

A Study on Female Shopping Behavior with Reference to Durable Goods – A Critical Analysis

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Abstract

Shopping is an activity that every one of us faces nearly every day. Normally women shows active interest to buy durable goods such as books, cars, jewels, clothes and any other thing that one might want to make a happy living. When it comes to shopping each of them having their own whims and fancy towards it. The perception of women in purchase behavior whether to buy or not to buy is vary in terms of quality, price, proximity, getting opinions from neighbors etc. Mowen and Minor (1998) define consumer behavior as a study of the buying units and the exchange processes involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, and ideas. The main objective of this study is to investigate the shopping

behavior of women for durable goods and analyze the various factors influencing the women at the time of purchase of durable goods.

Key words: Shopping, durable goods, consumer behavior, buying units.

I- Introduction to women shopping behavior

A decision making is the selection of action from two or more alternative choices. Constantly consumers make decision regarding the choice, purchase, use of products and services. Women face a lot of dilemma at the time of taking a purchase decision. Thus it is a process by which the consumers identify their needs, collect information, evaluate alternatives and make purchase decision. Females play a significant role in the domestic and socioeconomic life in the society.

In India over the years, both female and male roles have been changing. Now a day's female are playing different role of chief purchasing officer and controlling 85% of buying decisions. Certainly in male dominated societies many goods and services are actually decided and purchased by female. This is due to increasing literacy, independent income and role in the family. The consumer behavior in relating to consumer durables is strongly affected by some economic, social, cultural and psychological factors; (Seema Johar, IJAPSA-2015)

Due to the increasing number of literacy rates by women segment, they are keenly observing all environmental influences before finalizing the purchase decision. Besides they also gives more importance to quality of products in accordance with value for money. As more number of raising income, standard of living, lifestyle etc, purchase decision of durable goods occupies pivotal part by the working category of women. Before finalizing the decision by women, they used to gather the information relevant to purchase of durable goods.

The women are gathering information from many sources such as family members, neighbors, friends, relatives and colleagues etc. They also solicit the relevant information in the form of direct visit or through telephone. After purchase the goods, women expects the service category in terms of guarantee and warrantee, door delivery etc.

Consumer behavior reflects the totality of consumer's decisions with respect to acquisition, consumption and disposition of goods, services, time and idea by (human) decision making units (over time). It also includes whether, why, when, where, how, how much and how often and how long consumer will use or dispose of an offering. The Character, Behavior and Attitude of consumer are the important dimensions in the decision making process. Durable goods like TV, Washing machine, Computer, Digital Camera, etc are the products used by the consumers.

The success of the market depends greatly on how it satisfies the requirements of customers especially the women category. The use of durable goods is becoming increasingly popular in recent years in India. The introduction of different types of durables has also brought out many significant changes in the tastes and preferences of ultimate consumers in recent years. In most of the family, decision is finalized by women hence they are the nerve centre of the modern marketing of durable goods. In present scenario, understanding the expectations of women behaviour is quite essential for efficient and effective marketing.

Factors influencing women shopping behavior

Women are the most powerful consumers in the world and the role of women in the society and their shopping behavior has changed drastically due to various factors. The women's shopping behavior is strongly influenced by demographic, psychological and socio- cultural factors.

The price is the most important factor influencing women's shopping behaviour. Therefore the price of the product must be affordable so that the product has a cost advantage. The product must look attractive and catchy for the women to purchase the product. The next factor that influences the shopping behavior is quantity and quality of the product which makes a decision to buy the product by the women at large. Women usually refer to others before shopping a product and so the product must have a positive word of mouth. Women usually look for trendy, smart and fashionable things in the market to buy the product during shopping.

Women inclined to buy a product that satisfies needs and wants besides it also has to be economically viable. In the modern era, women's mostly prefer to shop along with their family and friends which is also a predominant factor in influencing shopping behaviour.

II- Review of Literature

Rajeswari. R and Pirakatheeswari. P (2014) made an attempt in their study, "A Study on Consumer Behaviour and Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision of Durable Goods with Reference to Salem District". A total of 50 respondents, result on the respondents while they purchase the consumer durable goods, the factor "Price" ranked first. It was followed by "Quality". The factor "Brand Image" got third rank and the factor "Model/Design" got fourth rank.

Lakshmi.G and Dr.Rengarajan.P (2013) while evaluating, "A study on women consumer decision making behavior with special reference to purchase of durable goods in Udumalpet town". The number of sample respondents 125. The specific objectives results as, in majority of the respondent's family, women play a major role in purchase decision and they prefer to prepare item list before purchasing. The involvement each one has on the family matters influences their behavior to a greater extent. The post purchase behavior of the sample respondents reveals the fact that, the decision process is not a satisfactory affair. The pressure of negative attitudes mounts up in certain families and is overcome by convincing, compromising, augmenting, etc.

Marichamy.K (2013) studied, "A Study on consumer behavior of Women with special reference to durable goods in Madurai city" 300 samples collected from Madurai Municipal Corporation. The study concludes that the competitive market provides opportunity on one hand and threats on the other hand to both the consumer segment of women and products of the product. It is quite important to improve core product with value addition to enrich customer satisfaction more in the similar price range. Not only quality improvements but improvement in after sales service can develop and replace demand for consumer durables as well as for

replacement of the products. The dealers / producers and the retailers must understand the importance of the consumers and their change attitude in the process of marketing. Only then the companies can withstand and survive in the sale of consumer durables.

Aradhana Krishna (2003) viewed that buyers' purchase behaviors can be influenced not only by the current prices of a product but also by those prices expect in the future.

Dr. K. Mubarak Ali (2007) submitted thesis "A study the influence of family members in the purchase decision of durable goods (with special reference to durable goods)". The aim of the study was to find out the role played by the husband and wife in the process of need identification and fulfillment with respect to the purchase of consumer durables. The respondents chosen for the study were in the age group of 21 to 51 years and above, their family monthly income ranged from 20,000 to 70,000 and above. The study revealed that all the families owned variety of durables like television, motor car, two-wheeler, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, etc. The study asserted that majority of the respondents gave importance to their friends opinion and suggestions based on their earlier purchase behavior. The study concluded that to bring about lasting happiness in one time purchase decision should be a joint decision.

Anand and BS Hundal (2008) undertook a study on "Perceptions of consumers towards Promotional schemes for durables" in Punjab. This study was conducted to gain insight into the perceptions of rural and urban consumers about various promotional measures adopted by durable goods manufacturing companies. Sample size 600. The major findings are though both the groups seem to have considered all the factors as important in sales promotion, a minute observation states that urban respondents have assigned high priority for these schemes: installment purchase (4.370), off-season discount (4.346) free gift (08). The suggestion is all the promotional measures has to be enforced to capitalize the opportunities in this highly growing Indian market.

Bayus (1991) studied "The consumer durable replacement buyer", and found that replacements account for a substantial portion of the sale of consumer durables in the U S.

Results of replacement of automobiles indicate that “early” replacement buyers are more concerned with styling and image and less concerned with costs than “late” replacement buyers.

Bhawaniprasad and Kumari (1987) have analyzed “Impact of advertising on consumer durables markets: A study of Refrigerator consumer”, in this study a ranking/importance of refrigerator among other consumer durables is studied. Study of 200 owners of Allwyn refrigerator in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad and Districts of Nizamabad and Karimnagar in Andhra Pradesh indicates that a very positive impact of advertising is found on the consumer durables market.

III- Suggestions

Marketers have to be very careful which designing products and marketing them to women because unlike men, it is very difficult to convince women or deceive them. Marketing messages have to be very specific and have to appeal to women with respect to their exact needs and requirements. As female plays a major role in purchase decision therefore the marketers need to concentrate more on identifying the expectations and steps to be initiated carefully at large. Besides Women normally prefer to prepare item list before purchasing hence the marketers have to look after many criteria such as quality, quantity, price, service, durability etc.

IV-Conclusion

The market for consumer durables is becoming more competitive now a day. Therefore, the producer of durable products should understand consumer interest much to find higher sale of their products. Overall, it is argued that the study of consumer behavior is rapidly evolving as researchers recognize and implement new techniques and Trans disciplinary perspectives to understand the nature of purchase and consumption behavior. The result of this study is emphasized and further supported the importance of perception of female consumers as an important element of female purchase decision. (Rajesh Matai, Anil. K. Bhat, 2013)

In India, women are of at most importance in present scenario due to the great shift in demographics. This change is more evident since the past 5 – 6 decades whereby an increasing

number of women have entered the workforce. In today's times, women are educated, independent, hold responsible positions at their jobs and there are many women entrepreneurs who run and sustain their businesses.

Women possess a lot of dispensable income which they can spend freely on the products they consume themselves (for their self-gratification). In the olden times, women used to just limit themselves to purchasing groceries and food items. Present day woman makes the final decisions regarding 80% of family's monthly/annual purchases. Since women are independent and manage their lives all by themselves, it is the common requirement of all these women to be presentable and appear confident in their day to day dealings and transactions at large.

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