

## An Analysis of Buyer Behaviour in Indian Context

\*Mrs.P.Abarna

\*\* Dr.M.Nazer

\*Ph.D., Research Scholar in Commerce, Khadir Mohideen College,  
Adirampattinam

\*\*Associate Professor of Commerce, Khadir Mohideen College, Adirampattinam

Every day we buy various products from the market. While purchasing products it is importance as to how involved consumer is in the buying process. If the product is of low value such as, soap, salt, etc consumer involvement is minimum. In case of big-ticket items such as. Cell phones, car, and television the consumer is highly involved because he is spending a lot of money in purchasing that product or service. Out of his limited money income he prioritises his needs allocates a budget for buying commodities, searches information about various brands, prices, reputation of the stores, after sales service available etc. he then evaluates the various alternatives which are available and then buys a high value item. All buyers are motivated by various reasons when they make purchase. The various motives which make people purchase products and services have been discussed in this paper.

### Why consumers buy?

Motivation is the driving force within individuals that impels them to action. Marketers and traders are always interested in knowing and understanding why consumers spend their money as they do. Individuals buy products and services for many reasons and different people can have different reasons for purchasing the same product. For example, a pair of shoes may be bought by Mr. A. for suitability and convenience whereas; Mr.B might buy the same shoe for style and appearance and to match it with his dress. Mr. C might buy shoes because of its price and quality. Thus, different consumers are motivated by different reasons to purchase the same product. Buying motives seeks an explanation of why consumers buy what they buy. Some of the buying motives which are prevalent for buying any product or service are:

- **Desire for Gain:** A lady lecturer may be motivated to purchase a microwave oven in order to reduce the cooking time. A student may be motivated to pursue an MBA course so that she can get a good job in the corporate sector in future.
- **Fear of loss:** When the consumer purchases products as a means to prevent pain, loss, risk, embarrassment, mistakes, unpopularity, worry or unhappiness he is said to make purchases because of fear of loss. Purchase of insurance policies, burglar alarms, car-steering lock, etc are motivated be fear loss.
- **Comfort and Convenience:** Consumers are motivated to buy products such as, car to avoid travelling be public transport, washing machine to avoid washing clothes by hand.
- **Security and Protection:** Many purchases are motivated by the desire to avoid physical harm to over selves, our loved one and our property. An individual may buy home exercise equipment, an annual physical examination, a back-up computer disks, and a fire extinguisher in order to protect himself.
- **Pride of Ownership:** Although certain purchases are not easy to be logically justified but they give a sense of pride to the owner. Purchase of a luxury car, designer clothing's and furniture, a collection of antique paintings are purchases which are driven by pride and status. Consumers are ready to pay a premium in order to purchase them.

- **Satisfaction and emotion:** everybody wants to gain love and affection from others. We look for approval, ratification, praise and love from our dear ones. Sending greeting cards, flowers, throwing parties, buying gifts make people feel good about them.

Thus, all purchases are backed by various motives and even if a purchase may look rational but it is backed by some emotion also. A purchase is said to be rational when it is backed by reasons of economy, durability or efficiency. But in real life it is very difficult to separate the irrational from the rational. Suppose a boy decides to give a present to his girl friend and shops all around the stores thoroughly and systematically. He is driven by both emotional and rational motives.

### **Post – Purchase Dissonance**

When individuals choose between two or more alternatives, anxiety or psychological disturbance occurs because the decision has unattractive as well as attractive features. After making decisions to purchase a particular brand, people expose themselves to information that they perceive to support their choices and avoid information which is likely to favour rejected alternatives.

Almost all purchases result in cognitive dissonance. After the purchase a consumer may seem to be satisfied with the benefits of the chosen brand and may be glad to avoid the drawbacks of the brands not bought. However, every purchase involves compromise. A consumer may feel uneasy about acquiring the drawbacks of the chosen brand and about losing the benefits of the brands not purchased. Thus, consumers feel at least some post purchase dissonance for every purchase.

For example, if a person purchases a new 'Maruti' car and makes a down payment for it he might experience cognitive dissonance. If s/he thinks of the unique positive qualities of the brands not selected. S/he requires reassurance from others that s/he has made a wise decision, that the car is excellent for the prices s/he paid and that he is a wise buyer. Thus a buyer may start doubting the choice of his brand and experiences anxiety over the decision. Thus, all the positive attributes of the cars s/he considered (such as, Tata, Hundai, Flat) but did not purchase and all the negative aspects of his purchased vehicle (Maruti) are dissonant with the purchasing behavior. In his seeking reassurance from friends that his purchase was a wise one, s/he is attempting to reduce the post-purchase cognitive dissonance.

Assuming that a purchaser of 'Maruti' experiences dissonance and looks for reassurance. He is highly receptive to advertising provided by the manufacturer. In the advertisement for the 'Maruti' car, which he has just purchased, the superiority of the product and the sharpness of his decision would be shown. Consumer's dissonance may increase because of the following reasons:

- When the purchase is expensive
- When there is a greater similarity between the item selected and item(s) rejected
- When the purchase decision is very important.

Thus, buying a house or car would create more dissonance than buying a soap or bread. A trader can relive post-purchase uncertainty of the consumer by the following methods.

1. By including messages in its advertising specifically aimed at reinforcing consumers' decisions by complimenting their wisdom.
2. The salesmen can emphasise the advantages of the product purchased, while stressing the disadvantages of the forgone alternatives. Moreover he can show that many characteristics of the chosen item are similar to products the buyer has forgone, but which are accepted by the reference group.
3. By offering stronger guarantees or warranties.
4. By increasing the number and effectiveness of its services.
5. By providing detailed brochures on how to use its products correctly.

Thus, some marketers provide reassurance through congratulating recent buyers and reviewing strong product attributes in the manuals provided to new purchasers. Several automakers publish special editions of magazines focused on recent purchasers and are given free of charge to them. Even salespersons of consumer durables are often instructed to call their recent buyers within a day or so after purchase to offer further information and assurance.

In society family acts as a major consumption unit, where limited money income and needs of the various members have to be kept in mind. Thus, understanding the family dynamics is very important.

### **Family as Consumers**

As defined by the Bureau of the census of the US, "a family consists of two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption and living together". Family decision making involves decisions with regard to how family members interact and influence on another in terms of individual, family or household purchases.

### **Family Dynamics**

Families play an important role in the market as consumption units. Members in a family influence the decision making process in the purchase of different products. This is especially true for high-value items, such as, consumer durable products that are used by several members in the family. Even when members of a family might be leading their own lives and, pursuing their own dreams, and when their tastes are different, the bond that exists between them continues to be very strong. This is mainly because of the following three reasons:

1. The consumption of a product maybe personal, but its choice is not. Every family member looks for the approval and ratification of his choice from the other members. For example, a father may not buy a pair of sneakers if his son does not approve of it. Or a wife would not buy a dress if her husband does not approve of it.
2. Often the family consumption decisions are dependent on one another. In most families, the needs of various members as also their desire to purchase new products cannot be satisfied by the family's limited income. This necessitates an allocation of family resources and a trade-off among all the desired products and services.
3. Many products are purchased for the collective use and consumption of the family. This is because the traditional boundaries between the roles assigned to the different members of the family often disappear.

Due to liberalization, media explosion and certain societal changes in India, roles of different family members are shifting. Decision-making is becoming more democratic and children are more and more active participants

in the Indian homes. Marketers are also projecting children in their communication Strategies.

Brands can help increase turnover by encouraging customer loyalty and are particularly useful if:

1. You are in a fast-moving sector. If your business's environment changes rapidly, a brand provides reassurance to customers and encourages their loyalty.
2. You are in a crowded marketplace. A brand can help you stand out. For example, there are many kinds of adhesive tape, but there is only one 'Sellotape' and 'Hoovering' has become a household word for vacuum cleaning.
3. You have no other points of difference. When customers are confronted with a wide choice of comparable suppliers, they will always choose the one they feel will suit them best. Your suitability for a customer is portrayed through your brand. You want to add value to your business. Successful brands can make businesses more attractive to potential buyers or franchisees.

**There are five key areas to consider:**

1. Work out your business, product of service's core competencies. These are what you achieve for your customer, not necessarily what you do. For example, a good wine shop's core competence is selling wine that its customers enjoy—not just selling wine.
2. Assess who you're existing and potential customers are and find out what they like and what they don't. For example, if competitive pricing drives them, there is little point in you presenting yourself as a premium-price supplier of the same products offered by your competitors.
3. Find out how your customers and your employees feel about your business. Reliable? Caring? Cheap? Expensive? Luxurious? No-frills? Later in the process, these emotional responses (brand values) will form the basis of your brand message.
4. Define how favourably your business is viewed, by consumers and potential customers—this is your perceived quality. Do they trust your business, product or service? Do they know exactly what it does for them? What do they think of when your brand is mentioned to them? Low perceived quality would restrict or damage your business. High-perceived quality gives you a platform to grow.
5. Consider how far you can develop your business with its current customer perception without moving away from your core competencies. The amount you can change your offer is your brand stretch. For example, a shop known for selling fresh sandwiches could also consider selling homemade cakes and biscuits without going outside its core competencies. But selling frozen ready meals too may stretch its brand too far.

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