

Consumer Behaviour towards Buying a Product or Service

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Abstract

In recent years much more emphasis has been laid on the research which helps in knowing the consumer behavior that helps particularly for analyzing the situation and hence in the improvement and development of the campaign. It is through the behavioral science research one gets to know or understand how the consumer or client would react to particular given situation. Through understanding and learning about the psychology of an individual one can understand the behavior of the other person but marketers are more interested in the empirical and theoretical work of social psychology, sociology and cultural anthropology.

The aspects of consumer behavior according to the Engel, Kollat and Blackwell defined as "those acts of individuals directly involved in obtaining and using economic goods and services, including the decision process that proceeds and determines these acts".

Keywords

Consumer Behaviour, selection of a product or service, Perception, Learning, Motivation, Personality, Life-Style, Attitudes.

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Internal States

The behavior of the consumer depends on the external environment which can further be classified into cultural and social.

Cultural influences include society and that comes from subcultures.

Culture

Culture means pattern of behavior that is shared by a group of people which is passed down from generation to generation in a particular group of people which is known as family. These patterns of behavior include beliefs, norms, values.

Belief is something one starts accepting is true and one starts believing it.

Reference Group – This group plays an important role as it is through this group a standard or belief is incorporated and evaluates him or himself. An example of a Reference Group is

Membership or Associate Group – It is that group to which individuals are associated – family, business organizations and social and religious organizations.

Ascribed Group – It is that group to which an individual is associated because of its age, sex or education.

Anticipatory or aspiration group – It is that group to which an individual tends or longs to join.

Negative or Dissociative Reference Group – This is a group of which one does not want to be part of and wants to keep a distance from. Campaigns like that of discouraging drinking and smoking.

Opinion Leadership

It is not necessary that all individuals are equally influenced by the society. The thought of the leaders or their opinion is one of the most extensively researched phenomena. Opinion leaders are the people who act as a forced channel to cooperate with some particular idea for which they are in favor of.

Family and the Changing Role of Woman

Family plays a very important role in influencing consumer behavior. In today's time women are shown and portrayed as having a dual role which means their status in the workplace and also their status in the home. The ads are made keeping in mind both the perspective of a women.

Role Switching Ads

These are those ads in which the opposite sex other than the one used traditionally to promote a product or a service.

Role Blending Ads are those in which both men and women are shown doing combined work in an advertisement.

A continuous watch is done to see and know whether the advertising would respond to the changing roles of women and why advertisers try not to use a new stereotype that is working women with aspiration values. They now try to make a balance and use both types of women who are working or housewives.

Internal Influences

Internal Influences a lot on the external behavior of a person. These influences emerge from the psychological studies in the field of human behavior. The advertising tactics and strategies are evolved through consumer perception, motivation and attitude.

Perception

It is through which the human mind perceives or interrupts after selecting and organizing the situation, product or service.

Perceptual Selectivity

A human mind selects and perceives only a few things. For example a consumer watches many ads on a frequent note but only a few are liked or remembered. Firstly, because one perceives something according to his liking or disliking, his or her internal or external influences the choice.

The factors that influence perception concerning ads are contrast, color and size.

Perceptual Organisations

Consumers tend to form their own patterns of perceptual organizations with some little information they have, one type of perceptual organization is figure – and – ground - differentiation. When a scene with any detail is seen part of it stands out from the rest.

Frame of Reference

Perceptual Interpretation involves some judgment. This judgment is evolved through a frame of reference like a person has a feel of the product he or she starts relating that product to a known one. For example an elegant product is put in front of the luxurious background to make the feel of the product classy and portray it with elegance and stands out among all other products.

Perceived Risk

A consumer when one goes to buy a product or service, a certain risk is there in every purchase they make and one has to face the consequences of that risk taken. It may be either good or bad. The amount of risk differs from product to

product. Risk may be related to performance, psychological or financial. The ad campaign can vary the amount of risk taken. The ad companies test the information of the product. The ad offers payback schemes, money-back guarantees, and free samples or face demonstrations.

Self Perception

According to Plummer a brand may be characterized as modern, old-fashioned, lively or exotic and these characterization aspects are purely the result of ads. It is also believed that self-perception is related to the brand and products. A consumer's perception is related to what brand they buy and their need.

Motivation

Motivation plays a very important role in terms of consumer behavior in Advertising. Needs and motives are important. Needs are the internal force that results in outer behavior. There are two types of needs *Biological and Personal / Social*. Biological needs are necessary to maintain a healthy life and for growth and reproduction. Personal or Social Needs are related to status, prestige and self-confidence.

- Need for Self-Actualization
- Esteem Needs
- Belongingness and love Needs
- Safety Needs
- Physiological Needs

Social Motives

Social motives arrive from the social environment.

Motivation Research

This research is more related to human behavior rather than marketing research techniques. This research is difficult to do as people are not very genuinely open to speaking out or responding to a particular situation and giving appropriate information. These researches are more exploratory, difficult to understand why people behave in a certain manner or situation. These are known as qualitative research. For example, if one person uses one brand of oil for dandruff why others, why do others use the same brand and no other brand.

McDonald's research is not only the best fast food franchise but also a family hangout place. The campaign "You Deserve a Break Today".

Depth Interviewing

Ernest Dichter who is known as the Father of Motivation Research believed that it is wrong to just survey by asking people "Why did you do or What you did"

Rather he believes in that it is much more promising to just let the person come up with its view points. An individual should be given the freedom to talk freely. This would help in clinical psychology and find better outputs and help in research in-depth and with much more appropriate answers. This research is done among 50 to 200 individuals and done for a span of 30 – 45 minutes with the help of trained interviewers to analyze the responses.

One-on-one interview is supposed to have far much better results as an individual speaks out his heart, much more to the point, and precise and it is easier to study his / her psychology minutely.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews are done among small groups of 20-25 individuals. Researchers use this technique not to get answers to what, when or how but this type of interview is done when one has to find or get output in detail. This survey is largely used in television advertising. Better to be used in explanatory stage. These interviews depend on ideas, attitudes, emotions and beliefs.

Limitations to the Use of Motivation Research

Motivation Researchers may be skilled in interviewing but not skilled in understanding the psychology. This technique is performed by psychologists and sociologists.

Another criticism is that this research cannot be copied due to which it is difficult to rely on this result for the best of results. It is believed that if the researchers get to know the exact reason of an individual purchases a product, reasons in detail then it's easier to understand consumer behavior, attitude research and consumer information processing analysis.

Attitudes

Attitude is the way one thinks feels or behaves in a particular situation. This can either be favorably or unfavorably according to one's liking and disliking of a particular object or subject.

Attitude is an important subject to be studied in terms of advertising. It is an attitude that helps in predicting an individual's behavior towards liking, disliking, buying or rejecting a particular service or brand. A great effort is put in to understand the attitude of an individual. A lot of research is put in to understand 'why' and 'why not' and come to a conclusion. Only if theory research is done to understand attitude will results or conclusions would show their results and these results would be beneficial for further references. It is not even necessary whether a consumer has a favorable attitude or shows interest in a particular object and would definitely buy it in the end or not.

Attitude Component

1. Cognitive
2. Affective and Evaluative Component
3. An action tendency component

These components are common to all attitudes but differ in their proportions.

Cognitive

A belief about one object - Fair and Lovely makes the skin bright

An Effective and Evaluative Component

It is the liking of a person/feelings

An Action Tendency Component

It is the behavior of an individual towards an object according to their liking or beliefs.

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