CONSUMERS PURCHASING CHOICE TOWARDS MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES COLOR TELEVISIONS (MNC CTVs) – AN ANALYSIS

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Abstract
Consumer markets in India are undergoing rapid transformations. Gone are the days when the people of a particular nation were forced to stick to products and services produced and provided domestically. It was an inevitable circumstance due to lack of availability and accessibility of overseas products. The evolution and revolution in the field of science and technology have brought in a drastic change in every business and its allied activities. The situations have demanded the governments to convert the existing business policies. The preference of consumers is not static and it undergoes changes every day due to the introduction of new products by the domestic as well as multinational companies. The preference towards the consumer durable products is not exception to the above statement because of change in life style, double-income, awareness of consumers etc.

Key Words: Consumers, Purchasing, Choice, MNC CTV.

INTRODUCTION
Today, Consumer markets in India are undergoing rapid transformations. Gone are the days when the people of a particular nation were forced to stick to products and services produced and provided domestically. It was an inevitable circumstance due to lack of availability and accessibility of overseas products. The evolution and revolution in the field of science and technology have brought in a drastic change in every business and its allied activities. The situations have demanded the governments to convert the existing business policies. These new policies of the governments influence very much the national and multinational companies. Particularly the Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) policies of Indian government have paved way for incorporation, mobilization and operation of Multinational Companies (MNCs) all over the world. Existing business condition and environment have let the world class goods move freely beyond the boundaries. Now, one can buy any country's product at anywhere in the world. In order to ensure the timely supply of goods and services every company keeps changing and evolving new business strategies with an appropriate Supply Chain Management (SCM). Ever changing business activities have been psychologically influencing the behavioral patterns of consumers and dealers and their product and service preferences. It is important to reflect on the relevant concepts which are directly or indirectly affect the consumers' and dealers' preferences especially in dealing with the products of MNCs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1. To observe the marketing strategies of MNCs relating to influencing consumers' choice.
2. To analyze the consumer choice in the selection of selected MNC CTV sets and its association with sources of information.
3. To study the impact of demographic variables affecting consumers' preferences.
4. To offer suggestions for better consumer oriented marketing strategies for MNC TV brands.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY
The research design employs descriptive, explorative and analytical methods. The basic information is obtained through the survey method by administering a questionnaire and through personal enquiries. As there is a need to collect innovative ideas, strategies and policies to solve existing problems, explorative research method is utilized. Certain analytical tools for identifying differences among factors affecting consumers' and dealers' preferences are also used in this study. All the three methods are concurrently used to employ their characteristic features for effective research design. The information is based on primary and secondary sources. First hand information is collected directly from the sample respondents relating to their preferences. Secondary data sourcing is done from the reports of various associations, research articles in various national, international journals, books, reports from daily papers and websites.

The sample for the study is drawn from the consumers. The customers are the ultimate user of the MNC CTV and the dealers play the role of the intermediaries to reach the same from the producer to the end users. The customers are drawn randomly from the Vijayawada City. Random sampling technique is used by the researcher to select cunsumers from Vijayawada city. The addresses of the consumers who have bought CTV sets recently related to the specified MNC brands are obtained from the respective dealers. Six hundred samples are selected from the list given by the dealers concerned. The researcher has

taken due care in selecting the representatives from the population by giving proportionate weightage for all the dealers and also by adopting random sampling technique.

All the six hundred samples are given a questionnaire to obtain the necessary relevant information with regard to the research problem to carry out the research more effectively and efficiently. The selected consumer samples are expected to be fairly representatives with special reference to the Vijayawada City. About 565 filled in questionnaires are received from the respective customers. The researcher has rejected 48 incomplete questionnaires and the remaining fully completed 517 questionnaires are duly selected for analysis after a careful scrutiny. The questionnaire includes a mixture of multiple choice questions along with the statements reflecting various kinds and levels of preference of customers towards this study. For this purpose the Likert scale techniques which consist of multiple choice questions using five points scaling ranking method is used. The questionnaires given to consumers are divided into five parts, namely, personal information, general information, their preferences, product evaluation and product rating. A pilot study is conducted among 50 consumers before finalizing the questionnaires. On the basis of respondents' feedback the researcher rectified and modified the minor changes in the existing questionnaire in consultation with the subject experts and his guide. Television is viewed by all persons in a family so income of the respondents includes income of all family members. This helps the researcher to ensure full-fledged complete questionnaires for data collection.

The primary data is analyzed with the help of the following statistical tools
1. Factor Analysis by Principle Components Analysis method is applied to reduce the variables related to consumer reaction into major factors.
2. K - means Cluster Analysis that is exploited to classify the consumers of MNC CTV into various heterogeneous groups.
3. Paratnetric one sample t-test and Analysis of Variance which are used to test the equality of group means of the variables.
4. Multiple Regression Analysis that is applied to find out the impact of independent variables like demographic on dependent variables.
5. Percentage Analysis, Non-Parametric Chi-square and Diagrammatic representation that are used to establish the contribution of primary data.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS
Consumer while buying goods they differ by nature in their taste, attitude, belief, income, sex, age, occupation, purchasing power, family situation and marital status because their characteristics are never simple such as age, sex, marital status, income, occupation, and education, are most often used as the basis for market segmentation. Demography refers to the vital and measurable statistics of a population. Demographics help to locate a target market, while psychological and socio cultural characteristics help to locate a target market, while psychological and socio cultural characteristics help describe its members how they think and how they feel. Demographic information is the most accessible and cost-effective way to identify a target market. Indeed, most secondary data, including census data, are expressed in demographic items. Demographics are easier to measure than other segmentation variable they are invariably included in psychographic and socio cultural studies because they add meaning to the findings. Demographic variables are the most popular bases for distinguishing customer groups. One reason is that consumer wants, preferences and usage rates are often associated with demographic variables. In the content it is better collect about their personal information and their demographic factors to understand their preference to the Multinational Company Color Television (MNC CTV).

Various researchers reveal that the internal and the external factors very much influence the customer's preferences. Especially, with regard to MNCs the external factors i.e., demographic, social, ecological, economic, cultural, political, legal and technological factors very much affect the companies both, favorably and unfavorably and also influence the purchasing behaviors of the customers in that particular market. Economic and demographic factors have a significant influence in determining the types of products that people need. They also have an important bearing on the brand choice and supplier patronage. In the following pages, some of the important demographic and economic trends are described. Frank, Massy and Lodahl have analyzed the correlation of household purchasing behavior with socio-economic and demographic characteristics by using the data from J.Walters Thompson consumer panel for grocery products that are frequently purchased. There seems to be a high degree of association between socio-economic, demographic and personality variables with households purchasing behavior.

Preference is the power of ability to choose one thing over another with the anticipation that the choice will result in greater satisfaction, greater capability or improved performance'. Normally consumers prefer one product over the other because they

think that they will get more satisfaction. "The deployment of the theory of reasoned action as a model for preference formation explains why such evaluation takes place. Satisfaction is a product of the alignment between prescribed functional and emotive performance elements and the ability of the company to meet the performance expectations. Sustained preference is a product of meeting these requirements over time. Such preference can be thought of as a series of experience interactions that are continuously being modified as the components of preference over time'. That is why the preference is not always static.

The consumer markets in our country are facing very rapid changes. 'Consumer India has always been pretty tricky to double guess. Just when we believed that consumer spending was firmly on a high growth trajectory based on the wonder years of 1993-98 it spluttered and slowed to a crawl. For the next few years, marketers tried everything they knew to speed it up again. They dropped prices while improving product and service quality. They ran buy-one-get-one-free schemes. But that only helped them get volume growth at the expense of operating margins. The FMCG sector had a terrible time with some product categories actually shrinking in size while consumer durable makers struggled to reconcile capacity with demand. Consumer would like to buy more of durable products because, 'Growing preference among consumers for high-end, branded technology products would lead the India consumer durables segment to achieve a healthy double digit growth in 2005-2006 fiscal, according to a survey by industry body FICCF. 'The consumer durables segment can be segregated into **consumer electronics** such as televisions, video, compact disk, players and audio systems etc. and **consumer appliances** also known as white goods like refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, microwave ovens, vacuum cleaners and dishwashers'. Thus the Indian electronic market can be segregated.

The Indian electronics entertainment market is highly price-sensitive. As such, the ebb and flow of demand is determined primarily by considerations of price and affordability, the latter being a function of durability, disposable income and of late availability of consumer finance and easy payment options. Technology shapes preferences only in as much as it is a value-for-money proposition and is within the price band of affordability'. The demand for consumer durables is increasing day by day because of the following reasons. 'Over the years, demand for consumer durables has increased with rising income levels, double-income families, changes lifestyles, availability of credit, increasing consumer awareness and introduction of new models. Products like Colour Television (CTV), Air Conditioner, Cars etc., are not longer received as luxury product'. Thus in developing countries the demands for high-end products are preferred, bought and used widely by the consumers.

Age
As consumer wants, abilities and preference change with age. "Age influences on consumer behavior with reference to durable as well as non durable goods". Because product needs often vary with consumer age, marketers have found age to be a particularly useful demographic variable to distinguish segments. Many marketers have carved themselves a niche in the marketplace by concentrating on a specific age segment. The following table is framed based respondents profit.

Table No.1.1: Age of consumers of MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Upto 25	83	16.0	16.0
26-35	159	30.8	46.8
36-45	116	22.4	69.2
Above 45	159	30.8	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

It is found from the above table that 30.8% and 30.8% belong to age category of 26-35, and above 45 respectively. 22.4% of respondents are in the 36 and 45 age group. The age group upto 25 has got 16.0%. But the researcher felt that the different age groups have represented proportionately in this study.

Gender
Gender is an important demographic characteristics for marketers as well as to manufacturers because sex has always been a distinguishing segmentation variable. 'Men and women tend to have difference attitudinal and behavioral orientations, based partly on genetic makeup and partly on socialization practices. Women tend to be more communal-minded and men tend to be more self-expressive and goal-directed. The marketing research has identified the gender is a useful discriminating variable in classifying durables and non durables products.

Table No.1.2: Gender of consumers of MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	395	76.4	76.4
Female	122	23.6	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

From the above it is inferred that 76.4% of sample consumers are males and 23.6% are females. In this sample it is found that number of male consumers is more than female consumers.

Marital Status

The married people would like to be more economical in their spending. Now a days in many families through there is a possibility to double income, still marital status will have more impact on their spending and preference to particular product. The following table explains the marital status of respondents.

Table No.1.3: Marital status of consumers of MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Married	365	70.6	70.6
Unmarried	152	29.4	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

It is informed from the table that 70.6% of sample consumers are married and 29.4% were unmarried. In this sample, it is found that number of married consumers is more than the unmarried consumers.

Occupation

Generation of income depends upon occupation held by the consumers. It is treated as segmentation variable widely used in products and services in durable. The following table is arranged to know the different occupation of respondents.

Table No.1.4: Occupation of consumers of MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employed	250	48.4	48.4
Self employed	199	38.5	86.8
House wife	68	13.2	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

From the above table it is observed that 48.4% of respondents are employed where 38.5% and 13.2% are self employed and house wives respectively. In this sample there are more number of employed person than self employed and house wives.

Income

Income segmentation is a long-standing practice used by all marketing researchers to predict the customers for a given product. "Blue-collar workers were among the first purchasers of Color Television sets; it was cheaper for them to buy these sets than to go to movies and restaurants". The following table gives the information about the income of the respondents.

Table No.1.5: Income of consumers of MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 10,000	126	24.4	24.4
10,000-15,000	143	27.7	52.0
15,000-20,000	106	20.5	72.5
Above 20,000	142	27.5	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

From this table it is understood that 24.4% and 27.7% of sample are drawing income of below Rs.10000 and between Rs.10000 – Rs.15000 respectively. The income between Rs.15000 – Rs.20000 category is 20.5% and consumers drawing more than Rs.20000 are to the extent of 27.5%. The researcher feels that all the income groups are more or less equally representing in the sample. The various income groups of respondents are exhibited in the next page.

Number of family members
Now a day each every member of the family is aware of many things which include durable products as well. Many times the decisions are not taken by the individual in the families but it is found that most of the times taken jointly. Therefore, irrespective of the number of members in the family all the families are taken as a sample for this study. The following table exhibits the number of family members in the study.

Table No.1.6: Number of family members of consumers of MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Upto 3	127	24.6	24.6
4-6	345	66.7	91.3
Above 6	45	8.7	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

From this table it is examined that upto three members in a family is at 24.6% and followed by second category having 4 to 6 members is at 66.7% and more than six members in a family to the extent of 8.7%. From this it is further observed that the families having four to six members are more than the other two categories.

Table No.1.7: Number of consumers Processing MNC CTV

Variables	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
LG	252	48.7	48.7
Samsung	193	37.4	86.1
Sony	72	13.9	100.0
Total	517	100.0	

Source-Primary Data

From this table it is observed that the respondents having LG CTV is at 48.7% followed by consumers of Samsung CTV is at 37.4% and finally only 13.9% of consumers are having Sony CTV. It is deeply identified that majority of sample customers are having LG CTV.

Sources of Information
Consumer acquire their beliefs, attitude and develop preference through a process of learning from the public especially from news paper and magazine in fact they interact with commercial persons like sales persons and dealers and commercial media like Radio and TV, and finally they are influenced very much by personal contacts like friends, family members and relatives. Who plays sometime major influencers and give their own experience as to prefer a particular CTV.

The Frequency distribution and percentage of analysis of primary data reveal the following results. It is not the only sources of information which will influence the consumers some other sources of information jointly will operate.

Table No.1.8: Sources of Information from Personal Contact

Personal Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Family	191	36.9%
Friends	193	37.3%
Relatives	94	18.2%

Source-Primary Data

From the above table it is found that consumers of MNC CTV are very much influenced by personal sources like family, friends and relatives. Microscopically it is observed that 36.9% of the consumers are influenced by their own family members followed by friends at 37.3% and at 18.2% are motivated by their relatives.

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Table No.1.9: Sources of Information from Commercial people

Personal Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Sales person	64	12.4%
Dealers	116	22.4%

Source-Primary Data

Sales persons and dealers are the sources of information in a limited extent but in particular dealers are good in giving the sources of information by 22.4% where as sales persons is spreading the information to the extent of 12.4%.

Table No.1.10: Sources of information from Public Media

Public Source	Frequency	Percentage
Radio	40	7.7%
RV	224	43.2%
Newspaper	133	25.7
Magazine	78	15.1

Source-Primary Data

From this table it is observed that consumers of MNC CTV are getting the sources of information through public media like radio, TV, newspaper and magazines. It is further identified that the consumers of MNC CTV are informed fro CTV through TV itself because it is recorded with a highest percentage of 43.2, followed by news paper with 25.7% then comes magazine disseminates information to consumers of the MNC CTV for about 15.1% where as radio could give information only for the extent of 7.7% overall it is observed that TV could be effective sources of information for rank goes TV itself and the second sources is family and then followed by friends.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY
1. The age groups belonging to 26-35 and 45 above are found be equal in numbers (159) in the sample.
2. There are more number of male (76.4%) respondents than female (23.6%) respondents.
3. The number of married consumers (70.6%) is more than the unmarried consumers (29.4%).
4. There are more number of employed persons (48.4%) than the self employed and house wives.
5. The respondents drawing Rs. 10,000 - Rs. 15,000 (27.7%) and above Rs. 20,000 (27.5%) are more than the other two categories such as below Rs.10,000 (24.4%) and Rs.15,000 -Rs. 20,000(20.5%). In general all income groups are more or less spread equally.
6. The families having 4-6 members (66.7%) are more than the other two categories.
7. The majority of the consumers (48.71%) are the users of LG CTV over Samsung (37.3%) and Sony CTV (13.9%)
8. The sources of information are very effective with friends (37. 3%) than the family and relatives among the personal source.
9. In the commercial source dealers (22.4%) are strong sources of information than the sales persons (12.4%).
10. Among the commercial sources television (43.2%) itself is an effective source of information to promote CTV which is then followed by newspaper (25.7%), magazines (15.1%) and radios (7.7%).
11. The demographic factors such as age, sex, income, occupation, marital status, number of family members and other factor namely possession of MNC CTVs do not differ significantly with product details of IN/INC CTVs. The consumers have preferred the IN/INC CTV because of the advanced features in CTV and one more important factor is that the cost of maintenance of MNC CTV is less.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY
1. Since different age group of consumers prefer different categories namely product, place, promotion and price of MNC CTVs. The manufacturers may produce suitable for all age groups of consumers.
2. The consumers are enthusiastic about using MNC CTVs with more innovative technology. The production of new models with advanced technology would maximize the consumers preference.
3. Since the consumers have almost the same preference for LG and Samsung for their features and makes, there must be a management strategy to reduce the cost of their CTVs.
4. Brand loyalty becomes the fruit of consumer preference. Hence, it is suggested that manufacturers of CTVs may modify the models often to suit the demands of the consumers.
5. Advertisements may be designed the producers of MNC CTV in such a way that show buyers taking advice from friends and relatives before purchase of it.

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CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The finding of the study reveals that the LG CTV dominates other MNC CTVs because of its captivating appearance, free maintenance and added technically advanced features. The sales volumes of LG CTV are very much directly influenced by the consumers' preference and recommendations. LG CTV's price, offer mechanism, impressive advertisements, effective personal selling and timely after sales service enable it to be a fast moving CTV with an edge over other MNC CTVs. On an overall basis, the findings of the study on the Indian CTV consumers point out the fact that Indian Consumers are becoming more and more sophisticated in their television buying behaviour, which is predominantly reflected in the fact that they are seeking more information about the product features and benefits. They are also conscious of the good looks of the CTVs. Consumers are also very price conscious and have somehow perfected the art of equating the price with advanced features and innovative latest designs of CTVs. The selected MNCs have promoted television sets so effectively to the Indian consumers so that they are now more aware of intricate product information, product features and product performance and which is why they are able to equate the prices with the quality of the performance of the product. They are also demanding more in terms of services, promotion, benefits and attention from the dealers.

The researcher has brought out a new consumer preference model which is of self explanatory by:

Consumer Preference Model
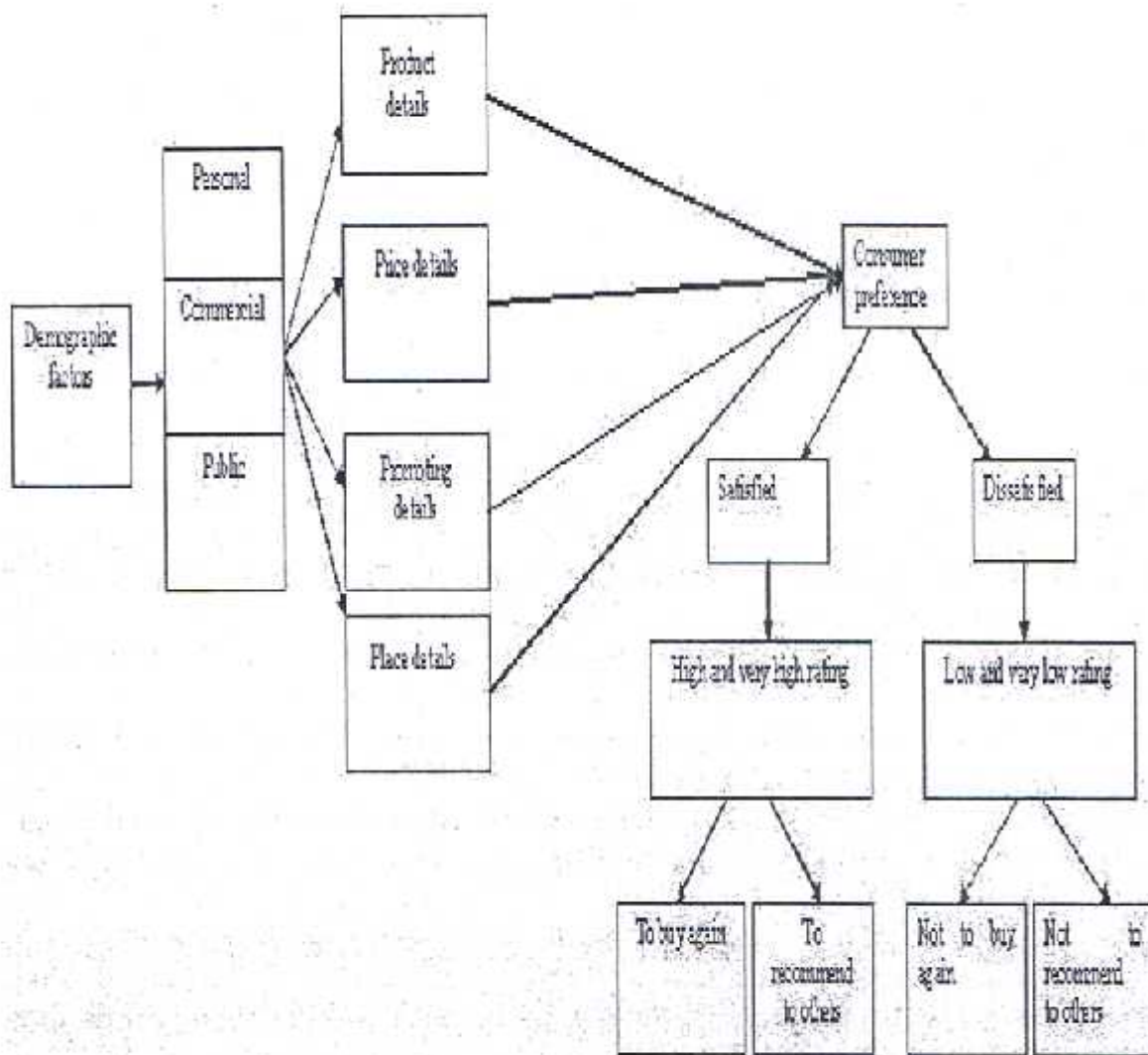
SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
This study gives an idea about the consumer preference in the purchase of MNC CTVs by considering all possible aspects of preferences. Further research on the following lines will be useful in reinforcing the present findings. A case study of consumer behaviour for different MNC products may be conducted.

SOCIAL OF THE RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY
The current of the brings out various strategies followed by MNCs. The consumers are benefited by way of collecting the data required for the selection of different products offered by the popular MNCs.

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