



A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR OF NON-DURABLE PRODUCTS IN THE AGARTALA CITY

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Abstract

Every manufacturing industries want to maximise the productivity and increase their profit stream. The goals of every organisation is to study consumer behaviour, as it leads to pave the way towards success. Every production unit tries to trace their consumer's requirements. They try their best to fulfil consumers need and want. The consumer behaviour changes now and then based on price, quality, quantity, fashion and taste and by the influence of advertisement. The present paper is undertaken to test hypotheses to know the impact of price on their purchase decision; Whether the high price of nondurable products has better quality than low price of nondurable products; the consumers prefer branded products or not and the role of advertisement on consumers buying perception. All the hypotheses are tested using SPSS software version-20.

Key Words: Productivity, Profit Stream, Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Perception and Nondurable Products.

JEL Classification: C83, C88, L67, L68, L82 and M30.

1. Introduction

In the era of globalisation, production and marketing strategy of nondurable goods highly depends on consumer behaviour. With repeated industrialisation and technological advancement, many multifarious products are available in the market, and parallel volume of the population are increasing. That is why it becomes difficult to motivate the consumers as because they are also becoming educated, and their level of knowledge is increasing with the increase of different test, fashion, design, colours, size and price of the goods. Accordingly, there is a need of changing production and marketing strategy, especially for non-durable products.

Behaviour is an external expression of internal feelings about a person. Accordingly, consumer behaviour means consumers attitude or expression while buying the goods. In other words, consumer behaviour is the result of such purchase, which a buyer makes for the satisfaction of his or her needs from where, when, what, whom and how many.

The consumer behaviour of non-durable products is frequently changing. At present, competitive situation, the marketers neither can increase the price too much nor can decrease the price of non-durable products as if, they increase the price of goods, then their existing consumers will decrease and thereby they cannot capture too many consumers.

Non-durable products are the products, which used by the consumer for a shorter period. Some of the examples of non-durable products are soaps, toothpaste, cosmetics, detergent powders, health drink, and so forth.

2. Literature Review

Brown (1950)¹ found by applying "depth interview" technique that prestige advertising, habit and acceptable experience were the main factors in brand choice for coffee in Los Angeles.

Alfred F.Kuchen (1962)² has conducted a study on 650 households from Chicago Tribune panel to examine consumers a brand choice based on purchase frequency of frozen orange juice. They found that brand loyalty was more for frequently purchased them for less purchased. The probability of repurchases reduced significantly with the passing of time.

Frank, Douglas and Polli (1967)³ have examined which factors were positively and negatively correlated in the purchase of small package sizes of grocery product of the households. He found that adult member of the family was positively correlated with package size whereas, Socio-economic characteristics such as family income, occupation, education of a head of household, total consumption and brand loyalty was negatively correlated.

¹ Brown, G.H. (1950). *Brand Loyalty-Fact or Fiction*. Advertising Age, pp. 23-24.

² Alfred E. Kuchen (1962). *Report Buying New York*, American Elsevier, Published Copy.

³ Frank, R., Douglas, S., & Polli, R. (1967). *Household Correlates of Package-Size Proneness for Grocery Products*. *Journal of Marketing Research*. Vol. 4, pp. 381-384.

Wallendorf and Zaltman (1979)⁴ have examined the factors which prevent consumers to convert their attitudes into intentions and buying behaviour frequent and repeated. Formal Attitudes are learned predispositions to respond to some object in a consistent way. The responses may vary, either favourable or unfavourable. Consumers learn these attitudes with the passage of time, and our learned attitudes act as a general guide to our overt behaviour on the attitude object, giving rise to a consistently favourable or unfavourable pattern of responses.

Preethi (1986)⁵ has conducted a study on consumer attitude towards the brands of home appliances. She found that maximum numbers of the consumers prefer branded durables for their good qualities, service, prompt recollection, promotion and different range of products.

Raut (1987)⁶ has studied consumers' attitudes and found that 89 percent of the respondents admitted that advertising was the only medium through which they become aware and get information about the products. They can also compare products of other brands as well as convenient for them to purchase the products.

Singh and Prabhakar (1989)⁷ have opined that consumers' take purchase decision based on consumer's perception towards a particular brand and found that the marketers are also recognised this consumer's perception. They (marketers) tried to get the attention of the consumers by producing a distinctive image for their brands, to display their brands are much better than competitors' products.

Sivayam (1994)⁸ has conducted a study in Madurai City to analyses the socio-economic factors such as education, age and income that influence consumers in purchasing toilet soaps. It was found that advertisement and socio-economic factors were the main criteria that influence their preference along with quality and brand image for the product.

Nuntasaree & Barry (2008)⁹ has conducted a study in Thailand to analyses the consumer behaviour of male model for skin-care products. They found that male model buys products based on quality, price, brand, packaging, and advertising and promotion campaign for the product.

3. Research Design

The research design of the present study is exploratory and descriptive research, in which the researcher has made an attempt to study the behavioural aspects of the consumers of Agartala relating to their buying behaviour, their socio-economic, demographic relationship with their buying behaviour, the factors which influence their buying behaviours. The research design framed by the researcher for the empirical study requirement.

4. Sample Size

The researcher has conducted interviews of 200 consumers with questionnaires from Agartala. The Agartala city is divided into four zones-east, west, south and north zone. In each zone, 50 questionnaires were distributed to collect data and information, which is relevant for the study undertaken.

5. Collection of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data as this present study is completely based on the empirical study. The primary data is collected by well-designed and structured questionnaire keeping consistency within view of the review of the literature, existing research findings, objectives and hypotheses of the study covering demographic, qualitative and quantitative aspects of consumer behaviour. The secondary data is collected from published and unpublished sources, websites, books and periodicals and magazines.

6. Tool for Analysis

The following hypotheses are tested using SPSS software version-20.

⁴ Wallendorf, M., & Zaltman, G. (1979). *Reading in Consumer Behavior: Individuals, Groups and Organizations*. Jon Wiley & Sons, Inc.

⁵ Preethi, R (1986). "A study on consumer attitudes towards branded products with references to home appliances," *Project Report*.

⁶ Raut, K.C. (1987). *Consumer's attitude towards advertising*. *Indian Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 31(4).pp.10-15.

⁷ Singh & Prabhakar (1989). *In gaining insights*. *Advertise and Market*. 9(22).pp.75-76.

⁸ Sivayam Nama.M (1994). "Advertising Media Preference - The Influence of Socio-Economic Factors of Consumers - A Case Study," *Indian Journal of Marketing*. Vol. 23 pp. 7 -8.

⁹ Nuntasaree, S. & Barry, (Dr.) E. (2008). *A model of male consumer behaviour in buying skin care products in Thailand*. *ABAC Journal*. Vol.29 (1), pp.39-52.

7. Research Hypotheses

1. H_{A1} : Consumers compare the price of the brand of a non-durable product with other brands.
 H_{01} : Consumers don not compare the price of the brand of a non-durable product with other brands.
2. H_{A2} : Consumers think that high price of a non-durable product has better quality.
 H_{02} : Consumers do not think that high price of a non-durable product has better quality.
3. H_{A3} : Consumers prefer to buy branded non-durable products.
 H_{03} : Consumers do not prefer to buy branded non-durable products
4. H_{A4} : Advertising plays an important role in changing consumer perception towards a non-durable product.
 H_{04} : Advertising does not play an important role in changing consumer perception towards a non-durable product.

8. Hypotheses Testing and Analyses

8.1. Price Comparison vs. Brands of Non-Durable Products

- H_{A1} : Consumers compare the price of the brand of a non-durable product with other brands.
 H_{01} : Consumers don not compare the price of the brand of a non-durable product with other brands.

Table 1: Chi-square Test

Price Comparison vs. Brands of Non-Durable Products

Factor	Chi-square Value	df	P
Price Comparison	140.770	2	0.000

Interpretation

Table-1 shows that 'P' value is less than 0.05 with 2 degrees of freedom, hence null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected. Therefore, our hypothesis (H_{A1}) is accepted and stand positive.

8.2. High Price vs. Better Quality of Brands of Non-Durable Products

- H_{A2} : Consumers think that high price of a non-durable product has better quality.
 H_{02} : Consumers do not think that high price of a non-durable product has better quality.

Table 2: Chi-square Test

High Price of a Product vs. Better Quality of Brands of Non-Durable Products

Factor	Chi-square Value	df	P
High Price	227.10	2	0.000

Interpretation

Table-2 shows that 'P' value is less than 0.05 with 2 degrees of the freedom hence null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected. Therefore, our hypothesis (H_{A2}) is accepted and stand positive.

8.3. Consumers' Preferences vs. Branded Non-Durable Product

- H_{A3} : Consumers prefer to buy branded non-durable products.
 H_{03} : Consumers do not prefer to buy branded non-durable products.

Table 3: Chi-square Test

Consumers' preferences vs. Branded Non-Durable Products

Factor	Chi-square Value	df	P
Preferences	120.370	2	0.000

Interpretation

Table-3 shows that 'P' value is less than 0.05 with 2 degrees of the freedom hence null hypothesis (H_{03}) is rejected. Therefore, our hypothesis (H_{A3}) is accepted and stand positive.

8.4 Advertisement vs. Consumers Perception

- H_{A4} : Advertising plays an important role in changing consumer perception towards a non-durable product.
 H_{04} : Advertising does not play an important role in changing consumer perception towards a non-durable product.

**Table 4: Chi-Square Test
Advertisement vs. Consumers Perception**

Factor	Chi square Value	df	P
Advertisement	165.490	2	0.000

Interpretation

Table-4 shows that 'P' value is less than 0.05 with 2 degrees of the freedom hence null hypothesis (H_{04}) is rejected. Therefore, our hypothesis (H_{A4}) is accepted and stand positive.

9. Conclusion

Thus, it is concluded that marketer should continuously study, examine and monitor consumer behaviour so that they can understand and predict consumer's perception well in advance about the non-durable products. It will help marketers to design and develop products according to consumer's expectations and want. The market of the non-durable products in Agartala is still in infant stage. Hence, there is a huge scope for local as well as national and foreign marketers to penetrate in this segment to expand their business. The manufacturers to boost their share in the market should reduce consumer attention by targeting their products to the actual needs of the consumers. A manufacturing company of the non-durable products should not only maintain its product quality and standard but should also revamp its promotional campaign to get an extra advantage over its competitors.

10. Scope for Future Research

The future research should be carried on the same constructs through a qualitative study. The following suggestions may be considered for the further studies:

1. The study may be conducted in the whole Tripura taking more sample.
2. The study may be conducted at semi-urban and rural levels also.
3. A comparative study of the urban, semi-urban and on the rural consumers may be conducted.
4. Similar studies may be conducted to identify who influences consumers in purchasing decision, who takes decisions to purchase the non-durable products, whether consumers know the brand names used by the co-workers, friends and neighbours.
5. Similar studies can be tried in other states and then the results obtained can be verified and compared to help marketers to develop a suitable marketing strategy and to predict consumer behaviour and perceptions towards the non-durable products.

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