

Do High Involvement Product Effect Buying Behavior Of Consumers- Evidence From Mysore City

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Abstract

Customer preference for the high involvement products has always been a challenge for the marketer because of many reasons which involves the complex coordination of inter-departments and its activities. It may perhaps be starting from the movement of goods through raw material stage and reaching the final consumers. Subsequently the time of implementation of the marketing strategies that are found as the origin of foundation for the contemporary marketing alike, the supply chain management has taken the pivotal of the apex, which has made the work of the marketers to be always on the hot seat, so does this become a challenge for the high involvement products in the market. Further, the stratification across the globe is a universally accepted category like the higher class, mid class, and the minor class.

But today in India these categories are sub-divided and are jugglers for the marketers. As a survival tactics, the universal rules may not be applicable in India. The Indian

markets are not developed to greater extents of other countries like Europe and American product line strategies. Hence the present study intends to understand the consumer buying behavior with reference to high involvement products and their impacts in the markets. To undertake the research, the study has applied descriptive and Inferential statistics through primary data collection.

Keywords - Buying behavior, Consumers, Brand differentiation, High involvement Product, Black box theory, Winning strategy, Decision making process.

Introduction-

One of the most popular theories of understanding the customers is the black box theory. The understanding this theory has always been a magical one because, deeper that we try understanding about a customer, the more complex it becomes due to the unpredictable behavior of the customers. Customer buying behavior is a very unpredictable factor because we may not be able to find the thought process in the minds of the customers. It is said that the strategies should always be thought very high but the practical perspective should always be local. The game plan works only if the pilot survey happens to be strong and understand the local market with respect to the wants and requirement of the markets. Especially the high involvement products have the characteristics of low brand differentiation with high involvement in the purchase of the products. When it is concerned with the buying behavior of the high involvement products, many people who are might be in the form of house members, relatives, friends are associated in the process of buying. Now if it's a fast-moving consumer goods since the involvement is low, there is a chance of buying behavior shows impulsive buying. The study required for the other two types of behavior namely the habitual and variety-seeking buying behaviors does not require intensity of the strategies to be thought by the corporate because its inventory and the factors related to disposal of the inventory is also not so much complex. But forecasting method will play a very strong role in defining the demand factors concerned with complex buying behavior. As such the products are generally costly and also that the company has to think of a differentiation because it is going in the direction of niche market where the buyers are also conscious of quality and particular of the

product in terms of specifications like the color, size, fittings, ergonomics, aesthetics etc.. One aspect that the super markets have keep in their mind, is that of the walk-ins for the malls. Considering the impression of the people that, the general tendency of the consumers is that the mall or the supermarkets are generally costly. The super markets cannot only be for the high-income group, but also that they have to consider the middle-above average income group while they strategies the policies for the display. But on the basis of the pareto effect, the twenty percentage of the premium category income group can give eight percentage of business, this can as well boost the sales if there is a combination of both the categories of segment group. One of the major factors that influence the marketing process are the government policies, economic conditions and social factor and the business entity should also consider the three major categories namely the customers, distributors and the facilitators.

One other things is , in the process of conveying and communicating to the target customers, certain quaries concerning what to buy, when to buy, why to buy, how to buy and so on so forth. As if now knowing the details of the product just may not be sufficient but it is equally important to know the market segment and concentrating on the individuals in the form of participation from the customers play an important role in the purchasing decision. For instance, in the process of purchasing of a car- the initiator might be the daughter, the son may influence the variant, wife may decide on the color and the purchaser might be the head of the family and inspite of different involvements by the family members, the actual person who helps in the commutation, might be a driver.

Knowledge of when, where, and how purchases, are made is also useful. The other factors are the social, cultural, psychological etc., One of the other factors is that of the viral marketing, when several individuals communicate on the daily basis and get the others also influenced through formal or informal groups and on which the consumers will have the discretion get influenced or not. Thus, the consumers who considers the decision, can give the futuristic business or may shift to other related products.

The roles of these individuals or the group play a vital role in the formation of the opinion and once these opinions become stronger, than the chances of the impression that is developed by them can be converted into a stronger and prospective customer. High involvement products generally will have complex buying behavior patterns and consumers will have the high involvement in the process of purchasing such of those brands. Such of those products and services like purchasing as house, a premium car, a healthcare services etc., will gather lot of information before any commitment is made. The talk becomes even more complicated when the others such as relatives, friends are involved the process of making decision. As such most of the high involvement products and services are categorized typically based on the task-oriented attribute than sales volume alone. All these things would happen to ensure that the customers don't enter into the state of dissonance and if it does, then the chances of a negative viral becomes evident and thereafter it affects the sales. As such the high involvement products marketing strategies are so much focused that losing one customer can be very costly and repercussion is that getting a repeat customer doesn't look evident at all. Especially in the variety-seeking buying behavior, consumers involvement is low with high brand differentiation, the chances that the customers could keeping on changing the product quite often. At the same time the switching over cost isn't much, more so in the frozen eateries, fast food, cool drinks. The strategies in these situations would be to make the customers to be converting as habituals, which can happen with the combo offers, the chances that the invasion of the others brands would be bleak But all these are considered in the low involvement products with high brand differentiation. In the case of high involvement products, since the brand differentiation is low, such kind of switching over to the competitors' products doesn't arise because of two reasons, one that the consumers would have decided to go for that product alone due to their investigated knowledge and the other the products are premium.

In any of the circumstances, the purchasing process goes through the same steps which is also common of the general consumer behavior. The step being that of the need or the objectives to buy and further the other steps such as sourcing of information, deciding on one of the alternatives, purchase decision and finally the feedback, though it may look to be

theoretical, but true in the case of high involvement products, just for the reason that losing one customer at this point of the juncture might prove to be too costly for the organizations. One of the important attributes is that of the company being very specific of the post-purchase loyalty and the satisfaction of the customers being the pivotal priority.

The behavior and responsiveness are so concomitantly attached, that the customers buying pattern cannot perfectly being defined, more so in the ever growing and ever-changing marketing strategies. The stratification across the globe could be considered as winning formula for the developed and other counties where as in India, with about twenty-nine states, different languages, and different earning capacity and with different consumer behavior, it becomes even more challenging for the marketers for developing the promotional activities. The other end of understanding customers is purely a customization, but at the same time we have to find out if we are in a ready state to customize the requirement to all the categories in the stratification. One reason being that India is presently in the process of going through mass production and yet attains the significant application of customization. Presently India has made the categories of three alone in the upper class itself, namely the upper-upper class, upper- middle class and the upper- lower class. Another three plus three combinations are found in the other two categories as well. This stratification is done to accommodate the frequency of re-structure and re-engineering. The salvage value in India still follows the capital investment unlike the other counties rely mostly on the customer likes and preferences.

Therefore, the attitude towards the purchase of the high involvement products such as automatic washing machines, high end TV's, sports items, one-time gifts articles etc., have to be developed with a repeat walk-in by the customers, is a very difficult task to the organizations. But needless to say, the next generation marketing will only have to be with the development of customer relationship management instead of the conventional marketing strategy like the advertisements being created with each of the product and its product line in mind. A customer relationship not only develops customers for the same product line but off course at a frequency, at the same time it indirectly forces the customers to come to the stores and tends to multiply the

business because of the time and the quality consciousness in terms of consumption. Relatively it is seen that the survival and sustainability of these super markets has mainly depended upon the repeat customers. There might be many other factors that attract the customers to come back to the same premises like all solutions in one stop. This is where the super markets are supposed to capitalize the opportunity and enhance the business. A continuous market survey would give the insight to the super markets directly and indirectly to the companies, in the process to understand the sensitivity of changes and preferences of the customers. Another important factor is the involvement of the people in the buying process. In a high involvement product, there are many people of the same family or otherwise also, generally get involved in the buying process. This is evidently seen in India and especially the tier-II cities.

A high involvement product for an upper class might be a necessity item, whereas for a middle and lower class, these products are a luxury items. Therefore, the multiplication factor in the middle-class family seems to be more since the others who are involved in the purchase decision will also be a potential customer. Therefore, here is where, the potential for cross selling proposition also develops. In fact, cross selling proposition is basically used to gain advantage on profit maximization and cost reduction. As the products moves from producers to consumers, it must travel for a long distance and therefore care should be taken for the logistic movement and management. High intensity products that are consumed in the especially in India have been manufactured in another location of the states, such as Tamil Nadu Gujrat etc., In accordance to this the channel of distribution should include the safety and security of the consignment with the timings to make sure the arrival of the goods to the distributors. As such since it is high involvement products, the marketers will have the risk of hiring those transporters, which would carry these materials with at most care. The sourced transportation firms will assist in companies to schedule the destination in the given time. The logistics management of such products can be moved either through roadways, railways or airways if it is tangle good, depending upon the intensity of the products, and service companies like Fed-Ex or professional couriers will assist in the movements of materials to the destinations.

Warehousing: At most care should be taken to handle the high involvement products and require a storage facility with proper infrastructure. Generally, the high intensity products do not get sold immediately, therefore it has to be tracked for its maintaining of characteristics and proper packaging of it. The time may arise when the warehousing can also be outsourced if required or the retailers themselves should have the equipment to handle the products. Although certain basic principles of marketing apply for general products, the high involvement products differ in the sense of purchase behavior associated with it. High involvement products have to be handled carefully to an extent that even while handing over the products to the customers also, certain instructions have to be personally told to the customers, so that the complaints after the sales would not be there or at least. Patronized services that are involved in the warehouse handling also need to be monitored distinctively due to the characteristics of inseparability. One other factor that is involved here is, legal aspects, if the products are not handled properly and if there are any proliferates, these proliferates might not appear in the beginning, but at the later stages when the customers start using the products, certain issues may arise immediately, and within the warranty period, than the cost that is incurred on the replacement might just be more costlier than the proper handling of the goods in the warehouse itself. It may even at the cost of outsourcing the services, it may be done. Finally, what is important is that of the quality-control mechanism for a better handling of the products. What needs also to be considered is the employees who can handle these products with at most conviction and care. This leads for a steady demand of offering with differential cost in small additions in the form of service cost, can just be added without burdening the interest of the producers and the customers as well.

Empirical evidences-

The purpose of the review of literatures is to identify, review the significant theoretical and research works through papers on consumer buying behavior and high involvement products. The review process mainly highlights foremost areas on consumer buying behavior.

The present study elucidates and reviews the essential and base research articles related to consumer buying behavior and high involvement products. Which consists of process or

stages of buying behavior, High involvement products, buying behavior of consumers, classifications of buying behavior etc.

Consumer buying behavior-

Consumer buying behavior is the study of the individuals, groups in which the buying pattern would be authenticated by the disposal income the customers have. It also involves the psychological study of the customers in the process of understanding their needs, the purchasing decision, though it may be of a greater importance concerned with low involvement products, it is for the observations to make, that a lost customers may not come back to buy the same product. But high involvement products, customers would spend a lot of time prior to buying the product, for one or more reasons that cost would be high and they expect to change the product if they make an impulsive buying. Consumer behaviour has become an complex hot topic and very grim because it composes of various factors like thought process,, the feelings of humans and their actions in choosing the best product and then purchasing it. These factors have gerater influence on other dependent variables such as gnder, place or the residence and the age factor. The decisions of consumers mainly depends on these factors considerably before purchasing the final product(Solomon 1969). The products assesments of consumers are exaggerated by their presenece of appearance, the texture, tase or the smell. And likely to be influenced by the shape, its colour of packages and the brand subtitles are the consirable factors in the brand name or while choosing the cover pages or ambassador's for the magazines. And these are societal judgmentals which are affected in some point of time(Amarasinghe Arachchige et al. 2022)

Decision making process through high involvement product-

High involvement products can be defined as a product where an extensive process is involved & the consumers before buying, they consider many parameters or variables. Involvement can be defined as the subjective mental state reflecting personal importance to an object or event, where purchase involvement reflects the relevance of a purchase to a consumer(Racherla, P., Mandviwalla, M., & Connolly n.d.)

Customers are not motivated to conduct in-depth product research while making low involvement purchases (Spears et al., 2016).

Daily purchases with a low average value and little financial risk of product failure are examples of these low-involvement items (Adenan, Ali, and Rahman 2018).

The likelihood of financial and non-financial hazards is higher than with low involvement products, hence consumers of high involvement products must follow a rigorous decision-making process (Arora, Kumar Sharma, and Arora 2018).

According to Sharma and Nair (2017), the high participation items typically have high personal importance and occasionally situational importance. Consumer decision-making can be divided into four categories, including extensive, limited, habitual, and impulsive, depending on the products involved (Bu and Go 2008; Bauer et al. 2006).

Extensive purchase decisions involve careful analysis and extensive decision making within the available product alternatives, where limited purchase decision making restricts problem-solving efforts due to the lack of information. Habitual decisions refer to routine decisions based on positive experiences, and the decisions with the lowest effort and suddenly arising intense action refer to impulsive decision-making. (Bu and Go 2008)

According to this theory, consumers make extensive decisions on high involvement products that need careful analysis of the information available. Based on this methodology, the study reveals 25 critical factors, some of which are brand-new. The study also shows that the choice of housing style is influenced by the factors collectively rather than separately. This attitude emphasises the significance of taking all aspects into account when examining home options. (2017)

Amarasinghe Arachchige et al. Participation is necessary for the cognitive reasoning that occurs during the decision-making process. There are two ways to approach this cognitive process; the first involves minimal cognitive effort and leads to low engagement, while the second requires considerable cognitive effort and leads to high involvement in decision-making. Because of this, customers place a lot of weight on cues and additional information about products that need high levels of involvement (von Mettenheim and Wiedmann 2021).

Shutte (1969) defined store brands as products that are branded and controlled by firms with the primary goal of selling these things through distribution. A few decades' variants are also taken into consideration and discussed here. Store brand goods are additionally referred to as goods that are exclusively sold in a specific retailer.

According to Sudhir and Talukdar (2004), private label branding first appeared in the middle of the 1960s. Because there is a closer connection between customers and the items because to branding, customers may be more devoted to shop brands. In terms of value for money, store brands appear to have an advantage over national names.

Studies by Baltas (2003) revealed an increase in shop brands. Purchase Decision Elements The achievement of private label brands depends on various factors such as the country's retail structure, level of retailer concentration, advertising rate of manufacturer brands, economies of scale and imagination (Jin and Young, 2005).

Baltas (1997) claims that characteristics like familiarity, extrinsic cues, perceived quality, perceived risk, perceived value for money, and income level all play a role in consumers' adoption of private label items. As a result, four independent variables, such as perceived quality, perceived price, perceived image, and promotion, are frequently used as success criteria for private label brands. Retailers have power over these four factors, which influence consumer decisions to buy private label brands. The study includes the perceived quality construct since quality is one of the most important variables in consumers' minds.

Researchers that studied consumers' perceptions of shop brands contend that these perceptions will have an impact on how well a company markets itself, according to Cronin and Taylor (1992).

According to research by Caruana (2002) and Tsiotsou (2006), perceived quality and customer satisfaction are significantly correlated. In short, the firm can manage the quality perceived variable, but the factor of pleasure is outside of the firm's control.

Statement of the Problem - Some of the European and the American product line strategies may not be applicable for many unknown reasons in the ever changing and volatile Indian markets. The general model of the consumer buying behavior measures the consumer behavior on the basis of the two parameters namely the brand differentiation and involvement. The most developed markets have their products being manufactured on the basis of consignment and once these batches are dispatched, the next consignment would be different, whereas in India the market has not developed to that extent that we could afford to change the setting and make the old design or technology, an obsolete one. The high involvement products not only require the promise as an intangible parameter but also the packaging is equally important to give that extra effect of attracting the customers, because of the fact that these products are usually high priced and therefore the packaging also consists of better designing strategies for more attractions which is challenging in developing countries like India.

Theory for consumer buying behavior –

The black box model depicts how stimuli, consumer traits, decision-making processes, and consumer reactions interact. It is possible to discriminate between intrapersonal and interpersonal stimuli (between and within people). The black box model is connected to the black box theory of behaviourism, which places more emphasis on the relationship between stimuli and customer responses than on internal processes in consumers. While businesses plan and implement marketing stimuli, social elements, depending on the economic, political, and cultural context of a society, provide environmental stimuli. The qualities of the buyer and the decision-making process, which dictates the buyer's response, are both contained in the buyer's black box.

Environmental factors		Buyer's black box		Buyer's response
Marketing Stimuli	Environmental Stimuli	Buyer Characteristics	Decision Process	
Product Price Place Promotion	Economic Technological Political Cultural Demographic Natural	Attitudes Motivation Perceptions Personality Lifestyle Knowledge	Problem recognition Information search Alternative evaluation Purchase decision Post-purchase behaviour	Product choice Brand choice Dealer choice Purchase timing Purchase amount

Fig. 1 Black Box Model

The black box model considers the buyers response as a result of a conscious, rational decision process, in which it is assumed that the buyer has recognized the problem. However, in reality many decisions are not made in awareness of a determined problem by the consumer.

Objective of the study –

1. To understand the buying behaviour of the customers with respect to high involvement products at super markets in Mysuru city.
2. To Analyse the strategy adopted for customer relationship management by super markets in Mysuru city

Methodology-

The present study intends to collect the data from primary and secondary. The nature of study is Qualitative research. To fulfil the objective the structured questionnaire is prepared and to analyse the data statistical tools are implied both the descriptive and inferential was applied to interpret the results.

Analysis of the study –

Step-I Hypothesis testing: -

Null Hypothesis- There is no significant change in the frequency of buying behaviour in high involvement products

Alternate Hypothesis- - There is significant change in the frequency of buying behaviour in high involvement products

Step 2: - Determine the expected value of the buying behaviour in terms of frequency of purchase

$$1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10 = 55/10$$

Step 3: - level of signification & degree of freedom

Level of significance (α) = 10%

Degree of freedom(θ); k =no. of categories

$$V=k-1 \quad v=4-1=3 \text{ (see appendix IV)}$$

Sl no.	Frequency of purchase	($O_i - E_i$) ²
1	1	(1-5.5) ²
2	2	(2-5.5) ²
3	3	(3-5.5) ²
4	4	(4-5.5) ²
5	5	(5-5.5) ²
6	6	(6-5.5) ²
7	7	(7-5.5) ²
8	8	(8-5.5) ²
9	9	(9-5.5) ²
10	10	(10-5.5) ²
Total	55	82.5

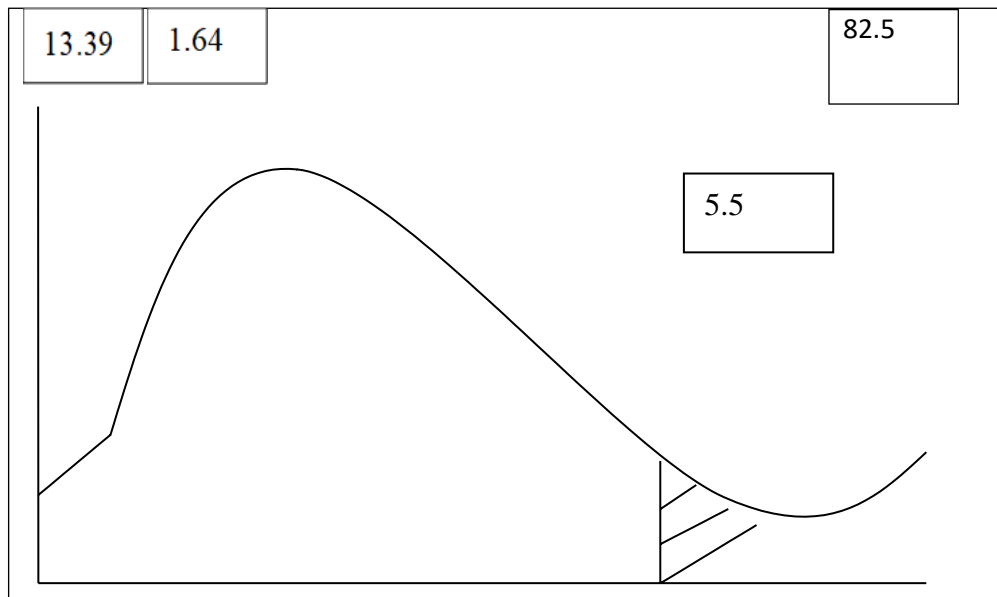


Fig- 1

In most cases, the normal distribution curve resembles the illustration up top. The value is approximately 14.06 when the threshold of significance is set at 10%, the degree of

freedom is calculated as indicated above, and the appendix is also taken into account. Every research project should have some level of confidence, and in this case, that level is roughly 98%.

Step 4: Use the formula to calculate the χ^2 .

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{\sqrt{(O_i - E_i)^2}}{E_i}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Average} &= \sqrt{82.5 / 10} \\ &= 9.082 / 10 \\ &= 0.9082 \end{aligned}$$

The significance of this step becomes that much important because, this is the value with which the actual value of chi-square is calculated & hence it is required to compare the same with the value from the appendix.

Interpretation: -

Step 5: - Deduce the business research

As the calculated value χ^2 is 5.5 less than 13.59. Null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is not rejected. There is no significant change in the frequency of buying behavior in high involvement products. Similarly, many other factors can also be taken for finding correlation & used as information for decision making. The same calculation can be used for interpolation & extrapolation also.

Finding and suggestions for future study – From the study it is evident that consumers don't make an impulsive decision for buying high intensity products. The opinions of the consumers are taken from other such parameters like their members in family, friends, colleagues for the preference of the colors, size, utility and benefits of the products and background. We cannot say the amount of competition is very less at the level of competitors, consumer decision making depends on the factors of products that they would buy. A place like Mysore, customers do compromise on low intensity factors but not on the products claim during the time of promotional campaign.

From the present research it would be suggested that since the sales volume has to be increased, the sales promotional activities in particular the redeemable coupons, cash backs has to be implemented more strongly than the other benefits. Super markets have to strengthen the technological factors with user- friendly applications, which helps the retailers in attaining the sales volume and also make the customers

understand the user friendly approach of the technology. The phototropic activities such as annual societal campaign concerned with either the children or the old aged people activities have to be increased to make the retailers impact stronger. The CSR, Corporate social responsibility has to be taken, post covid-19 situations that would help the retailers to develop contact with the people directly and indirectly. Would help benefit the customer relationship management.

Conclusion:

The tier-II city consumer behavior differs to an extent that makes the retailers to change their planning in accordance to the local area adherence, in turn getting closer to the reach of the customers. Especially in a place like Mysuru, the market is very speculative and they take a much longer time to decide in the process of buying the high involvement products and such of those strategies that work in the cosmopolitan cities may not work in the same sense of drawing the line. Definitely a silver line has to be drawn making it sure that the customers would be taking the right decision in the process of buying the product. Should there be any such of the differences, than the repeat buying or vital marketing may be at stake. Therefore especially in Mysuru city, the strategies do not work as much as it would work for the bigger cities. It just the fact that we should be able to think big, but act for the local market, would give that competitive advantage which is evidently required for the success to succeed in the market. The one strategy that works for the customers relationship management, should actually be localized to the present requirement of the city. Customer relationship management should have the emotional component, which is essential to the Mysuru market, so the simple reason that Mysuru is still a culturally a rich city and there in the transaction phase of moving towards the commercial perspective. Finally the high involvement products require that extra care and factors such as sentimental parameters should be included in Customer relationship management, just making sure it would get the accomplishment of objectives so defined.

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