

Cross Culture Consumer Behaviour

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Abstract: *The prime objective of the article is to learn about the cross culture consumer behavior. Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and all the activities associated with the purchase, use and disposal of goods and services, including the consumer's emotional, mental and behavioral responses that precede or follow these activities. Consumer behaviour emerged in the 1940s and 50s as a distinct sub-discipline in the marketing area. Consumer behaviour is an inter-disciplinary social science that blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology, ethnography, marketing and economics, especially behavioral economics. It examines how emotions, attitudes and preferences affect buying behaviour. Characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics, personality lifestyles and behavioral variables such as usage rates, usage occasion, loyalty, brand advocacy, willingness to provide referrals, in an attempt to understand people's wants and consumption are all investigated in formal studies of consumer behaviour. The study of consumer behaviour also investigates the influences, on the consumer, from groups such as family, friends, sports, reference groups, and society in general. The study of consumer behaviour is concerned with all aspects of purchasing behaviour - from pre-purchase activities through to post-purchase consumption, evaluation and disposal activities. It is also concerned with all persons involved, either directly or indirectly, in purchasing decisions and consumption activities including brand-influencers and opinion leaders. Research has shown that consumer behaviour is difficult to predict, even for experts in the field. However, new research methods such as ethnography and consumer neuroscience are shedding new light on how consumers make decisions.*

Keywords: *Cross Culture Consumer behaviour, Theories and Concepts*

I. INTRODUCTION

It refers to the actions of the consumers in the marketplace and the underlying motives for those actions. Marketers expect that by understanding what causes the consumers to buy particular goods and services, they will be able to determine which products are needed in the marketplace, which are obsolete, and how best to present the goods to the consumers. The study of consumer behaviour assumes that the consumers are actors in the marketplace. The per-spective of role theory assumes that consumers play various roles in the marketplace. Starting from the information provider, from the user to the payer and to the disposer, consumers play these roles in the decision process. The roles also vary in different consumption situations; for example, a mother plays the role of an influence in a child's purchase process, whereas she plays the role of a disposer for the products consumed by the family.

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1.1. Some Selected Definitions of Consumer Behaviour are as Follows:

1. According to Engel, Blackwell, and Mansard, 'consumer behaviour is the actions and decision processes of people who purchase goods and services for personal consumption'.

2. According to Loudon and Bitta, 'consumer behaviour is the decision process and physical activity, which individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services'.

The main purpose behind marketing a product is to satisfy demands and wants of the Consumers. Study of consumer behaviour helps to achieve this purpose. As consumers are the most important person for marketer or sales person, therefore it is important for them to consider the likes and dislikes the consumers so that they can provide them with the goods and services accordingly (Solomon, 2009). The more careful analysis helps in more exact prediction about the behaviour of consumers of any product or services. The study of consumer behaviours helps business manager, sales person and marketers in the following way.

To design the best possible product or service that fully satisfies consumer's needs and demands.

To decide where the service or product would be made available for easy access of consumers.

To decide the price at which the consumers would be ready to buy that product or service.

To find out the best method of promotion that will prove to be effective to attract customers to buy a product.

To understand why, when, how, what and other factors that influence buying decision of the consumers.

II. IMPORTANCE OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TO MARKETERS

It is important for marketers to study consumer behaviour. It is important for them to know consumers as individual or groups opt for, purchase, consumer or dispose products and services and how they share their experience to satisfy their wants or needs (Solomon, 2009). This helps marketers to investigate and understand the way in which consumers behave so that they can position their products to specific group of people or targeted individuals. In regard to the marketer's view point, they assume that the basic purpose of marketing is to sell goods and services to more people so that more profit could be made. This principle of making profits is heavily applied by almost all marketers. Earlier, the marketers were successful in accomplishing their purpose. However, today, as the consumers are more aware about the use of product and other information of the product, it is not easy to sell or attract customer to buy the product (Kumar, 2004).



Thus, in order to sell a product or service or to convince consumers to buy product, the marketers have to undergo through proper research to win them over.

The following are some of the points discussed that explains the value to marketers of understanding and applying consumer behaviour concepts and theories.

To understand Buying Behaviour of consumers

To create and retain customers through online stores

To understand the factors influencing Consumer's buying Behaviour

To understand the consumer's decision to dispose a product or services

To increase the knowledge of sales person influence consumer to buy product

To help marketers to sale of product and create focused marketing strategies

2.1. To Understand Buying Behaviour of Consumers

The study of consumer behaviour helps marketers to recognize and forecast the purchase behaviour of the consumers while they are purchasing a product. The study of consumer behaviour helps the marketers not only to understand what consumer's purchase, but helps to understand why they purchase it (Kumar, 2004). Moreover, other questions like how, where and when they purchase it are also answered. The consumption and the reasons behind disposition of that particular product or services help marketers to be fully aware of the product that is marketed. The consumer behaviour studies also help marketers to understand the post purchase behaviour of the consumers. Thus, the marketers become fully aware about every phase of consumption process i.e., pre-purchase behaviour, behaviour during purchase and post purchase behaviour. Many studies in the past shows that each consumer behaves differently for a product i.e., they buy the product for different reasons, pays different prices, used the product differently and have different emotional attachments with the product (Solomon, 2009).

2.2. To Create and Retain Customers Through Online Stores

Professor Theodore Levitt says that consumer behaviour is of most importance to marketers in business studies as the main aim is to create and retain customers (Kumar, 2004). If the consumers are satisfied with the product, he or she will buy the same product again. Therefore, the product should be marketed by markers in such a way that convince customer to buy the product. Thus, creating customer and the retaining those customers are important. These can be done through understanding and paying close attention towards the consumer's behaviour while making purchase decision or buying a product in market place. Moreover, the information published on the websites largely influence the customer's buying behaviour. Such information on published sources arouse consumer to buy a product or service. Moreover, updating such information will help the consumer to retain to a product or re try the product if the product has dissatisfied them (Solomon, 2009).

2.3. To Understand the Factors Influencing Consumer's Buying Behaviour

It is important for marketers to consider the factors that affect the buying behaviour of consumer before entering the market. There are many factors that can influence the purchase decision of consumers such as social influence, cultural influences, psychological factors and personal factors (Super Professeur, 2011). Understanding these factors helps marketers to market the product on right time to the right consumers. For example, if marketer is marketing a product which is Halal. The marketers first consider all the factors that can influence consumers to buy Halal products, where they can target specific areas where Halal food is more sold.

The marketers need to pay attention to cultural influences such as religion, values and norms of the people or societies targeted and lifestyle of the targeted consumers. The marketers can propose different strategies that convince the targeted consumers to buy marketed products or services. Moreover, the marketers should be ascertain the factors that influence and affects purchase decision of consumers (Solomon, 2009). If the marketers failed to understand the factors that might influence consumers, they will fail to convince the consumer to purchase that product or will fail to meet the demands of consumers. Some variables cannot be directly observed (Super Professeur, 2011). In such case, thorough understanding of concepts and theories of consumer behaviour helps marketers to predict the consumer's buying behaviour to a reasonable extent. Thus, understanding consumer's behaviour to buy a product is complex and requires marketers to continuously understand and apply various concepts and theories for successful marketing.

2.4. To Increase the Knowledge of Sales Person Influence Consumer to Buy Product

All the products and services marketed revolve around the behaviour of consumers that how they will respond to them. Effective marketing of a product by sales people may help to deliver right product to right people. Consumer behaviour deals with the knowledge of what the consumers need and want to buy and what goods and services are available to satisfy their needs. Thus, consumer behaviour deals with particularly with the behaviour of people i.e., consumers. It is important for sales person to be fully aware of the customer's requirement so that he or she could clearly communicate the benefits of the product to the customers. Moreover, the sales person by understanding consumer's demand and need for a product can sell goods that are most closely related to their requirement. Besides understanding consumer behaviour, the sales person should also have command over their spoken language. This is because any miscommunication could harm brand reputation. Moreover, if the consumers have more knowledge about the product than the sales person, the sales might fail to meet their targets. Thus, analysing consumer's behaviour and knowledge for effective marketing of products by sales people are important.



The sales people must be fully aware of the consumer's behaviour in different situations so that they could help them in meeting their demands and satisfaction (Solomon, 2009).

2.5. To Understand the Consumer's Decision to Dispose a Product or Services

Disposal of product involves throwing away of products by the consumers (Solomon, 2009). This behaviour of consumer is very complex and requires more importance by the marketers. Understanding the consumer's behaviour about how and when consumers dispose a product, the marketers or the companies can position themselves so that this behaviour could be limited (Raghavan, 2010). If the product or services that have failed to deliver required or expected satisfaction by the consumers, the product is disposed by the customers. For this, some marketers track the follow up from the consumers so that they can gauge the reason behind failure of the product. Moreover, in order to retain customers, some marketers or organizations offer customers with services like exchange of product, money back guarantee etc. Although, these tools are helpful to influence post purchase behaviour of consumers to some extent.

The method of disposition varies transversely from product to product. Some of the factors that lead to consumer's behaviour to dispose a product include psychological characteristics, situational factors or the intrinsic factors of product. The psychological characteristics include attitude, mood, emotion, social class, social conscience, perception etc. The situational factors such as urgency, functional use, fashion change etc. and intrinsic factors such as product style, durability, reliability, adaptability, replacement cost, colour, size etc. can lead to consumer's decision to dispose a product (Rao, 2011). For example, the personal computers sold previously were largely demanded by consumers. However, due to change in size, advancing technology, affordability, convenience; most people have switched to laptops and mobiles with operating systems have disposed personal computers to a greater extent.

2.6. To Help Marketers to Optimize Sale of Product and Create Focused Marketing Strategies

The theories and concepts of Consumer behaviour help marketers to optimize their sales and to create efficient marketing strategies. Moreover, these theories provides marketers with information on the consumer's behaviour to spend money, likely causes that incline them to spend more money on a product, and these two information help to plan strategies that should be practiced by the marketers for successful marketing of a product (Goessl, 2011). Studying different consumer behaviour theories helps to understand the different choices that consumers make to buy a product. There are some factors that need to be carefully analysed by the marketers which help them to increase their sales and develop effective marketing strategies. These factors are discussed as follows:

Consumer's rational behaviour: It is foremost important for a marketer to understand the situations where consumers behave rationally. Many consumer behaviour theories suggest that the consumers want to get maximum benefit and satisfaction from the product by spending minimum amount of money. This shows that consumers do not spend

all their money to buy a product and keeps a certain amount of money as their savings. However, on the other hand, the consumers having limited money spend all their money on purchase of their basic needs such as shelter, food and clothing. Thus, the marketer must carefully analyse these two situations of consumers before marketing a product or services (Wise GEEK, n.d.).

Consumer's taste and preferences: Understanding consumer taste and preferences helps marketers to revamp their product so that they could meet customer satisfaction. These factors may change from time to time. The change in consumer's behaviour affecting by these factors should be carefully monitored. The marketers need carefully understand the consumer's interest in the products by breaking down the targeted consumers into demographics, like age, occupation and location as they contribute investigating information about consumer preferences. Price of Products: Prices of products are a widely discussed factor in consumer behavior theories. The theories suggest that marketers should keep their prices low without affecting the quality to attract consumers. This is because consumers go mostly for products that are of low price but satisfies their demand (Open Learning World, 2011). Features of Product: Increased number of features offered by the product tends to increase the price of products. In such case, consumers go for added features in a product at affordable price. Therefore, the markers design their products in such a way that the product gives maximum value or features to consumers at affordable price (Goessl, 2011). Consumer's knowledge about a product: The marketer must know to what extent the consumers have knowledge about a product. Mostly, consumers select products with which they are familiar with. For example, if the consumers are aware of the health effects of eating high fat food or fast food, marketing of such a product to health conscious consumer will end up in failure.

III. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, consumer behaviour theories and concepts are of most importance to the sales people or the marketers. As products are made to cater consumer's needs and demands, therefore, the products should be carefully marketed for the successful achievements of organizational goals. The study of consumer behaviour helps them in analysing different factors that has influence on the buying decision of the consumers. If the marketers failed to understand these factors, they would not meet their targets.

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