



FACTORS THAT SHAPE CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR THIS YEAR

R. Chandrakala* Dr. M. Sudhahar**

*Assistant Professor, Department of B.Com (C.A), Tirupur Kumaran College for Women, Tirupur.

**Associate Professor, PG and Research Department of Commerce, Gobi Arts and Science College, Gobichettipalayam.

Abstract

Consumer Behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy their needs and wants. It is also concerned with the social and economic impacts that purchasing and consumption behavior has on both the consumer and wider society. Consumer behavior blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology, marketing and economics, especially behavioral economics. It examines how emotions, attitudes and preferences affect buying behavior. Marketers to offer consumer the utmost satisfaction and even consumer delight should chase the factors that shape consumer behavior. As years pass by, consumers are becoming conscious, aware, educated, new factors shape the concept of consumer behavior, which decides the entire dealing of an organization. The year 2017 is not an exceptional one. The year came out with the new factors that shape the consumer behavior. The year 2017 can be quoted for the new trends in various disciplines. The field of consumer behavior is not an exceptional one. The year depicts various new trends that dictate the shape of consumer behavior. This paper attempts to bring out those new trends that whip the marketers to go with consumer behavior accordingly.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, needs and wants, consumer delight.

Introduction

Consumer behavior is the study of how individual customers, groups or organizations select, buy, use, and dispose ideas, goods, and services to satisfy their needs and wants. 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 perspective 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.

Definition- Consumer Behaviour

According to *Louden and Bitta*, “consumer behavior is the decision process and physical activity, which individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services”.

Typically, buying of anything ranging from a pin to plane is dictated by one’s necessity, tastes preferences, purchasing power and even the technology, climatic changes now. That, who purchases and uses the products comes under the category of customer or consumer. Of course, even the user of these facilities with the implicit or explicit permission of the buyer is reckoned, under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 as the customer/consumer. What makes him to buy a pin or a plane is an interesting subject of study for the marketers who always try to aim to shape them as loyal consumers. Studying about consumers and attempts of giving importance is not a new phenomenon. The concept of studying the consumer behavior can be traced back to the period of 1800s. In a speech in South Africa in 1890, Mahatma Gandhi said this:

“A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption of our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider of our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favor by serving him. He is doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.”

From that time to till date, marketing and consumer behavior have taken various shapes owing to the Industrialization, Cultural Revolution, Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization. The tradition of 'producing for the existing demand' has changed to 'producing in anticipation of demand'. The recent shift in the production system which is characterized by 'producing with the hope of creating demand' which majority of the producers and service providers are adopting now-a-days, has necessitated them to study their customers carefully and critically in different dimensions such as, socially, politically, culturally, economically, with a special emphasis on psychological dimension.



Consumer Behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy their needs and wants. It is also concerned with the social and economic impacts that purchasing and consumption behavior has on both the consumer and wider society. Consumer behavior blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology, marketing and economics, especially behavioral economics. It examines how emotions, attitudes and preferences affect buying behavior. 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 investigated in formal studies of consumer behavior. The study of consumer behavior also investigates the influences, on the consumer, from groups such as family, friends, sports, reference groups, and society in general.

Consumer behavior is an evergreen discipline both in the field of marketing and in the field of research. Marketers can never give a full stop in the effort of studying the pulses of consumers. Day by day consumers are imbibed by innumerable factors, in purchasing and consuming the products. This puts the marketers in an inevitable situation to study not only why, what, where, when and how consumers buy but also the various factors influencing the consumers to purchase the products. A careful and analytical study on factors influencing the consumers will help the marketers to chart out a successful marketing strategy. With the present day modern consumers and marketing, the marketers have to put extra efforts in studying the factors influencing the consumers. Because factors of yesteryears are completely different from the factors which has an impact today.

Methodology

The study is based on secondary data obtained through scanning of available literature on the subject from various libraries and institutes. Various magazines, newspapers, journals were referred. Interviews and group discussions with experts in this field has been conducted.

Objectives

1. To depict what is consumer behavior
2. To know about the new trends which shape consumer behavior in the year 2017

Marketers to offer consumer the utmost satisfaction and even consumer delight should chase the factors that shape consumer behavior. As years pass by, consumers are becoming conscious, aware, educated, new factors shape the concept of consumer behavior. The year 2017 is not an exceptional one. The year came out with the new factors that shape the consumer behavior. Marketers must understand the need to develop a buyer personality to analyze and predict behaviors, but it can be challenging. Consumers face a daily offensive of content, requiring businesses to find ways of creatively connecting the spots between marketing strategies. In this way, knowing and understanding what to expect in terms of consumer behavior shifts in 2017 can help the marketers to meet customer requests through alterations in marketing strategy.

Customer's attitude towards shopping, increase in income levels, increase in number of earning members in a family, increase in young working population and women workforce, changes in lifestyles, increasing urbanization, advancement in technology, entrance of e-commerce and m-commerce, even changes in climatic conditions, need for organic and green products, health issues and so on are the factors contributing to these kind of shift in consumer behavior. The marketers should keep an eye on these factors and analyze the consumer behavior for a successful marketing.

New Patterns That Shape Consumer Behavior In 2017

The year 2017 can be quoted for the new trends in various disciplines. The field of consumer behavior is not an exceptional one. The year depicts various new trends that dictate the shape of consumer behavior. This paper attempts to bring out those new trends that whip the marketers to go with consumer behavior accordingly.

Passion: People's attitude towards shopping has changed. Shopping for necessities only was the olden day trend. Now, with the emergence of modern day marketing especially popping up of new retail markets, increasing income levels, has changed the buying pattern of consumers. They developed a passion for shopping, which imbibes them to be the odd man out and go for the new and modern products. This provides them a thrust to go in for shopping beyond necessities and this passion moves them towards shopping for particular brands and finally towards brand loyalty and even brand equity. Today's consumers enjoy driving around and visiting shopping centers, looking for new ideas because it is important to get out of the office and on the road. It spurs new ideas for new uses. The marketers should study the minds of consumers to know this changing passion and implement the necessary changes in their marketing strategy. The new marketing strategy should be in such a way that it should provide an attractive path for the consumers to come in and pick what they want.



Desire for Relaxation: In this modern arena, consumers are over-stimulated and over-scheduled. This tight schedules develop a need for the consumers to de-stress and relax and this need has become an important driver of consumer behavior. Improvement in technology has also motivated this need for relaxation. Many apps developed by online shopping centers, coming out of retail stores with more departments for relaxation like movie Cineplex's, food court, play station etc, motivated this concept of relaxation. According to this, shopping centers, marketers should devise a marketing plan to provide maximum relaxation to the consumers. Come, shop relax should be the mantra.

Slow Shopping: One trend to look for in 2017 is the notion of "slow shopping". The desire for relaxation and slow shopping may go hand in hand. Instead of trying to speed consumers through the shopping process, some retailers are taking up the idea of encouraging shoppers to stay behind in the store, testing products and enjoying the experience rather than approaching shopping at just another responsibility. Shopping centers in the international platform and in meteors are established with libraries, comfortable seating to encourage to stay longer. Consumers also take their precious time for shopping way also paves the channel for entertainment and relaxation. Modern and forthcoming retailers will only succeed if their store provides for all these opportunities.

Reliance on Technology: 24*7 has become the word for shopping in 2017. Consumers has increased their reliance on smart phones, particularly in the year 2017. Consumers have come to rely heavily on technology for getting everyday tasks accomplished. Gone are the days of calling the movie theater for show times or dialing the data base directory to find a number. Most people pay their bills online, keep in touch with friends electronically and store their photos on their smart phones or computer. On an average, we spend seven hours a day on a screen, whether it is a smart phone, tablet, computer or TV, which has become an integral part of our lives and will only increase over time. As technology rocks, customers are connected, of course, information technology advancements fuel the connectivity that brings together the world as one bog community from the smart phones to super-fast data. This trend is not about to change because now kids as young as 5 years know how to operate a smart phone, LinkedIn even lowered its age limit to 13years to capitalize on the technology adoption rate. Retailers need to meet the consumers where they are and satisfy their sophisticated needs. If your target market spends more time on face book or Twitter, be present and respond to them on the same platform. Technology has made it that, Consumers now understand the power they have and will use it when not satisfied with a service. A simple expression of their dissatisfaction on your social media that is not responded to immediately will ignite uproar from other customers who were OK with the sold products and service.

Enable and Empower Consumers: Consumer control will continue to be a driving force in 2017. People are increasingly relying on user-generated content for information. That means retailers must think out of the way as well by finding ways to enable and empower consumers. Whether it is finding work, taking charge of their healthcare or managing their finances, consumers are demanding more control. This means retailers and marketers must meet those consumer demands with relevant promotions to drive engagement. This can be done by utilizing promotions and content in the advertising customers in different ways. An example of this would be if a marketer promoted a contest in their TV advertisements where the consumer can post pictures to their social media channels with a designated hash tag for a chance to win. This would enable the consumer to have control of what they are sharing about the brand, while the marketer is being promoted in a word-of mouth style that has the opportunity to influence people that follow on social media in a direct way.

Growth in Online Video: Expect video to continue to dominate when it comes to driving internet traffic in 2017 and beyond. It is estimated that half of millennial will stop what they are doing to watch a new video posted by a favorite creator. Consumers are often looking for answers, which are credible and reliable. Video is a great way for companies to share a message in transparent way that reaches their target audience.

Increasing Level of Awareness: Consumers are becoming aware of their needs and availability of products and services to satisfy their needs. They are aware of the environmental problems, health issues and so on and choosy about the products. Marketers cannot simply post their products and persuade the consumers, because consumers are educated before they reach the place to purchase their necessary products.

Eco-Friendly Products: Consumers are happened to be more and more responsible towards the environment and this increase in environmental awareness has a great impact on their purchase decision. Products are being bought and sold based upon their eco-friendliness these days. So it will be wise for marketers to select more ethical and ecological responsible products and packaging as it will not only benefit them but will also be helpful in balancing environmental concerns that consumer want.



Suggestions

- The marketers should understand the attitude of the consumers before designing their products
- The ever changing technology should be updated even in studying the pulses of consumer behavior
- The expectations of consumers should be known in advance to fulfill their needs
- As mentioned above, marketers should enable and empower the consumers
- Retail markets should come out with the departments to relaxation, enjoyment and entertainment for consumers
- The subject of consumer behavior should be positioned as core part of the marketing strategy
- To attract the consumers engage them both through online and offline
- Because social media is 24/7, consumers have come to expect immediate responses from brands—even nights and weekends. So be available at all times
- Launch an online community to enable customers to help each other
- Try to sell the values not the products
- Consumers should be enabled and empowered in designing and marketing the products

Conclusion

After the detailed analysis of the study, it is the time to conclude this exhaustive study. The science of consumer behavior has to be keenly taken care of and to be the core part of the marketer's strategy. It is simply the study of why, what, where and when the consumers buy, but it bring forth a valuable result to the retailers and marketers. The rising income levels, the advancing technological changes, the broadening of horizons have compelling effects on the marketers to now concentrate on a wide variety of factors demonstrated by target consumers in rural as well as urban markets. Modern one replaces traditional consumers. The equality of gender, paternal dominance is substituted by maternal dominance and increase of consumer awareness through exhibitions, melas etc. at both urban and rural locations. Marketers have to come out with new and innovative promotional techniques to attract this modern segment of consumers. In the study of consumer behavior, all these factors are to be considered and consumers are to be ensured the availability of products at any time and anywhere.

References

1. Robert J. Donovan, John R. Rossiter, Gilian marcoolyn, Andrew nesdale, *Journal of Retailing, store atmosphere and purchasing behaviour* volume 70, issue 3, 1994, Pages 283–294.
2. Peter H. Bloch, *Journal of Retailing, the shopping mall as consumer habit*, volume 70, issue 1, 1994, Pages 23–42.
3. Phillip Nelson, *Journal of Political Economy, information and consumer behaviour*, Vol. 78, No. 2 (Mar. - Apr., 1970), pp. 311-329.
4. Kotler Philip, *Marketing management*, (Pearson education, 12th edition)
5. Osbourne, Magz. , *Retail shopper behavior - Retailers adapt to local ways of buying*. ISSN: 2218-3280, Source: Campaign Asia-Pacific. Nov2010, p24-1NULL. 1p.
6. Yavas, Ugur; Riecken, Glen. Heavy, Medium, Light Shoppers and Non-shoppers of a Used Merchandise Outlet *Journal of Business Research*. Sep1981, Vol. 9 Issue 3, p243-253. 11p.ISSN: 0148-2963
7. Joung, Hyun-Mee. Materialism and clothing post-purchase behaviors *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. 2013, Vol. 30 Issue 6, p530-537. 8p. DOI: 10.1108/JCM-08-2013-0666.issn: 0736-376