



Buying Behaviour of Consumers
With Respect to Durable Products:
A Case Study of Personal Computers

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INTRODUCTION

The personal computer market in India has not only grown in numbers in the last few years, but also witnessed a complete change in terms of market share enjoyed by various players in the industry. The demand for personal computers has grown many folds.

The factors affecting the demand for personal computers are:

- Growth in personal disposable income
- Growth in urbanization
- Growth in female work force
- Trend towards smaller families
- Continued penetration growth in emerging market
- Global economy recovery cycle.
- Operating system upgrades cycle.
- Aging installed base

Behaviour of a consumer is influenced by social, psychological and personal factors. Social factors that influence consumer decision making are culture, sub culture, social class, reference groups, family, and friends. Psychological factors are internal forces within people that affect buying decisions. They are motives, perception, learning and personality. Personal factors are conditions or circumstances that exist when a consumer is making a purchase decision. Demographic factors are personal characteristics such as age, sex, race and ethnic group, etc. The consumers vary in their consumption pattern based on geographical location, density of population, urban rural background, features of the consumer, age, literacy level, income level, linguistic diversity, religion and dress, food habits and festival celebrated. Since consumer is one who will decide whether or not to buy a particular product, so it becomes relevant to explore why a common man buys a personal computer and how does he/she buy.



SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of study was restricted to selected house holds of Delhi so that findings could be applied to Metropolitan Cities of India. The survey was conducted in only those house holds which actually possessed/owned personal computers either Desk Top or Lap Top.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the research study were as follows:

- To examine how consumer behaves towards purchase of a personal computer.
- To identify, who in a family, influences and who makes a decision regarding purchase of personal computer.
- To examine the influence of social, economic and personal

factors affecting decision-making process of consumers.

- To determine the message content and media most appropriate to be chosen for advertisement of personal computer.



HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

An attempt has been made by the researcher to test the following hypotheses by collecting primary data and applying Chi-square method:

- H0 I: The variable “Children's influence on the respondent's purchase decision regarding personal computers” is independent of family income.
- H0-II: The variable “Children's influence on the respondent's purchase decision regarding personal computers” is independent of education of the respondent.
- H0-III: The variable “Mother's influence on Respondent's purchase decision regarding personal computers” is independent of family income.
- H0-IV: The variable “Mother's influence on the respondent's purchase decision regarding personal computers” is independent of education of the respondent.
- H0-V: The variable “respondent's attitude towards ranking price as first preference regarding personal computers” is independent of family income.
- H0-VI: The variable “respondent's attitude towards ranking price as first preference regarding personal computers” is independent of education of the respondent.
- H0-VII: The variable “respondent's attitude towards ranking latest technology as first preference regarding personal computers” is independent of family income.
- H0-VIII: The variable “respondent's attitude towards ranking company image as first preference regarding personal computers” is independent of education of respondent.
- H0-IX: The variable “respondent's attitude towards ranking company image as first preference regarding personal computers” is independent of family income.

Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research objectives and to control variance. The plan is an outline of the research theme on which the researcher is to work. The structure of the research is more specific outline or the scheme and the methods to be used in the collection and analysis of data. Decision regarding what, when, how much and by what means concerning an enquiry or a research study constitutes 'research design'. It is a blue print for collection, measurement and analysis of data. The importance of research design lies in the fact that it makes a statement of what is to be done in order to achieve the research objectives and how it is to be done. It is an expression of what is expected of the research and of the research exercise in terms of result and the analytical inputs needed to convert data into research findings.



SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND DATA

The researcher has made efforts to collect information and data for analysis both from secondary and primary sources described in brief as follows:

Secondary Data

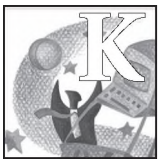
The researcher has collected secondary data from various resources mainly Research Journals, Books on Consumer Behaviour, Business Newspapers, Various magazines and Internet.

Primary Data

The primary data were collected by researcher during October 2009 and March 2010, from total no. of 500 house holds of Delhi. In the present study the element is house hold because focus is on buying behavior of consumers (regarding personal computers) who are inmates of a household.

One person, preferable the head in the household or the adult person who has actually purchased a personal computer, was contacted.

For survey questionnaire was used. There were 32 questions. A pilot study was conducted among 10 households selected on judgmental basis after which the number of questions were reduced to a total of 25, out of which 4 questions were open ended and remaining close ended type.



KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The important findings of the research are as follows:

- H.P. emerged as the most popular brand of personal computer followed by HCL, Compaq Dell, Lenovo, Zenith, LG and Lenovo.
- The most preferred brand of personal computer was HP which was followed by HCL, Compaq Dell, Lenovo, Zenith, ACER, LG and Lenovo.
- It was found that most of the respondents possess H.P. brand of personal computer followed by HCL, Lenova, Compaq, ACER, Zenith and LG.
- For most of respondents (89%) the mode of payment was cash down payment. Loan and installment were not promising mode of payment. It was also found that family income had no bearing on mode of payment.
- Most of the respondents (75%) were found to be loyal to their preferred brand.
- Most of the respondents (83.8%) were satisfied with their brand of personal computer, with regard the performance, price, technology and looks & style.
- It has been found that there is very high level of satisfaction among the owners.
- People go in for maximum information search and they put

in enough efforts before committing their resources for purchase of personal computers.

- By most of the respondents company image was ranked (I) attribute of Pc, followed by latest technology (II), looks & style (III), features (IV) and price (V).
- At the time of purchasing personal computer most of buyers (75%) look for latest technology, followed by company image and price. Features like dealers gift and discount do not affect the perceptual selectivity of the respondents while purchasing personal computer.
- Before buying a personal computer, majority of respondents (57.6%) discussed with the users of the product, followed by consultation with their father, friends and relatives.
- In majority of cases (46%) it is buyers who take their own decisions. Amongst rest Mother's influence proved to be major. Friends, children and father also influence decision for PC buying. Friends proved to be the major influencer in less educated respondents.
- Majority of buyers (43%) considered 2-3 brands of personal computers before making a final purchase.
- In majority of cases (55%) personal compute buyers got an idea from visual advertisement, followed by news paper, friends and magazine.
- Electronic media (TV) followed by Newspapers strongly influenced the opinion irrespective of respondents' education.
- Hoardings and Dealers' window display were found to be influenced the opinion educated people.
- Magazines and Dealers' window display were found influential for professionally qualified people also.
- Majority of respondents (68%) subscribe 'The Times of India', followed by 'The Hindustan Times', 'Indian Express' and 'Dainik Jagran' in Delhi.
- The most popular magazine subscribed by respondents (72.4%) in Delhi is 'India Today' followed by 'Readers' Digest'.

Testing of Hypotheses

The nine hypotheses (null) tested by applying Chi-square technique show the following results:

- Family income had no positive effect "on the respondents whose purchase decisions were influenced by children."
- Respondents' education had positive effect "on the respondents whose purchase decisions were influenced by children".
- Family income had no positive effect "on the respondents whose purchase decisions were influenced by mothers".
- Respondents' education had no effect "on the respondents whose purchase decisions were influenced by mothers".
- Respondents' attitude towards ranking price as first preference is independent of the family income of the respondents.

- Respondents' attitude towards ranking price as first preference depends on qualification of the respondents.
- Family income of respondents has bearing on the respondent's attitude towards ranking latest technology as first preference.
- Respondents' attitude towards ranking latest technology as first preference depends on the education level of the respondents.
- Family income of respondents has bearing on the respondents' attitude towards ranking company image as first preference.

OVERALL IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

- The increasing trend of personal computer purchase suggests that there are bright prospects for sale of personal computers in the coming years in India.
- Marketers/Advertisers dealing with personal computers with different features should focus their attention on all income groups, depending on the customer's needs and price level to increase their market share in respective income groups.
- Loans and installment facilities for personal computer purchase are no more viewed as lucrative schemes by prospective buyers. Hence, promotional campaigns should take care of this aspect.
- All efforts to be made to maintain brand loyalty for preferred brand by appointing more dealers.
- There exists great potential for personal computers. Therefore, it is imperative on the part of the marketers that they should develop effective promotional and other marketing strategies so as to capture the growing market of personal computers.
- The computer manufacturing companies must focus attention on latest technology, features, looks and style as these are attributes that most of the buyers look for irrespective of their family income.

- The company must try to build the Brand/Company image in a very big way by promotional means as this is also one of the important features which a consumer/buyer looks. It has been found in the research that company image plays a major role in influencing buyers' decision.
- Buyers with urban and sub-urban background, the opinion formation for personal computer purchase takes place by consulting 'users of the product' as well as 'friends and relatives'
- Parents (Father & Mother) irrespective of the background may be approached as their opinion matters to a great extent.
- Prospective buyers, irrespective of their background, consult dealers of the product before purchasing personal computers and most of them consider 2-3 brands before making a final purchase. Therefore, the companies should carefully select dealers, and it should be also ensured that the sales staff of the dealers is properly trained.
- Promotional campaigns should be directed towards 'Children' as they prove to be the major influencer's irrespective family income.
- Continuous and intermittent schedule of visual advertisement about personal computers should be frequently given so as to create brand awareness. The themes of advertisements should be focused, utilitarian and informative.
- Advertisements should be given in electronic media & print media-both TV and newspaper/magazines.
- Dealers should arrange an attractive and eye catching window display for personal computers as it has been found more influential and effective in gaining attention of the buyers.

It can be concluded that the findings and suggestions, as above, will be of great value to the marketers/advertisers of personal computers for shaping of their future strategies.

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