MULTIDIMENSIONAL ASSESSMENT OF INVOLVEMENT IN BUYING OF FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS

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Abstract

The concept of involvement is important in knowing consumer behaviour. Involvement level of customer significantly influences his decision making and also affects their buying behaviors. Therefore, this study tries to explore the involvement dimensions of buying Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs). A Sample of 542 respondents reveals five dimensions of involvement—importance, interest, hedonic values, sign values and probability of mispurchase of product involvement. Moreover, this study also reveals significant differences across involvement dimensions with respect to demographic variables. This paper offers insight in understanding the buying behaviour of FMCGs buyers to design marketing strategies for them. Moreover, it highlights the need to think about involvement as a specific product class phenomenon.

***Keywords*:** *Buying Behaviour, Consumer Behaviour, Family Buying, FMCGs, Product Class Involvement*

1. Introduction

The Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) are consumer packaged goods which are sold frequently and at a relatively low cost. The absolute profit made on FMCG products is relatively small, but they generally sell in large quantities, so the cumulative profit on such products can be large (Deliya, 2012)[1]. These goods have small shelf life and generally include a wide range of frequently purchased consumer products such as processed foods, biscuits, jams, toilet cleaners, soap, hair care products, shampoo, detergents, edible oils, cosmetics, soft drinks, beverages, chocolates and over the counter products etc. Every strata of the society irrespective of social class, age group, income group, gender etc consumes these products daily. The products sold by this sector are usually branded due to robust multinational presence.

The concept of involvement is noteworthy in knowing consumer behaviour (Engle et al., 1990) [2]. Involvement level of customer significantly influences his decision making and also affects their buying behaviors.

Sherif and Cantril's (1947) [3] initiated research work on consumer involvement and further, Krugman (1965) [4] popularized it in his research related to advertising. According to Mittal and Lee (1989) [5], product involvement includes four antecedents—sign value, utility, product-hedonic value and brand risk. Rothschild (1979) [6], explained that involvement is of three types: enduring involvement (long term attachment with a specific product class), situational involvement (interest and concern is considered perishable) and response involvement (a behavioral orientation). Enduring involvement explains the relation with a product category, whereas, the situational involvement is related to the purchase process and decisions, furthermore, response involvement reflects the extent of involvement of an individual in a situation.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Traylor and Joseph (1984) [7] explored a common dimension of involvement to all the studied products—durables and non durables. Moreover, this study revealed that there was significantly negative correlation between the purchase frequency and product involvement. Further, the study exerted high involvement consumers for costly and durable products, whereas, consumers were found to be less involved in non-durable products. Juhl and Poulsen (2000) [8] explored two antecedents—sign value and utility, of consumer involvement in fish products. Sign value was found to be more important antecedent of consumer involvement in compare to product utility value, whereas, in product utility value, specific health related utility value was found to be more significant than general conscience value. This study explored two segments of fish market customer i.e. traditional fish eaters, and fish lovers, and it was observed that than traditional fish eaters were found to be less involved in buying fish in compare to fish lovers. Knox and Walker (2003) [9] worked to develop the structural relationship between involvement—brand involvement and product involvement and brand loyalty. The study confirmed that product involvement was found to be a significant antecedent of brand involvement. Moreover, brand involvement was a significant antecedent of brand commitment and brand support for grocery products. The study explained that at brand level, only brand risk was found to be the sole antecedent of brand involvement. Michaelidou and Dibb (2008) [10] stressed that consumers can be segmented in to three groups— low, moderate and high, on the basis of their involvement. Moreover, the study highlighted three classifications of involvement namely enduring involvement, situational involvement and response involvement and suggested choice of the shopping channel as a moderator of purchase decision involvement and brand choice. Lakshmi (2011) [11] studied purchase involvement and explored its relationship with the influence of women in family purchase decisions for durables. The study explored eight factors of purchase involvement namely, coolly, prudence, shrewdness, price consciousness, hassle-free, triviality, apathy and brand insignificance. Further, the study explored three clusters—value seeking women, savings conscious women and comfort seeking. The study confirmed that Chennai women were found to be value driven mostly. Moreover, the study interestingly found no statistical association between purchase involvement and demographics, except in the case of occupation, where a significant difference between working wives and housewife was observed. In some of the previous literature association between consumer involvement demographic variables like age, gender and occupation etc. has been observed (Lakshmi, 2011[11]; Salma and Tashchain, 1985 [12]).

The above presented review highlights that studies related to involvement dimensions in buying have been conducted mostly in developed countries. As per the knowledge of researchers, no study was found which studied the involvement dimensions of Indian families for joint use FMCGs. Hence, the present study endeavors to determine the factors of involvement in buying of joint use fast moving consumer goods across demographic variables particularly in Punjab, a state in which people have diverse socio-economic and cultural background.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND MEASUREMENT

Out of 576 total only 542 questionnaires were found to be usable, so the analyses are based on 542 respondents. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Descriptives	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Total no. of Respondents	542	100	100
Gender			
Male	209	38.6	38.6
Female	333	61.4	100.0
City			
Amritsar	162	29.9	29.9
Jalandhar	152	28.0	57.9
Ludhiana	228	42.1	100.0
Age in years			
30-35	13	2.4	2.4
36-40	182	33.6	36.0
41-45	243	44.8	80.8
46-50	104	19.2	100
Education			

Matriculation	27	5.0	5.0
Higher Secondary	65	12.0	17.0
Graduation	190	35.1	52.0
Post Graduation	234	43.2	95.2
Ph.D.	26	4.8	100.0
Occupation			
Service	277	51.1	51.1
Agriculture	42	7.7	58.9
Business	72	13.3	72.1
Homemaker	151	27.9	100.0
Household Income in Months			
<20000	17	3.1	3.1
21000-40000	109	20.1	23.2
41000-60000	277	51.1	74.4
>60000	139	25.6	100.0

In order to measure the involvement of consumer in buying of fast moving consumer goods 16 statements of consumer involvement profile (CIP) developed by Laurent and Kapferer (1985) [13] have been utilized. Further, to fulfill the second objective i.e. to determine whether these factors are affected by the demographics of customers, Null Hypothesis that 'there is no significant relationship between the demographic variables and the obtained factors' was taken and one way analysis of variance was used. Mean score of significantly related independent and dependent factors was observed.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Obj-1 To determine the factors of involvement in buying of fast moving consumer goods in Punjab.

To check the reliability of scale Cronbach's Alpha test has been applied which was found to be 0.687 which confirms the scale reliability. KMO value i.e. 0.734 and it is more than 0.6 which signifies that data are adequate for

applying factor analysis and moreover the result of Bartlett Test ($p<.05$) confirms the relationship among variables used in this study for factor analysis. Five factors have been extracted which cumulatively explained 77.013% of total variance. This percentage of variance is acceptable, as according to Hair et al. 2005; in social sciences 60% of variance is satisfactory.

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix

Sr. no.	Statements	Component				
		1 Pleasure	2 Perceived product importance	3 Interest	4 Probability of Mis-purchase	5 Sign value
1	It's not a big deal if make mistake		0.888			
2	It's annoying to make unsuitable purchase		0.920			
3	A poor choice would be upsetting		0.929			
4	Never know if making the right purchase				0.672	
5	Feel a bit confusion in choosing				0.788	
6	It's complicated to choose				0.796	
7	Never certain of choice				0.788	
8	Tell something about the personality					0.863
9	Reflect what kind of person					0.726
10	Says something about person					0.827
11	Enjoy buying for oneself	0.936				
12	Buying feels like giving gift to oneself	0.930				
13	It is enjoyable product	0.917				
14	Product of great importance			0.927		
15	Interested in product category			0.924		
16	Indifferent to product category			0.818		

Table 2 illustrates the factors which have been identified in this study and appropriate names are assigned based on the nature of the variables loaded under a particular factor and according to prior literature. The first factor

combines the statements 11, 12 and 13 and has been named as Pleasure. It explains the highest percentage of variance which is 16.832 percent. The second factor has been recognized as Perceived Product Importance which includes statement 1, 2 and 3 and depicts the importance of product category. This factor explains 16.412 percent of total variance. The third factor which includes statement 14, 15 and 16 explains 15.837 percent of total variance has been termed as Interest. The fourth factor explaining 15.006 percent of total variance has been called as Probability of Mis-purchase. The fifth factor combines the statement 8, 9 and 10 and has been named as Sign value. This fifth factor explains 12.927 percent of total variance.

Obj-2 To determine whether these factors are affected by the demographics of customers.

2.1) Effect of Gender on factors:

ANOVA

Between Groups

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Pleasure	6.452	1	6.452	6.518	**0.011***
2. Perceived product importance	1.717	1	1.717	1.719	0.190
3. Interest	6.745	1	6.745	6.817	**0.009***
4. Probability of mispurchase	.142	1	.142	0.142	0.706
5. Sign value	.631	1	.631	0.631	0.427

*sig. at 5%

Descriptive

Mean

1. Pleasure	male	-0.1377247
	female	0.0864398
3. Interest	male	-0.1408109
	female	0.0883768

Null hypothesis H0 (1) is partially rejected as it expounds that there is a statistically significant difference between the views of females and males on two factors: Pleasure value of the product and Interest. Descriptive analysis suggests that females are found to be more interested in buying of fast moving consumer goods and moreover females found this activity more pleasurable as compared to their counter parts.

2.2) Effect of Age on factors:

ANOVA

Between Groups

Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Pleasure	1.670	1	1.670	1.672	0.197
2. Perceived product importance	0.028	1	0.028	0.028	0.867
3. Interest	3.900	1	3.900	3.921	**0.048***
4. Probability of mispurchase	1.028	1	1.028	1.028	0.311
5. Sign Value	3.094	1	3.094	3.106	**0.079****

*sig. at 5%, ** sig at 10%

Descriptive

Mean

3. Interest	30 to 40 years	0.1131505
	40 to 50 years	-0.0635860
5. Sign value	30 to 40 years	0.1007933
	40 to 50 years	-0.0566418

Null hypothesis H0 (2) is also partially rejected as Age is found to be significantly related to two factors: Interest and Perceived Sign value. It was observed that the customers in younger age band (30 to 40) were found to be much interested in buying of fast moving consumer goods and moreover they attached the fast moving consumer goods to their personality too. Whereas, the customers in upper age band (40 to 50) were found to be less interested in buying fast moving consumer goods and did not consider these product items to be attached to their personality.

2.3) Effect of Background on factors:

ANOVA

Between Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Pleasure	0.546	1	0.546	0.545	0.461
2. Perceived product importance	0.796	1	0.796	0.796	0.373
3. Interest	6.994	1	6.994	7.072	**0.008**

4. Probability of mispurchase	1.986	1	1.986	1.989	0.159
5. Sign value	0.000	1	0.000	0.000	0.984

Descriptive

Mean

3. Interest	Rural	-0.1232204
	urban	0.1047163

Null hypothesis H0 (3) is also partially rejected as it is found that one factor i.e. Interest has significant relationship with the background. It was observed that urban customers exerted higher interest in buying of fast moving consumer goods as compared to rural customers.

2.4) Effect of Monthly Income on factors

ANOVA

Between Groups

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Pleasure	4.563	3	1.521	1.525	0.207
2. Perceived product importance	10.463	3	3.488	3.537	**0.015**
3. Interest	5.736	3	1.912	1.922	0.125
4. Probability of mispurchase	34.698	3	11.566	12.290	**0.000**
5. Sign value	3.324	3	1.108	1.109	0.345

Descriptive

Mean

2. Perceived product importance	<20000	-0.0833382
	21000-40000	-0.1094132
	41000-60000	0.1339985
	>60000	-0.1710418
4. Probability of mispurchase	<20000	0.6245215
	21000-40000	0.3174232
	41000-60000	-0.2298583
	>60000	0.1327680

Null Hypothesis H0 (4) is also partially rejected as it is found that two factors: Perceived product importance and Probability of mispurchase are significantly related with monthly family income of household. Descriptive mean suggested that customers who had less than INR. 40,000 monthly household income exerted less importance to fast moving consumer goods, may be due to this reason they were not very concerned and certain about their purchase, hence the probability of mispurchase found to be high in this category. Whereas, customers of monthly household income INR. 41000 to 60000, perceived fast moving consumer goods more important.

(2.4) Effect of Occupation on factors:

ANOVA

Between Groups

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Pleasure	10.768	3	3.589	3.642	**0.013**
2. Perceived product importance	10.438	3	3.479	3.528	**0.015**
3. Interest	3.717	3	1.239	1.241	0.294
4. Probability of mispurchase	18.629	3	6.210	6.396	**0.000**
5. Sign value	9.815	3	3.272	3.314	**0.020**

Descriptive

Mean

1. Pleasure	Service	0.0518045
	agriculture	-0.4004840
	business	-0.1640374
	homemaker	0.0945774
2. Perceived product importance	Service	-0.0884996
	agriculture	0.1232425
	business	0.3233519
	homemaker	-0.0261135
4. Probability of mispurchase	Service	-0.0934962
	agriculture	0.5467179
	business	-0.1712319
	homemaker	0.1010926
5. Sign value	Service	-0.0340654

	agriculture	0.0027825
	business	0.3344014
	homemaker	-0.0977327

Null Hypothesis H0 (5) is also partially rejected as it is found that except one (Interest) all the other factors were significantly related to occupation. Descriptive mean suggested that customers whose occupation is service, found purchase of fast moving consumer goods pleasurable, whereas, for the customers whose occupation was agriculture, buying of FMCGs was not that pleasurable. These respondents were highly uncertain about their purchase and their probability of mispurchase was high according to them. Customers related to business class attached fast moving consumer goods with their personality and according to them these products give an idea about their personality to others so the sign value of fast moving consumer goods for them was high. Business class respondents did not find buying fast moving consumer goods pleasurable but these products were important to them so they purchase these products carefully and were highly certain about their choice so the probability of mispurchase was low. The customers who were homemakers were also found to be uncertain about their choice and exerted high probability of mispurchase, but found buying of fast moving consumer goods pleasurable.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCULSION

In this study five dimensions—importance, interest, hedonic values, symbolic values and probability of mispurchase of product involvement of product involvement in buying of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) have been studied. Furthermore, present study exerted that there is significant relationship between the demographic variables and the explored factors. This study found significant difference between the views of females and males—Interest and Pleasure value. It was observed that females found buying of FMCGs more pleasurable and interesting than males. The reasons for this may be that in Indian families mostly females have the responsibility of buying joint use family products and they have interest in buying fast moving consumer goods according to their choice. Moreover, it was observed that more younger respondents consider themselves more interested in buying of FMCGs as well found these products highly related to their personality. The reason for this may be that in younger age people are more concerned to their personality and take interest in all things which are related to their personality. Urban respondents exerted more interest in buying of these products as compared to their counterparts. The reason may be attributed to the to the fact that in urban areas people are more concerned and educated about these products which creates interest in choosing right products for themselves. Importance of the product and mispurchase probability was found to be significantly related with monthly income of household. It has been observed that respondents having less than INR 40,000 household income exerted less importance, concern and certainty about their purchase and due to this, their probability of mispurchase has been found to be high as compare to the respondents who were having income INR 41,000 to 60,000. Furthermore, except one factor i.e. Interest all other factors was found to be significantly related to occupation. This study observed that customers whose occupation is service, found purchase of fast moving consumer goods pleasurable, as may be after spending so much time for their jobs it is pleasurable to spend time on buying things which are related to their personal care. Whereas

for the customers whose occupation was agriculture, buying of personal care product was not that pleasurable as they were highly uncertain about their purchase and their probability of mispurchase was high according to them. The reason behind this may be that agriculture is a 24X7 job and is done mostly away from urban areas, so people related to this occupation gets less time for their own care. Customers related to business class attached fast moving consumer goods with their personality and according to them these products give an idea about their personality to others so the sign value of fast moving consumer goods for them was high. May be due to less time availability respondents belonging to business class did not find buying fast moving consumer goods pleasurable but these products were important to them so they purchase these products carefully and were highly certain about their choice so the probability of mispurchase was low. The respondents who were homemakers were also found to be uncertain about their choice and exerted high probability of mispurchase, but found buying of fast moving consumer goods pleasurable. The reason behind this may be that they spend much time at home so they don't get much exposure and their knowledge is limited so they are not certain about the correctness of their purchase. The findings of this study somewhat reiterate the findings of some other authors who explore the role of demographics in buying involvement (Lakshmi, 2011 [11]; Salma and Tashchain, 1985 [12]).

To understand Involvement dimensions is a decisive step in understanding the buying behaviour of buyer of FMCGs to design marketing strategies for FMCGs buyers. A lot of opportunity lies for the marketers in FMCGs sector, as a very large number of respondents have been exerted high interest in this product category and the interpretation of the present study has implications for the measurement of involvement across product contexts. Therefore, it highlights the need to think about involvement as a specific product class phenomenon as well.

6. LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study is based on the fast moving consumer goods buyers in India and confined to uncover its buying dimensions by taking it as a single category. Future research might seek involvement with different sub-categories of FMCGs such as personal care products, household care products, food and beverages and OTC (over the counter) products. Longitudinal research may be undertaken to gauge the changes in customer involvement towards buying of FMCGs in long run.

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