



## Meaning and importance of understanding buyer behaviour: A study

Sandeep Kumar

Master of Commerce, UGC-Net, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar, Haryana, India

### Abstract

Buyer or Consumer behavior is the behavior that buyers or consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. There are three phases of buyer behavior. There are: Acquisition phase, Consumption phase and disposition phase.

The Four main applications of buyer behavior are in developing marketing strategy, public policy formulation, social marketing and in consumer education. To survive in a rapidly changing market, a firm has to constantly understand and latest consumer trends and tastes for coming out viable marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** Acquisition phase, consumption phase, disposition phase, purchase, strategy, social market, constant

### Introduction

One of the few common features among all of us is that we are all buyers irrespective of what we are. As buyers, we play a vital role in the economy-local, national and international. We need to study buyer behavior to gain insights into our own consumption related decisions like what we buy, why we buy, how we buy and the promotional influence that persuade us to buy. Marketers too need to adopt and dovetail their strategies by taking the buyer into consideration.

### Meaning of Buyer Behaviour

While marketing a product the firm aims at satisfying the needs and wants of actual and potential users of that product. But to achieve this, first it is essential to understand the tastes, preferences, likes, dislikes, consumption patterns, process of purchase, etc. of the buyers of that product you may prefer to use Babool toothpaste, Lux toilet soap, and clinic shampoo. It is interesting to note that your preference vis-à-vis food, clothing, books, magazine, recreation, banks, stores may be different not only from those of your friends but also your neighbours and colleagues. For example, take the case of banks.

Various experts have defined buyer/consumer behavior differently. According to Schiffman and Kanuk Consumer behavior is the behavior that buyers or consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. Moven has defined it as the study of decision-making units and the process involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences and ideas.

Both the above definitions of buyer behavior say more or less the same thing except that Schiffman and Kanuk used the buyers whereas Moven has used the term decision making units. From these definitions we can identify three phases of buyer behavior as follows:

**a. Acquisition Phase:** This refers to how buyers acquire the products and services for their consumption. Much of the research in the buyer behavior has focus on acquisition phase. When investigating the acquisition phase marketers should analyse the factors that

influence the product and service choice of buyers and consumers.

- b. Consumption Phase:** This refers to how buyers use or consume the products analyse how buyers actually use a product or service and the experiences that the buyer obtains from such use. The investigation is important both for tangible products as well as for services.
- c. Disposition Phase:** It refers to what buyers do with a product once they have completed its use. Therefore, the marketers in understanding the buyer behavior should take into account the acquisition, consumption and disposition phase. If they do so they will be in a position to develop viable marketing strategies in terms of right product positioning. Buyer behavior involves purchase of services and ideas as well as tangible products.
- d. Importance of Understanding Buyer Behaviour:** All marketing strategies and tactics are based on explicit or implicit beliefs about buyer behavior. The study of buyers helps firms and organizations improve their marketing strategies by understanding issues such as:
- How buyers think, feel, reason, and select between different alternatives (eg, brands, products)?
  - How is the buyer influenced by his or her environment (eg. Culture, Family, Signs and Media).
  - How buyer motivation and decision strategies differ between products that differ in their level of importance or interest that they entail for the buyer and
  - How Marketers can improve their promotional campaigns and marketing strategies to target the buyer more effectively?
  - There are four main applications of buyer behavior which are discussed below:
  - The most obvious is for marketing strategy i.e., for making better marketing decisions. For example, by understanding that buyers are more receptive to food advertising when they are hungry, we learn to schedule snack advertisements late in the afternoon.

- A second application is public policy. In 1980s, when accutane, a near miracle cure for acne, resulted in severe birth defects in pregnant women, federal drug administration (FDA) of us took the step of requiring that very graphic pictures of deformed babies be shown on the medicine containers.
- Social marketing involves getting ideas across to buyers rather than selling something. Understanding buyer behavior will help in espousing for social causes such as planned families, prohibition, equality of girl child etc.
- As a final benefit, study buyer behavior should make us better buyers. Common sense suggests for example, that if you buy a 200 ml liquid bottle of laundry detergent, you should pay less per ml than if you bought two 100ml bottles. In today's world of high technology, buyers' tastes are also changing rapidly.

### **Conclusion**

In purchasing various products and services buyers are influenced by host of factors these are: Psychological factors, personal factors, social factors, and cultural factors. Psychological factors include motivation, perception, learning, beliefs. Personal factors include: age and life cycle stage, occupation. Social factors include: reference group, family roles and statuses. Finally buyers while making purchasing of different products pass through different stages of buying decision process.

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