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THE FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BUYING DECISION OF ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

Consumer behaviour study is an effort to understand the buying tendencies of buyers for their end use. Consumer buying decisions direct how healthy the company's selling policy fits market demand. The persistent invention in electronic products accompanied by great price war followed by various opponent products available in every market, has commanded sellers to focus on the consumers' buying behaviour. This study examines the effect of influencing determinants on consumer buying decision of electronic products amongst different socio-demographic profiles. The comprehensive analysis indicates that social and personal factors are strongly associated with the consumer buying decision of consumers which supports our previous study on similar ground and situational determinant is the new which play almost parallel role. The result also helps manufacturers and dealers in understanding consumer buying behaviour and assist in improvement on buyer gratification. It was recommended that sellers should take cognizance of the fact that socio-personal factors are the fundamental determinants of buyers' want and behavior and should therefore be considered when producing electrical products for semi-urban markets.

Keywords: Influencing Determinants, Consumer Buying Decision, Consumer Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

The basic principles governing the current competitive market are customer orientation and belief in customer-centeredness. At present, the competitive market forced producers to produce goods based on customer needs (Tafler, 2004). Consumer behaviour is a combination of customers' buying consciousness and external incentives which are likely to result in behaviour remodeling. Buying behaviour according to Dawson et al. (2006), are set of attitudes that characterize the patterns of consumers' choices. Consumer behavior can be defined as activities related to acquiring, consuming, and get rid of the goods or services, which also includes the decision-making process preceding and

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after the event took place (Blackwell, 2001). The literature classifies factors influencing consumer decision making process in various ways. Koudelka categorized them into inner and outer factors distinguishing three basic categories: Personal, Psychological and Social factors (Koudelka, 1997). Later, Kotler added the cultural factors in the independent category (Kotler, 2001). The next group of factors can be taken as situational factors. At any time, we make decisions concerning every aspect of our lives; these decisions are generally made without stopping to think about how we make them and what is involved in the particular decision-making process itself (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010).

The examination of all aspects of a society such as its religion, knowledge, language, laws, customs, traditions, music, art, technology, work patterns, products, plus all other artifacts that gives a society its distinctiveness is required to evaluate the buyer (Lawan & Zanna, 2013). As a personal factors, these are referred the ones unique for each consumer. Summary like age, sex, place of domicile, occupational and economic conditions, personality and self-consciousness can be found here (Horska & Sparke, 2007). Culture, subculture, and social class are particularly important influences on consumer buying behavior (Kotler, 2011). The external stimuli that serve as sources of information about a particular product, and influence a consumer's product-related values, attitudes, and behavior which include the marketing four Ps and the socio cultural influences, which when internalized, affect the consumer's purchase decision (Lawan & Zanna, 2013). Psychological factor includes motivation, perception, skills and knowledge, positions, personality, style of life (Brown, 2006).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumers can pick certain products or brands over others, and to know the reason behind these preferences is extremely crucial in order to market prevailing products more effectively than competitors. Certain factors like consumers' demographic profile, purchase perceptions, and their attitudes towards products or brands influence their purchase decisions. Jarvenpaa and Tedd (1997) identified various factors that affect consumers' electronic products purchases decision like product understanding, shopping experience, customer service, and consumer risk (Jarvenpaa, 1997). According to decision making model, consumers process the environmental cues; the physical factors of the product, psychosocial cues, such as advertising, and consumers put these cues into a set of perceptions that shape their preferences. Based on these preferences, consumers make their choices subject to situational constraints, such as price (Hong & Lerch, 2002). The decision maker satisfies rather than maximizes; that is, he looks for a course of action that is "good enough" and that meets a minimal set of requirements (Janis & Mann, 1977).

The most important factors biasing purchases of all commodity groups are products' characteristics and the perceived quality (Stavkova, 2008). Core technical features, post purchase services, price and payment conditions, peripheral specifications, physical appearance, value added features, and connectivity and mobility are the seven factors that are influencing consumers' purchase decision (Nasir, 2006). Cultural, social, personal, psychological, product and price variables simultaneously influenced the purchasing decision process. However, price variable did not significantly influenced purchasing decision. Culture was the dominant variable influencing purchase decision (Suroto, 2013). Social factors, physical factors, and marketing mix elements are strongly associated with consumer buying behaviour (Furajji, 2012).

Value Identification, Customer Service and Lifestyle are the most influential factors for women's purchasing decisions. These factors mostly influence the buying behavior of Nepalese women. Besides these, price, brand awareness and accurate information also influence their buying behavior

(Thagunna & Khanal, 2013). Besides information search evaluation of alternatives is an important activity that determines consumer's choice. They opined that customer's purchase decision is influenced by 'cognitive heuristics' or in simple words a consumer choose his perceived brand based on his past experience if it fulfills his perceived values (Laroche, Kim, & Matsui, 2003).

SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BUYING DECISION

Social norms are rules or expectations through which a society guides the behavior of its members and often reflect social values. Social norms are mechanisms of social control which promote conformity. They can be both proscriptive, regulating what we should not do and prescriptive, establishing an expectation of what we should do; particularly buying and consuming (Lawan & Zanna, 2013). Reference groups includes buyer reference group, such as family members, friends, social organizations, professional institutions and trade, heavily influence the selection and specific brand. Reference Group somehow affects the value and behavior of others. Most of the purchases affect ideas and opinions of the reference group (Nesai, 2009). The study results demonstrated that there is a positive and significant relationship between reference group, family, price, quality, color, and purchasing decision (Abdel, 2014; Farah, 2013). Similarly, Yoon and Cho (2009) found that there are eight possible factors influence the consideration of furniture choices which are style, color, price, and construction quality, ease of maintenance, comfort, material, and matching with other items.

Purchasing behavior will be affected by the nature of family and its responsibilities may create a range of reverse demands for goods and services. The style of the family life determines its place in the society (Samadi, 2007). Social factors include the likes of normative and informational susceptibility towards social influence. Two different forms of consumer susceptibility are information susceptibility and normative susceptibility (Wang, F. et al., 2005). Information susceptibility refers to purchase decision made by consumers based on the expert opinion of others while the normative susceptible person might made a decision based on expectations of what would impress others (Ang, 2001). An expert's opinion often paves the way for others to follow; but then the opinion leaders become the ones influencing the market since they possess specific knowledge about some particular product (Chang, Lee, & Huang). Integrity is found to have strong significant influence to social consequences of consumer attitudes (Phau & Teah, 2009).

Individuals may be involved in numerous different types of groups. Furthermore, reference groups have potential in forming a person attitude or behavior. The effect of reference groups varies across products and brands (Sakpichaisa, 2012; Chaipornmetta, 2010). Similarly, reference groups and can be of any size and may be tangible or intangible. Moreover, individuals' behavior is strongly influenced through numerous groups. Individuals reference group are those groups that have a direct or indirect influence on the person's attitudes or behavior. Group having a direct influence on a person are called membership group. These are group to which the person belongs and interacts. Some are primary groups. With which there is fairly continuous interaction, such as family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers (Katherine, 2010). Socio-cultural factors either acting independently or in conjunction with other personal or demographic factors have significant influences at each stage of the consumer buying decision making process. The social role and status profoundly influences the consumer behavior and purchasing decisions, especially for all "visible" products from other people. This kind of behavior and influences can be found at every level and for every role and social status.

PERSONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BUYING DECISION

Internal personal factors that influence a buyer's purchase decision like age and stage of life cycle (Rouzbahani, 2013). Personality factors such as value consciousness, integrity, personal gratification, novelty seeking, and status consumption influence purchase decision. Lichtenstein defines value consciousness as a concern to pay in a low price, while expecting to a certain quality constraint (Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, & Burton, 1990).

Highly risk adverse consumers need to be very certain about what they are buying. Whereas less risk adverse consumers can tolerate some risk and uncertainty in their purchases. The second variable, innovativeness, is a global measure which captures the degree to which consumers are willing to take chances and experiment with new ways of doing things (Donthu and Gilliland, 1996). The shopping motivation literature is abound with various measures of individual characteristics e.g., innovative, venturesome, cosmopolitan, variety seeking.

Decisions and buying behavior are obviously also influenced by the characteristics of each consumer (Hawkins et al, 2012). A consumer does not buy the same products or services at 20 or 70 years. His/her lifestyle, values, environment, activities, hobbies and consumer habits evolve throughout his life. The factors influencing the buying decision process may also change. The purchasing power of an individual will have, of course, a decisive influence on his/her behavior and purchasing decisions based on his/her income and capital. For social status, some consumers may also look for the "social value" of products they buy in order to show "external indications" of their incomes and their level of purchasing power (Kotler, 2001).

NEED OF THE STUDY

There are numerous researches on consumer buying decision models in the literature. However there has been not significant study carried out on that geographical area with respect to electronic products as well as the specific determents. Consumer buying decisions differ significantly depending on the category of product to be purchased and consumer characteristics. Therefore, sectorial studies are required to demarcate the factors affecting consumer buying decisions. This study will have significant impact on understanding the effect of social and personal determinants on consumer buying decision for electronic products in a particular geographical area. Similarly, to cope with the highly competitive electronic products market, marketers have to understand the effect of various influencing determinants those play important role in the buying decision and assortment of consumer electronic products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The non-probability convenience sampling method is used and the sample sizes of 163 respondents were interviewed from newly introduced Gadhimai Municipality of Bara, Nepal. The study territory was selected by the researcher bearing in the mind of similar respondents' characteristics of previous study areas. The researchers had targeted to collect 163 faultless questionnaires from the respondents to justify the previous study. The target respondents were more than 20 years old semi-urban consumers; bearing in the mind that they are the decision maker of the family while buying electronic products. Data is collected via self-administered questionnaire which contains 13 questions in first

section related to various factors influencing buying decisions of electronic products, six questions were in second section regarding respondents' socio-demographic profile. One-way ANOVA and Pearson chi-square are carried to examine the relation between independent variables.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

1. There is significance relation between income of buyers and the social determinants those influence the buying decision of electronic products.

Table 1: ONE-WAY ANOVA TEST RESULT

Social Factors		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1. Spouse	Between Groups	46.842	3	15.614	4.145	.027
	Within Groups	598.998	159	3.767		
	Total	645.840	162			
2. Siblings	Between Groups	22.337	3	7.446	1.425	.215
	Within Groups	830.535	159	5.223		
	Total	852.871	162			
3. Neighbors	Between Groups	11.140	3	3.713	1.015	.324
	Within Groups	581.707	159	3.659		
	Total	592.847	162			
4. Parent	Between Groups	30.426	3	10.142	3.229	.020
	Within Groups	499.475	159	3.141		
	Total	529.902	162			
5. Status	Between Groups	44.642	3	14.881	4.012	.007
	Within Groups	589.677	159	3.709		
	Total	634.319	162			
6. Friends	Between Groups	72.756	3	24.252	5.062	.012
	Within Groups	761.735	159	4.791		
	Total	834.491	162			
7. Kids	Between Groups	41.474	3	13.825	2.481	.043
	Within Groups	886.010	159	5.572		
	Total	927.485	162			
8. Colleagues	Between Groups	.120	3	.040	.008	.915
	Within Groups	837.021	159	5.264		
	Total	837.141	162			

To rationalize the hypothesis the researchers have performed one-way ANOVA test to associate the relationship between income of customers and the social determinants those influence the buying decision of electronic products. The above test result shows that the factors 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 having

higher mean square values compare to other factors. Similarly, the significance values of these factors are 0.027, 0.020, 0.007, 0.012, and 0.043 respectively. The social determinants those having significance value equal or less than 0.05; supports the hypothesis. We can also examine in the case of social determinants like 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7 ANOVA is statistically significant and 2, 3, and 8 ANOVA is statistically insignificant. The electronic products are mostly expensive so that buyers' buying decision is mainly influenced by family members or close relatives.

2. There is significance relation between personal factors and other major influencing factor those influence buying decision.

Table 2: ONE-WAY ANOVA TEST RESULT

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Cultural Factors	Between Groups	3.112	3	1.037	.699	.644
	Within Groups	235.931	159	1.484		
	Total	239.043	162			
Social Factors	Between Groups	11.877	3	3.959	2.745	.026
	Within Groups	229.288	159	1.442		
	Total	241.166	162			
Psychological Factors	Between Groups	2.616	3	.872	.467	.572
	Within Groups	297.004	159	1.868		
	Total	299.620	162			
Situational Factors	Between Groups	4.468	3	1.489	.958	.001
	Within Groups	247.287	159	1.555		
	Total	251.755	162			

To validate the hypothesis, the one-way ANOVA statistical test was conducted to relate the effect between personal determinants and other major influencing determinants while making buying decision of electronic products. The result of ANOVA test specifies in the case of social and situational factors ANOVA is statistically significant with the test result values 0.026 and 0.001 respectively those are less than the value 0.05. Other factors like, cultural, and situational have test result values 0.644 and 0.572 respectively which are more than 0.05. Therefore these two determinants don't support the hypothesized statement. However, in this study one more situational determinant is also associated with personal factor whereas it was not same with the previous study. The cause may be the size of market which is smaller than the previous studied market and the number of electronic stores is also very limited in this market.

3. Consumers' education has significant impact on the criteria (features) on the basis of which customers take buying decision of electronic products.

Table 3: Chi-square Tests

Criteria(Features)	Pearson Chi -Square Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
1. Quality	24.234	15	.046
2. Price	17.033	15	.229
3. Service	26.547	15	.003
4. Durability	29.080	15	.044
5. Power Consumption	24.005	15	.050

Pearson Chi-square statistical test is conducted to decide the relationship between dependent and independent variables, and to judge the researchers' hypothesis. The one-way ANOVA test is conducted to validate the consumers' education and the criteria (features) on the basis of which customers take buying decision of electronic products. The above chi-square table indicates that the criteria (features) like 1, 3, 4, & 5 are statistically significant with value 0.046, 0.003, 0.044 and 0.050 respectively, whose value is either less or equal to 0.05. These four criteria (features) for selection of electronic products support the hypothesized statement whereas criterion i.e. price does not support the hypothesis with the resulted value 0.229. The former four features are mostly considered by every consumer because these are the features which each and every consumer likes more than other features of electronic products.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The social, personal and situational determinants do have great impact on buying decision of electronic products. The electronic products are durable products and are purchased on the basis of buying involvement and the family status in the society. However, Lawan & Ramat (2012) study has determined that culture, either acting independently or in conjunction with economic and personal determinants significantly influences buying behaviour. Their finding is not valid on the studied market may be due to differences in consumer characteristics whereas our previous study was also disagree on their remark. Present study revealed that this segment of consumer are sophisticated and like to maintain their prestige in the society. They always need to purchase such product which will uphold their status in society and distributes great gratification. However, we still support the endorsement given by Lawan & Ramat to the marketers that they should take cognizance of the fact that socio-cultural determinants are some of the fundamental determinants of a person's want and behavior, and same should be considered during R&D of products for the markets.

Y-generation consumers mostly like classy electronic products. However, adult customers' buying decisions are influenced by their close relatives and family members. They also take decision on the basis of their social class, status and prestige. Personal determinants like income, lifestyle and values of customers, and situational factors like availability and alternatives of product lines also play an important role on electronic products buying decision. These finding are similar with the result of Furaiji & Latuszynska (2012), An Empirical Study of the Factors influencing Consumer Behaviour in the Electrical Appliances Market. On the contrary, income and education play crucial role in decision making which does not apply on those families that having annual income of more than 4 lakhs. Such families give high priority to lifestyle and social status.

Situational determinants also have great influence on buying decision in case of absence of desire product or brand or availability of very limited options. It restricts the buyer to simply choose from few

available products or brands. Many a times it disappoints the buyers or asked to visit another nearest market or to take irrational decision. In some cases customer postpone their shopping hoping that the desired product will be made available in near future. In the newly emerged semi-urban market it has been observed that customers are limited with the alternatives due to few sellers. Therefore new manufacturers can grab this opportunity by offering customers desired products at competitive rate. Economist defines these markets as oligopoly market functioned by few players. Salesperson and neighbor do not play much inducing role on purchasing electronic products. Approximately, half of consumers considered their parent as opinion leader and one-third of consumers considered their friends as opinion leader on buying decision of electronic products. This study supports the findings of Chakravarthy & Prasad (2011), Impact of opinion leader on consumer decision making.

MANAGERIAL INFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Semi-urban market always has significant opportunities for sellers to expand their commercial capacity. Usually in this types market, there shall be fewer sellers at the initial phase, so called it is the revenue and customers segment apprehending chance for sellers. Most of the consumers' buying decisions of electronic products are personally and socially influenced. However the buying situation has also dominant influence on buying decision. Thus it is important that sellers should offer such electronic products which is desired by semi-urban buyers and their society. Quality products and assurance about performance which could meet the customer expectation with good service commitment can motivate to buy offered product. The product should not only gratify the consumer but also it will uphold the family prestige in society.

Social determinants have assorted inducing elements on different demography of buyers. The Y-generation is more pioneering and sophisticated buyer so that they could be offered stylish, innovative featured and fashionable product. They always hear themselves and their close groups, and want to be unique in the society disregarding every norm whereas adult & mature customers like to buy electronic products as per their income, need, and usage of the family. Sellers should hold information about the gap between society & youngster lifestyle, and their preferences towards electronic products. It will help in launching new product to Y-generation consumers and trending product to adult consumers. These way sellers can gratify the most of the demographics of buyers which can also turn the buyers into loyal buyers.

The existing sellers of this market keep on holding their existing customers by maintaining healthy relations with buyers and offering attractive schemes. Sellers can also take advices and feedback regarding previous buying experience and purchased the product performance. They should apply every possible strategy to delight them. These experiments could assist in creating existing customer as loyal customer and influence for repeat purchase. However, new player should pay attention on Y-generation, innovative, inexperienced, and modern buyers because this segment of consumers loves to buy newly launched and innovative featured items. They usually get motivated whenever they find something new and different in existing product. Sellers should employ knowledgeable, capable and qualified salesperson having good convincing skills which will help to persuade buyers to experience their offerings.

The buyers get frustrated when their expected product or brand is unavailable in the market. This is very normal situation in semi-urban market. In such situation most of the buyer select the product which they may not like. In some cases they delay their purchase plan too. In the semi-urban market, sellers can offer diverse varieties of electronic product of various brands in their outlet. Customers can have their preferred products or brands as well as more alternative products for them to evaluate.

Customers also prefer to visit such store where they can discover maximum alternate products. Buyers when then find their expected product they feel more pleased in their overall shopping experience. It is not advisable and possible to offer all brands but at least the most demanded brand and its product can be offered. Manufacturers and resellers must understand the significance of buying roles performed by the person other than the buyer (initiator, influencer, decider, and user).

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The contribution of this study is to identify the major of influencing determinants on consumers' buying decision of electronic products in semi-urban area. The significant conclusion of this study indicated that the overall groups of independent variables are moderately associated with the dependent variables. However, in the depth investigation it is found that influence of social determinants like Spouse, Parent, Status, Friends, and Kids are strongly associated with the buying decision of semi-urban consumers. Similarly, the core-technological features like Quality, Price, Service, Durability, and Power are having great impact on diverse socio-demographic groups of consumer and their buying decision.

The study area is newly introduced urban area so that there are very less electronic products stores having limited products and brands. New players can capture this area by offering new product and brands which are not available in this market as well as new marketing strategy. Existing sellers may include more number of alternative brands to provide a wider choice for their prospects. Various sales promotion activities can be done by the manufacturers and resellers to increase new product/brand trails and adoption. Message generation and execution can be done in a way for various marketing communication tools like advertising, public relation, internet and interactive marketing to increase customer awareness and customer education. These analyses made it possible to discover semi-urban consumer decision-making process. This study also supported almost all the findings of previous study of Kushwaha (2015) conducted on similar market.

Moreover, this analysis assisted us to recognize several favorable opportunities for further research. As this study is snapshot of the Nepali consumers in the semi-urban plane areas, extensions to populations of other areas in Nepal of different socio economic groups & geographical territory and to other countries may produce different results. Also, factors such as cultural, economic, political, environmental, and more are not included in this study, thus their impact on purchase decision are unknown. Nevertheless, electronic products are expensive, valued assets, and high involvement products to ask respondents to provide their involvement was thought-provoking since it may affect their status or image. Observation method would be the most advisable method for the same topic and same can be undertaken for future research.

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