

DYNAMIC BEHAVIOR OF CONSUMER: A Case Study of Bhopal

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ABSTRACT

Consumer behavior refers to the mental and emotional process and the observable behavior of the consumers during searching, purchasing and post consumption of a product or service. Consumer behavior involves study of how people buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy. It blends the elements from psychology, sociology, socio psychology, anthropology and economics. It also tries to assess the influence on the consumer from groups such as family, friend's reference groups and society in general. Buying behavior has two aspects: the final purchase activity visible to any observer and the detailed or the short decision process that may involve the inter play of a number of complex variables not visible to anyone. Thus these are the aspects that use to govern consumer's buying behavior his needs, his purpose of buying and his social status.

All the above factors are of great importance in understanding the complete behavior of consumer which compels him to ultimately buy a commodity. In this survey that has been conducted in Bhopal from the questionnaire and interview method it has been extracted out that all the respondents are mostly influenced by their social background and hence their buying behavior is also governed by the society to which they belong as undoubtedly human beings are social animals. We need people around to talk and to discuss various issues to reach to various issues to reach to better solutions and ideas. As we live in a society it is really important for individuals to adhere to the laws and regulations of society which as per the new trends opening their minds towards the mall culture, convenience store etc and at individual level this approach influences their buying decisions.

KEYWORDS : Consumer behavior; society; buying behavior;

INTRODUCTION

Any individual who purchases goods and services from the market for his/her end-use is called a consumer. In simple words a consumer is one who consumes goods and services available in the market. As per Victor Lebow: "Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction and our ego satisfaction in consumption. We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever-increasing rate". His complaint was apparently taken as a blueprint, with world economies designed around continuous consumption and growth. This way we know that for an enormous growth of any economy continuous consumption plays a significant role even in the circular flow of money in

an economy. And the consumption is directly related with the buying behavior or consumer behavior of any buyer.

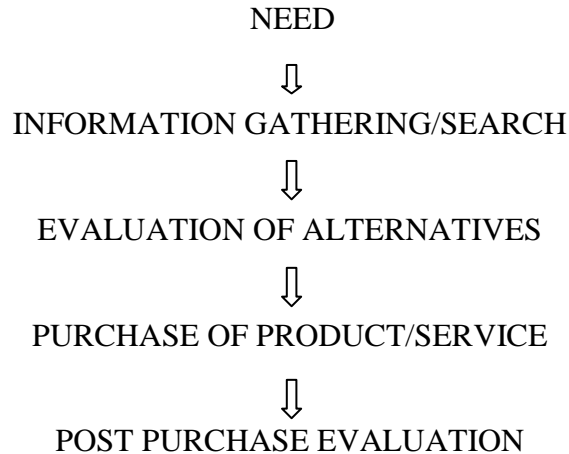
Consumer behavior refers to the mental and emotional process and the observable behavior of the consumers during searching, purchasing and post consumption of a product or service. Consumer behavior involves study of how people buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy. It blends the elements from psychology, sociology, socio psychology, anthropology and economics. It also tries to access the influence on the consumer from groups such as family, friend's reference groups and society in general. Buying behavior has two aspects: the final purchase activity visible to any observer and the detailed or the short decision process that may involve the inter play of a number of complex variables not visible to anyone.

Consumer behavior is also a branch which deals with the various stages a consumer goes through before purchasing products or services for his end use. In a layman's language consumer behavior deals with the buying behavior of individuals. There are various aspects that use to govern consumer's buying behavior his needs, his purpose of buying and his social status.

The main purpose of taking this topic for research is because of the variations in this objective which help to understand the attitude of the person not as the customer but as the human because the study of the behavior is an art of the particular person. What happen exactly in the market, how consumer behaves towards other seller and what makes him to buy other products. As the time changes market trends also changes and with that the attitude of the consumer changes. After the globalization and liberalization whole world has become one market and a platform for all the seller's to give their best in the form of various products to the customer's. This led to wide variety of products in front of customer's. This ultimately appeared to be a challenge in front of the manufacturers to satisfy the customer. This makes the topic interesting for researching and to make partition of the buying behavior of any individual from the group. As well as the reaction of the seller, interview of the buyer and the conclusions so on. The purpose is very much interesting because here we have to observe the people in different ways and it is also helpful in the future of any field. To understand the marketing effectively and also to gather business need information. Information about what customer wants, about competitors, about distribution channels etc. The manufacturer or marketer often complain that they lack enough marketing information or the right kind, or have too much of the wrong kind. The solution is an effective information system. The study of the consumer behavior helps firm and organization improve their marketing strategies by understanding issues such as the psychology of how consumer think, feel, reason and select between different alternatives .

In this paper the most important factors that governs a consumer is the need for the product , the social status and the satisfaction of desires relating to it as discussed earlier and the last but not the least important factor is the economical factor need of a product and the urge of a social status and psychological factors that ultimately pushes a person towards the product and finally the pricing structure and the economical condition of a person creates ability in him towards final consumption of that product .

In general a consumer goes through several stages before purchasing a product or service



Step 1- Need is the most important factor which leads to buying of products and services. Need in fact is the catalyst which triggers the buying decision of individuals.

An individual who buys cold drink or a bottle of mineral water identifies his/her need as thirst. However in such cases steps such as information search and evolution of alternatives are generally missing. These two steps are important when an individual purchases expensive products/services such as laptop, cars, mobile phones and so on .

Step 2- When an individual recognizes his need for a particular product/service he tries to gather as much information as he can.

An individual can acquire information through any of the following sources:

- Personal sources- He might discuss his need with his friends, family members, co workers and other acquaintances.
- Commercial sources-Advertisements, sales persons, packaging of a particular product in many cases prompt individuals to buy the same , displays (props, mannequins, etc)
- Public sources- Newspaper, Radio, Magazine
- Experiential sources- Individual's own experience, prior handling of a particular product.

Step3- The next step is to evaluate the various alternatives available in the market. An individual after gathering relevant information tries to choose the best option available as per his need, taste and pocket.

Step 4- After going through all the above stages, customer finally purchases the product.

Step5- The purchase of the product is followed by post purchase evaluation. Post purchase evaluation refers to a customer's analysis whether the product was useful to him or not, whether the product fulfilled his need or not?

Approaches to consumer behavior

Approaches to consumer behavior: Consumer behavior is the way by which consumer spend their income. Different consumers have different behavior. They utilize their limited income to get more expenditure.

Traditional approach

As per the traditional approach to consumer behavior is to assume that the consumer has well-defined preferences over all of the alternative bundles and that the consumer attempts to select the most preferred bundle from among those bundles that are available. The nice thing about this approach is that it allows us to build into our model of consumer behavior how the consumer feels about trading off one commodity against another. Because of this, we are able to make more precise predictions about behavior. Consumer behavior towards any product depends upon the utility of that product and as per the neo-classical approach of the economics utility is a psychological phenomenon and it cannot be measured it can only be expressed in terms of more or less. As the concept of utility of the product is totally a psychological phenomenon it varies from person to person. Here predictions were derived by keeping the idea that consumer make consistent choices by maximization of well defined preferences. As in economics we assume that resources are limited and the wants are endless thus it has to be put on to alternate uses which led an individual to make choice of a bundle of any specific goods amongst the various other possible alternatives thus it gives the way for a consumer regarding its preferences depending upon the utility .

Modern approach

The term t can be seen that many of the elements of the model are similar to those presented in the Theory of Buyer Behavior (Howard AND Sheth 1969), however the structure of presentation and relationship between the variables differs somewhat. The model is structured around a seven point decision process: need recognition followed by a search of information both internally and externally, the evaluation of alternatives, purchase, post purchase reflection and finally, divestment. These decisions are influenced by two main factors. Firstly stimuli is received and processed by the consumer in conjunction with memories of previous experiences, and secondly, external variables in the form of either environmental influences or individual differences.

The whole research work is being conducted on the basis of the following factors:

- The environmental influences identified include: Culture; social class; personal influence; family and situation. While the individual influences include:
- Consumer resource; motivation and involvement; knowledge; attitudes; personality; values and lifestyle.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1. To study the consumer behavior according to their standard of living .
2. To study the approach of consumers towards branded goods and their demand.
3. To study the individual consumer opinion towards the price of the products.
4. To study sellers in the market, what they have, how he manage his product selling.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is to explore the way organized retail has dramatically changed not only the Indian Traditional retailing structure but also the consumption behavior. The consumption behavior was examined with the help of a structured questionnaire. It led to the result that for consumers the shopping mall or variant of organized retail format is the preferred type of retail store, due to convenience and variety. The Indian market has seen vast changes in political, social and economical environment which has a great impact on consumption. With the Indian as well as International corporate entering into the Indian retail scenario the market has

been divided between the traditional and the modern organized sector . There are various issues that need to be addressed like what would be future patterns of consumption, which format of retail would be preferred by consumers and will the rise of organized retail affect the traditional retailers.

This study will contribute to the understanding that consumers and retailers in most cases have different perceptions in relation to store image and shopping habits, justifying the need for consumer marketing research which is important for retailers implemented in the real marketing orientation . The study will examine the choice of format the consumer has when he or she decides to buy a particular product and also decides the development of organized retail in the future focusing on aspects with influential effect on purchasing behavior among the consumers. The focus is on consumer expectation. The questions were formulated to capture the overall behavior of the consumers and with the help of the survey questionnaire the analysis was done. An attempt has been made to explore the way organized retail has changed traditional buying behavior.

METHODOLOGY

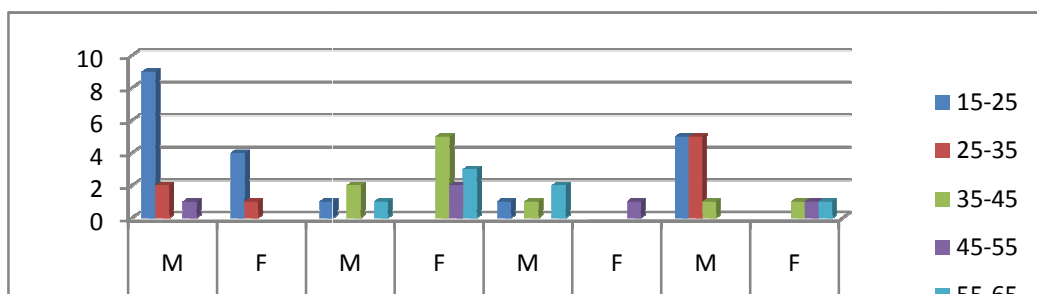
A survey has been conducted of sample of 50 consumers to gather data necessary to identify the factors that affect consumers buying behavior in Bhopal. Information was gathered through an interview survey and questionnaire based on the psychological, sociological , personal ,economical aspects of the consumers as the consumers are familiar with this kind of research and their educational level is suitable for the use of this kind of survey method. Additionally, the cost of conducting large postal or telephonic survey to develop a typology was considered prohibited. Furthermore, as many consumers do not have an internet access, the electronic survey methods was not suitable for surveying a representative to a general population sample.

An effort was made to reach consumers at the same time and place where actual purchase decisions are made hoping to better elicit consumer’s true preferences about the products. Data were collected in locations frequented by consumers such as supermarkets, groceries, open market, mall in the city .

FINDINGS

1. Social Factors Influencing buying Decision

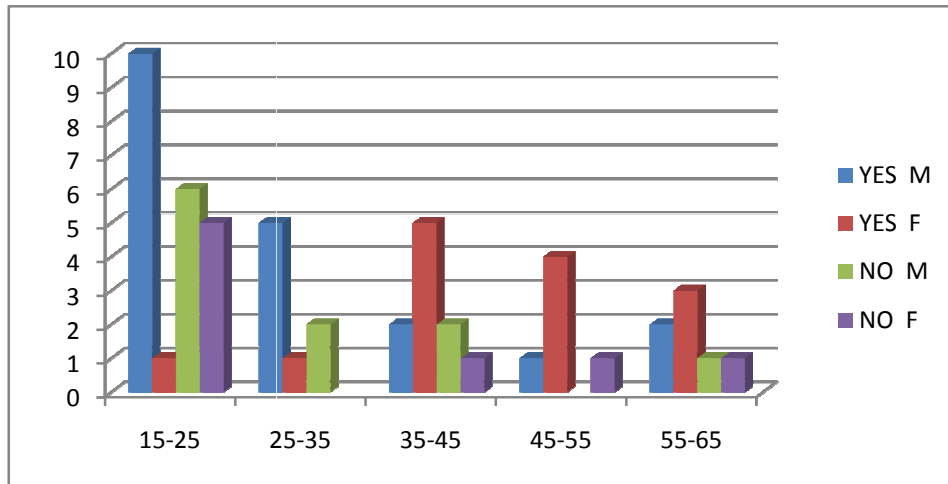
AGE	FRIENDS		FAMILY		RELATIVE		CO-WORKER		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	9	4	1		1		5		20
25-35	2	1					5		8
35-45			2	5	1		1	1	10
45-55	1			2		1		1	5
55-65			1	3	2			1	7



From the first question regarding factors that influence buying decisions it has been find out that amongst the middle aged people students between 15-25 of the age their buying habits are more influenced by their friends between the age of 15-25 psychological factor that will work on the students is more governed by their mates because a greater part of their schedule they use to spent with their mates. Than in comparison to their family persons or relatives .In this age group of 15-25 the same age factor proves to be more influencing or governing on the persons under sample size. As we move on in the age factor we find that the age factor of 25-35 will be more influenced by their co-workers because in comparison to their family members and even friend circle away from their work place they use to spend more time with their colleagues .Under the sample the persons between the age group Of 35-45 are family persons their thinking will be more focused on their family persons again the age group of 55-65 is mostly of retired ones so this way they will be more influenced by their family persons and then their relatives amongst which they spare their most of the time .

2. Brand loyalty of the customer towards product

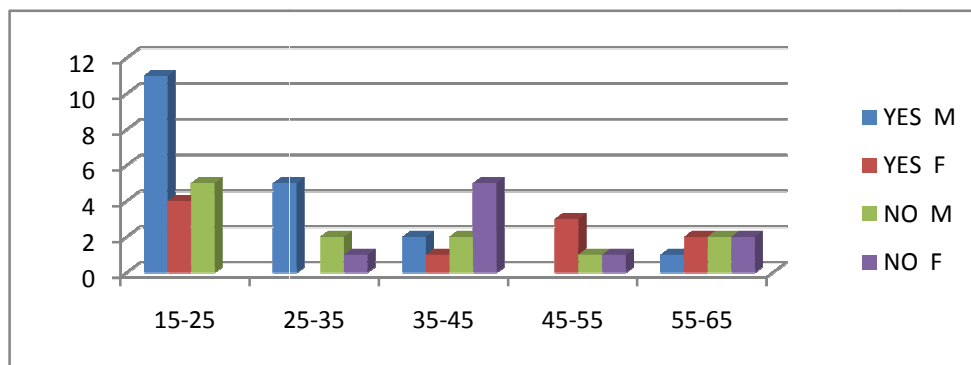
AGE	YES		NO	
	M	F	M	F
15-25	10	1	6	5
25-35	5	1	2	
35-45	2	5	2	1
45-55	1	4		1
55-65	2	3	1	1



From the survey it has been find out that male persons are more brand freak than in comparison to female respondents between the age of 15 to 35 again here the social background or the friend circle of the male candidates govern their choices between this age group . As we move on in the age group we find that women’s are ,more conscious about the product information as they are more conscious in carrying themselves this makes them more brand loyal and less experimental but as we move further in the age group between 55-65 we find that candidates will be indifferent towards brands .

3. Diversion of consumers towards new products in place of old ones

AGE	YES		NO	
	M	F	M	F
15-25	11	4	5	
25-35	5		2	1
35-45	2	1	2	5
45-55		3	1	1
55-65	1	2	2	2

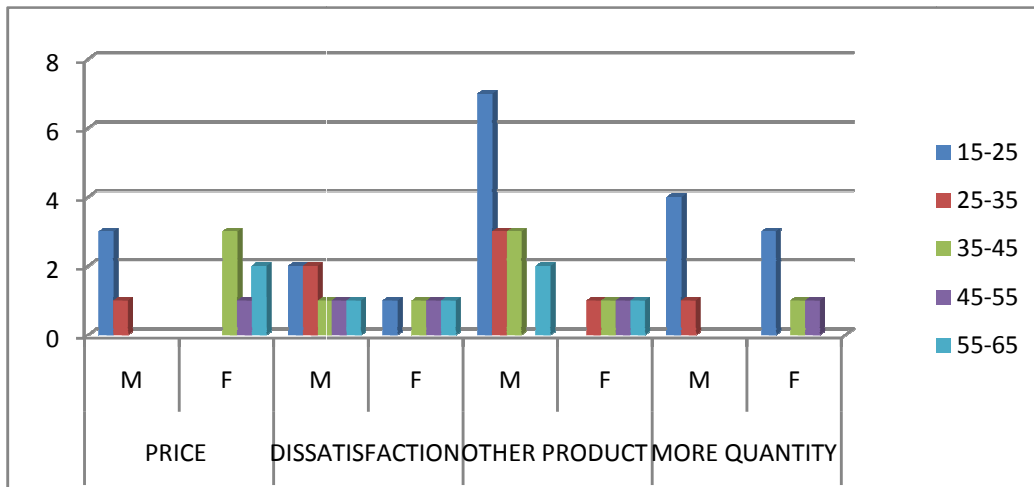


As far the diversion of consumers towards new products in place of old ones is concerned we find that candidates between the age of 15-25 are more experimental and enthusiastic towards the new entrants in products because between this age group persons will get very soon attracted towards the new products for the sake of flaunting but as we move ahead in the age group we

find that as the age increases people get more conscious about what they are using as product they become more curious about the product information before using it .

4. Factors affecting change in decision making

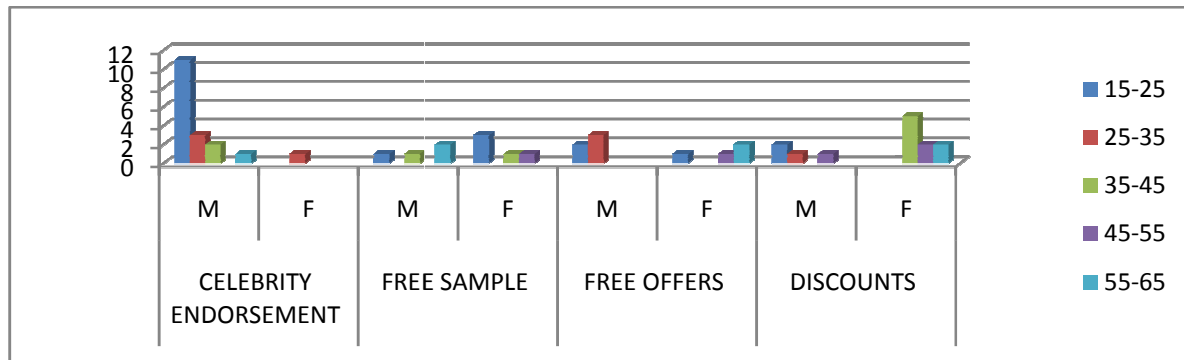
AGE	PRICE		DISSATISFACTION		OTHER PRODUCT		MORE QUANTITY		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	3		2	1	7		4	3	20
25-35	1		2		3	1	1		8
35-45		3	1	1	3	1		1	10
45-55		1	1	1		1		1	5
55-65		2	1	1	2	1			7
									0



Now a days consumers are more acquainted with 'n' number of products around them since after the globalization and liberalization the whole world has become one market consumers have wide variety of options with them this led them to frequent switching of goods as amongst the male candidates in the sample between the age group of 15-25 some are earners so the price factor affects them more than in comparison to the female candidates in the sample size between the same age group but as we move on in the age factor female candidates between the age group of 25-35 are earners too so here the price factor affects them also. Further between the age group of 45-65 females tends to be more economical so again here the price factor affects them more. Due to the wide variety of products dissatisfaction prevails much faster in the candidates between the age group of 15-45 where as candidates between the age 45-65 will remain indifferent. As the maximum candidates between the age group of 15-25 are students and non earners this led them to seek more quantity at a lower price but as we move on with the age more than 25 we find earners in the sample size who are more concerned about the quality not quantity of the product .

5. Role of advertisement in consumer decision making

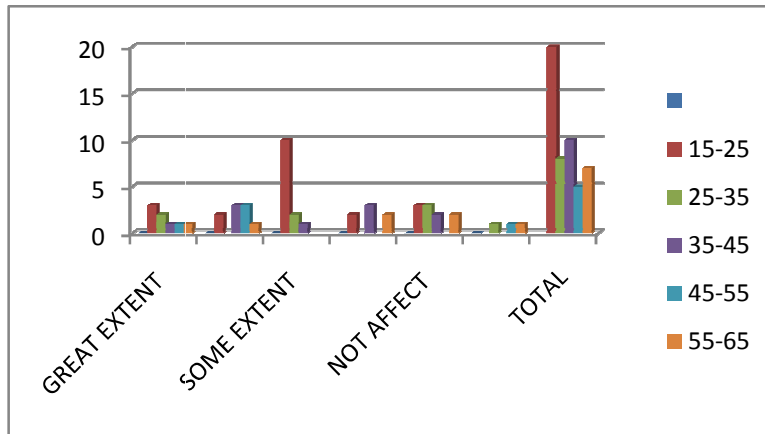
AGE	CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT		FREE SAMPLE		FREE OFFERS		DISCOUNTS		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	11		1	3	2	1	2		20
25-35	3	1			3		1		8
35-45	2		1	1				5	9
45-55				1		1	1	2	5
55-65	1		2			2		2	7



Students between the age group of 15-25 get more influenced with the celebrities and some even find them as their role models so the products endorsed by the celebrities will be frequently consumed by their followers than in comparison to the free samples, discounts and offers. As the candidates between the age group of 2-45 are earners they will be more influenced by discounts offers and free samples. Candidates between the age group of 55-65 are retired ones mostly that's why they will be more economical in their buying habits this way for them also free samples discounts and offers are more influencing.

6. The extent to which standard of living affects buying decisions

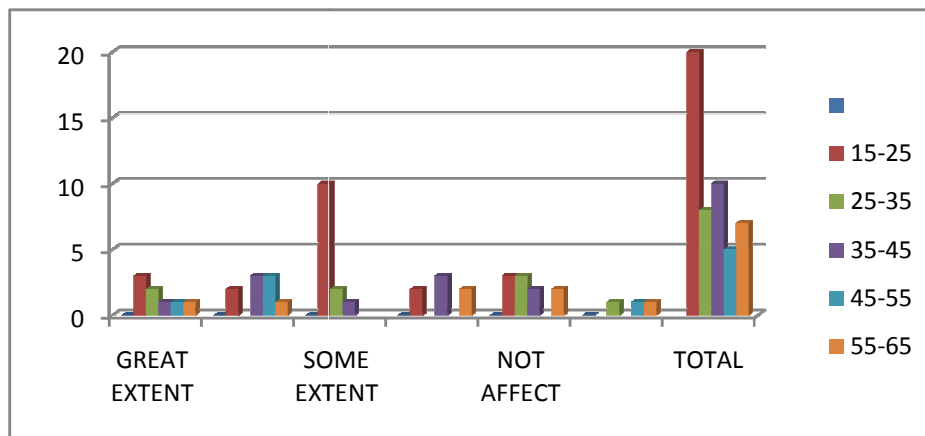
AGE	GREAT EXTENT		SOME EXTENT		NOT AFFECT		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	3	2	10	2	3		20
25-35	2		2		3	1	8
35-45	1	3	1	3	2		10
45-55	1	3				1	5
55-65	1	1		2	2	1	7



Candidates between the age group of 15-25 are more dependants and some are earners so for dependants their standard of living will be more guided by their family members so to some extent their buying decisions will depend on their standard of living but for those who are earners amongst the same age group their standard of living greatly affects their buying decisions as their earning governs their standard of living as we move on in the age group candidates between the age group of 25-65 are either earners or stabled persons as per their standard of living so they are comparatively unaffected .

7. Impact of price factor on buying decision

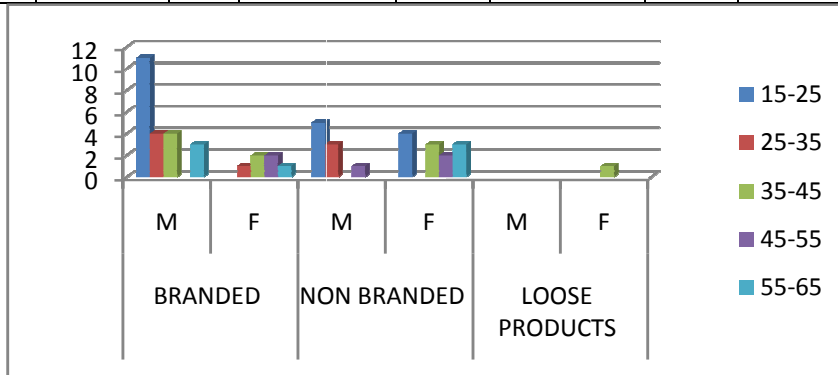
AGE	MOST OF THE TIME		SOME TIME		NOT AT ALL		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	3	2	10	2	3		20
25-35	3		1		3	1	8
35-45		4	2	2	2		10
45-55	1	1		2		1	5
55-65	1	1		3	2		7



Price changes plays a significant role in any body's buying behavior to some extent it affects the candidates between the age of 15-25 and to great extent who are self dependants as we move on in the age between 25-65 most of them are earners so it leads to stability in their buying behavior they tends to be less experimental and more confirmed and economical regarding their buying habits .

8. Category of products preferred by the customer

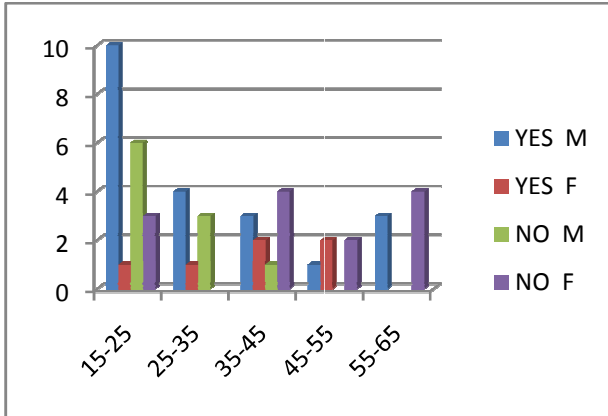
AGE	BRANDED		NON BRANDED		LOOSE PRODUCTS		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	11		5	4			20
25-35	4	1	3				8
35-45	4	2		3		1	10
45-55		2	1	2			5
55-65	3	1		3			7



As far as the brand choice is concerned male candidates as per the survey are more brand freak than in comparison to female candidates due to the more desire for the fulfillment of their self esteem males in the given sample size tends to be more social as extract out from their personal interviews this led them with the more desire of self esteem fulfillment in them but as the age increases this has been find out that persons between the age group of 25-55 are more focused on their other goals regarding their family and work so this way they are less focused on their appearance this also appeared to be a distinct approach of the consumers only a few bunch of high profiled persons in the sample tends to be more conscious regarding their appearance as it is demanded by their profession .

9. Customer awareness regarding the product

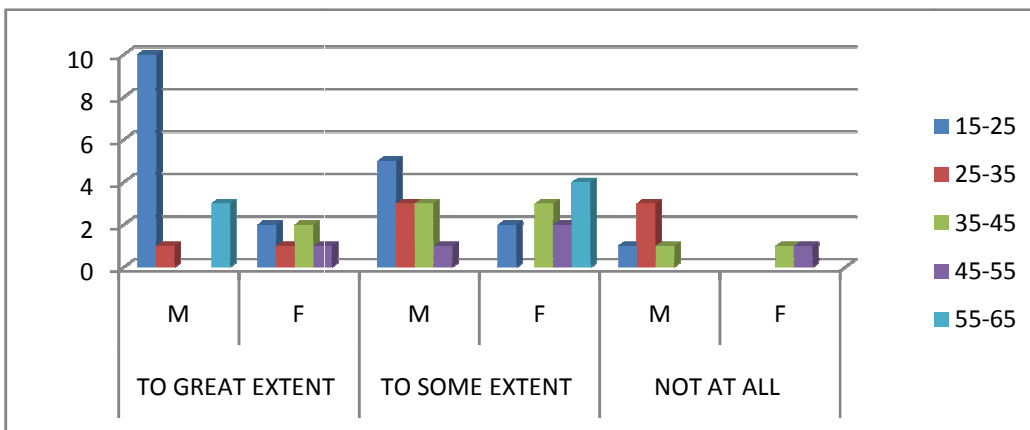
AGE	YES		NO	
	M	F	M	F
15-25	10	1	6	3
25-35	4	1	3	
35-45	3	2	1	4
45-55	1	2		2
55-65	3			4



In the given sample size males are more brand aware than females that's why they are more conscious in having the information regarding the product they are consuming it also reflects their urge for social prestige but with the increase in age and busy working schedule divert their social urge and due to busy work schedule and personal life people under sample size lack in collecting brand/product information.

10. Impact of packaging on customers

AGE	TO GREAT EXTENT		TO SOME EXTENT		NOT AT ALL		TOTAL
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
15-25	10	2	5	2	1		20
25-35	1	1	3		3		8
35-45		2	3	3	1	1	10
45-55		1	1	2		1	5
55-65	3			4			7



Packaging is that form of marketing technique in which its purpose is to preserve the final product till it reaches the ultimate consumer. Packaging is also a way of imparting knowledge to those who are brand/product conscious and keen to have knowledge about the product before using it. The very first infatuating thing in a product which fetches a customer at

first sight is its packaging. Knowledge about its ingredients ensures the customer regarding its genuineness printed behind the packaging especially it a the most effective techniques for kids and primary middle aged persons who tends to get attracted towards the product from its appearance many a time good and attractive packaging also leads to final buying/consuming of that product .

CONCLUSION

From the conducted survey under the research topic new buying trends, perception, of the buyer, factors influencing buyers perception, marketing strategies that need to be implement and marketing strategies that need to be improved are being tried to be extract out. The purpose of the survey is to gather the knowledge which could further help the firms/industry in gathering market information. The conclusion could vice versa helps both consumers and manufacturers in attaining their motives of buying and selling . From the collected information manufacturer could be benefited by attaining the customer knowledge and even the customer would be benefited in attaining the desirable commodity what he wants.

1. Consumers' preferences for grocery shopping are gradually shifting from local kirana stores to organized convenience stores.
2. Age is one of the most important factors responsible for the changing preference of customers.
3. Payments through credit cards are increasing purchases from convenience stores.
4. Brand choice of customers is changing and this is also influencing shift from kirana to convenience stores.
5. Maximum number of customers belongs to young age group.
6. Maximum number of customers is male due to family responsibility.
7. Maximum no. of customers having nuclear family.
8. Maximum no. of customers are educated and aware about retail store.
9. Maximum no. of customers are time conscious and desire for many brands under one roof.
10. Maximum no. of customers belongs to middle income class.

LOOKING FORWARD

From the market survey that has been conducted in the Bhopal city regarding changing consumer behavior the information which has been collected is so collected both for the help of consumers and also for the help of producers to cater the needs of the consumers in much 2better way . TETRA packaging is an example of packaging that ensures quality product to the customers such type of packaging that ensures better preserving of the commodity is more preferable to the consumers . In this era of nuclear family parents are more conscious regarding the quality of the product. Now a days consumers are more literate towards the product and they always keen to have knowledge regarding what they are consuming and to what extent that product is useful for them regarding their health and beauty for it the packaging here plays an important role because as it creates the first impression regarding product in the mind of the customers so manufacturers should more focus on the packaging of the products. Before advertising the product the manufacturer should first decide its targeted segment as per their age and gender and regarding that they should select the tools to create add for instance flowers to represent the beauty product of middle aged girls or toon characters to promote the products of kids. From the survey an important thing which came out is that the buying behavior of respondents under sample size is highly influenced by the social background to which they

belongs it must be clear to understand and easy to recall advertisement must reaches the mind of the consumers in such a way that it should create sense of necessity of that product in the mind of the consumers . During the festive seasons people tends to buy more so during this period attractive vouchers could be a better techniques to increase sales this led to the growth of a firm which ultimately results into profit maximization.

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