

## MEASURING INVOLVEMENT LEVEL FOR BUYING HOME APPLIANCES

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### **ABSTRACT:**

Customer involvement is considered as an important variable that can help explain how consumer process information and how this information might influence their purchase or consumption related behaviour. Judith L. Zaichkowsky has noted that there is no agreement about how to define involvement and how to measure the degree of involvement. She has observed that although there is no single precise definition of involvement, there is an underlining them focusing on personal relevance. She has developed an involvement construct that include three antecedents. First, Traits of person: such as needs, importance, interest, value and unique experiences. Second, The characteristics of stimulus: such as differentiation of alternatives, communication media and message content. Third, Situational factors: such as purchase or use occasion for a particular product. Present study aims for study of customers' involvement level for buying a Home Appliances in varachha region, Surat, Gujarat. Semantic Differential Scale was used to measure the involvement level.

**Key words:** Consumer Buying, Customer involvement, information processing, home appliances.

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## Introduction

Consumer Involvement theory is one way to understand the psychology and behavior of target audience. There are two dimensions to consumer involvement theory: 1) Involvement and 2) Rational/Emotional.

Involvement refers to how much time, thought, energy and other resources people devote to the purchase process.

### High Involvement / Rational:

In this category business purchases include purchase relating to the technological infrastructure, the office location and lease, the company health insurance plan. On the other hand consumer purchase relating to high involvement / rational purchases tend to be linked to high cost products and services like financial services and products, the purchase of a home or home appliances, major appliances and electronics.

High involvement consumer purchases can vary significantly on the rational/emotional scale from individual to individual. For example for Mr. Jigar, a home appliance is strictly a way to get to work, and his selection is based on fuel economy and reliability. For Ms. Reva, a home appliances is an important expression of her status and ego. The task is to determine how the majority of your target market relates to the purchase of the particular product or service. For B2C and B2B markets, advertising for high/rational purchases tend to be copy driven, with clear explanations of features and benefits.

### High Involvement / Emotional:

Business purchases that fall into this category might include such things as office design, advertising, and perhaps the hiring of certain employees. For consumer purchase, high involvement/emotional purchases can include jewelry, weddings, and holiday travel plans. In some societies the selection of a husband or wife will fall into this group. Again, depends on the culture, person, and how much purchasing power he/she has. Advertising in this category tends to focus on visual and emotional appeals.

### Low Involvement / Rational:

These are the things we buy out of habit, without much thought. This category includes most of the things you put into your basket at the drug store or market. The places you eat lunch,

say the local McDonald's, and office supplies. Here the typical role for advertising is to get people to sample or switch. To break the habit of customer spending their money on the products or services of the competitor marketer has to consider coupons, other incentives and find out ways to differentiate or re-position the product or service.

### **Low Involvement / Emotional:**

The satisfaction we get from these products is emotional or sensual. But this satisfaction doesn't last a long time. So we don't spend a lot of time thinking about the purchase. For example: A movie ticket, candy, an entertaining magazine, or a birthday home appliances and sometime selecting a restaurant for a special occasion. The advertising challenge here tends to be the flash promise of pleasure, of gratification, the promise of a benefit. Strong positioning can help, especially in a crowded product category. Pain relievers, cough medicines and the like, especially those for children, can be more emotionally driven.

### **Literature review:**

Purchasing Involvement has been one of the central issues in the consumer behavior literature because it can be an important mediator of consumer behavior, which can fundamentally influence the consumer's evaluation processes on certain objects.

Researchers have made significant efforts to define and describe purchase involvement. Cohen emphasizes the plurality of views that co-exist in the relevant literature regarding its meaning. Indeed, it is a concept which is often described as a medley of ideas. Some definitions appearing in the literature provide further enlightenment and illustrate its relevance to related concepts, such as motivation, goals and personality.

“Involvement is said to reflect the extent of personal relevance of the decision to the individual in terms of her basic values, goals and self-concept”

“Involvement is an internal state variable and indicates the amount of arousal, interest or drive evoked by a particular stimulus or situation”

Working definition of consumer involvement from **Creighton (1981)**: ‘a process, or processes by which interested and affected individuals are consulted and included in the decision making of an agency, planning group or collaborative entity’. What that process

looks like may vary greatly, but ultimately a key result of consumer involvement is that consumers' views and experiences are directly included in the planning and decision making processes.

In earlier years involvement researchers focused on the conceptualization of high and low involvement media and later on with consumers' involvement with products and purchases. They hypothesized that there are high and low involvement consumers and later it was extended to high and low involvement purchases. This led to the notion that a consumer's level of involvement depends on the degree of personal relevance that the product holds for the consumer.

Hence, it was postulated that high involvement purchases were very important to the consumer and hence evoked Extensive problem solving (information processing) and low involvement purchases held little relevance and thus had little perceived risk leading to very limited information processing.

#### **Different types of Involvement:**

Involvement with purchase decisions was conceptualized as a behaviour change in a decision strategy and resulting choice that occurs only when the consumer sees the purchase or consumption situation as personally relevant or important. The involvement of consumer with act of purchase was linked with perceived risk. It was found that when purchase was seen as important, the consumer would expend effort to obtain information and reduce uncertainty through: a) more willingness to perceive the information and b) extensive, overt search for relevant information. According to **Havitz and Howard (1995)**, enduring involvement reflected a sustained level of care or concern with an issue, product, or activity and represented an individual's ongoing attachment with the attitude object. Situational involvement on the other hand reflected heightened involvement prompted by a specific situation. **Richins (1986)** in their experiments noted that although both above involvement level represent an individual's state of arousal related to a purchase decision or activity choice, the fundamental distinction between the forms of involvement lies in the temporal pattern of their occurrences.

Situational involvement was a temporary elevation of interest that fluctuated, usually within the time frame of a purchase decision. Situational involvement was highest when a shopper was found to be doing a high risk purchase and was discernible at time of purchase.

### Measurement of Involvement Construct:

**Zaichkowsky's (1985)** Personal Involvement Inventory measured involvement with a particular product. **Laurent and Kapferer (1985)** created a Consumer Involvement Profile having five facets of perceived importance of the product (its personal meaning), symbolic or Sign value attributed by the consumer to the product, hedonic value of the product, Interest with the product class and the perceived risk associated with the product purchase.

### This in turn had two facets:

- The perceived importance of negative consequences in case of poor choice.
- The perceived probability of making such a mistake.

Consume behavior studies can help unearth much information to help marketer to segment the market, selection of target segment(s), developing the positioning strategy and develop appropriate marketing mixes for different markets and group of consumer.

The consumer involvement includes two dimensions, product involvement and situational involvement. The product involvement is defined as a consumer perceives linkage between an individual's needs, goals, and values and their product/service knowledge represents the personal relevance of a product/service.

The situational involvement refers to under the specific situation, the level of a consumer concerns about product/service. To the extent that product/service characteristics are associated with personal goals and values, the consumer will experience strong feelings of personal relevance or involvement with the product/service.

**Kassarjian** has stated that it is 'undeniable that there are differences between individuals which, regardless of the product or situation, make some people more interested, concerned or involved in the consumer decision processes. Kassarjian's notion of generalizing purchasing involvement is similar to a personality trait, in the sense that it transcends individual purchase situations and is a characteristic of the individual.

For a researcher to accept only one of these definitions would mean largely disregarding years of profound research work related to refining and developing this concept. In fact, two definitions have been adopted as being most appropriate for this research.

First, **Rothschild** developed a generic definition which integrates involvement with other variables which either determine it, or are determined by it, as follows: 'Involvement is a state of motivation, arousal or interest. This state exists in a process. It is driven by current external variables (the situation; the product; the communications) and past internal variables (enduring; ego; central values). Its consequences are types of searching, processing and decision-making.

Secondly, a definition from **Mittal and Lee (1989)**, who directly relate involvement to a goal object, and thus to needs, motives and benefits. Concisely, they define involvement as: 'interest in a goal-object'.

**Ms P. Janki and S. Premila** are conducting for the study these study four objectives are framed. The study was home appliances sired out with the sample size of 200 respondents' selected based on proportionate random sampling with in Coimbatore city. The data were collected with interview schedule analyzed and were using percentage weighted average score analysis of variances and factor analysis. Thus the study on consumer behavior with respect to involvement helps marketers to understand consumer's needs so as to recognize the potential for development of change in consumer requirements. The study concludes by stating that customer involvement and ultimately leads to attitude, attitude guides in achieving desired benefits and that in turn enhances the brand loyalty.

**Natalie Lennox and Nicholas McClaren** investigated consumer involvement with a product class. Data was collected from 178 vehicle buyers. Reliability and factor analyses investigated the structure of the Bloch (1981) instrument and the dimensions underlying involvement. In terms of replication, the results suggest the reduced-item version of the instrument previously proposed by Shimp and Sharma (1983) is reliable and is a less excessive measurement instrument. Similar dimensions underlying involvement with the product class are reported here. The study extends previous work by obtaining similar results in a different cultural setting, producing findings from a more relevant sample, applying an additional method of data collection, and suggesting that the underlying dimensions may be temporally stable.

**Havitz and Howard (1995)**, enduring involvement reflected a sustained level of home appliances or concern with an issue, product, or activity and represented an individual's ongoing attachment with the attitude object. Situational involvement on the other hand reflected heightened involvement prompted by a specific situation.

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**Judith L. Zaichkowsky** has noted that there is no agreement about how to define involvement and how to measure the degree of involvement. She has observed that although there is no single precise definition of involvement, there is an underlining them focusing on personal relevance. She has developed an involvement construct that include three antecedents. First, Traits of person: such as needs, importance, interest, value and unique experiences. Second, The characteristics of stimulus: such as differentiation of alternatives, communication media and message content. Third, Situational factors: such as purchase or use occasion for a particular product

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#### **Research objectives:**

- ✓ To know the involvement level of consumer for buying home appliances.
- ✓ To know whether consumer are rationally involved in buying home appliances.
- ✓ To identify most important factor consider by consumer for purchasing home appliances.

The following hypothesis will be tested at 95% confidence level.

- ✓ Consumers are highly involved in purchasing home appliances.
- ✓ Consumers are agreeing with the statements that they are rationally involved in buying home appliances.

**Research methodology:**

Here descriptive research design was used to measure the involvement level. Convenient sampling technique was used for selecting respondents. The data were collected through questionnaire and sample size taken as 100 respondents. Out of this only 96 questionnaire were found to be analyzable. For the analysis of data various test like t- test, chi-square test, frequency distribution, cross tabs, tables and charts were used with help of SPSS software.

**Result and Analysis:**

Table no: 1	
Have Home Appliances	Response
Refrigerator	96
Cooler	95
Mixer	91
Toaster	92
Iron	85
Microwave	08
Air conditioner	06
Other	01
<b>Total</b>	<b>474</b>
<b>Source: primary data</b>	

Table no: 2	
Who Take Decision	Response
Husband	35
own self	18
Father in law	25
Mother in law	9
Father	6
Mother	1
Son / daughter	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Source: primary data</b>	

From the analysis it was found that almost all respondents have home appliances in their home. (Table no: 1) and when it come to taking decision related to purchase of any home appliances most of the decision are taken by husband, father in law and own decision. (Table no: 2)



<b>Table no: 3</b>			
<b>Descriptive Statistics for semantic differential scale</b>			
<b>parameters</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Sum</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Important level for purchasing home appliances	96	510	5.31
Interesting level for purchasing home appliances	96	449	4.68
Relevant level for purchasing home appliances	96	445	4.64
Exciting level for purchasing home appliances	96	382	3.98
Meaningfulness level for purchasing home appliances	96	387	4.03
Appealing level for purchasing home appliances	96	354	3.69
Fascinating level for purchasing home appliances	96	349	3.64
Worthy level for purchasing home appliances	96	375	3.91
Involving level for purchasing home appliances	96	335	3.49
Necessary level for purchasing home appliances	96	280	2.92
<b>Total involvement score</b>			<b>40.27</b>
<b>Source: primary data</b>			

### Semantic Differential Scale

From the result of the semantic differential scale (Table 3) Total involvement score is 40.27 out of 70 and in percentage term it is 57.53 %. On the basis of this scale it can be interpreted that consumer were moderately involved in purchasing home appliances.

One sample t test:

Table no: 4

One-sample test		Test Value = 2					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Statements		Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
1	I would read a consumer report article about the home appliances	2.04	0.307	95	.759	.042	-.23	.31
2	Having a home appliances is the symbol of high status in society	2.40	4.150	95	.000	.396	.21	.59
3	I compared the home appliances characteristics among the different brands	2.61	5.967	95	.000	.615	.41	.82
4	I usually pay attention to advertisement for the home appliances	2.92	7.639	95	.000	.917	.68	1.15
5	I usually talk about the home appliances with other people	3.10	8.526	95	.000	1.104	.85	1.36
6	I should take advice from other people prior to purchasing the home appliances	2.95	6.589	95	.000	.948	.66	1.23
7	I usually take many factors in account before purchasing the home appliances	3.00	7.368	95	.000	1.000	.73	1.27
8	I look for more information and references in case of high price home appliances	2.94	7.419	95	.000	.938	.69	1.19
9	Home appliances reflect its' owner personality	2.96	7.685	95	.000	.958	.71	1.21
10	I would not take risk in buying any category of home appliances	2.85	6.257	95	.000	.854	.58	1.13

Source: primary data

Here the result is tested at 95% confidence level. For the significant value less than 0.05, the null Hypothesis  $H_0$  is rejected or the alternative Hypothesis  $H_1$  is accepted. For the significant value greater than 0.05, the Null Hypothesis  $H_0$  is accepted or alternative Hypothesis  $H_1$  is rejected.

If Null Hypothesis is accepted, it means that there is no significance difference between the calculated sample mean and hypothesized population mean (2.00). And if Null Hypothesis is rejected, it means that there is significance difference between the calculated sample mean and hypothesized populations mean (2.00).

In above table negative t Value indicates that for the members are not agree with these statements or simply respondent tries to Neutral.

Here in above test Null Hypothesis is accepted only in case of the statement no. 1 because significant value is 0.759 which is greater than 0.05 which means there is no significant difference between hypothesize mean and population mean. And for remaining statements null hypothesis is rejected, it means there is significant difference between hypothesize mean and population mean.

#### Most important factor for purchasing home appliances.

<b>Analysis of factors considered by consumers before purchasing home appliances</b>					
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Most Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Most Important</b>
Availability	64	21	7	2	2
Delivery term	25	63	7	1	0
Delivery time	12	30	52	1	1
Discounts offered	13	31	30	19	3
Finance terms	16	32	28	14	6
Extension of credit	17	21	35	17	6
Technical support	18	32	26	16	4
Transportation cost	17	32	24	13	10

Packaging	27	22	25	17	5
Reliability of supply	21	20	33	16	6
Quality	22	21	21	23	9
Product range	22	36	22	8	8
Price	21	23	29	18	5
Performance	26	22	22	18	8
Minimum qty. requirement	18	33	25	12	8
Brand name	20	32	23	15	6
Facility	21	31	24	15	5

Source: primary data

Factor like (Table no:4) price, availability, delivery terms, financial terms, technical support, products range, brand name, facility, performance and minimum quantity requirement are the most important factors for consumers before purchasing home appliances.

### Conclusion:

Total overall involvement level for buying home appliances is 57.53 % (score is 40.27 out of 70). On the basis of this involvement level it is found that are moderately involved for purchasing of home appliances. Most of customer agrees with the statement like the read consumer report considers many factor like, not take risk, taking advice from other before purchasing home appliances. This indicates their rational decision making approach for purchasing home appliances.

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