



IMPACT OF SITUATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING ON BUYER BEHAVIOR

Shiva Ghavami Lahiji

Manager of Goyasina Language Institute, Bandar Abbas, Iran

ABSTRACT

Consumer buying behavior is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behavior in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service. The study of consumer behavior draws upon social science disciplines of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and economics. Situational influences are temporary conditions that affect how buyers behave—whether they actually buy products, buy additional products, or buy nothing at all from sellers. They include things like physical factors, social factors, time factors, the reason for the buyer's purchase, and the buyer's mood. The present study attempts to prioritize situational factors on consumers' purchasing behavior in Bandar Abbas.

KEYWORDS: Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Consumer Buying Behavior, Situational Factors, Buying Factors.

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of situational factors affecting on buyer behavior in Bandar Abbas, Republic of Iran. Analysis of consumer buying behavior is important. Knowing what consumers want, how they want to buy, what features are important to them and what characteristics they are willing to pay for, can provide valuable insights in meeting consumer expectations and growing a business (Ross et al. (2010). In fact, it aims at improving business performance through an understanding of the customer's preferences and desires (Patwardhan et al. (2010).

Consumer behavior is a vast and complex subject (Ksenia 2013; Jisana 2014). Also consumer purchase decision is controversial and challenging issues (Ksenia 2013).

Understanding consumer behavior and “knowing consumers” are not that simple (Gibson 2010; Jisana 2014). It is almost impossible to predict with accuracy, how consumers will behave in a given situation (Jisana 2014) because of the changing technology, innovation, and changes in lifestyle (Gibson 2010).

In the present world, many companies are concerned about attracting new consumers and retaining existing consumers and expanding the market (Karimi and Rahmani 2013). According to Dadras (2015), in determining of purchase behavior, the consumer decision-making process is essential. It can be claimed that in today’s world of growing competition where there are numerous brands selling the same products, consumers have an abundant number of choices and many diverse factors that influence their buying behavior. In such a scenario, this analysis can help in structuring and formulating different strategies for maximizing profit (Patwardhan et al. (2010).

1.1 SITUATIONAL FACTORS

The most important situational factors identified in this study include:

1. *Consumer’s Physical Situation:* Marketing professionals take physical factors such as a store’s design and layout into account when they are designing their facilities. Presumably, the longer buyers wander around a facility, the more they will spend. Grocery stores frequently place bread and milk products on the opposite ends of the stores because people often need both types of products. To buy both, they have to walk around an entire store, which of course, is loaded with other items they might see and purchase. Store locations are another example of a physical factor. Starbucks has done a good job in terms of locating its stores. It has the process down to a science; you can scarcely drive a few miles down the road without passing a Starbucks. Buyers can also buy cups of Starbucks coffee at many grocery stores and in airports—virtually any place where there is foot traffic. Physical factors like these—the ones over which firms have control—are called atmospherics. In addition to store locations, they include the music played at stores, the lighting, temperature, and even the smells buyers’ experience. Research shows that “strategic fragrancing” results in customers staying in stores longer, buying more, and leaving with better impression of the quality of stores’ services and products.
2. *Consumer’s Social Situation:* The social situation of buyers can significantly affect what they will buy, how much of it, and when. Perhaps buyers have seen Girl Scouts selling cookies outside grocery stores and other retail establishments and purchased

nothing from them. But what if a buyer neighbor's daughter is selling the cookies? Some companies that sell their products at parties understand that the social situation buyer is in makes a difference. Certain social situations can also make a buyer less willing to buy products. Buyers might spend quite a bit of money each month eating at fast-food restaurants. Likewise, if a buyer has turned down a drink or dessert on a date because his friend was worried about what the person he was with might have thought, his friend consumption was affected by buyer social situation.

3. *Consumer's Time Situation*: The time of day, the time of year, and how much time consumers feel like they have to shop also affects what they buy. Some buyers are a "morning person" or "evening person" affects shopping patterns. Boarding supermarkets are extremely affecting in tune to physical factors such as time and how it affects buyers. Companies worldwide are aware of people's lack of time and are finding ways to accommodate them. Some doctors' offices offer drive-through shots for patients who are in a hurry and for elderly patients who find it difficult to get out of their cars.
4. *Reason for the Consumer's Purchase*: The reason of a buyer shopping also affects the amount of time he will spend shopping. Making an emergency purchase, shopping for a gift are some examples in this issue. In recent years, emergency clinics have sprung up in strip malls all over the Bandar Abbas city. Convenience is one reason. The other is sheer necessity. Purchasing a gift might not be an emergency situation, but a buyer might not want to spend much time shopping for it either. Gift certificates have been a popular way to purchase for years. But now a buyer can purchase them as cards at nearest grocery store.

2. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Data were collected through a questionnaire that was implemented in person through interviews with 600 consumers to randomly chosen ages 20 to 65 in numerous shopping places and asking them about their experiences of daily buying base on impact of their situational factors as mentioned in the study. The sample was calculated according to the Cochran formula.

2.1 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first part of the analysis was concerned with classifying attributes according to the gender and the second part is according to buyers' age distribution. The study used the Kendall tau rank correlation coefficient in treating the data collected through the survey, to better assess the correlation of variables. This was done by using SPSS statistical software.

TABLE 3. AN OVERVIEW OF KENDALL'S TAU CORRELATION BETWEEN BUYER'S AGE DISTRIBUTION AND GENDER VS. SITUATIONAL FACTORS

	Physical Situation		Social Situation		Time Situation		Reason for Purchasing	
Gender	.026	.022	.076*	.022	-.033*	.012	.020	-.053*
20-30 years	.074*	-.019	-.025	.058*	-.067	.038	-.031	.041
30-40 years	-.013	.062	.016	.081*	-.053	.021	-.021	.062
40-50 years	-.057	.132	.093	-.040	-.025	.021*	.033	.140
Above 50 years	.101	.044	.059	.061	-.021	.020	.051	-.103

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

The Kendall's tau findings, describes the significant correlation between buyers' gender and age disturbing vs. situational factors as follows:

- *Gender vs. Situational Factors.* On the buying behavior of female buyers among the situational factors, "time situation" and "reason for purchasing" have greater priority. Also, for male buyers, "social situation" is an important priority.
- *Age Distribution vs. Situational Factors.* "Physical situation" and "social situation" are important priorities for buyers between (20-30 years). It can be seen for 35 years buyers in "social situation", and for 45 years buyers in "time situation".

There is not more significant correlation between buyers' gender and age distribution vs. situational factors.

CONCLUSIONS

Consumer behavior is a vast and complex subject. Also consumer purchase decision is controversial and challenging issues. Understanding consumer behavior and “knowing consumers’ are not that simple. It is almost impossible to predict with accuracy, how consumers will behave in a given situation. Situational influences are temporary conditions that affect how buyers behave. They include physical factors such as a store’s buying locations, layout, music, lighting, and even smells. Companies try to make the physical factors in which consumers shop as favorable as possible. If they can’t, they utilize other tactics such as discounts. The consumer’s social situation, time situation, the reason for their purchases, and their moods also affect their buying behavior.

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