



ISSN: 0976-3031

Available Online at <http://www.recentscientific.com>

CODEN: IJRSFP (USA)

*International Journal of Recent Scientific Research*  
Vol. 8, Issue, 7, pp. 18742-18746, July, 2017

**International Journal of  
Recent Scientific  
Research**

DOI: 10.24327/IJRSR

## Research Article

### CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT AND INFORMATION PROCESSING AS DETERMINANTS OF PERSONAL COMPUTER PURCHASE: A STUDY ABOUT THE RURAL MARKET OF JALOUN DISTRICT

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijrsr.2017.0807.0559>

#### ARTICLE INFO

##### Article History:

Received 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2017  
Received in revised form 29<sup>th</sup>  
May, 2017  
Accepted 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2017  
Published online 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2017

##### Key Words:

Customer Involvement, Information  
Processing, Consumer behaviour, Rural  
Marketing.

#### ABSTRACT

Rapid urbanisation of rural areas has fuelled inflow of massive population from the countryside and smaller towns into the major cities of the country. Especially after the opening up of the economy, the pace of change that India and its people are experiencing in their socio-cultural milieu is mind boggling. India, with its wide diversity, offers a fascinating scope to study the host of changes which developmental activities have brought about in its social & economical framework. Due to the advancement of IT in all areas, whether it may be urban or rural, the need of computers is constantly increasing. The purpose of the study is therefore to make an analysis of computer purchase in rural regions catapulted by factors like information process and consumer involvement.

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#### INTRODUCTION

As rapid socio-economic changes sweep across India, the country is witnessing the creation of many new markets and a further expansion of the existing ones. With over 300 million people moving up from the category of rural poor to rural lower middle class between 2005 and 2025, rural consumption levels are expected to rise to current urban levels by 2017. Rural consumer markets are witnessing a rapid developments and challenges to adapt to ever-changing customer needs and wants influenced by a variety of social and economic processes, e.g. globalisation, urbanisation, shift of economy towards services, changing lifestyles and thus purchasing behaviour of rural consumers. Purchasing behaviour is driven by complex social behaviours which have both rational and subjective influence on customer choice of the brands, products or distribution channels. Marketing researchers instantly attempt to relate purchasing behaviour and related aspects such as media consumption to personality of the consumer. New approaches, models and concepts are emerging at a speed never seen before however with a variable success of being accepted and applied in marketing practice.

Awareness about products, which can satisfy the desire, can be obtained from the attractive presentation of attractive items that provides information about new products, fashion trends or

suggestions of co-ordination. Consumer procedures are studied when individuals or groups are involved in meeting the needs and desires for selecting products, services, ideas, or experiences, buying, using or disposing. In the marketing context, the word 'consumer' not only refers to the purchase process, but also for the pattern of total purchases, including pre-purchase and post-shopping activities.

Computer is one of the largest untapped markets in rural area of India so there is large number opportunity available to computer manufacturer. This study will help to the computer manufacturing companies to make their strategies in rural area for being successful in rural market of Uttar Pradesh.

##### **Consumer Involvement as Determinant For Purchasing Behaviour**

The concept of partnership was linked to marketing the following ideas of advertising. Since then, there has been a great deal of consumer research for consumer convergence in the 1980s.

Consumer Involvement is the soul of buying behaviour because it defines the mentality of the consumers that motivates consumers to identify with product/service offerings, their consumption patterns and consumption behaviour (Krugman's 1967). Before deciding on the brand's preferences and purchase

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of the final work, the inclusion among consumers is to create and think about the product / service category and various options. It is the quantity of physical and mental effort that a consumer picks into the purchase decision. It produces the product / service for a person's relevance or level of personal importance, and before that / urges to make and interpret the information for future decisions and use, before the urging. Involvement affects the consumer decision process and the sub processes of information search, information processing, and information transmission (Kapferer and Laurent, 1985).

#### **Involvement: Origins**

Involvement originates from social psychology and specifically from the persuasive communication literature, where the social judgement-involvement approach has been used to explain attitude and attitude change (Sherif and Sargent, 1947).

#### **Classifications and Types**

(Laaksonen 1994) suggested that involvement has three forms or types: enduring, situational, and response.

**Enduring Involvement:** In conceptualizing enduring involvement, authors have adopted the social psychological perspective of 'ego involvement' which considers the perceived personal relevance of an object to an individual (Zaichkowsky, 1985)

**Situational Involvement:** The basic concept of this type of involvement is that it represents a 'mental state' as a temporary concern with a stimulus object. Definitions look at this form of Involvement in the form of intensity, which means that the degree, the amount of interest, the motivation, or the excitement.

#### **Response Involvement**

This kind of partnership refers to a behavioral orientation, including information acquisition and decision-making processes In this context,

#### **Importance of Information Processing As Determinant For Purchasing Behaviour**

Information processing theory states that individuals are able to change information, think about it, and process it. Information processing is the soul of purchasing behavior because it helps to identify the source of the product information before making a purchase decision. Consumers check the product, touch it, give information from the sources to the source and may read about it. Information Processing helps buyers buy products.

Information Processing is one of the significant subjects of consumer behaviour. In fact, information processing refers to the process during which consumers face to information, notice them, apprehend them retain them in their mind and finally restore them for future usages. (Moven & Minor, 1998). One of the issues facing most of the rural people how they can motivate consumer to get and process information so that they can use them when they want to purchase goods or use services. One of the essential factors in data processing is consumer's involvement. (Michaelidou, N. and Dibb, Sally 2008)

According to Blackwell *et al.* (2001) consumers go through five steps to process information during information search:

1. Exposure helps the consumers to get the information through his senses Example: Tv commercials' comes more louder than the programmes.
2. Attention Information processing is related to attention, which is the concentration and focusing on one or multiple tasks. Consumers allocate processing capacity to a stimulus. Consumers actively search out information that has personal relevance.
3. Comprehension helps to consumer to interpret the information in meaningful form.
4. Acceptance is related to accept the information from the various sources.
5. Retention once the background is established, but again, in order to ensure understanding and retention.

#### **Objectives of Study**

1. To study Customer Involvement impact on personal computer purchase in rural market.
2. To examine the effect of Information Processing on behaviour of consumers towards personal computer purchase in rural market.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Most of the studies on consumer involvement have been conducted in developed economies and more specifically in US (O'Cass 2000). In India, studies on consumer involvement received little attention except for few studies conducted by (Avinandan and Anirban 1996),. Initial evidence to suggest consumer involvement is a better predictor of behavior than innovativeness in markets where two relatively mature technologies compete side by side (Stanley, Lo. & Hynes 2006). Many scholars have followed the advice of (Michaelidou, N. and Dibb, Sally 2008). Who argued that involvement has to be kept separate from its antecedents and its consequences; otherwise an overly broad construct would result in making investigation of relationships imprecise. Involvement effect in purchase intention in different ways according to the type of endorsers and the stage in a product life cycle high-involvement products into two types: less subjectively based types and more subjectively Cho, V. (2010). Among such studies, there are a very few which attempted to examine the rural consumer involvement.

**H1:** Involvement determinants will have a positive impact on the purchase intention of a Personal Computer in rural Uttar Pradesh.

In the dynamic and challenging environment, understanding how consumers acquire information is important at the micro level for marketing management decisions and at the macro level for public policy decisions (Srinivasan, 1990). For marketing managers, understanding the information search is crucial for designing effective marketing communication campaigns because information search represents the primary stage at which marketing can provide information and influence consumers' decisions (Wilkie and Dickson 1985). In our information rich society, understanding how consumers seek and use information allows public policy makers to improve the quality and accessibility of information. The

processing manipulation varied the instructions given to participants about how they should process the information (Keller and McGill 1994). Search behaviour varies for different individuals (Moore and Lehmann, 1980; Malhotra, 1983). Kaas (1982) provides more detailed analysis of search behaviour by dividing it into different stages which depend on the knowledge of consumers about the market and the frequency of purchase. If consumers are unfamiliar with a product, they will enter the concept-forming stage. In this stage, they learn about the relevant attributes of the product and define their choice criteria. When the criteria are formed, they move to the next step which is brand information. Infrequent consumers who are familiar with the product category enter the search process from the brand information stage. Validation of the relationship between information processing and purchase intention can be very useful in rural context because, if selection of a particular variable category is found to lead to a certain processing pattern and subsequent buying behavior, managers could use it as another important proxy.

**H2:** Information processing has a positive impact on the purchase behaviour of a Personal Computer in rural Uttar Pradesh

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

For the purpose of the study rural consumer are asked to rate 2 Personal Computer determinants (Customer Involvement and Information Processing) on 5 Point Likert Scale for Personal Computer.

**Sampling Plan**

The study was restricted to the rural market of Jaloun District.

**Sampling Unit:** For the research total 120 respondents were selected from each.

**Sampling Techniques:** For the study simple random sampling technique was used. In this sampling method, the researcher collects the data as per their convenience in terms of location, cost, time, etc. The secondary data for this particular study were collected through national and international journals, periodicals and other existing reports that were based on the subject. Secondary data helped the researcher to create better comprehension of consumer behaviour towards computer purchase. Thus the study conducted and analysed primary data with the significance of the secondary data. The study depends mainly on the primary data collected through a well-framed and structured questionnaire to elicit the well-considered opinions of the respondents. Close-ended questions were asked to analysis the pre-determined objectives

**Table 1 Model Summary**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>				
Multiple R				
R Square				
Adjusted R Square				
Standard Error				
Observations				
<b>ANOVA</b>				
	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	18.82576	1.711433	2.736238	0.26155786
Residual	11.88392	0.625469		
Total	30.70968			

a. Dependent Variable: Personal Computer Purchase.  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Involvement

**H01:** There is no positive relation between Involvement determinants and purchase of Personal Computer in rural Uttar Pradesh.

From the model summary, it has been revealed that the positive association between personal computer purchase and customer Involvement is .78 (Its large value indicates a strong relationship). Since the significant value (p- value) 0.3 is greater than to 0.05. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant association between personal computer purchase and Involvement. ANOVA table exhibits that the hypothesis that all model coefficients are 0 is rejected at 1% as well as 5% level of significance which means that the model coefficients differ significantly from zero. In other words we can say that there exists enough evidence to conclude that slope of population regression line is not zero and hence, customer involvement is useful as predictor of computer purchase.

**H02:** There is no positive relationship between Information Processing and purchase of Personal Computer in rural Uttar Pradesh.

**Table 2 Model Summary**

<b>Regression Statistics</b>				
Multiple R				
R Square				
Adjusted R Square				
Standard Error				
Observations				
<b>ANOVA</b>				
	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	15.79091	1.052728	2.11692	0.078922014
Residual	14.91876	0.745938		
Total	30.70968			

From the model summary, it has been revealed that the positive association between personal computer purchase and Information processing is .71 (Its large value indicates a strong relationship) its large value indicates a strong relationship which is significant. Since the significant value (p- value) 0.07 is greater than 0.05. Therefore we may can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant association between personal computer purchase and Information Processing. ANOVA table exhibits that the hypothesis that all model coefficients are 0 is rejected at 1% as well as 5% level of significance which means that the model coefficients differ significantly from zero. In other words we can say that there exists enough evidence to conclude that slope of population regression line is not zero and hence, customer involvement is useful as predictor of computer purchase.

**CONCLUSION**

The Indian consumer durables industry has witnessed a considerable change in the past couple of years. Changing lifestyle, higher disposable income coupled with greater affordability and a surge in advertising has been instrumental in bringing about a sea change in the consumer behaviour pattern. Apart from steady income gains, consumer financing and hire-purchase schemes have become a major driver in the consumer durables industry. Indian rural consumer durable market of personal computers is very vast size and having lot of opportunities. To capture the rural markets, the industries which are producing/ marketing the consumer durables for that



they has the follow the different types of creative strategies to tapping the rural markets. And to know consumer behaviour is also important for tapping rural markets.

1. Modify the product to market it more suitable for the needs/usage conditions of rural consumer.
2. Develop entirely new products for rural markets.
3. To capture durable market share, the organizations has to consider the pull strategy and push strategies in rural market.
4. To promote the consumer durable products in markets better to use mixed strategies of promotional techniques in rural market.
5. To select best pricing method for durables, by considering demand of the product, competition, infrastructure facilities, economic conditions of particular rural areas.
6. By conducting the campaigns, exhibitions and trade fairs to crate the awareness about products and brands.
7. Arrange customer care units it all areas for clarifying and giving the information about their products.
8. Collecting feedback among the products after using the products in terms of price, durability, service, and satisfaction.
9. By considering the density of people, the organizations have to establish or open new sales outlets.
10. To encourage social activities for development of rural areas for brand loyalty.
11. Consumer-seller relationship in rural areas is an interesting area of study. Such a study will help in identifying the factors responsible for enhancing sales and consumption in rural areas.
12. Impact of socio-economic variables on rural consumer behaviour requires an enquiry.

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**How to cite this article:**

Singh, A and Banerjee, S.2017, Customer Involvement And Information Processing As Determinants of Personal Computer Purchase: A Study About The Rural Market of Jaloun District. *Int J Recent Sci Res.* 8(7), pp. 18742-18746.  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijrsr.2017.0807.0559>

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