A Study of Theories on Consumer Behavior

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Abstract
The different theories on consumer behavior and the relevant research conducted on the understanding of the consumer behavior. After the understanding of the consumer behavior, the different marketing strategies which are to be adapted for the customer loyalty. The success of the company depends on the maintaining of the strong customer relationship. Consumers are the users of any particular product. They may not be the buyers but they are the ultimate users of the product. The telecom industry has flourished a lot in last five years and this is due to the ever increasing customers and service providers in this industry. This detailed study will help in the comprehensive reasoning about the subjects related to marketing and change management. The analysis from the different research articles will help in the understanding of different research theories about this subject.

1. Introduction
The study of consumer behavior is necessary as it helps companies to improve their marketing strategies. It helps in understanding how consumers think and feel about different brands and products Ed Peelen (2005). How
their culture, family and media influence the consumers. It helps the marketers to adapt and improve their marketing campaigns and marketing strategies. The consumer behavior involves services and ideas and tangible products also. (Lars Perner)

There are different applications of consumer behaviour. The one is for making better marketing strategies. The second application is in the formation of public policy. The third application is regarding social marketing. It involves getting ideas across to consumers rather than selling something. Another benefit of studying consumer behaviour is that it makes us better consumers. The consumer attitudes include the beliefs about some object, feelings about the object and behavioral intentions toward some object within the context of marketing. The consumer’s belief may be positive or negative (Kardes). According to John C. Mowen and Michael S. Minor, consumer behaviour is the study of the exchange processes involved in acquiring, consuming and disposing of goods, services, experiences and ideas. It is an exchange process where there is an exchange of services and the exchange of goods. It may be an exchange of experiences and ideas. The study of consumer behaviour helps in decision making. According to John C. Mowen and Michael S. Minor (2001), during the 1970’s and early 1980’s researchers focused that consumers are the rational decision makers. With the exchange of the goods and services, there will come across a new behaviour which will be the behaviour of the consumers. The researchers have identified six types of resources that may be exchanged that is goods,
services, money, status, information and feelings.

The consumer buying behaviour involves stages that include problem recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, purchase and the post-purchase evaluation. These are the stages of consumer buying behaviour and at each stage the consumer has different behaviour (Blackwell et al). It is very necessary that we should understand the consumer behaviour at each stage because it will tell us to adapt which strategy at which stage. The understanding of the Psychology of the consumer helps in the understanding of the behaviour of the consumer at each stage. It will help in the devising of marketing strategy at each stage. The understanding of the consumer behavior will also help the company in analyzing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The consumer buying decision process is affected by the personal characteristics, psychological and social characteristics.

This paper focuses on different aspects of marketing, organizational development and change management which will form the basis for further study. It explains different marketing strategies firms adopt to sell their products or services to appropriate customers. These strategies reflect upon the nature of business and must be in line with the corporate goals of the organization. Selection of correct strategy is followed by segmentation of the market; why and how will the organization to do business with the target consumer group. Maintaining strong relationship with customer is important for the success of the
company. Rest of this paper has been organized as follows. In section 2 related works is presented. In section 3, analysis and discussion are covered whilst conclusion and future work are given in section 4.

2. Related Work
The study of consumer behavior is necessary as it helps companies to improve their marketing strategies. It helps in understanding how consumers think and feel about different brands and products. How the consumers are influenced by their culture, family and media. It helps the marketers to adapt and improve their marketing campaigns and marketing strategies. The consumer behavior involves services and ideas and tangible products also. (Lars Perner).

The consumer research mainly started during the mid 60’s when the marketing managers realize that they have to understand the causes of consumer behaviour. They wanted to know the different characteristics of the consumer behavior such as how people receive and use the information so that the managers can make the marketing strategies. If the managers can predict consumer behavior they can also influence the behavior. Therefore the knowledge of consumer behaviour is necessary for understanding not only the purchase decisions but also the different decisions regarding the marketing of the products. (Hawkins at al, 2000).

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The consumer buying behavior involves stages which include problem recognition, information search, and evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, purchase and the post-purchase evaluation. These are the stages of consumer buying behavior and at each stage the consumer has different behavior (Blackwell et al, 2005). It is very necessary that we should understand the consumer behavior at each stage because it will tell us to adapt which strategy at which stage. The understanding of the psychology of the consumer helps in the understanding of the behavior of the consumer at each stage. It will help in the devising of marketing strategy at each stage. The consumer buying decision process is affected by the personal characteristics, psychological and social characteristics. The customer retention is very important. It is related with the post purchase behavior of the consumer. After the use of the services or product, the consumers go into the satisfaction stage or the dissatisfaction. It depends on the quality of service. In the telecom sector there is a lot of competition therefore the customers are satisfied only if they get according to their expectations. To give customers beyond their expectation is the quality of the service (Jane Smith). There are changing customer demands with the
passage of time. The requirements of the customers change with the new technology and the customer’s wants become their needs. Today, the companies focus on retaining their customers and for retaining the customers it is necessary to understand their changing needs and wants and according to their changing needs introduce changes in the services and product quality.

3. Analysis and Discussion

To give customers beyond their expectation is the quality of the service (Jane Smith, Customer Retention). The customers are retained when they receive what they expect from the product. The customer retention strategies are used to retain the customers because it costs more to make a new customer as compared with the retention of the already existing customer. According to (Hawkins et.al, 2000) the customer retention helps in increasing the profit as well as the customer base. The customer retention strategies are used to retain the customers which are the elements of constant revenue generation for the companies. The customer retention strategies are used to retain the already existing customers and to maintain the customer base. It costs more to get a new customer therefore it is very much important for a company to retain the already existing customers.

3.1. Market segmentation

The segmentation of the market is done on the basis of different characteristics of different target groups. The market segmentation is helpful in better understanding of the needs of the users, their decision criteria and approach and it gives a
clear direction towards the management of the product (Michael J. Croft, 1994) The variables used for segmentation may be from different demographics, behaviour, geographic and psychographic factors Garland (2004). To examine the consumer behaviour it is very much necessary to understand the different target groups. The understanding of the consumer behaviour will help in understanding what the consumers want and what they perceive about the particular product. The demographic study is helpful in the segmentation of the market and sometimes the demographics alone are helpful in the segmentation of a particular market (Farnfield, 1999). The attitude of the consumers about a particular product helps in the understanding of the brand loyalty of the product. It is difficult to study a particular market as a whole. Therefore, the markets are divided into different segments. These segments are made on the basis of different characteristics. The market research is necessary for the strong marketing planning and that is only possible through the proper segmentation of the market. The demographic segmentation is on the basis of age, gender, family size, income, religion, occupation, education, ethnicity, nationality, social class. These are the demographics of a particular market and the understanding of these characteristics of a particular segment help in the understanding of the behaviour of that particular segment. The geographic segmentation is on the basis of the region, size of the area, population and the climate patterns. This type of segmentation is helpful in the market research. The psychographic
segmentation is on the basis of activities, interests, opinions, attitudes and values. The behavioural segmentation is on the basis of the brand loyalty and the usage rate of the particular product. These segmentations of the market are done in order to get the better understanding of the market and the behaviour of the consumers. There are three types of marketing models identified by. They are mass marketing, targeted marketing and global marketing. In the mass marketing, the whole market is considered as a homogeneous group of customers. It is helpful for the mass production and mass distribution but it is not helpful for the different needs of the consumers. The advantage of the mass marketing is that it is the marketing of the product at a mass level but the companies which adapt this model does not cater the needs for those consumers which have different needs and wants therefore they lose a particular market share (Hammond et al. 1996). In order to cover this market there is a new model introduced called the targeted marketing. The focus of the targeted marketing is those customers which has specific needs and wants. It covers those consumers which have different needs and wants.

The target groups are differentiated on the basis of their characteristics. There will be few competitors in this particular segment and therefore it will be easy for the companies to gain the market share (Schnaars, 1991). In the fast moving consumer goods there are different products which are differentiated on the basis of different target groups. For example, there are different detergents of a same company but for different
target customers. Similarly, in the case of coke there are different categories such as diet coke, coke for different market segments. The objective of this is to understand the diversity among the customers and group them according to their buying characteristics. Freeman (1992). It is necessary because it helps in better fulfilling the needs of the target consumers. Dibb (1998) gave the stages during the segmentation. The market segmentation helps in better understanding of the consumer behaviour and it helps in the better understanding of the needs and wants of the users. The segmentation may be done on the demographics of the consumers or their socio-economic behaviour. The criteria for doing the market segmentation are decided by the different companies which are based on the geographic as well as demographic situation. The market segmentation helps in the target marketing of different products.

3.2. Strategies for target marketing

It is very much necessary to select the target market. Once the target market is selected then it will be easy for the companies to devise policies for the target market. The target market selection is done on the basis of the characteristics of the market. The market is segmented on the basis of different demographics and geographical location. After the segmentation of the market the marketing strategies are formulated in order to target this market. A three tier process for an effective customer targeted market strategy was outlined by (Jarvis and Goodman, 2005). The different strategies are adapted for doing the target marketing. The specific segment of a market is selected and the marketing
strategies are designed for that particular segment depending upon the needs and wants of the users of that segment.

3.3. Customer base

The growth of the business is based on the acquiring of the customers. The different types of media are used for this purpose such as the use of print and electronic media (Sanchez, 2004). With the use of different type of media the customers are communicated about the product. In order to capture the customers the companies use different type of marketing strategies. The use of media helps in increasing the customer base (Parker and Mathews, 2001). The customer base is also increased by the already existing customers when they communicate about the product to other people. In this way, the product as well as the company repute is made better through word of mouth. The consumer base is increased by adapting different strategies by different companies. The satisfied and loyal customers also help in increasing the customer base when they communicate about the features of the product to other people.

3.4. Customer loyalty

The customer loyalty is how loyal the customers are to the product. Some customers are brand loyal and the customer loyalty is created through the effective marketing and providing service to the customers. Oliver (1997) defines the theory of loyalty as “a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product or service consistently despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour.” The loyalty of
the customers is towards the product reflects their satisfaction towards the product (Jill Griffin, 2002). The customer loyalty is achieved through customer satisfaction. The customers are satisfied when they enjoy value added services and they get after sale services. According to Bowden (1998) customer satisfaction is achieved by providing value added services and products. The profit is increased when the customers are loyal to the products and they are only loyal when they are satisfied. The customer loyalty is helped in increasing the customer base also since the customers communicate about the product to other people and in this way the more people came to know about the features of the product which enforces them to use the product (Merlin Stone et. al, 2000). The mobile users are provided with the service of mobile number portability. With the help of this facility, they can change the mobile service provider without changing their mobile number. The following figure shows the percentage of users who switched their mobile service provider between last twelve months and more than twelve months ago. It shows that majority of them switched their mobile subscriber more than twelve months ago.

3.5. Consumer loyalty programs

The customer loyalty programs are initiated by different companies and these are initiated in order to retain the already existing customers. The customer loyalty programs help in building long term relationships with the customers. The different loyalty cards are issued by the companies to their customers and on frequent purchases they are given extra points.
and on the basis of these points they are offered discounts.

3.6. Customer relationship

The customer relationship is very much focussed by the companies nowadays. The emphasize of the companies on the customer relationship management is only to keep the customers satisfied and get feedback from the customers regarding the product which is very much helpful in the consumer research and product development. The needs of the customers are better understood through the customer relationship (Judith W. Kincaid, 2003). The customer relationship marketing is how we find the customers, how we know about them, keep in touch with them, trying to ensure that customers get what they want from the companies and ensuring that the customers get what they are promised to get (Merlin Stone et. al, 2000). The key aspect of customer relationship management is the ability to collect, analyse and track the customer information. It is more effective from the cost point of view to retain existing customers instead of acquiring new customers (Merlin Stone et. al, 2000). The customer relationship management helps in maintaining the long term relationships with the customers. The customer relationship marketing helps in communicating the new features of the product to the existing customers. The customer relationship marketing is also important because it helps in the continuous profitability for the company. Retaining the already existing customers is more important as compared with the acquiring of new customers. Therefore, the marketers must realize that the real asset is brand
loyalty in the customers as compared with the brand itself (Sanchez, 2004). The marketers focus on total customer satisfaction. This helps in increasing the revenue of the company as well as the good will of the company will be increased (Gummesson, 1994). It is necessary to understand the behaviour of the customer in order to devise policies for the marketing.

3.6.1. Customer relationship Marketing

The companies get competitive advantage by devising different marketing policies. The concept of customer relationship marketing was given by (Berry, 1983). It is important to realize the importance of developing long-term relationships with the customers (Ndubisi, 2007). All customers are valuable and the companies have to manage them through the customer relationship marketing. There has been a change in the traditional marketing approach and it has shifted from revenue generation to customer oriented marketing approach (Harwood and Garry, 2006). In the customer relationship marketing the key target variable is customer retention (Thorsten Hennig-Thurau et al, 2000). The retained customers help in generating more revenue. The cost of acquiring new customers is more as compared with the retaining of existing customers. The aim of relationship marketing is to establish, maintain and increase relationships with customers (Grönroos, 1994). Customer relationship is helpful in gaining information on the consumer behaviour (Ndubisi, 2004). The customer relationship marketing is done by contacting with the customers and initiating different customer loyalty programs for the customers. The contact with the
customers helps in the understanding of the problems of the customers and getting feedback regarding the products. It is helpful in gaining information on the marketing intelligence. It helps in the understanding of new marketing campaigns, new marketing promotions (Burton, 2005). The market segmentation should be done effectively as it will help in the establishing of loyalty among the existing customers and potential customers (Gilmore and Pine, 1997). In the relationship marketing, the communication plays an important role in the communicating of the products. The relationship marketing offers the customers a strong commitment to re-buy the product or service and instead of switching between the competitive brands (Oliver, 1999). The relationship marketing emphasizes on the long term relationship between the customers and the company. In fact, the customer relationship marketing is just to achieve the customer satisfaction, retaining the customers and securing long-term profitability (Calonius, 1988). The different types of communication modes are used for the communication with the customers just to know about their needs and to know about their feedback regarding the products. The better communication creates awareness among the consumers regarding the product. The relationship marketing is to keep in touch with the consumers and providing them timely information regarding any changes in the products (Moorman et. al, 1992). The customer relationship marketing helps in making the long term relations with the customers. To make the new customers require more investment but the customer relationship
marketing helps in retaining the customers and it helps in generating constant revenue for the companies.

3.7. Long term relationship with customers

To develop a long term relationship with the customers the marketers should be aware of the needs and wants of the people. They should understand the psychology of the customers and they should be aware of the cultural and social differences in the customers. The information regarding the consumer demographics should be exchanged among different departments in the company and according to this information any changes can be made in the company (Coyne and Dye, 1998). There should be inter firm relationships also in the companies and there should be market networking (Wensley, 1995). The reengineering and the restructuring should be carried out to increase the existing relationships provided that the necessary opportunities exist (Porter, 1985; Trim, 1999). The building long term relationships with the customers help in deepen the relationships with the customers. The long term relationships help in the continuous long term profitability for the company (Michael Treacy et. al. 1998). “Call centre representatives is the company to the customer because they are the only employees your customers have contact with” (Richard Gerson, GersonGoodson, Inc.). The long term relationship with the customers helps in creating a loyalty among the customers and it also help in increasing the customer base and constant revenue for the companies.

3.8. Total Customer Satisfaction

The customer satisfaction is something to give customers beyond
their expectations. The customer satisfaction is determined through the continuous improvement, quality of customer service, price and how conveniently the product is used (Athanassopoulos, 2000). The satisfied customers show more loyalty towards the product and they spend more and they are less price sensitive (Rust and Oliver, 1994). The customer satisfaction is to give customers beyond their expectations and it is based on the customer's feelings after using the product. The customer satisfaction helps in increasing the revenue and it also helps in the savings in the form of reduced cost, each type of cost is related with the marketing of the product to the customers. The customer satisfaction is a mechanism for evaluating consumer purchase decision. It was proved that the customer satisfaction is composed of both expectations and performance (Oliver, 1997). The customer satisfaction is the feeling of the customers after the purchase and use of the product. Customer satisfaction is linked with performance and expectations fulfilment. The customer satisfaction is also considered as a judgement based on the overall experience with the certain product (Wilson and Nicosia, 1986). The different characteristics of consumer help in the purchase decision. These include the psychological, cultural and social factors (Sanchez, 2004). Customer satisfaction offers advice for companies. It provides not only customer research but also a road map to devise policies and processes. The customer requirements define the quality of products or services. The knowledge of customer requirements helps in providing information how the customers define
quality of service. A customer may be satisfied today but not motivated to be loyal in the future. The components of real customer loyalty are overall satisfaction, willingness to commit to an ongoing relationship and willingness to recommend the company to others. The customer satisfaction is the difference between the expectations of the customers from the product and what they get in actual from the product. The customer satisfaction is gained by fulfilling the needs and wants of the customers and by giving customers beyond their expectations.

3.8.1. Significance of customer satisfaction

The significance of customer satisfaction cannot be denied in any case. The primary goal of any organization is to satisfy its customers by fulfilling their needs and wants. The consumer dissatisfaction occurs when the companies are not fulfilling the needs and wants of the people (Oliver H.M.Yau, 2000). To satisfy the customers is also necessary because it costs more to recruit a new customer instead of retaining the one already there. If the customers are dissatisfied, they will communicate their feelings of dissatisfaction to other people more as compared to the satisfied customers who will communicate their feelings of satisfaction to few people. Similarly, the organizations whose customers are satisfied will have more market share as compared with those having dissatisfied customers. The customer retention helps in increasing revenue for the company as well as reducing costs. The customers are only retained when they are satisfied. The customer satisfaction is generally measured by enterprises and they hope the customers will stay with
them if they are satisfied but even the satisfied customers leave if they are given a good offer from the competitors (Berry and Bendapudi, 2003;). The customer satisfaction helps in the retention of the customers but the retention levels might remain unchanged at some stage. Customer satisfaction is the attitude regarding a good or service after its acquisition and use and the product quality is the customer’s evaluation of the performance of a good or service. According to Seybold, the consumer satisfaction can be understood through the equity theory. Equity theory states that each party to an exchange should be treated fairly or equitably. Satisfaction will be there when the ratios of outcomes and inputs for each party to the exchange are equal. Consumer complaint behaviour covers all the actions consumers take when they are dissatisfied with the product performance. The companies have to understand how they have to deal with consumer complaints. There might be the case that all the satisfied customers do not retain; they may not have any choice that’s why they remain with one brand or company. The customer satisfaction can lead to the retention of customers but it cannot produce customers on its own. The customers have different satisfaction levels from their mobile service providers.

3.9. Strategies for market dominance

In order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage the marketing strategy provides a process that allows an organization to use its scarce resources to achieve a competitive advantage. It serves as the fundamental foundation of marketing processes designed to fill
market needs i.e. keeping the customer in mind. The marketing strategy closely follows the mission statement of the organization and broader corporate goals and strategies. Marketing strategy for a given firm primarily depends on the market it operates in, what resources are available, how organized its operations are (procurement, production, distribution), who are the consumers and on what basis will it compete in the market.

In the market dominance strategies, the firms are differentiated on the basis of their market share. Each company struggles to get a good and attractive position in the market. The firms devise such a policies in order to get viable position in the market. They want to dominate the market. The market dominance can either be achieved through creating product differentiation or adding new features to the already existing product. The market dominance strategies are adapted only to get more market share and generate more revenue. In order to get the attractive position they do aggressive marketing and introduce different products. The market dominance is gained by offering the consumers something different from the other companies. The different products are introduced in different lines to introduce the differentiation and become dominant in the market. The other companies which are in a similar line of business will restrict themselves to a particular line business. They will adopt a defensive policy and they will focus on a particular line of action. The purpose of this strategy will only be to exist in the market and maintain their own position. To survive in the
market, the companies adapt the market dominant strategy and with the changing market competition and the changing consumer requirements, the companies adapt the market dominant strategy so that retain the customers as well as maintain their existence in the market.

3.10. Innovation strategies

The new product development is related with the innovation strategies. If a company is already in a particular line of business it expands its line of products. The expansion of the different line of products will lead to the innovation strategies which involves the introduction of different products. (Porter, 1985). The industries which involve the different innovation strategies are the different software industries. The fast moving consumer goods is also a particular industry which involves the introduction of different innovative strategies. The FMCG particularly involves such type of strategies because they have different products which are famous in different type of consumers. The innovation strategies in the telecom sector involve the introduction of different technologies. The new technologies provide the customers with the new services and enhanced products. The different telecom companies adapt such innovative strategies which involves the introduction of new products for a particular group of people and for people from different walks of life. The companies introduce different strategies on the basis of continuous research and development. The innovation strategies help in creating the product differentiation and it helps to create and add new features in the already existing product.
3.11. Introducing change

The consumer behaviour is changing continuously with the changing world. The consumer's needs and wants are changing and with the changing demands there should be a change in the strategies to fulfill those demands. There should be continuous improvement in every part of the organization.

The change agents play a significant role in initiating, managing implementing change organizations. Although, there is a continuous change going on everywhere but the role of change agents cannot be denied. They are the people who initiate change.

Before introducing any change in any company, it is very much necessary to monitor and observe the consumer behaviour of that company.

The company may do this through the data mining on its own part but there should be an external research by communicating with the consumers. The change agent may be an organizational development consultant, who may be internal or external consultant. The change agent may be a change leader.

The managers can also act as a change agent especially the middle managers in implementing change. The traditional model of management involves the planning, organizing, leading and controlling but in a world of constant change this model has to be updated. The rapid change in information technology and the change in the consumer's demands have significantly changed the manager's roles.

Change is a continuous process and it will come whether one is ready
for it or not. Therefore, it is necessary that one should prepare him for change and the change becomes a planned change for any organization. There should be continuous change readiness. The purpose of change management is to perform rather than conform.

The people who are worry about their survival resist the change but if they are given training and development and if they are communicated the advantages of change, they can become the part of people who initiate the change and change agent knows better. The big changes require the big changes. Any organization, being a living organism, is in the process of continuous change. Nobody can stop this process. No specific action is needed for changes to happen.

Some changes in organizations may be considered positive; then it is common to use the term ‘development’. Which changes are deemed ‘positive’ - that depends on the desired direction of development. Other changes may be undesirable and when they take place may be referred to as ‘deterioration’. Both the development and deterioration of an organization may be more or less sustainable; it depends on the change impacts the initial causes or impetus for the change. When the change depletes limited and non-renewable resources - thus diminishing the possibility of a similar move in a future - the process is not sustainable. When the change affects the cause in a way that increases the possibility for continuing progress in the same direction - then the process is sustainable. Organizational
development (as opposed to OD) refers to any effort to improve organization, and does not imply assumptions about people, organizations, or the change process. It is not really serious. What we mean by organizations is indeed changing. Self-organizing is the fundamental thing we need to understand and to learn to work with.

The change in the marketing strategy of any organization depends on the better understanding of the consumer behaviour of that organization. The changes in the strategies are made on the basis of the changing needs and wants of the consumers and their changing behaviour towards using the products. The change is introduced in the mobile telecommunication products according to the requirements of the customers.

3.12. Churn Management

The churn management is an issue which is being faced by most of the companies nowadays. Due to the increase in the competition the customers are switching from one company to the other. The issue of churn is there and especially in the mobile telecommunications market but the need is to manage it. Similar to the change that change is there and there should be change management.

The different marketing strategies used during the product life cycle helps in the churn management (Hawkins et. al, 2000). According to Hawkins, the churn is a term used to refer to turnover in a company’s customer base. The churn is reduced by adapting different strategies by the companies. They may be the price reduction strategies or different promotional offers but there is always a need to reduce churn.
4. Conclusion and future work

This paper has presented different aspects of marketing, organizational development and change management. It explains different marketing strategies firms adopt to sell their products or services to appropriate customers. The future work may focus further expansion of this work by taking into account application of the discussed in a different environment.

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