

Exploring Dimensions of Consumer Buying Behaviour: Review of Literature

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Abstract—*The existing models used in explaining the consumer buying behaviour are critically examined in this study. This study explores the models with the existing constructs and determinants. It has been observed through the literature review that Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) are the most frequently cited psychological models used to explain consumer buying behaviour. Volition or will is a construct by which an individual decides on and commits to a particular course of action. Under these conditions, perceived behavioural control which is important construct of TPB becomes irrelevant and the theory of planned behaviour reduces to the theory of reasoned action. Further, various other models are explored where Technology is explained as an important construct. Models like Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Diffusion Theory, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) are used in different context using other determinants and indicators of technology. Furthermore, literature also suggests a combined model of TRA and TAM with technology readiness as an important construct. Technology readiness gives an extended meaning to TRA where buying behaviour of technology related products and services are concerned. The purpose behind this is to explore the possibilities to explain the buying behaviour from a holistic approach. With this it is further suggested that various dimensions of psychology and technology as can be combined together as constructs which may help researchers understand consumer behaviour objectively.*

Keywords: *Consumer Behavior, Theory of Reasoned Action(TRA), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Technology Acceptance Model(TAM)*

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior refers to the cognitive and affective processes and the physical activities of people who purchase and use goods and services to satisfy their needs, wants and desires. In simple words consumer behaviour aims at understanding what, when, how, why, and how often a consumer/customer purchases. The study of consumers helps to examine their psychology in purchasing a product. Their behavior depends on various constructs which could be related to individual's psychology which changes with time (Soloman et al, 2012). Few construct which are important to

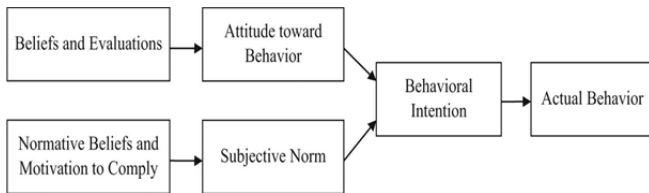
consumer behaviour are discussed here. Family plays a vital role in an individual's purchase behaviour (Juster 2015). They are the initiator to influence one's buying behavior. Reference group helps in influencing an individual's opinions, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour (Escalas et al,2012). Consumers often take opinion from any specific person called opinion leader, who may influence their buying behaviour (Lantos, 2015). Prominently people follow what their culture says. Hence, culture plays a vital role in purchase behaviour of consumer (Belk,2013). Social status of a person also influences buying behaviour. Caste follows certain rituals which are to be followed by every individual and hence affect their buying behaviour. Consumer's buying pattern and fashion changes with time and age. The self concept and reflection of consumer's own attitude which can be positive or negative influence his/her buying behaviour (Sirgy, 2015; Hosany & Martin, 2012). Motivation is another factor which drives a consumer towards a product or influences his/her buying pattern. Mindset theory in consumer behaviour literature suggests that fixed mindset and growth mindset have different views towards product preferences, effectiveness of advertising and trust recovery in case of product failures (Murphy & Carol, 2016).It has been observed that tourists are more inclined towards buying green due to more environmental education imparted to them. This suggests that learning is what consumer gets from external environment for a particular brand or a product which influence his/her buying behaviour (Zsoka et al, 2013). While reviewing the literature it was evident that there are many constructs which are used to explain consumer behavior in different ways. This knowledge led us to search for the combined approaches to understanding buying behaviour. These constructs are explained with the help of various models. These models refer to various orientations and perspectives with which consumer approach the market place and how/why they behave as they do. They refer to how the varying orientations impact the buying decision process and overall buyer behaviour. Existing literature suggests that these constructs are combined into the existing theoretical models given by researchers in different areas. These models are mentioned in the following table with author names.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing theoretical models which are used in consumer behaviour are critically examined over here. The constructs which are widely studied in existing literature are compared and theoretically analysed. The objective of this study is to analyse these models and ascertain whether given constructs can be used in different scenarios representing a holistic approach.

2.2. Theory of Reasoned Action:

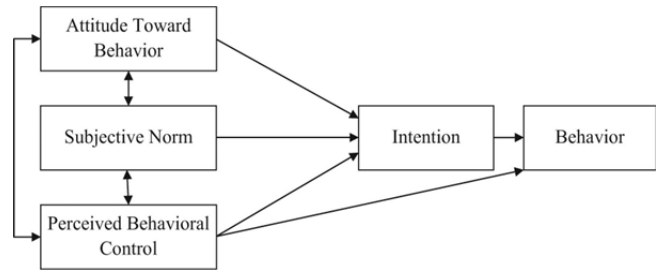
Many people seek answer to the basic question of why people behave the way they do. This theory explains what makes people behave in a certain way and how they decide on it (Mishra et al, 2014; Bagozzi,2014). Theory of Reasoned Action is a widely studied psychology model explaining consumer behavior. According to this theory, an individual's buying behavior depends on behavioral intention and this intention comes from attitude (CB Claiborne, MJ Sirgy, 2015) of an individual. This consideration for their actions whether to perform or not to perform certain behaviour comes from their intentions. This theory assumes that people act based on their intentions. These intentions comprised of two factors namely individual's attitude towards a behaviour (whether it is right or wrong) and individual's beliefs (decided by the social pressure whether to perform or not). This social pressure and messages affect in case of online buying behaviour as well (lee et al, 2011). Behaviour, behavioural intentions, attitude, beliefs, subjective norms and normative beliefs are the constructs used in the model. Trust and risk are other important themes in consumer buying behaviour which are explained using this model (Kim et al, 2008). This model has found its utility in various interdisciplinary areas.



2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

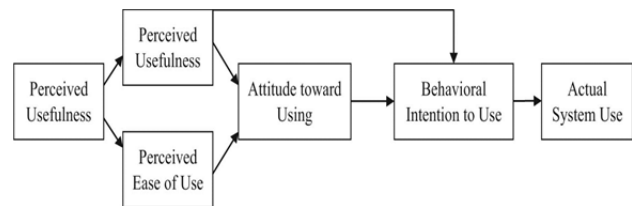
Theory of planned behavior is extension of theory of reasoned action with an additional construct name perceived control (Ajzen, 2015). This theory was aimed at explaining all behaviors over which people have the ability to exercise self-control. Perceived control means individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. It varies across situations and actions, which results in a person having different perceptions of behavioral control depending on the situation. This construct was added later to the theory, and changed the Theory of Reasoned Action to Theory of Planned Behavior. Attitudes, behavioral intention, subjective norms,

social norms, perceived power and perceived behavioral control are the construct used in theory of planned behavior.



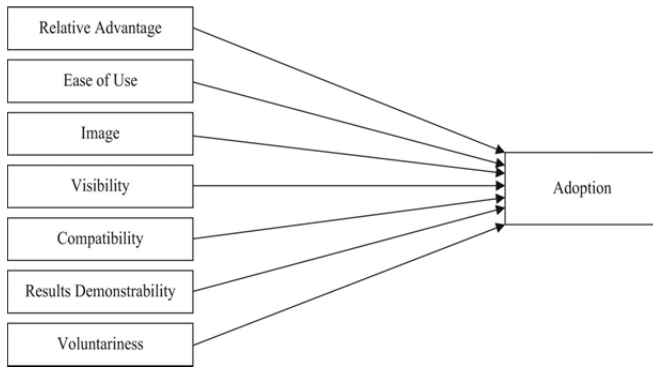
2.3 Technology Acceptance Model

This model is one the most frequently used model for new information technology acceptance. It suggests that when customers encounter new technology, there are factors that determine their decision about how and when they will use it (Nasri & Lanouar, 2012). Two of these generic factors of Technology Acceptance Model are perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU). Perceived usefulness is "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" and Perceived ease of use is "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort". Under these two factors there are various constructs used by different researchers in different context.



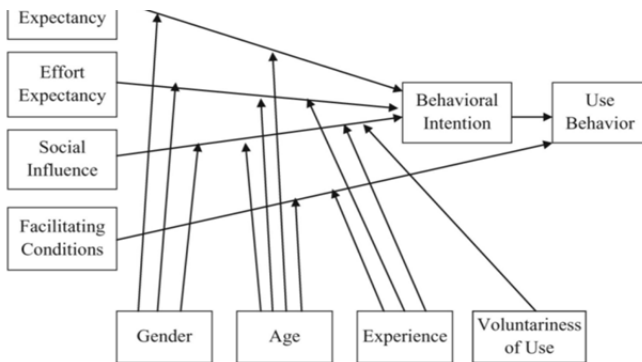
2.4 Diffusion of Innovation Theory

This model categorizes the customers into five different groups based on their engagement and adoption of new technologies and products over the period. These five categories are innovators (small group of people interested in latest ideas and technologies), early adopters (group of people who are can be engaged through little persuasion), early majority (they are basically followers and need reviews from the early adopters to make purchase decision), late majority (they are the sceptical people who are not very keen on change and would not adopt if there is a feeling of being left out) and laggards (typically they prefer traditional communications and will adopt new products when there are no alternatives). Few constructs which determine the adoption of new technology are relative advantage, ease of use, image, visibility, compatibility, result demonstrability and voluntariness.



2.5 The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT)

The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) is a technology acceptance model which intends to explain consumer intentions to use an information system and subsequent usage behaviour. The theory suggests that there are four constructs namely performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions (Jayasingh, 2015). The first three are direct determinants of consumer usage intention and behaviour, and the fourth is a direct determinant of use behaviour. Gender, age, experience, and voluntariness of use are posited to moderate the impact of the four key constructs on usage intention and behaviour. The theory was developed through a review and consolidation of the constructs of various models that existing research had employed to explain information systems usage behaviour from technology acceptance model, theory of reasoned action, social cognitive theory and diffusion theory.



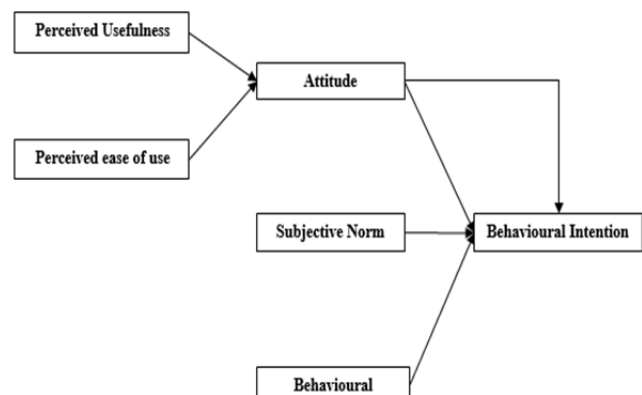
3. DISCUSSION

Theory of reasoned action is predominantly used in the consumer behavior literature to explain the individual's behavior. It is used to predict how an individual will behave based on his existing attitude and behavioral intentions. While in TPB, attitude and subjective norms are distinctly mentioned there is one additional determinant mentioned behavioral control. Constructs in TRA are used to measure attitudes. As suggested by "expectancy value" theory attitude is the product of individual's expectations or beliefs linked to attributes of an item or act. The theory of reasoned action (TRA) is a special

case of the theory of planned behavior (TPB). The only difference between the two theories is that the TPB includes perceived behavioral control as an additional determinant of intentions and behavior. In the development of the TRA it was assumed that people have volitional controls (Amaro, P Duarte, 2015) over the behavior of interest (and that they realize that they are capable of performing the behavior if they so desire). *Volition* or will is the cognitive process by which an individual decides on and commits to a particular course of action. It is defined as purposive striving and is one of the primary human psychological functions. Under these conditions, perceived behavioural control becomes irrelevant and the theory of planned behaviour reduces to the theory of reasoned action.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) tells how users come to use and accept a particular technology. Technology Acceptance model is also based on Theory of Reasoned Action. This model deals specifically with the accessibility of information system. This model helps in overcoming the factors which causes hindrance to buy/purchase a technology. According to this model acceptability of any information system is determined by two factors: *Perceived usefulness* and *Perceived ease to use*. These factors or constructs can be combined into existing TRA model giving it more explanation or higher utility in case of products based on technology. While, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) is a model which describes user acceptance of an information technology with a subsequent usage behaviour. It aims at explaining *user intentions* to use an information system and subsequent *usage behaviour*. On the other hand Diffusion of Innovation Model is one of the oldest social science theories which explains how, with time, an idea or product gains momentum and escalate through a specific population or social system. Diffusion of Innovation examines how ideas are spread among groups of people. Innovations are not adopted by all individuals in a social system at the same time. Instead, they tend to adopt in a time sequence, and can be classified into adopter categories based upon how long it takes for them to begin using the new idea.

4. CONCLUSION



Based on the literature review above mentioned model can be proposed theoretically which needs to be substantiated with the help of path analysis or structural equation modelling before being empirically established. Further it can be argued that a holistic model like this can be proposed which focuses on different factors and constructs mentioned in these models. Different combinations can be proposed featuring specific utility. For instance one construct named technology readiness in TAM is integrated in TRA as the determinant of behavioural intention. Similarly, TRs four dimensions Optimism, Innovativeness, Discomfort and Insecurity are combined. Consumers' usefulness about a specific product is positively correlated with their intentions and attitude to use it, Consumers' perception of ease to use is also correlated with their attitude and intentions to use it. Hence, technology and psychology is correlated with each other and they can be combined together under one head. Technology Acceptance Model, Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology and Diffusion of Innovation Model can be combined together under one theory called "Diffusion and Technology Model". Constructs which are involved under this model are need generation, exploring technology, culture, attitude and intention.

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