

Research Methodology

Literature review first draft

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Tutorial number : TO1

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Research gap

2.1. Consumers buying decisions

The articles are going to talk about consumers buying decisions, its meaning and the elements and factors that influence the consumers buying decisions and make customers want to purchase this product and differentiate it among other competitors.

2.1.1. Definition of consumers buying decisions

It is the decision process of the consumers to buy the product to satisfy their needs and wants. Consumers buying behavior refers to the behavior of customers while buying the product. There are types of consumers buying decisions like routine response, limited decision making, extensive decision making and impulse buying. First is the routine response which is purchasing the product immediately and needs no effort with very small research like milk and soft drinks. Second is limited decision making which is buying the product occasionally, and it requires a moderate amount of time and effort to compare brands before purchasing like clothes. Third is extensive decision making which is used in purchasing an expensive and unfamiliar product that requires gaining lots of information about the product, as it has high level of risks like cars. Finally, the impulse buying which requires no conscious planning. (Sharma, 2014: 833-834,836). As well as, consumers intention in buying any product is mainly about their perception about the product. Perception comes from the firms marketing their products and nowadays lots of firms concentrate on good marketing to attract consumers buying decision and build a good image in consumers mind (Kazmi, 2012: 11). Moreover, consumers buying decision is a psychological process that helps in understanding how consumers decide whether they will purchase this product or not. There are lots of decisions taken by consumers while purchasing a product like product choices, brand choices, distributor choices, total purchase and time of purchase. Product choice is the consumer decision to buy a specific product that will satisfy his needs and wants. Brand choice is deciding which brand the consumer will be attracted to buy from, as every brand has its own characteristics and features. Distributor is someone who is responsible for marketing or distributing products and consumers take a decision of choosing them so take distributor choices. Total purchase is the consumer decision in deciding the quantity of products that will buy. Time of purchase is the consumer decision in deciding when he will buy the product and finally the payment decision, as consumers are the one who will take the decision of paying their products whether by cash

or visa (Warayuanty & Suyanto, 2015: 75-76). Furthermore, consumers buying behavior and decision is a sequence of steps the customers face to buy the product and marketers should concentrate on it to make them decide to purchase their products (Khanfar, 2016: 96).

2.1.2. Consumer decision making process

It is essential to know the consumers buying decision process. The process begins by exchanging money to buy a product or service to satisfy the customer's needs, as a result marketer gain money from selling the products. Marketers should understand the customers behavior during the process of purchasing the product to remain competitive and increase their sales. The consumer buying decision process consists of five stages that the customers face to buy a product which are need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternative, purchase decision and post purchase decision. Customers can cancel one or all the stages, as it depends on consumer's mind. For example, the customer will skip those stages if he will buy his regular brand of milk however, the customer can't skip those stages if he will buy a car as in this case it is very important to follow the consumers decision making process (Qazzafi, 2019: 131). As well as, understanding consumers decision making process is hard in every organization. The organizations are concentrating about this process to satisfy their customers to purchase the product. The process is called "five-stage customer buying process model" which summarizes the steps the buyer faces and pass through while purchasing (Omar & Atteya, 2020: 123). Moreover motivation, learning, perception and personality which are the basic psychological processes highly affect consumers buying behavior. Lots of firms have tried to concentrate on consumers experience in those psychological processes to conclude the stages of Consumer decision making process. Consumer decision making process is essential to be understood by all the marketers and not only the purchase decision to gain customers satisfaction (Munthiu, 2009: 27-28). Furthermore, Consumer decision making process is the steps that customers face in deciding whether to purchase this product or not. The process got affected by internal and external factors. The internal factors are the psychological factors for example, attitude, motivation, perception and learning, as well as the external factors which are culture, media and any economic changes. Lots of researchers, by the time have understood the consumers and the steps they used before and after purchasing the product and summarized them in five steps (Nagaraja & Girish, 2016: 200).

2.1.2.1. Need recognition

The first stage in consumer decision making process is arising a need for the customers. There are two types of needs which are physical and psychological, and the firm should know the customers needs to satisfy them. Maslow have mentioned that personal needs consist of social needs, self-esteem, physiological, safety and self-actualization. Customers will face a need or will face a problem, so they will search about satisfying this need and solving their problems (Omar&Atteya, 2020: 123). Moreover, need recognition appears when customers identify a need and decided to purchase a product to meet this need. There are two factors that can cause this need internal stimuli and external stimuli. Internal stimuli are the basic needs that anyone should have which are Maslow's hierarchy needs for example feeling safe, hunger and thirst. The external stimuli are the artificial factors that led in making consumers demand a need like good advertisements about a product so you think to buy it (Munthiu, 2009: 28). As well as due to lots of changes that occur in consumers lifestyle and necessities, a need recognition appears. Researchers have said that consumers while buying the products, they may get attracted to other products because of good offers and advertisements so unplanned purchases may occur. As a result, occurrence of a need recognition is not only related to customers essential needs like hunger and thirsty, but there are other factors that led to a need recognition (Nagaraja & Girish, 2016: 200-201). Furthermore, need recognition occurs when the consumer realizes that he has a problem and thinks about purchasing a product to satisfy this need and solve his problem. The consumer decision making process starts by a need recognition, as when the customer realizes that he has a specific requirement that he wants to meet, the steps that he will follow to purchase a product will start (Anjana, 2018: 454).

2.1.2.2. Information search

After the customers identify their needs, the second step in the consumers buying decision process is searching for information to satisfy their needs and solve their problems. Information searching is essential in consumers buying decision process especially with high value products, as the products that customer used to buy daily will not need a search, but the products with a high value will need lots of searches to know which one is the best. An aroused consumer always searches for lots of information and they have two levels; heightened attention and active information search. First level is the heightened attention which means that consumers pay high attention to the product information coming to him in a receptive level. Second level is the active information

search, here the consumer searches about reading materials, searching on internet and asking his friends about the product. For example, someone who wants to buy a new laptop, he will concentrate with laptop ads, ask his friends about the best laptops and listen to laptop conversations (Munthiu, 2009: 28). In addition to, information searching can be done by external and internal sources. The most popular way is the consumers past experience, but external sources may be needed in case the past experience wasn't enough or changes have occurred in the way that the customers use to satisfy their needs and solve a problem. From external sources example is internet, it will help in knowing more about the product and its characteristics and to have a strong motive to buy a product and not only give options available for customers to satisfy their needs (Nagaraja & Girish, 2016: 201). Furthermore, once the customers realize that they have a problem and need to be solved, the consumers start to gain enough information to solve their problem. The search mainly depends on how important is the product and the value of it that the customer wants to buy. There are many search methods like media, internet, advertisements and asking friends and parents (Anjana, 2018: 454). Moreover, information searching enables customers to gain extra information that will highly help customers in their decision buying process like the benefits of the product, features of the product and other alternative. Information search always needed with the high value products, but those who can easily found and purchased will not need this step in the decision-making process (Omar& Atteya, 2020: 123-124).

2.1.2.3. Evaluation of alternative

After identifying the customer's needs and make an information search, the customers now will evaluate the existing alternatives to see which one will highly satisfy his need. First criteria that will be used by the customers to evaluate the alternatives is the hard product attributes. They are tangible aspects like the how much will the product cost, features and performance of the product. The second criteria that will be used is the soft product attribute. They are intangible factors like the brand image of the product, its design and style. However, it is not easy to evaluate the alternatives as it requires lots of time and resources (Nagaraja & Girish, 2016: 201). In addition to, in this stage the customers compare every alternative feature with the criteria they determine to fulfill their needs, then they choose the one which will highly achieve and meet their needs (Anjana, 2018: 454). Moreover, the alternatives are evaluating to determine their pros and cons and to see which one will be the best for the customer to purchase. The decision can be by

evaluating the efficiency and quality of the product which are the tangible benefits, or the decision can be by how the product appears, its style, reputation and brand recognition. All of those will highly raise customers satisfaction rate and motivation to purchase the product (Omar& Atteya, 2020: 124). As well as, this step will make customers decide whether they got attracted to the product or not, moving towards or away from it as it mainly influences the customers attitude and decision towards the product. Also, this step is highly influenced by the degree of involvement. Evaluating number of brands is needed in case of high customer involvement, but only one brand can be evaluated in case of low customer involvement (Altekar & Keskar, 2014: 5).

2.1.2.4. Purchase decision

Purchase decision is the fourth stage in the consumers buying decision process. After evaluating all the alternatives, the customers will decide which product to purchase which satisfy their needs. Here in this stage a real transaction happens, as customers will finally pay money to buy their chosen product. Some unexpected purchases happen while the customers buy their products due to good offers and advertisements. As a result, even if the customer passes through all the decision process steps, purchases may be done through store management and influence of the stock (Omar& Atteya, 2020: 124). As well as, in this stage the customer finally makes the purchase decision, but it may be affected by two factors. First the attitude of others, if parents or friends say that the product is not good and the customer can purchase a better one, the tendency of customers to buy the product decreases. Second factor is the unexpected situational factor which means unexpected conditions have occurred like a competitor decreases a price of a product and other social and physical factors, so all of those create the customer decides whether to purchase the product or postpone it (Munthiu, 2009: 30). Moreover, after realizing that the customer has a need that is not satisfied, then he searches about information of product and evaluate the alternatives, after that a consumer will decide to purchase this product or brand (Anjana, 2018: 454). Furthermore, after the customer has evaluated the products and ranked them, in this stage he will choose which one to purchase. However, if one of the customers friends who owned a product similar to what the customer is going to buy and gives him a bad feedback, so the customer might change his mind and will not buy the product. Also, if the customer decides to buy a certain product then on his way, the price of the product suddenly rises so the customer may postpone his purchase.

As a result, there are some factors that may affect the customers decision (Comegys & Hannula & Vaisanen, 2006: 341).

2.1.2.5. Post purchase behavior

It is the final stage in the decision-making process. If the customer has his need satisfied and his problem is solved, he may recommend this product to his friends and family and the marketer's sales will increase. The next time, this stage is essential for the purchaser's decisions as if they got satisfied, they will always buy the product from the same place. However, if the customer is not satisfied after buying the product, he will not purchase it again from the same place and will give bad feedback to his friends and relatives, so the company will gain a bad reputation and fails (Omar& Atteya, 2020: 124). In addition to, this stage is very important to marketers as they consider their satisfied customers are the best advertisement tool because when the customer got satisfied after purchasing the product, he will keep saying good words about the product and its sales will increase. As a result, marketers should highly concentrate on this stage as purchases will result in cognitive dissonance or discomfort (Munthiu, 2009: 30). Moreover, the aim of any company is to make its customers satisfied to build brand loyalty and good reputation, and this stage is very important factor for marketers to identify the next purchase of consumers. In case the customers were satisfied, they will recommend it to other people and word of mouth marketing will increase. However, if the product doesn't solve the problem of the customer, they may advise others to not purchase from this place (Nagaraja & Girish, 2016: 201). As well as, the purchase process doesn't end when the customer buys a product, it continues after the actual purchase is made. Marketers and firms should understand the customers Post purchase behavior to know whether they are satisfied and will remain buying their products or dissatisfied (Comegys et al., 2006: 342).

2.1.3. Factors influence consumers buying decisions

There are lots of factors that affect consumers buying decisions. Nowadays, in the competitive markets the 4ps have a high impact on consumers decision to whether buy a product or not. The 4ps are product, price, place and promotion (Satit & Tat & Rasil & Chin & Sukati, 2012: 523). As well as, the customers power of demand increases in the economies so marketers are trying to make good relationships between them to understand what they need and what will affect their buying decisions. The factors that influence consumers buying decision can be related to the

behavior, perceptions and attitudes of consumers other than the 4ps. Also, consumers can be attracted to purchase the product by awareness and good knowledge about a product or by good advertisements and offers made by the firms. Branding also is an important factor that may influence customers buying decisions, as a good branding indicates to a good quality and good image of a product (Mirabi & Akbariyeh & Tahmasebifard, 2015: 267-268). Moreover, when a customer wants to buy a new house, he will not only look at the price of the house, as there are other factors that should be considered like location and environmental perspectives. Nowadays, all the countries have competitive markets and there are lots of similar products, so marketers should gain competitive advantage to attract the customers for example, developing suitable offers that reflect market demand and promoting well their products to satisfy their target segment (Rachmawati & Shukri & Azama & Khatibi, 2019: 1341). Furthermore, lots of factors affect customers buying decision like some people see that price indicates quality so if the product is very expensive this means it has a very high quality and vice versa and lots of people care about the quality of the product. Brand image which is the impression of the product in consumers mind, it highly influences consumers buying decision, as positive brand image will make customers want to purchase the product as they guarantee a good quality with a good manufacturing country. Socioeconomics is essential in influencing consumers buying decision as it includes the income of people. Low-income people will purchase the products that only satisfy their needs like food, however high-income people will be able to purchase luxury products. Another element of socioeconomics is the personal characteristics like age and occupation, as every age has different needs so they directly affect consumers buying decision. Last factor that influences the customers decision of buying a product or not, is the social influence which are the feelings, actions and attitudes of individuals (Rana & Osman & Othman, 2015: 430-431).

2.1.3.1. Product price

One of the most important factors that affect consumers buying decision is the price of the product. Price of the product is the amount of money that you should pay to purchase a product. When marketers offer a competitive and attractive price, they will gain high sales and lots of customers will want to purchase the product, so they will build a brand loyalty (Andreti & Zhafira & Akmal & Kumar, 2013: 73). In addition, nowadays price becomes a competitive factor among firms to differentiate their products. Travel agency is an example of a competitive industry that is affected

by price, so they should have travelling programs with affordable, reasonable and competitive prices to satisfy all types of people (Satit et al., 2012: 524-525). Moreover, price is very important for organizations as it is the source of revenue from selling the products. However, marketers should concentrate on a good pricing strategy because price is a very important element in influencing consumers buying decisions. Some marketers use a psychological pricing which attracts the customer as it influences the psyche of the customers, the strategy of it is to make the price appears lower by using odd numbers. Some marketers use bundle pricing to attract the customers which means a single price includes a combination of products and services. Also, other marketers use discount pricing to have a competitive advantage and influence customers to buy their products (Salamin & Hassan, 2016: 63-64). As well as, price is flexible and can be changed according to time and place and it has lots of forms like wages and rents. Lots of researchers said that choosing a competitive price will have a positive influence on consumers respondents to buy a product (Amron, 2018: 232-233).

2.1.3.2. Product promotion

Promotion has an important role in influencing consumers buying behavior, as it is the communication between marketers and customers to convince them to buy their products. Consumers got attracted to advertisements, discounts and offers created by organizations, also some researches show that when discounts occur on brand name products, it will have a big impact on consumers buying intention (Andreti et al., 2013: 74). As well as, promotion is an element in the marketing mix that is responsible for convincing customers to purchase the product. Organizations use promotion mix tools for example, advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing and public relations to convert message of the product and how it is useful for customers. All those elements used to create a brand awareness and knowledge about the product (Satit et al., 2012: 525). Moreover, promotional mix aim is to build a brand loyalty, brand awareness and create demand. Marketers should highly concentrate on having good promotional tools to differentiate the company's products from each other and to attract customers and raise their sales. Nowadays, customers want to have a communication between the marketers to feel that they know the product and involved in the process, so this interaction occurs by promotion tools (Yang & Lee, 2016: 37-38). Furthermore, promotion tools should be highly organized, planned and transfer the company's

message in a correct way. From the functions of promotion is to encourage repeat purchases and create a brand loyalty. Free sample is one of the examples of promotion which is giving customers small free samples to give them an opportunity to try it before purchasing it. Price reduction is another example of promotion, here the marketers reduced their prices compared to the other competitors for a limited time to attract the customers to buy the product (Ashraf & Rizwan & Iqbal & Khan, 2014: 183-184).

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