

Paper- Consumer Behaviour

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Topic: Introduction to Motivation

Emotional Versus Rational Motives

Consumer behaviorist have also made a distinction between 'rational motives' and 'emotional (or non rational) motives. Traditionally the term rationality is associated with persons who carefully weigh the pros and cons of all the alternatives and then choose the one that gives them the greatest utility.

In the marketing context, we can say that consumers who are 'rational' will select the goals after ascertaining various objective criteria such as size, weight, price etc.

As against this, 'emotional motives' are those goals which are selected on the basis of emotion's involvement. Usually such goals are selected purely on personal or subjective criteria such as desire for recognition of status, fear, pride, esteem, love etc.

Example:

HSBC Bank through its ad had communicated about its human face (rational motives) to banking. Its power vantage account ad communicates that it understands its customers' dilemma on financial planning and rational decision-making.

Another ad from HSBC Bank by using the 'Different People, Different Views' campaign had tried to influence upon customers through the portrayal of the mother sewing up a teenager's fashionably tom jeans or the other situations shown in the ad. This ad has got an emotional appeal conveying that it understands its customers' point of view without going into the regular banking used phrases.

Though it may be argued that those who take purchase decisions based on emotional motive do not experience maximum utility or satisfaction, need not always hold true. For, it may be counter argued that they (such consumers who are influenced by emotional motives) also make selection with a view to maximise satisfaction.

Moreover, 'satisfaction' is a personal process and will vary from person to person based on his or her need structure, past experience and training. Therefore, it is improper to distinguish between rational and emotional motives

Positive or Negative Motivation

Motivation can be positive or negative. If an individual experiences a driving force towards an object or person or situation, it is called positive motivation. Whereas, a driving force compelling the person to move away from someone or something will be known as negative motivation.

Though there is a difference between positive and negative motivation forces, in terms of both the physical as well as emotional activity, both are similar. In both initiate and sustain human behavior. This is why researchers refer to motives (or drives) as needs, wants and desires.

Example

We can understand better the difference between a positive and negative goal with an example, Say, a young executive male gets promoted and is transferred to a new place. This man (executive) will join the 'local club' (a positive goal) so as to gain social recognition and make new friends. The executive's wife may join the kitty parties held by the other executives' wives to avoid a negative goal by others as an unsociable person.

In the above example, we have seen that both positive and negative goals can motivate an individual's behavior. Unfulfilled wants, needs or desires can induce

individuals to set goals which can be positive if the behaviour is directed towards it and accordingly it will be referred to as an approach object.

On the contrary, a goal is said to be negative if the behaviour is directed away from it and thus it comes to be referred to as an avoidance object. Both the approach and avoidance goals can be said to be the outcome or results of an individual's motivated behaviour. For example, a young woman may have a positive goal of 'looking good and may regularly go to the gym and visit the beauty salon. Her friend may view eating junk food as a negative goal, since she is aspiring to join the modeling industry. So she will avoid eating junk food and also exercise at the gym to maintain herself and be fit for a modeling career. In the former case, the young woman's actions and behaviour are designed to achieve the positive goal of 'looking good' and in her friend's case; her (friend's) actions are designed to avoid the negative goal of eating junk food.