

Review

Metacognition, Locus of Control and Consumer Buying Behaviour

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Abstract

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Adolescence is a critical part of human life considering the fact that all cognitive processes and abilities starts developing dwelling into an era of prominent qualitative changes. Cognition is a mental process that include memory, attention, producing and understanding language, reasoning, learning, problem-solving and decision making. These increased capacity and efficiency of the cognitive infrastructure during adolescence give rise to a higher level of cognition: Metacognition. There appears to be a relationship between metacognition and certain personality variables including motivation and locus of control. Consumer buying behaviour is a psychological process purely based on perception which influences his decision. The study of this perceptual impact in the purchase process will aid marketers in formulation of strategies needed to emulate a successful business model. Hence, it is quite imperative to study and analyze metacognitive traits in an individual which transforms to the formation of an individual's loci, thereby helping us understand behavioural traits and decision making.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behaviour, Locus of Control, MetaCognition

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence, a part of human life considered critical to their upbringing for the fact that all prominent qualitative changes dwell into this era of cognitive process development. Cognition includes a mental process involving attention, memory, producing and understanding language, rational, learning, decision making and problem-solving. Cognitive skills are also referred to as information dispensation, applying knowledge, and changing predilections. When taken from a development perspective, by the age of 11, information processing capacity gets to build up with aided functionalities such as problem solving, decision making, abstracting using the information available and reinterpretation by producing new information. These enhanced ability and efficacy of the cognitive set-up during adolescence develops to a higher level of cognition: Metacognition. Otherwise speaking, progress level of metacognition can be considered as a prominent

gauge of normal integration of a higher level order or executive roles. Metacognition is nothing but a type of cognition, more so a subdivision of cognition. The term metacognition can be presumed as the scientific research of an individual's cognitions about his or her own cognitions. Clinical research shows that there is a relationship between metacognition and certain personality variables including motivation and locus of control (Landine, Stewart, 1998). Locus of control relates to both motivation and metacognition (Bergan, 1990; Grote, James, 1991; Harter, 1981) for it tacitly includes a person's self-belief in his ability to perform a task. Locus of control is a personality trait, which expresses individual's belief in successes and failures occurring as a result of luck or effort (Rotter, 1966). On one hand, where individuals having an internal loci believe in their ability to control life outcomes through hard work and effort, on the other hand, people with an external loci

believes impetus of life outcomes depends on luck, fate or other external factors beyond their control (Joe, 1971). In today's practice, one of the most established variables in psychology is Locus of control and is used by psychologists from varied orientations (Rotter, 1990). Consumer buying behaviour is a psychological process purely based on perception which influences his decision. The study of this perceptual impact in the purchase process will aid marketers in formulation of strategies needed to emulate a successful business model. Hence, it is quite imperative to study and analyze metacognitive traits in an individual which transforms to the formation of an individual's loci, thereby helping us understand behavioural traits and decision making.

METHODS

Metacognitive Knowledge is subdivided into 3 categories:

1) Knowledge of Person variables - attained knowledge and opinions concerning the existence of human beings as cognitive organisms.

- Intra-individual:- knowledge or faith about intra-individual deviation in one's own or someone else's benefits.

- Inter-individual:- comparison amongst other people rather within oneself

- Universal - knowledge extended from evolution.

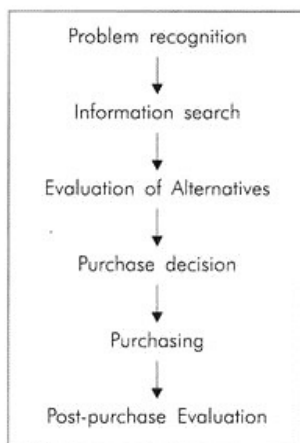
2) Knowledge of Task variables - individual learning about the nature of the information stumbled upon which affects and limits one's ability to deal with it (like getting students metacognitive abilities to study for a test).

3) Knowledge of strategy variables - are cognitive tactics to get from here to there.

- Cognitive strategy - intended to get the individual reach to some level of cognitive goals or sub-goals.

- Metacognitive strategy - allocates monitoring of cognitive tactics.

There are six stages to the Consumer Buying Decision Process (for complex decisions). Actual purchasing is only one stage of the process. Not all decision processes lead to a purchase.



Problem Recognition (awareness of need) can be stated as the difference between the desired state and the actual condition. A successful information search leaves a buyer with possible alternatives, which is then established against certain norms for assessment, features the buyer might need or not need. The buyer based on his judgement ranks/weights the alternatives or resumes search. Purchase decision is a behavioural attribute influenced by insight which may convert into a successful purchase or the buyer may abandon – all depends on the perceived notion of buying consequences. Even in the likelihood of a successful business transaction, there is always a cognitive discord which varies between satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This can be reduced by warranties, after sales communication etc.

Consumer behaviour, a part of human behaviour cannot be separated. Human behaviour is unpredictable in nature as the decision on what to buy and when to buy is impulsive at times. An individual's action for the very next moment is unknown. At best, one can at least guess the attribute of a consumer based on his past behavioural pattern. Study of human beings is tough and hence learning the consumer is challenging and multifaceted. Different situations demand different behaviour from an individual. Consumer behaviour is an everyday lesson learnt from each and every individual. Purchase attribute varies drastically, a product sold because of its smell today, might vary tomorrow and so forth and so on. Consumer behaviour is dynamic as it is always changing in nature. Consumer's behaviour differs based on their taste and preference. Consumer's behaving pattern changes along with the change in the modern world. Physical factors, psychology and social ideologies influence consumer behaviour. Status values can be one of the reason a consumer is loyal towards a brand. Another reason may be economy in price. Understanding these factors by a marketer is crucial before placing the product to the consumers. Hence the analysis of consumer behaviour is crucial for marketers. A clear analysis of the consumer behaviour is a must before any organization decides to manufacture or launch any product. In the event of the people rejecting a prospect or product, it has to be modified. Consumer behaviour is a continuous process as it is a personality trait. A psychological analysis of behavioural module is needed to be understood before making a marketing strategy. The study of an individual's loci will help in analyzing the prospects which leads to his behaviour.

CRITICAL DISCUSSION

To understand creative behaviour, the construct of locus of control plays an important part. Individual differentiation is the basis of locus of control which discriminates the notions regarding the localization of the

behaviour governing factors. One aspect of individuals having an internal locus of control is that they believe controlling their behaviour outcomes lies within them and they have a comparatively pivotal role in defining their own destiny, the other aspect of persons with an external locus of control is that they believe their behaviour is less significant in this regard and luck, chance, power agencies (persons or institutions) exercise a very authoritative action over their life. When it comes to the attitudinal level, it is considered that locus of control associates positively with ingenious attitudes - internal locus of control is the hallmark of creative persons although an internal locus of control does not imply creative attitudes necessarily. The internals are characterized by creative attitudes like risk assuming, searching for the new, appreciation of the originality and by volitional aspects with a more developed level as compared to the externals, etc. (Balgiu, 2011).

Senior school age is the period where an integrative self-conscious stable image is formed. During this period, the enthusiasm structure is being formed, and a steady prepotency of a certain motive is generated. Self-analysis is necessary, not only for association of reciprocated affiliation with the others, but also for union of one's own accomplishments, self-realization and self-development. Everybody falling on the continuum is categorized by a certain position (locus of independent control), which starts with the external type (where the events are inferred based on the result of action of external forces and conditions, which the person follows inertly) up to the internal one (where the events are inferred as the result of proper actions and activity). In consideration to all this, it is natural that the position might differ for one and the same person, based upon the type of situation and how it is deduced. Thus comes the concept of multidimensional profile, where social circumstances of different positions of platitude are tied to the varied types of components. In this context, such profiles might fall under a stable personal characteristic, which shows, to what level a person feels oneself a dynamic subject of proper activity in resultant fields of life. It is quite evident, that the approaches of analysis of various social situations, mechanisms of their spontaneous explanation mainly depend on the general trend of the person, on the molded system of inspiration and requirements. In this process, while gaining knowledge, grasping new values and developing a temperament, the motivation system is also being established and transformed. Besides, one of the processes of such self - directive, alongside with a more ancient process of emotive correction of activity, guideline of the reflection systems during formulation of new needs and an amendment of the motivation system, can be a mechanism of mindful assessment of proper activity in the conforming field. Thus, the control locus can assist as a good pointer of procedures of conscious self-regulation of a behavior and of progress of the motivation system and must be knotted to the motivation,

already available. It is predominantly actual for the senior school age – the vital phase of formulation of a personality, when the main beliefs and values, mechanisms of mindful self-regulation, motivation system are being protected.

CONCLUSION

The influence of personality has been studied on a wide spectrum of consumer behavior: response to advertising and design features (Holbrook 1986, Wright 1975), interaction style (Richins 1983), perceived risk (Schaninger 1976), information acquisition (Schaninger and Sciglimpaglia 1981), and social consciousness (Brooker 1976, Webster 1975). Since Rotter's (1966) influential work, locus of control has been an important area of study in personality research (Lefcourt 1982; Strickland 1989). In the consumer behavior literature, Howard and Sheth (1969) suggested that personality variables (including locus of control) influence the consumer decision making process, in which pre-purchase external search for information is an important component. Besides influencing much other behaviour, locus of control has been known to influence cognitive activity (Blass 1977; Lefcourt 1982).

Social learning theory hypothesized that when an entity identifies two situations as alike or related, then expectations for a certain kind of reinforcement, or a category of reinforcements, will evolve from one phase to another. Anticipations in each phase is ascertained not only by explicit experiences in that situation, but also to some fluctuating extent, by experiences in other circumstances which the individual identifies as similar. Over an accumulated sequence of past behaviours in interrelated situations (like information search before procuring a durable), a person cultivates generalized expectancies (GE) about the proceedings of the reinforcement that will trail a particular kind of behaviour. Now, in the context of buying consumer durables, it is expected that information search precedes the purchase, since the amount of money expenditure is high and buyers would be rather involved in the purchase process (Srinivasan 1990). Also, search behaviours are known to be influenced by the consumer's learning experience of similar behaviours (Srinivasan and Ratchford 1991). Learning from past experience aids in GE development amongst consumers who tend to undertake information search. Buying situations which are characterized by a certain degree of haziness will develop expectancies in individuals about the reliance of the output on one's ability. A higher GE in which reinforcements are contingent upon their own behaviour, internals would make attempts to more efficiently control their environment by looking for pertinent information. On the other hand, externals would have less need to acquire information since outcomes tend to be perceived as less

dependent on their own actions. It is henceforth, quite imperative to gain a deeper study on an individual's loci which in turn gets formed by his initial cognitive days. Metacognition as a whole, formulates the decision making system in an individual and studies related to these will provide deeper insight into consumer buying behaviour.

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