

# 14

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## Attitude Development and Alternate Evaluation in Buying

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Attitude indicates knowledge, feelings and intended action for the given stimulus.  
Good attitude does not result from good positions or wealth.  
The fact is that people get good positions because of positive attitude.

*One's attitude plays an important role in buying.*

*The student should understand:*

- *The meaning of attitude*
- *Attitude component*
- *Multi attitude choice model*
- *Basic choice heuristics*
- *Marketing inferences and action*

## Attitude Development and Alternate Evaluation in Buying

### ■ 14.1 Introduction

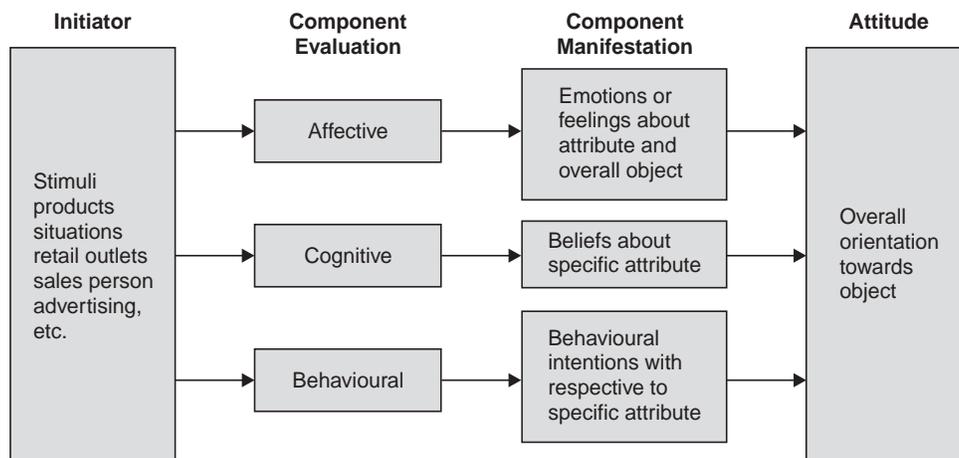
Consumers of all products are engaged in low, medium and high involvement information search. There are various questions to be considered.

- How do consumers choose among brand alternatives?
- Do they use any choice rules?
- Do they select best alternatives or reject bad ones?
- How do they find their way amidst many brand alternatives with different attributes?

People have different attitudes (bent of mind) for different products, *e.g.*, many consumers think of plastic to be cheap, artificial, weak, breakable, non-degradable, environmentally harmful and not desirable. They have a negative attitude and discourage the use of plastics.

Plastics also create positive attitudes, as it is light, unbreakable, easy to carry, handy. People do not dislike plastics, but do not know what to do with it after using it.

Attitude is the way we think, we feel and act towards some aspect of the environment.



**Fig. 14.1** Attitude component and manifestation

Key variables that surpasses all variables in alternative evaluation, is consumer attitude.

### Consumer Attitude and Alternative Evaluation

It presents a summary evaluation of the consumer environment around them.

#### Definition

Attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a constant favourable or unfavourable manner, in respect to a given object.

Marketeers try to bombard consumer with information. These may have a positive or negative effects.

Schematic conception of attitude has three components:

An attitude provides a series of cues to marketeers. They predict future purchases, redesign marketing effort and make attitude more favourable.

Attitudes indicate knowledge, feelings and intended action for the given stimulus.

#### Utilitarian Function

In building a favourable attitude towards a product, utilitarian function plays an important part. It guides consumers in achieving their desired needs and avoiding failure and disappointment, *e.g.*, desire for hi-tech products or after sales service may be the priority of the customer. Customer builds a favourable attitude if he is satisfied with the function, *e.g.*, safety, image etc.

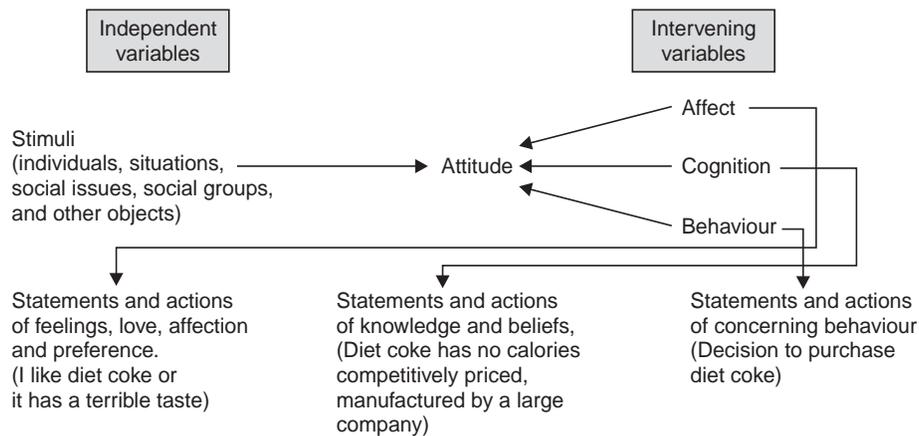


Fig. 14.2 Schematic conception of attitudes

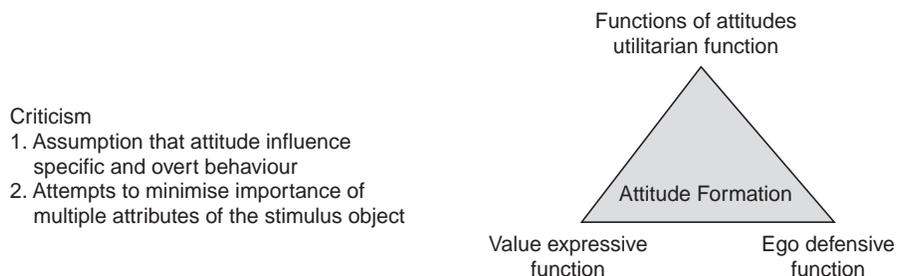


Fig. 14.3

### Ego Defensive Function

Individuals are attracted towards products that give them protection and enhance their image in a society. It protects consumers against internal and external anxieties and environment. Here marketing stimuli and more particularly products become an instrument of the protection process, *e.g.*, visible prestige products, mouthwash, deodorants, perfumes, make an individual more acceptable in a gathering, *e.g.*, mouthwashes are used to avoid anxiety producing situations. Creams are used for removing pimples from the face.

### Value Expressive Function

This helps to maintain self-identity among consumers and lead them to expression and determination, *e.g.*, Gandhian followers—select handloom and khadi clothes.

Consumer openly expresses opinions that reflect their belief and self concept.

### Knowledge Function

The knowledge that listerine stops bad breath. The knowledge that high cholesterol food is not good for health.

Consumers want to uphold the values they stand for. As a member of a club, one has to conform to the attire prescribed by that club.

## ■ 14.2 Heuristics (The choice-making rules)

The advantages of choice rules to consumers are:

- Guidance while decision-making
- Short-cut to decision-making
- Helps to integrate and arrange information to enable quick decisions
- Helps them to take complex decisions.

After recognising the problem and completing information search, the consumer combines and integrates various attributes to facilitate choice making.

Marketeers must know what criteria are available to consumers which may be used and why? How can marketeers affect choice rules? Purchase decisions may be:

R.R.B.—Routinised Response Behaviour.

L.P.S.—Limited Problem Solving.

E.P.S.—Extended Problem Solving.

The above three types of behaviour have already been discussed in the earlier section of the chapter. For extended problem solving a multi-attribute choice model is used. In this model if the choice is to be made between various brands of products, their attributes are listed and weightages on these attributes are given by the customer according to the importance of attributes. These attributes are rated on a scale (1 to 5) and the total is found out. The higher is the total of ranking, more suitable may be the brand. This is illustrated in the following example.

Consumers use different evaluative criteria in different situations, despite the product being the same. A plethora of evaluation processes are available. There are complexities of evaluation of attributes. A buyer of a computer may look for many attributes. This is a very involving process.

### Product Attributes

Product-bundle of benefit expressed through its attributes desired by its target consumer. These vary with customers and are determined by their needs, *e.g.*, for a female lipstick buyer, range of shades, packaging, price and prestige factor are the desired attributes.

Car—styling, low maintenance, fuel economy, price are the desired attributes.

Types of information sought in search behaviour for fulfilling product needs.

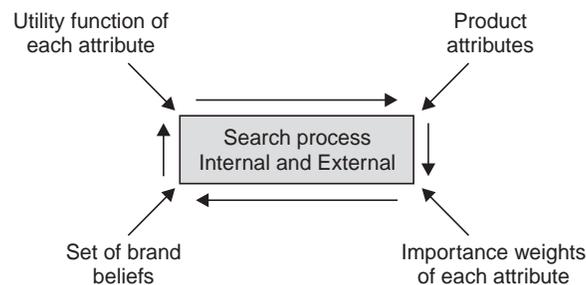


Fig. 14.4 Attributes vary with consumer and are determined by consumer needs

### Importance of Weights

All attributes are not equally important to different buyers of similar products, *e.g.*, lipstick buyer may conclude that price is more important than prestige factor, or vice-versa in brand evaluation. For a car, fuel economy may be more important than styling or vice-versa. Importance of attributes helps a consumer to reach a balanced evaluation.

### Brand Belief

The brand image helps consumers, *i.e.*, believing which brand is more likely to have a particular attribute, based on consumer perception, and may be at variance with reality, *e.g.*, what a consumer believes about a brand may not be true.

### Utility

By combining the performance levels of salient attributes, consumers can determine utility and make-up what is called an 'ideal brand'.

In evaluating, it has to be decided how many brands will be considered. For a mixer/grinder, a large number of brands are available. This is known as the *total set*.

### Awareness set

The brands one is aware of, as given in Column II of Table 14.1.

### Marketing gains are many

1. *Marketeers find* where their brand ranks in terms of consumer knowledge.
2. It indicates the limits of consumer awareness and recall for the number of brands.
3. *Marketeers know* how to reinforce their efforts to push their brands in the consideration set.
4. Prevent from going into inept set.
5. Provide information to meet expectation of consumer.

Table 14.1 How many brand alternatives to consider?

<b>Example I</b> <i>Selection of a mixer/grinder</i>					
<i>I</i>	<i>II</i>	<i>III</i>	<i>IV</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>VI</i>
<i>Total set</i>	<i>Awareness set</i>	<i>Inept set</i>	<i>Consideration set</i>	<i>Choice set</i>	<i>Choice</i>
Singer Phillips Inalsa Solar Maharaja Sumit Bajaj Gopi Jaipan Kanchan	Singer Phillips Inalsa Maharaja Gopi Kanchan	Maharaja Kanchan	Singer Phillips Inalsa Gopi	Singer Inalsa	? Ultimate choice
<b>Example II</b> <i>Selection of a washing machine</i>					
IFB Whirlpool BPL LG Videocon Maharaja Sumit Godrej	IFB Whirlpool BPL LG Sumit Godrej	Videocon Maharaja	IFB Whirlpool BPL LG Sumit Godrej	IFB Whirlpool BPL	? Ultimate choice
Brands available in the market	Brands potential buyer is aware of	Brands rejected not suitable not available	Brands meeting initial expectation and evaluative criteria	Brands in contention with final choice	Ultimate choice

### ■ 14.3 Multi-Attribute Choice Models

They explain how consumers may combine their beliefs about product attributes to form their attitude about various brand alternatives. A brand which forms the best attitude is chosen. Consumers go through a standard hierarchy of effects sequence (awareness-interest-desire-action).

#### Attitude-Towards-Object (ATO) Model

- Seeks information on importance of brand attributes.
- Belief about the presence or absence of those attributes in brand alternatives.

- Information on their combined effect in alternative evaluation.

$$A_0 = \sum_{i=1}^n B_i a_i$$

$A_0$  = Overall attitude towards object 'O'.

$B_i$  = Belief of whether or not object 'O' has a particular attribute.

$a_i$  = Importance rating of the attributes. Rated on a 1-5 scale in the example shown.

$n$  = Number of beliefs.

*Process:* To choose between the 3 cars (Premier, Ambassador and Maruti). First the attributes are chosen then the weightages are assigned to them, then the importance of these ratings are decided on a 1 to 5 scale as shown, then  $a \times b$  gives the value for each attribute. This is then added for all the attributes, and the final score gives the ratings of the car for the choice.

Table 14.2



Attribute	Weight <i>a</i>	Premier		Ambassador		Maruti	
		<i>B</i>	<i>a</i> × <i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>a</i> × <i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>a</i> × <i>B</i>
Designing	3	3	9	2	6	5	15
Low maintenance cost	2	3	6	2	4	2	4
Fuel efficiency	1	3	3	3	3	5	5
Total			18		13		24

- Maruti = Best car
- Premier = Average
- Ambassador = Worst of the lot

This model fails to consider that often consumer attitude does not equate with behaviour.

**Heuristics**—rules that guides the search into areas of high probability.

**Basic Choice Heuristics**

Used for mainly limited problem solving and routine response behaviour.

Broadly speaking, there are five basic choice heuristics as shown:

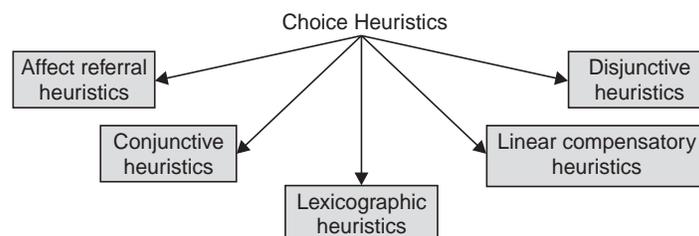


Fig. 14.5

Most consumer try to satisfy their purchase goals instead of optimising them. Most products require low to mild involvement.

Suppose you want to choose a refrigerator out of the three shown in the example below. Choices can be made by applying various heuristics as shown in Table 14.3.

**Table 14.3**

Attributes	Weight	Godrej		Kelvinator		Allwyn	
		Rank	Max. 10	Rank	Max. 10	Rank	Max. 10
Styling	30%	3	9	7	21.0	5	15.0
Economy	25%	5	12.5	2	5.0	7	17.5
Low maintenance	45%	5	22.5	4	18.0	3	13.5
	100%		35.9		44.0		46.0

### ***Affect referral heuristics***

Consumer uses earlier experiences and memory in brand evaluation. Holistic approach is used, e.g., for salt, tea, cigarettes. This is the simplest of all rules. Brand that fulfilled earlier requirement will be chosen.

### ***Conjunctive heuristics***

This is negative in nature. Many brand alternatives are available with distinct attributes. Consumers set minimum cut-offs on each attribute, which each brand alternative must possess to prevent rejection. Minimum cut off is three. Then Kelvinator will be dropped, i.e., 2/10 on economy. Weighs negative information.

### ***Lexicographic heuristics***

This is positive in nature. Brand attribute scoring the highest on most important attribute according to the customer is chosen. Godrej will be chosen. It scores five on low maintenance.

### ***Linear compensatory heuristics***

Consumer permits strength of a particular brand attribute to compensate for the weakness of another attribute. Choose the best—Allwyn. It scores the maximum of 46 marks, and if linear compensatory heuristics is used, the automatic choice will be Allwyn.

### ***Disjunctive heuristics***

Used infrequently, also, sets minimum cut-off points for every brand attribute. But here only salient brand attribute (on basis of weights) is considered. Brand must clear minimum cut-off on dominant attributes.

Godrej clears the minimum criteria of three points. It has at least three points for each attribute, and it also scores the maximum of five points on the most salient attribute, that is low maintenance. So, if disjunctive heuristics is applied. Godrej will be chosen. Similarly, by giving weightages to various brands and scoring on 1 to 5 scale, brands can be chosen. This applies to extended problem solving where the involvement is high, the risk is high, cost is high and a rational choice is to be made.

## **Choice for Personal Telephone Service Decisions**

*Compensatory:* Personal telephone selected by balancing the good ratings against bad.

*Conjunctive rule:* Selected the one that had no bad features.

*Disjunctive rule:* Selected the one that excelled in atleast one attribute.

*Lexicographic rule:* Chose that one which ranked highest on the most important their telephone.

*Affect referral rule:* Everything the company does is outstanding. Therefore, I bought their telephone.

**Table 14.4** Examples of attributes

<i>Personal computer</i>	<i>Shaving cream</i>	<i>Watches</i>	<i>Air conditioners</i>
Processing speed	Frangrance	Wrist Band	BTUS
Price	Price	Alarm Piece	Efficiency
Type of displays	Size	Water resistant	Quietness
Disk size	Smoothness of shave	Quartz movement	Warranty
Popular Russian	Consistency	Size of face	Price
Software			
Laptop or desktop			

Marketeers may modify their products according to consumer ratings.

Marketeers may modify consumer beliefs through proper communication.

For competitive evaluation alter the consumer belief, either by running down competitive products, or by a positive role to give new focus on neglected attributes. This can also be done by manipulating the product.

The acid test for marketing effectiveness is whether the consumer is led to a practical purchase action or not.

**Table 14.5** Areas of marketing inferences and action

<i>Area</i>	<i>Inferences</i>	<i>Actions</i>
Market identification	Segment the market on the basis of product attributes, beliefs, attractive benefit, beliefs and product benefit belief.	Market product on basis of lifestyle and benefit segmentation
Competitive analysis	Possibility of attractive beliefs and benefit manipulation Positioning the product	Change product attributes  Contingency review product positioning with proper consumer support
Marketing mix	Sources of ideas of new product  Communication has impact on comfort and earning Impact of price evaluation matrix Dist. outlet about product image	Use consumer perception and attitude to design new product Enrich consumer with fresh and distinct information Price perception should be made in line with brand image Encourage dist. in consumer evaluation
Making positive opportunity analysis Attitude formation and measurement	Need to keep an eye on demographic and social changes Attitude is an indicator of brand preference and behaviour  Continuous feel of the market is essential	Create exclusive segments of consumer demographics Strengthen the positive attitude and modify unsuitable ones by a variety of means Develop regular attitude checking system.

## Questions

1. What is meant by consumer attitude? What are its components and functions?
2. “Attributes vary with consumer and are determined by consumer needs.” Elaborate and explain the above statement.
3. What is an ATO model? How does it help you to make choices of products that require extensive problem solving?
4. Illustrate the method of choosing between various cars by the ATO model with the information given:

*Cars:* WagonR, Santro, Indica, Zen, Matiz.

*Attributes:* Fuel economy, Cost, Comfort, Style, Utility.

Assign weightages to the attributes and choose on a 1 to 10 scale.

**Note:** Refer example given in Table 14.2.