

Consumer Involvement Towards Ready-to-Eat Breakfast Cereals in India : An Application of Revised Product Involvement Inventory (RPII)

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Abstract

Consumer behaviour studies are gaining relevance in the current Indian retail scenario against the backdrop of various challenges that are posed by changed consumer lifestyles. Consumer involvement in the purchase decision process concept has been an interesting topic to consumer researchers as well as other practitioners. It affects the purchase decision of consumers which includes information search and the actual buying process that are directly related to consumer buying behaviour. The goal of the study was to explore and discuss the applicability of the revised product involvement inventory (RPII) to rate the level of involvement in the buying behaviour of Indian consumers of RTE breakfast cereals. The study was carried out from January 2015 to 2016. A research model was developed in order to understand the relationship between the constructs of involvement with reference to its sub - scales of interest and importance. A survey method was used for data collection. The data was analyzed and interpreted using structural equation modelling (SEM). The results revealed that RPII represents a reliable measurement scale for measuring involvement in the Indian market. In the study, it is proved that consumer involvement with subscale of interest has more significance among RTE breakfast cereal consumers in India. The dimensions of involvement such as brand loyalty, product information search, time taken to choose the product, and in addition, the psychological tension element were found to significantly affect consumer decision making.

Keywords: consumer level of involvement, consumer behaviour, revised product involvement inventory (RPII), ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals

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Consumer behavior studies in the RTE (Ready- To- Eat) food industry are gaining relevance in the current Indian retail scenario against the backdrop of various challenges that are posed by changed consumer lifestyles. Involvement is sorted out as an individual difference variable found to influence consumer's decision making and communication behaviours (Michaelido & Dibb, 2008). The involvement is normally used to segment consumers into low, moderate, and low involvement groups so as to target them with different promotional strategies. Consumer involvement is a major marketing and consumer behaviour construct, which mediates different behaviour and processes.

Marketers need an in-depth knowledge of the various dimensions that link involvement and consumer behaviour. Various researchers of consumer behaviour have developed a number of complex theories to explain and predict the behaviour of the consumer (Bettman, 1979; Engel, David, & Roger, 1973; Howard & Sheth, 1969). Consumer behaviour, with its various marketing constructs, has been used to classify products according to the level of involvement they arouse. Involvement's importance in marketing is well established by many researchers. Apart from its academic value, involvement has many implications for practitioners. Involvement can be used to

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segment consumers into low, moderate, and high involvement groups, which can be targeted with promotional strategies.

Consumer Behaviour and Involvement

Theories imply that consumers are rational, intelligent thinking, and problem solving organisms, who store and evaluate sensory inputs to make reasoned action (Zaichkowsky, 1985). It is said that a great deal of consumer behaviour does not involve extensive research for information or a comprehensive evaluation of the choice alternatives, even for the purchase of major items. This understanding has led the theorists to view consumer behaviour in terms of a two-fold dichotomy: low involvement consumer behaviour and high involvement consumer behaviour.

Involvement is defined as a psychological state that motivates people to be more aware and careful about persons/ objects/situations (Engel et al., 1973). Involvement is the degree of personal interest in a given product /service which can vary from one consumer to another. Depending upon the consumer's experience and knowledge, the purchase decision process can vary from consumer to consumer. Some of them can make quick decisions, but others may need time to get information before making any purchase. It reflects the importance and interest one is having in consuming a product and how much information he/she needs to make a decision. The level of involvement in buying decisions may be considered as something separate from decisions that are fairly routine (consumers are not very involved) to decisions that require extensive thought and a high level of involvement.

Low involvement purchases are made with no planning or previous thought. These buying decisions are called impulse buying. Low involvement is not necessarily products purchased on impulse, although they can be. By contrast, high involvement decisions carry a higher risk to buyers if they fail, are complex, or have high price tags. These items are not purchased often, but are relevant and important to the buyer. Consumers in this category spend a lot of time comparing different aspects such as features of the products, prices, and warranties. High involvement decisions can cause buyers a great deal of post purchase dissonance/ anxiety if they are not sure about the purchases, or if they have difficulty in deciding between alternatives.

Nature of Consumer Involvement

Consumer involvement is an inner urge within an individual, an interest/ desire to hold certain product/service offerings in greater relevance. Involvement has a level of strength and intensity that determines the degree of involvement that a consumer possesses. The length of the time that the consumer remains in its high state determines the level of persistence. It could be short term and situational interest in the product/ service category; or it is long term and enduring. There is a mechanism that underlies in the process of involvement, which is impacted by certain antecedents which will affect the degree of intensity and level of persistence. Involvement is a provoking factor which helps to measure the purchase decision (Kapferer & Laurent, 1993), which indicates the importance of the elements such as the number of compared characteristics among products and different brands, duration of information processing and decision making, personal satisfaction, perceptions and advertising process.

Different researchers have measured involvement using either unidimensional or multidimensional approaches. Zaichkowsky (1985) developed a bipolar adjective scale, the Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) to capture the concept of involvement for products. The scale successfully met standards for internal reliability, reliability over time, content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity. Tests of construct validity demonstrated that the scores were positively related to perceived differences among brands, brand preferences, interest in

gathering information about the product category, and comparison of product attributes among brands. A measure of involvement is independent of the behaviour that would allow the researcher to use the same measure across the various research studies. PII has several benefits to the study of consumer behaviour. It offers a potential of a valid instrument to replace the adhoc and untested approaches that have been previously used in the field. Involvement is a variable in the decision process. PII is considered as a quickly administered tool, generalizable across product categories.

McQuarrie and Munson (1992) improved the Product Involvement Inventory (PII) developed by Zaichkowsky (1985). A revised 10 - item inventory is shown to overcome the problems in maintaining good reliability. It highlights the separate sub-scales of consumer involvement: perceived importance and interest. It was developed to remedy four problems with the original measures: (a) difficulty and impracticability of use ; (b) uncertain discriminant validity ; (c) limited criterion validity ; and (d) an overly narrow conceptualization of involvement. The study on the comparison between the importance and interest sub-scales of the RPII across products included breakfast cereals, which showed a significant test result. It highlighted the importance of future research to attempt to identify products which are favourably regarded but uninvolved and on the other products which are unfavourably regarded but involving. It helps us to examine the extreme cases of products that are important but interesting, or interesting but unimportant.

This research paper tries to discuss the level of involvement of consumers as a criterion in the buying behaviour of RTE breakfast cereals in the Indian scenario. The paper used four involvement outcome dimensions such as brand loyalty, product information search, time taken to choose the product, and feeling of psychological tension in case of dissatisfaction in RTE breakfast purchases. The revised product involvement inventory (RPII) is used to rate the involvement in the purchase of RTE breakfast cereals. The study also tests the suitability and applicability of this measurement tool among RTE breakfast cereals. The selected product category of RTE breakfast cereals is considered as one of the high penetration products (Knox, Walker, & Marshall, 1994). This study will help marketers to understand the level of involvement of RTE breakfast cereals in terms of interest and importance and also to know if they should be modelled as antecedents or alternative expressions of involvement.

Review of Literature

The role of brand involvement is considered to be the most important potential factor between brand credibility and purchase intention (Alex & Thomas, 2014) towards convenience products and shopping products. It highlighted that if the products are of shopping in nature, the brand credibility and purchase intention scores are relatively higher and on the contrary, convenient products showed relatively low scores.

Seo and Namwamba (2014) investigated the clothing shopping behaviour of male college students. The research revealed that the students were highly concerned about their physical appearance and clothing. They had unique shopping behaviours determined by the level of product involvement. It influenced their interests in brand commitment, shopping orientations, information sources, product attributes, retail formats, and so forth. The study highlighted that the consumers enjoyed shopping with their friends and family members at various retail stores. Personal opinions and media influences hugely influenced their shopping behaviour. The study also revealed a positive relationship between product involvement and brand commitment.

Kautsar, Widiyanti, Abdulah, and Amalia (2012) established a relationship between credibility of the source of information, consumer involvement, and customer satisfaction on purchase decision. The relationship between these variables showed a positive relationship between each other in the study conducted in relation to non-prescription drugs. Consumer involvement had a positive effect on purchase decisions. Consumers process information more deeply and with increased involvement. Consumers have a greater motivation to observe, understand, and elaborate the necessary information about the product. The results showed that the purchase

decision acts as a mediator between the credibility of sources of information and consumer involvement on consumer satisfaction.

Brands are a very important asset of any business (Hanzaee, Khoshpanjeh, & Rahnama, 2011). Marketers believe that appropriate branding is the corner stone of a business. It is understood that the branding process is not an easy task in which various factors have to be considered. The study of Hanzaee et al. (2011) focused and investigated the effects of product involvement on brand loyalty. The results showed that three dimensions such as interest, pleasure, and sign value have a direct effect upon brand loyalty. The research study focused on different dimensions of product involvement more than the dichotomous concept of low and high involvement. The study gave an insight to marketers on the importance of understanding the specific dimensions in order to distinguish the elements that are more or less significant. It would help to discover the product performance considerations.

Consumer level of involvement is influenced by many frequent risks such as financial risk, performance risk, physical risk, social risk, time risk, and other variables such as uncertainty in selection, psychological risk, previous shopping experiences, product attributes, situation, brand personality, hedonic value, motivation, level of learning, utility of the product, price, durability, gift, lifestyle, store, frequency of use, additional benefits/ offers, packaging, and endorsement. Involvement is explained as the time, attention, energy, and other resources dedicated to understand about the product (Solanki, 2011).

The relationship between service quality, customer involvement, and customer satisfaction is explored well in a highly competitive retail market (Fatima & Razzaque, 2010). The findings confirmed that service quality and customer involvement do impact customer satisfaction in the retail banking sector. Te'eni - Harari and Hornik (2010) studied the mediating role of customer involvement in the quality - satisfaction link. The paper explored the variables such as product knowledge, product category, parents' and peers' influence. Young children's product involvement was found influencing parents and peers. Children's product involvement was influenced by peers and product category ; whereas, adolescents' product involvement relied on subjective product knowledge and product category. It was suggested that the consumer involvement variable must be taken as a basis of market segmentation of the younger populations. Segments can be created to examine the different product-involvement levels among each age group.

Four involvement outcome statements are used in the current study which are exhibited in the Table 1. The statement 1 is adopted without changes from the studies of Zaichkowsky (1985) and McQuarrie and Munson (1992). The second and third statements are rephrased for the purpose of the study, which are again adopted from the study of McQuarrie and Munson (1992). The fourth statement is developed for the current study by referring to Howard and Sheth (1969), which tries to explain the contrast theory, which is presuming the product expectations not matching with the actual performance, which also measures involvement outcome. Dissonance motivates the individual to bring harmony to inconsistent elements to reduce psychological tension (Loudon & Della Bitta, 2008). Ratings were made on a revised 10 - item inventory semantic differential scale by McQuarrie and Munson (1992).

Table 1. Involvement Outcome Statements

No:	Outcomes	Code
1	I have a most preferred brand of RTE breakfast cereals [1].	BA
2	I like to gather information on characteristics of RTE breakfast cereal products before purchase decision [1,2].	INFO
3	The time taken to choose the kind of RTE breakfast cereal products [2].	TC
4	The state of psychological tension in case of dissatisfaction with RTE breakfast cereal purchases [3].	PT

Source: Adapted from [1] Zaichkowsky (1985), [2] McQuarrie and Munson (1992), and [3] Howard & Sheth (1969)

From the above studies, it is noted that consumer involvement is an important factor which is very much linked to the consumer behaviour studies.

(1) Preferred Brand (BA) : Brand personality can definitely improve brand preference and customer intention to purchase a product. It is an active contributor for a long-lasting relationship. It is observed that branding is an important element in consumer decision making. Brand loyalty has an impact on consumer behaviour. So, it is critical for any business to build brands that can compete among the major branded products in order to fulfil the wishes and desires of their consumers. Consumers select the products among different choices depending upon various factors such as number of competitors, differences in the brands, product characteristics, and situational characteristics. The consumers tend to connect brands in building relationships with the products. The brand can create opportunities in consistently meeting consumer expectations.

(2) Gather Information on Characteristics of RTE Breakfast Cereal Products (INFO) : Once a brand is identified, consumers definitely would take time to search information related to the brand. The consumer will get to know the differences only through an intensive information search. Information search will be normally undertaken as internal and external. Internal search comprises the search from consumer's memory. The external search includes information search through brochures, websites, etc. A decision can be arrived at by identifying the good or bad attributes of the product.

(3) The Time Taken to Choose the Kind of RTE Breakfast Cereal Product (TC) : The time spent on the information search is also crucial to arrive at a valid decision pertaining to a particular product. When consumers tend to be involved more in a purchase decision, the time has to be explicitly incorporated into consumer behaviour. Many aspects of consumer behaviour change over time such as attitudes, perceptions, motives, lifestyles, and other external environment.

(4) The State of Psychological Tension in Case of Dissatisfaction with RTE Breakfast Cereal Purchase (PT) : The analysis of the post purchase behaviour can also be a factor that could affect consumer involvement because of the expectations of consumers towards the product. The cognitive dissonance and resulting psychological tension felt by the more involved consumers is less than that felt by low involvement consumers.

Sample and Procedure

A structured questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection to study consumer involvement towards the selected respondents of RTE breakfast cereals in Kochi city. Kochi City is in the Ernakulum District of Kerala, a state formed with the merger of the former kingdoms of Travancore, Cochin, and Malabar. This is the second most important port city in the Western coast of India, which is also a commercial capital of the State. The city is accessible by the National Highway 47 which links the city to Thrissur in North and Alleppey in the South. National Highway 17 also links the city. We pursued a convenient sampling of RTE breakfast cereal consumers who frequented the leading retail stores in and around Kochi (Lulu, Big Bazar, Reliance, More, and Nilgiris are the major retail players in Kochi). Customers who were the regular visitors at organized retail stores and the consumers of ready-to-eat breakfast cereals acted as the sampling units for the study. A self-administered questionnaire was completed by 250 respondents out of which 79 were males and 171 were females who rated RTE breakfast cereals. The study was carried out from January 2015 to 2016.

Conceptual Framework

A model is developed which includes all the involvement outcomes with reference to the subscales of interest and interest. The Figure 1 explains the constructs which lead to the level of involvement. A revised 10 - item inventory

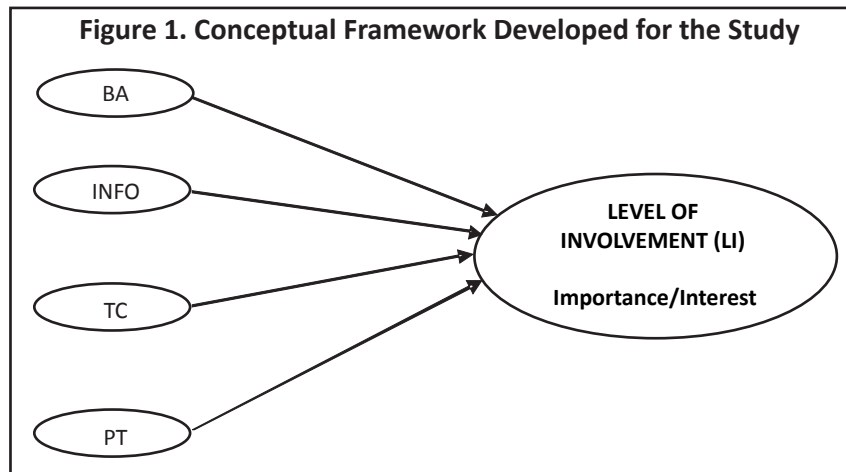


Table 2. Assignment of Items Used to Rate Involvement with its Subscales of Importance and Interest

Scale items	Importance (IMP)	Code	Interest (INT)	Code
1 <i>Important.....Unimportant</i>	x	IMP 1		
2 <i>Irrelevant.....Relevant</i>	x	IMP 2		
3 <i>Means a lot to me.....Means nothing to me</i>	x	IMP 3		
4 <i>Unexciting.....Exciting</i>			x	INT 1
5 <i>Dull.....Neat</i>			x	INT 2
6 <i>Matters to me.....Doesn't matter to me</i>	x	IMP 4		
7 <i>Boring.....Interesting</i>			x	INT 3
8 <i>Fun.....Not fun</i>			x	INT 4
9 <i>Appealing.....Unappealing</i>			x	INT 5
10 <i>Of no concern.....Of concern to me</i>	x	IMP 5		

Source: Adapted from McQuarrie & Munson (1992)

by McQuarrie and Munson (1992) is used to measure the involvement. The current research study focuses on consumer involvement highlighting sub-scales of perceived importance and interest with reference to consumers of RTE breakfast cereals in India. A revised 10 - item inventory is used to measure consumer involvement in the Indian scenario. Structural equation modelling (SEM) is used to represent, estimate, and test the network of relationships between variables. The Table 2 exhibits the scale items used to rate the involvement with its sub - scales of importance and interest.

Analysis and Results

Structural equation modelling (SEM) is applied to understand the relationship between the constructs of involvement by using RPII on measuring involvement of consumer buying behaviour towards RTE breakfast cereals along with the importance and interest subscales. For the analysis initially, an input model was developed by using AMOS-18 graphics. The model is statistically tested simultaneously to examine its consistency with the data through goodness of fit measures (Brown, 2006 ; Byrne, 2001). It starts with an initial model and is further refined to reach the final model.

Regarding the structural model, we assessed the significance of the estimated parameters in the structural equations (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1999). The reliability coefficients of each associated correlation

Table 3. The Regression Coefficients : Different Brands Available with Reference to Importance

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient / Factor loadings	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
Different Brands available (BA)	BA IMP 1	0.760	11.254	<0.001	57.9	0.75	0.83
	BA IMP 2	0.210	2.990	0.003	4.3		
	BA IMP 3	0.860	11.150	<0.001	73.4		
	BA IMP 4	0.740	10.950	<0.001	55.1		
	BA IMP 5	0.370	5.140	<0.001	13.1		

Table 4. The Regression Coefficients : Different Brands Available with Reference to Interest

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
Different Brands available (BA)	BA INT 1	0.693	9.923	<0.001	48.0	0.69	0.74
	BA INT 2	0.865	7.174	<0.001	74.9		
	BA INT 3	0.548	7.379	<0.001	30.0		
	BA INT 4	0.186	0.089	0.009	3.5		
	BA INT 5	0.157	0.096	0.027	2.5		

Table 5. The Regression Coefficients : The Time Taken to Gather Information with Reference to Importance

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
INFO Importance	INFO IMP 1	0.865	8.452	<0.001	74.8	0.825	0.846
	INFO IMP 2	0.328	5.098	<0.001	10.8		
	INFO IMP 3	0.883	17.186	<0.001	78		
	INFO IMP 4	0.854	16.586	<0.001	72.9		
	INFO IMP 5	0.415	6.495	<0.001	17.2		

Table 6. The Regression Coefficients : The Time Taken to Gather Information with Reference to Interest

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
INFO Interest	INFO INT 1	0.687	9.842	<0.001	47.2	0.763	0.763
	INFO INT 2	0.448	5.942	<0.001	20.1		
	INFO INT 3	0.852	8.222	<0.001	72.5		
	INFO INT 4	0.402	5.541	<0.001	16.1		
	INFO INT 5	0.467	6.297	<0.001	21.8		

matrix among the constructs are examined. Diagnostic parameters such as chi square (χ^2) ; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) ; goodness of fit index (GFI) ; the comparative - fit index ; the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) ; the comparative fit - index (CFI) ; the normed-fit-index (NFI), and the non normed fit - index (NNFI) are also considered as indicators of the model goodness of fit.

The Tables 3 to 10 represent the initial model factor loadings of the constructs used in the study. The Table 3 shows that all the constructs except *BA IMP2 (Irrelevant.....Relevant)* and *BA IMP5 (Of no concern.....Of concern to me)* have regression coefficient value less than 0.4. That is, in this case, these constructs have no significant impact on different brands available for RTE breakfast cereals. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is calculated after deleting the low factor loading constructs. The Table 4 indicates that all the constructs except *BA INT 4 (Fun.....Not fun)* and *BA INT 5 (Appealing.....Unappealing)* have value less than 0.4. In this case, these constructs have no significant impact on *BA-Interest*. The Table 5 demonstrates that all the constructs except *INFO IMP2 (Irrelevant.....Relevant)* has value less than 0.4. That is, in this case, *INFO IMP2* has no significant impact on *INFO Importance*. The Table 6 represents that all the constructs have regression coefficient value more than 0.4. That is, in this case, all these constructs have a significant impact on *INFO-Interest*. The Table 7 shows that all the constructs except *TC IMP5 (Of no concern.....Of concern to me)* have value less than 0.4. That is, in this case, this construct has no significant impact on *TC Importance*. The Table 8 explains the time taken to choose the product construct, and in this case, all the constructs except *TC INT 4 (Fun.....Not fun)* has value less than 0.4. That is, in this case, this construct has no significant impact on *TC Interest*. The Table 9 shows that all the constructs except *PT IMP2 (Irrelevant.....Relevant)* and *IMP5 (Of no concern.....Of concern to me)* have value less than 0.4. That is, in this case, these constructs have no significant impact on *PT Importance*.

Table 7. The Regression Coefficients : The Time Taken to Choose (TC) the Kind of RTE Breakfast Cereal Product with Reference to Importance

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient / Factor loadings	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
TC Importance	TC IMP 1	0.829	11.754	<0.001	68.8	0.767	0.798
	TC IMP 2	0.547	8.234	<0.001	30		
	TC IMP 3	0.656	9.932	<0.001	43		
	TC IMP 4	0.805	11.549	<0.001	64.7		
	TC IMP 5	0.221	3.189	0.001	4.9		

Table 8. The Regression Coefficients : The Time Taken to Choose (TC) the Kind of RTE Breakfast Cereal Product with Reference to Interest

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient / Factor loadings	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
TC Interest	TC INT 1	0.494	6.851	<0.001	24.4	0.800	0.771
	TC INT 2	1.311	5.358	<0.001	172.0		
	TC INT 3	0.551	8.891	<0.001	30.3		
	TC INT 4	0.350	9.348	<0.001	12.2		
	TC INT 5	0.551	7.24	<0.001	10.0		

Table 9. The Regression Coefficients : The State of Psychological Tension (PT) in Case of Dissatisfaction with Reference to Importance

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient / Factor loadings	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
PT Importance	PT IMP 1	0.677	9.725	<0.001	45.8	0.806	0.852
	PT IMP 2	0.151	2.322	0.02	2.3		
	PT IMP 3	0.835	11.672	<0.001	69.8		
	PT IMP 4	0.942	11.826	<0.001	88.8		
	PT IMP 5	0.293	4.366	<0.001	8.6		

Table 10. The Regression Coefficients : The State of Psychological Tension (PT) in Case of Dissatisfaction with Reference to Interest

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient / Factor loadings	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	
						Before	After
PT Interest	PT INT 1	0.961	12.321	<0.001	92.4	0.840	0.840
	PT INT 2	0.819	14.269	<0.001	67.1		
	PT INT 3	0.441	6.745	<0.001	19.5		
	PT INT 4	0.422	6.571	<0.001	17.8		
	PT INT 5	0.691	11.847	<0.001	47.7		

The Table 10 depicts that all the constructs have value more than 0.4. That is, in this case, all these constructs have a significant impact on PT Interest.

Findings

Overall, the analysis shows that item pairs of involvement with subscale importance 2 (*Irrelevant.....Relevant*) and subscale importance 5 (*Of no concern.....Of concern to me*) have no significant impact on the involvement outcomes. Similarly, item pairs of involvement with subscale interest 4 (*Fun.....Not fun*) and subscale interest 5 (*Appealing.....Unappealing*) have no significant impact on the involvement outcomes. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) exhibited in the Table 11 shows that out of the two subscales, Importance (IMP) and Interest (INT) for the four items, after removing non-significant items, suggest that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

The study tested the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Convergent and discriminant validity of the data used in the analysis are qualified with factor loadings ≥ 0.4 (Hair et al., 1999) and the average variance extracted (AVE) values > 0.5 (Kautsar et al., 2012). For the reliability test, we used a method of measuring Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is acceptable in most social science research situations.

A common indicator of the adequacy of the SEM model is the chi-square statistical significant test. An adequate fit chi-square (χ^2) should be non-significant and it means the model is not rejected. The final model meets the widely accepted goodness of fit standards, indicating that the conceptual model satisfactorily fits the data

Table 11. Score of AVE, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α), and Composite Reliability

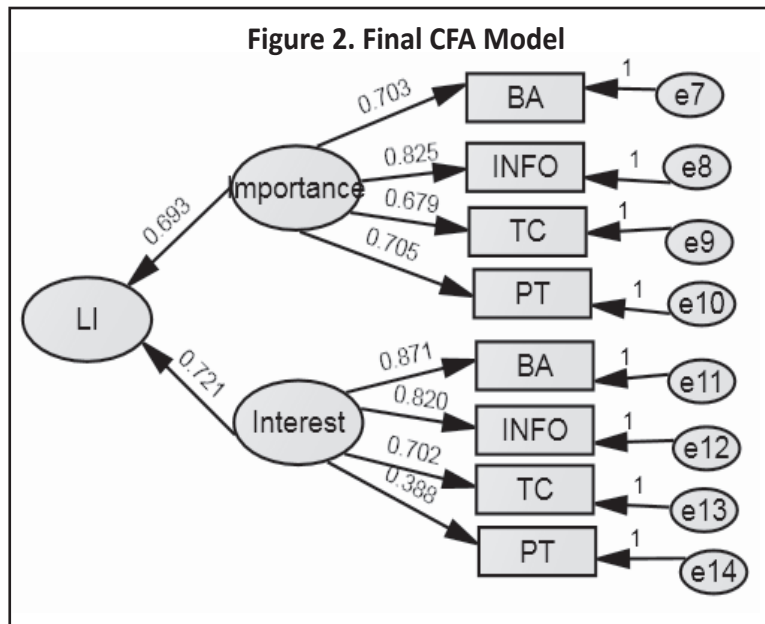
No:	Outcomes	AVE		Composite Reliability		Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (α)	
		Importance (IMP)	Interest (INT)	Importance (IMP)	Interest (INT)	Importance (IMP)	Interest (INT)
1	BA	.760	.650	.800	.750	0.830	0.730
2	INFO	.770	.670	.820	.800	0.840	0.770
3	TC	.670	.670	.830	.820	0.800	0.770
4	PT	.630	.620	.800	.750	0.860	0.840

Table 12. Final Model Fit Indices for CFA

	χ^2	DF	P	Normed χ^2	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
Final Model	19.550	8	.012	2.444	.982	.918	.982	.961	.989	.000	.076

Table 13. Regression Coefficients of Final Model

Path	Estimate	Variance Explained	P
BA→IMP	0.703	49.4	<0.001
INFO→IMP	0.825	68.0	<0.001
TC→IMP	0.679	46.1	<0.001
PT→IMP	0.705	49.7	<0.001
BA→INT	0.871	75.9	<0.001
INFO→INT	0.820	67.3	<0.001
TC→INT	0.702	49.3	<0.001
PT→INT	0.388	15.0	<0.001



(see Table 12). It must be pointed out that the chi-square statistic is significant and the normed chi-square (NC) is about ($NC = X^2/df$) 2.44, which demonstrates a good model fit (Bollen, 1989 ; Carmines & McIver, 1981). The root mean square error of approximation ($RMSEA$) is .076, which is well within the range of .05 -.08 limit interval offered by Hair et al. (1999) and Kline (2005). The goodness of fit index (GFI) is 0.982 (Bryne, 2001 ; Hair et al., 1999), the comparative fit index (CFI) is 0.989, and the normed fit index (NFI) is 0.982 (Hair et al., 1999; Kline, 2005) which represent acceptable values.

The path (see Table 13) between all variables is resulted well with relative significance higher to the importance subscale. From the study, it is proved that Indian consumers of RTE breakfast cereals gave much importance towards brands in the category of RTE breakfast cereals. Hence, it is clear from the analysis that branding turns products into something much more valuable for their consumers. It helps to foster loyalty, leading to repeat purchases and high profit margins. These results concur with the findings of other studies of Alex and Thomas (2014), Seo and Namwamba (2014), and Hanzaee et al. (2011). Consumers were very much impressed by certain brands because they believed that the brands stand for quality, price, and are trustworthy. According to the current study, the time taken to gather information on characteristics among RTE breakfast cereal products before the purchase decision is taken is also seen to be important, more important than consumers' interest in the brand. Time taken to choose the product is more of consumer's interest than importance, which is concurrent to the results obtained by Solanki (2011), Michaelidou and Dibb (2008), and Te'eni - Harari and Hornik (2010). Similarly, the consumers in the current study were found to be more interested in spending time to choose the kind of RTE breakfast cereal product that they needed. This is a result that is similar to the findings of Solanki (2011).

One of the aspects which helped to cater to the needs of the consumer is the emergence of retail stores. Store operations are geared in such a way to enhance the interest of consumers to shop their favorite products/ brands with reference to their favorable time and convenience. Attempts are made by retailers to improve customer satisfaction so as to reduce customer dissatisfaction, especially in the food business. Majority of the consumers were worried about the outcome of their purchase and hence, psychological tension is found to be highly significant in the study, with greater importance, which really concurs with the study results obtained by Fatima and Razzaque (2010).

Managerial Implications

The findings of the research have important implications for the marketers of RTE breakfast cereals in India. It would help to focus on the key dimensions of consumer involvement and thereby enable to develop a customer benefits oriented strategy. The awareness of consumer involvement in relation to the products offered in the market will help the manufacturers and marketers to understand decision making criteria of consumers and address the limitations prevailing. The findings of the study will initiate further research and development on RTE breakfast cereals' products & offerings to the ever growing Indian consumer base.

Conclusion

From our study, involvement is measured with reference to a multidimensional conceptualization. Here, it is proved that both importance and interest subscales should be modelled as antecedents of involvement. In conclusion, our findings suggest that RPII represents a reliable measurement scale for measuring involvement. The dimensions of involvement such as brand loyalty, product information search, time taken to choose the product, and in addition, psychological tension element have been found to influence consumer decision making. In the study, it is revealed that consumer involvement with subscale of interest has more significance among RTE breakfast cereal consumers in India.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

The study has addressed and explored only the applicability of the Revised Product Involvement Inventory (RPPII) to rate the level of involvement in the buying behaviour of Indian consumers of RTE breakfast cereals. Though the concept of brand loyalty and product related information processing, time taken to choose, and cognitive dissonance are included in general; the findings related to any specific brand are not covered. The study covered only the consumers who visited the leading retail stores in and around Kochi city and is not applicable to kirana shops or the unorganized retail sector.

The measurement of the mediating role of consumer involvement in the purchase decision of the RTE breakfast cereals can be adopted as a study for future research. Consumers process information more deeply and with increased involvement; consumers have a greater motivation to observe, understand, and elaborate the necessary information about the product. This study can further be developed to understand the importance of understanding the specific dimensions in order to distinguish the elements that are more or less significant. It would help to discover the product performance considerations.

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