

Chapter Four

BEHAVIOURAL CONSEQUENCES OF INVOLVEMENT: A MULTI-VARIATE ANALYSIS.

4.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, differences of involvement profiles and other perceptual variables between consumers of lower social class and upper social class have been observed using various parametric and non-parametric methods. In a sufficiently large number of occasions significant differences were found between different perceptual characteristics of the two groups of consumers. The most fundamental problem with univariate analysis is that it does not take into consideration the interaction effects of all the variables and always portrays a narrow view of the problem under consideration.

In this chapter, a multi-variate analysis will be undertaken to investigate the effects of various antecedents of involvement on the behaviour of consumers. Application of multiple regression and discriminant analysis would give us an insight into the actual relationship between several variables simultaneously. Precisely, some of the issues which will be vigorously investigated in the present chapter may be listed as below:

- (i) To investigate the nature and degree of association between different involvement facets and behavioural variables of two specific target groups. It is now recognised that consumers involvement is a causal or motivating variable with a number of consequences on the consumers purchase and communication behaviour. As such, the primary objective here would be to ascertain the cause and effect relationship between facets of involvement and different behavioural variables.
- (ii) To what extent can differences in the consumers purchase and communication behaviour be explained by the degree of involvement together with related variables?
- (iii) It will also be investigated whether a composite or multidimensional measure of involvement would be better in predicting behaviour of consumers.
- (iv) An attempt will also be made to categorise consumers on the basis of their discriminant scores into different social classes to which they actually belong.

A close study of these issues will enable us to understand clearly the effect of various facets of involvement on the behaviour of consumers. Application of multiple regression analysis would be useful in the sense that the relative contribution of each explanatory variables (viz., involvement antecedents) can be ascertained accurately. The order of discussion of this chapter will be as follows:

- (i) To investigate direction and degree of association between different variables, the simple correlation between some perceptual variables will be presented for illustrative purposes.
- (ii) After stating the rationale behind selection of different variables, the results and analysis of regression estimates will be presented.
- (iii) The conclusions drawn using multiple regression analysis will be supplemented by employing multiple discriminant analysis.
- (iv) A summary presentation of different findings will be provided at the end of this chapter.

4.2. Product -Moment Correlation : Results and Discussion :

The basic objective of conducting simple correlation analysis is to ascertain the strength and direction of linear association between two variables. Table-4.1 presents the simple correlation co-efficients between different facets of involvement, perceived differentiation, price and other behavioural variables considered in our study, such as, information search, choice extensiveness, commitment towards a brand and communication behaviour. This analysis is basically reported for illustrative purposes and will be used as the first step to initiate further discussions.

Simple correlation co-efficients between several variables for the two target groups of consumers pulled together have been computed for a better understanding of the nature of relationship among various variables. These findings may be considered along with the finding based on other multivariate analysis to be carried out in the subsequent sections . The hypothesis to be tested here is that different facets of involvement and consumer's purchase and communication behaviour are related ($H_a : r \neq 0$) as against the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between them ($H_0 : r = 0$)

Table 4.1a
Pearson Correlation Coefficients
Product : TV

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Involvement Facets</i>			
	<i>X1</i>	<i>X2</i>	<i>X3</i>	<i>X4</i>
X5	0.396 ^a	0.445 ^a	0.384 ^a	0.120
X6	0.166	0.216 ^c	0.351 ^a	0.236 ^b
X7	-0.041	0.022	0.076	0.250 ^b
X8	-0.088	-0.120	-0.045	0.013

Table 4.1b
Pearson Correlation Coefficients
Product : TV

<i>Variables</i>	X5	X6	X7	X8
X10	0.189	0.121	-0.068	-0.019
X11	0.355	0.531	0.299	0.173
X12	0.438	0.583	0.167	0.153

Table 4.1a
Pearson Correlation Coefficients
Product : Wristwatch

<i>Variables</i> <i>(involvement facets)</i>	X5	X6
X1	0.011	0.327 ^a
X2	0.188 ^c	0.454 ^a
X3	0.084	0.271 ^a
X4	0.229	0.013

Note : a : $p < 0.001$; b : $p < 0.01$; c : $p < 0.05$

It becomes a difficult task to generalise the findings on the basis of zero order correlation co-efficients. However, the results that are evident from such analysis may in no case be considered as trivial. A few significant aspects which draw our attention are discussed below :

- (a) Perceived risk (risk probability & risk importance) associated with a purchase decision is found to be positively associated with the extensiveness of the choice process. It is logical to think that consumers generally follow an extensive problem solving route when the perceived risk is high. The buyer is aware that a wrong decision will have undesirable consequences and as such often resorts to extended problem solving in the hope of reducing risk to tolerable levels (Howard & Sheth, 1969). The extent of decision making varies greatly depending upon the nature of the product, price etc. and these issues will be discussed at a later stage in this chapter.
- (b) Significant relationship between information search and various facets of involvement can be observed from the correlation co-efficients presented above. Theory suggests that when consumers are highly involved , they pay more attention to the decision and demand more information (Katona & Mueller, 1955; Jacoby , Chestnut, and Fisher, 1978). Most consumer behaviour theories explicitly or implicitly suggest that under low involvement conditions, individuals engage in minimal search, while under high involvement conditions, individuals engage in extensive search (Beaty & Smith, 1987). These results are in conformity with the studies made by researchers in this area.

- (c) The relationship between price and information search is found to be very significant. Similarly, greater the perceived dissimilarity between products, the more is the need for information. Similar relationship is also observed between choice extensiveness and price of the product.
- (d) In general, not very significant relationship has been found between brand commitment measure and different antecedents of involvement. However, self-expression factor is positively associated with brand commitment variable.

The above results reveal some interesting trend, yet it is based on the notion that only a single variable influence the behaviour of consumers. The basic limitation of conducting simple correlation analysis is that the interaction between various independent variables are not taken into view. Therefore, in the next section we conduct a multiple regression analysis alongwith other explanatory variables to predict behaviour of consumers. Multiple regression analysis will be carried out separately for the same set of respondents using both composite and multiple measures of the involvement construct.

4.3 Selection and Discussion on variables for Multiple Regression :

It should be pointed out at the outset that in order to assess the behavioural consequences of involvement we propose to employ multiple regression analysis taking into consideration various involvement facets as a set of explanatory variables . Traditional views hold that highly involved consumers (Assael, 1981) :

- try to maximise expected satisfaction from their formal choice through an extensive choice process (Chaiken1980), they compare competing brands, spend more time and compare various attributes before selecting a specific brand,
- are generally information seekers,
- are likely to be persuaded by reference groups ,
- process persuasive communication cognitively ,and
- are more likely to express their life style and psychographic characteristics in their brand choice.

In the context of our study, we have selected a few behavioural variables to ascertain the contribution of different dimensions of involvement. The dependent variables that have been retained in our analysis are discussed below:

- (i) **Information search** : As per central and peripheral routes to persuasion theory, individuals are more likely to weigh information carefully about a product and to exert a substantial cognitive effort to evaluating it when they are highly involved with a product category (Schiffman & Kanuk,1996). Theory suggest that there is a strong likelihood that consumers will carefully evaluate the merits and demerits of a product when the purchase is of high relevance to them. According to Vaughn (1980), when consumers are highly involved, they pay more attention to the decision and demand more information. He also stressed that low

involvement decisions are at the other extreme; they arouse little consumer interest or information handling because of low risk.

The consumer's search for information related to choice is a major component of most consumer behaviour decision models. Newman (1977) has provided a comprehensive review of the extent and determinants of search activity. According to Sharon and Scott (1987), indirect evidence of a strong relationship between involvement and search has been significant, indicative of the logical connection that might be presumed to exist between the two variables.

Much of the previous work, however, primarily addresses involvement as a manipulated variable representing personal relevancy and emphasising information processing, not decision making or external search. When one considers Houston & Rothschild's (1978) work or Bloch and Richin's (1983) exploration of these constructs, it becomes clear that to understand the relationship between involvement and search, the multi-dimensional nature of involvement must be examined. In view of this, the relationship between various dimensions or facets of involvement and information search variable should be explored.

It is also very rational to expect that buyers' search for information prior to purchase is mainly to reduce their uncertainty about the decision to tolerable levels (Cox, 1967, Hansen, 1972). Greater uncertainty, then presumably, should lead to more extensive search. In support of this, several studies show that certain constructs indicative of uncertainty are related to search (Bucklin 1966).

There is evidence in the consumer behaviour literature that other antecedent variables of involvement also affect the information search behaviour of consumers. Katona and Muller (1955) observed that the level of enjoyment is positively related with search activity.

Block *et. al.* (1986) in a relatively recent study found a significant relationship between enduring product involvement and ongoing search for clothing ($r = 0.67$) and for personal computers ($r = 0.70$). Thus, when an individual perceives that a product is closely related to his or her self concept, values and ego, he will demand more relevant product related information in order to make the appropriate choice.

It is clear from the above discussion that there exists a positive association between search and various facets of involvement, we also frame our hypothesis that greater the level of involvement as measured by different facets, the higher will be the information search.

- (ii) **Choice extensiveness** : When consumers have no established criteria for evaluating a product category or perceive different competing brands as extremely dissimilar, their decision making efforts can be termed as extensive problem solving. At this level the consumer is likely to be more involved with the purchase decision. It is very reasonable to expect that under high involvement

situations, the buyer generally passes through all the stages of the buying decision process and thereby likely to evoke extended decision process behaviour.

In fact, the most important determinant of choice extensiveness is the level of involvement of consumers with the decision. For example, if the perceived risk (financial and/or social) associated with the purchase is high, the buyer is aware that a wrong decision would lead to undesirable consequences, and often resorts to extended problem solving with a view to reduce risk to tolerable levels (Punj and Staelin, 1983).

Theory (Howard, 1977) posits that extensive problem solving takes place when the consumers knowledge and beliefs about brands are very limited and s/he does not have specific brand preference. It should be mentioned that whether a consumer will follow an extensive problem solving route before buying a brand depends on the nature and type of the product (Howard & Sheth, 1969). For example, while buying a T.V., the decision-maker presumably passes through all the stages of the decision making process. Alternatively, while buying a toothpaste or detergent, the buyer is predisposed to the purchase of one particular brand and necessarily follows a routinised or impulse buying behaviour.

Kapferer and Laurent (1985a) observed that all facets of involvement variable significantly affect the extensiveness of the decision process and as much as 54 percent variation in the dependent variable is explained by the five involvement antecedent variables.

Keeping in view the influence of product characteristics, we also propose to study the impact of involvement variables in the decision process of consumers for two different products (viz, T.V and Wristwatch).

- (iii) **Brand Commitment** : The concept brand commitment is defined as the pledging or binding of an individual of an individual to his brand choice (Lastovicka 1979). It is a psychological attachment of consumers toward a particular brand within a product category. The term brand commitment is conceptually different from brand loyalty. Robertson's (1976) discussion of low commitment behaviour among consumers suggest that loyalty toward a particular brand is a behavioural construct which does not necessarily imply brand commitment .In case of routinised buying situations, a particular consumer may repeatedly buy a certain brand because it is virtually meaningless to consider alternative brands as the decision is not at all important to him (her). In this situation, an individual is loyal to a particular brand but brand commitment is absent here since a stockout of his/her brand may pose a minor problem which would lead him/her to try a substitute brand.

Brand commitment, on the other hand, is an attitudinal construct which implies that higher the commitment toward a particular brand, the greater would be the desire to select that brand. Consumers would face a major problem when the same brand is not available and perhaps would search the brand in

other shops. Based on this argument, it has been pointed out in consumer behaviour literature that 'low involvement consumers not only think of the product class as trivial, but he further has little bond to his brand choice' (Lastovicka and Gardner, 1977). Likewise, a brand is probably in a more stable and favourable position when preferred by less involved individuals (Harrel, 1979). Finally, it is also believed that "consumers demonstrate more unstable behaviour for low involvement purchases characterised by low brand loyalty and high variety seeking" (Tyebee 1977). Traylor (1981) in his paper computed Spearman rank order correlation co-efficients in order to study the association between product involvement and brand commitment for a wide variety of products. The study revealed that the Spearman correlation co-efficients are generally positive, although not always statistically significant. Traylor, however, reiterated the need for conducting subsequent research to focus on more refined multidimensional measures of product involvement.

Laurent and Kapferer (1985b) however, concluded on the basis of their empirical analysis, that the prediction of consequences of involvement is heightened when one takes into account all antecedents of involvement. The study conducted by them revealed that brand commitment is positively influenced by almost all facets of involvement.

The prior studies (Traylor'81, Laurent & Kapferer, 1985b) conducted to judge the nature of relationship between brand commitment and product involvement unfold that these two constructs are positively associated suggesting that the higher the consumer involvement, the greater will be the commitment toward a specific brand.

- (iv) **Advertisement Involvement** : Motivation to process information in terms of consumer's involvement with the informational stimuli has appeared in the marketing and advertising literature (Bloch & Richins, 1983; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984; Houston and Rothschild, 1978; Mitchell, 1981; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Despite general agreement on the importance of involvement, the motivational role of involvement in attention and comprehension process is not clearly understood. However, considerable evidence demonstrates that in high involvement conditions, consumers, are motivated to expend a great deal of cognitive effort when processing persuasive message, but in low involvement situations less effort is expended (Batra and Ray 1986, Swasy and Munch 1985).

Recent theories on communication behaviour take into consideration two important issues : consumer involvement and brain specialisation. Research in the area of persuasion suggest that consumers will process message arguments in advertisements in detail and will draw complex, effortful inferences if they are highly motivated (Petty and Cacioppo, 1979). One important variable that affect consumers' motivation to process advertisement is their level of involvement with the advertisement or product category.

In fact, product class involvement is expected to play a larger role in influencing individual's level of advertising message involvement. Individuals who are involved with a product class should have a greater propensity to attend message point presented in an advertisement because such processing behaviour is consistent with their need to be informed (Laczniak & Muehling, 1993). Therefore, when an advertisement features a brand from a product class with which an individual is highly involved, it would be expected to produce heightened levels of advertisement message involvement. In this perspective, consumers who experience greater involvement should have greater motivation to attend and comprehend the salient information in that situation (Petty *et.al.*, 1983). These highly involved consumers should allocate greater cognitive resources and exert more energy in their attention and comprehension processes than do consumers who experience less involvement. In sum, greater levels of product involvement should directly influence involvement with advertisement.

Theory (Laczniak & Muehling, 1993; Zaichkowsky, 1985) predicts that the level of involvement affects certain aspects of consumers behaviour but this does not necessarily imply that behavioural variables depend only on consumers involvement with certain product category. Apart from different antecedent variables mentioned above, a few other important explanatory variables may also directly influence behaviour. For this reason, in this section on predictive validity, we consider two important variables other than involvement that may be expected to influence behaviour: Price and Perceived Product Differentiation.

Information search and choice extensiveness are likely to be influenced by perceived product dissimilarity and price of the product. Perceived product differences act as an important stimulus of choice and search behaviour (Assael, 1981; Claxton, Fry and Partis, 1974). If the price of the product is high, consumers are likely to spend more time in the choice process and vigorously search for product related information (Bucklin, 1966; Dommermuth, 1965; Katona and Mueller, 1955; Keil and Layton, 1981). Similarly, the relationship between perceived product differences and information search as well as choice extensiveness is also expected to be positive indicating that the greater the dissimilarities among competing brands, the higher would be the search index and choice extensiveness (Claxton & Portis 1974; Mittal, 1995).

In addition to these variables we have incorporated a dummy variable to represent the social class of an individual. The USC is represented by 1 and that of LSC by 0 to isolate the effect of social class, if any, on different independent variables.

4.4 Regression Findings and Discussions:

On the basis of the regression equations discussed in the previous section, the results of multiple regression analysis have been reported in table 4.2a to 4.6b. For the purpose of facilitating readability and interpretation, regression coefficients, multiple

correlation co-efficient (R), the co-efficient of determination (R^2), the \bar{R}^2 alongwith F statistic values have been reported in these tables. We conducted multiple regression analysis to predict behaviour and to assess contribution of different facets in explaining certain aspects of consumer behaviour. The following tentative conclusions are drawn based on the findings obtained using the OLS method.

- (i) The positive relationship between different involvement facets and behavioural variables are prevalent in general, except for some cases where relationship exist in negative directions. The findings of correlation analysis presented in table 4.1a to 4.1c are more or less confirmed in this section. The discussions that will be made here is in the order of dependent variables mentioned earlier.
- (ii) Marketing theorist's (Mittal, 1995; Kapferer & Laurent 1985b) realised that the antecedents of involvement influence the consumers desire for information search. The study reported by Kapferer and Laurent (1985a) revealed that all antecedent variables more or less affect consumer's information search behaviour. They considered, in their study, a wide range of products ranging from washing machine to soap and observations were pulled for conducting multiple regression analysis.

If the observations are pulled, then specific behaviour patterns such as extent of risk perceived, pleasure value, price of the product which affect behaviour may to a great extent be camouflaged. Since many products differ in the characteristics to a great extent it would be impossible to study influence of involvement variables on consumers' decisions process and information search. In view of this, we report here the findings which are based on two different categories of product.

The information search variable is influenced by various antecedents variables. The risk probability facet has been found to be positively influencing search behaviour. For product TV, all involvement variables along with the dummy variable explain 45 percent variations in the information search variable. The inclusion of price and perceived product differentiation into the model improves the predictive power marginally. These findings are in consistent with the findings reported by other researchers (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985a; 1985b). It is now recognised that consumers search for information primarily to reduce risk to tolerable levels (Cox, 1967; Hasen, 1972). In our study, we have also observed that a significant positive relationship exists between information search and various dimensions of involvement.

It is very interesting to observe that the composite measure of involvement also affect the information search behaviour of consumers significantly. However, the value of (R^2) is much lower than the corresponding measure obtained using various dimensions of involvement. For TV, the unidimensional measure of involvement is found to be significant in explaining behaviour.

Regression analysis incorporating the dummy variable along with the involvement facts has been carried out to assess the impact of social class membership on information search behaviour. Results indicate that the USC consumers tend to demand more information concerning the product. The relationship between social class and search for information is significant. The goodness of fit is found to be highly significant for TV.

- (iii) The extensiveness of the decision process appears primarily influenced by two antecedents of involvement : risk importance and self expression factor. The other variables influencing extensiveness are the price and degree of perceived differences between alternatives. However for Wristwatch, the relationship is not found to be very significant. In fact, the relationship between perceived differentiation variable and decision extensiveness is found to be negative. This is probably because of the fact that only a few competing brands are available in the market. As such, the buyer is predisposed to a particular brand. Similar findings have also been reported by Laurent and Kapferer (1985b) in which as much as 71% variations in the choice extensiveness is explained by a set of five explanatory antecedents variables along with price and product perceived dissimilarity. Pleasure associated with purchase also affect choice extensiveness significantly (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985b).

The findings of our study are also in consonance with the findings reported by the authors mentioned above. It is observed that pleasure dimension does not affect choice extensiveness significantly. Among involvement variables, risk probability and self expression facets influence decision extensiveness significantly. For T.V., it is found that the value of \bar{R}^2 is 0.520 where as the corresponding value of \bar{R}^2 for Wristwatch is 0.195 when all explanatory variables are incorporated in to the model. It should be mentioned that the percentages of variation explained decrease substantially for Wristwatch when an identical analysis is done with a composite index of involvement.

- (iv) Traylor (1981) has pointed out that highly involved consumers are likely to have fewer brands in their evoked set and their commitment towards a brand could thus be high. Likewise, Tyebjee (1977) hypothesised that consumers would demonstrate more unstable behaviour while purchasing low involvement product characterised by low brand loyalty and high variety seeking.

Not very significant relationships have been observed between commitment towards a brand and the level of involvement of consumers. The value of R^2 is, generally, observed to be low. It is noticed that brand commitment and social class membership are significantly associated. The USC consumers exhibit greater loyalty towards brands and social class membership significantly influence the commitment behaviour.

The prediction of commitment behaviour by an overall measure of involvement along with dummy variable show that the relationship is significant for the two products for which the analysis is done. These findings are not very surprising because similar observations are also reported in literature. Traylor(1981) also noticed that for the twelve categories of product considered in his study, only in seven occasions significant associations between commitment and involvement scores observed. One aspect is here worth mentioning that involvement was operationalised by a measure to tap only dimension of involvement, viz; ego involvement in a product class. We, however, feel that all dimensions of involvement should be considered simultaneously to explore relationship between brand commitment and consumer involvement.

- (v) Individuals who are involved with a product class should have greater propensity to attend to message points presented in an advertisement because such processing is consistent with their tendency to keep themselves informed. Lacznik and Muehling (1993) found that the measures of product involvement were significantly correlated with items designed to tap a message involvement levels and significant correlations ranged from 0.23 to 0.45.

Other studies (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985a) also demonstrate that interest in a product category, pleasure and sign influence the readership of articles in a product category. In another study (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985b) 'looking at advertising' variable was also found to be significantly influenced by the pleasure dimension of involvement. The goodness of fit measured by R^2 were found to be low in both occasions .

The regression results unfold that a moderately strong association is present between various dimensions of involvement and involvement with advertisement. It has been observed that advertisement involvement variable is influenced primarily by perceived risk facet. In general, the R^2 values are not very high indicating a weak relationship between involvement facet and involvement with advertisement variable. Results indicate that when overall involvement is considered, the goodness of fit does not improve to a considerable extent.

The results of multiple regression revealed that the scale showed acceptable predictive validity. The sensitivity property of the scale is also established by conducting multiple discriminant analysis. In the following section and attempt would be made to establish convergent validity of the scale.

Table 4.2a
The Effects of Involvement Facets on Consumer Behaviour
Product TV

<i>Dependent Variables</i>	<i>X1</i>	<i>X2</i>	<i>X3</i>	<i>X4</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	\bar{R}^2	<i>F</i>
X5	0.174 ^c	0.258 ^c	0.128	0.162 ^b	0.529	0.280	0.254	10.8 ^a
X6	0.067	-0.016	0.279 ^b	0.190 ^c	0.436	0.190	0.161	6.54 ^a
X7	-0.067	0.086	0.062	0.235 ^b	0.272	0.074	0.040	2.21
X8	-0.014	-0.109	0.034	0.092	0.175	0.030	0.000	0.88

Table 4.2b
The Effects of Involvement Facets on Consumer Behaviour
Product Wristwatch

<i>Dependent Variables</i>	<i>X1</i>	<i>X2</i>	<i>X3</i>	<i>X4</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	\bar{R}^2	<i>F</i>
X5	-0.179	0.322 ^b	0.018	0.241	0.343	0.118	0.088	3.98 ^b
X6	0.018	0.422 ^a	0.036	0.023	0.456	0.208	0.181	7.83 ^a
X7	0.129	0.184	0.125	0.108	0.449	0.202	0.175	7.55 ^a
X8	0.337 ^a	0.025	0.031	0.060	0.504	0.254	0.229	10.16 ^a

Table 4.3a
The Effects of Involvement and Social Class on Consumer Behaviour
Product TV

<i>Dependent Variables</i>	<i>X1</i>	<i>X2</i>	<i>X3</i>	<i>X4</i>	<i>X9</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	\bar{R}^2	<i>F</i>
X5	0.264 ^a	0.258 ^c	0.206 ^c	-0.135	2.59 ^a	0.691	0.478	0.454	20.17 ^a
X6	0.159 ^c	-0.015	0.360 ^a	-0.115	2.66 ^a	0.659	0.435	0.409	16.95 ^a
X7	0.010	0.086	0.130	-0.025	2.26 ^a	0.437	0.191	0.154	05.20 ^a
X8	0.024	-0.108	0.069	0.039	1.14 ^a	0.271	0.073	0.031	01.74

Table 4.3b
The Effects of Involvement and Social Class on Consumer Behaviour
Product Wristwatch

<i>Dependent Variables</i>	<i>X1</i>	<i>X2</i>	<i>X3</i>	<i>X4</i>	<i>X9</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	\bar{R}^2	<i>F</i>
X5	-0.180	0.328 ^b	0.021	0.232	0.073	0.343	0.118	0.080	3.16 ^b
X6	0.015	0.446 ^a	0.045	-0.001	0.323	0.46	0.212	0.178	6.35 ^a
X7	0.120	0.267	0.158	0.025	1.105 ^b	0.506	0.256	0.225	8.15 ^a
X8	0.338 ^a	0.018	0.028	0.068	-0.095	0.505	0.255	0.233	8.08 ^a

Table 4.4a
The Effects of Involvement and other Explanatory
Variables on Information Search and Choice Extensiveness

Product : Wristwatch

Dependent Variables	X1	X2	X3	X4	X9	X11	X12	R	R ²	\bar{R}^2	F
X5	-0.202 ^c	0.319 ^b	0.020	0.250 ^b	-0.282	0.020	0.767	0.359	0.129	0.076	2.46 ^c
X6	0.036	0.478 ^a	0.061	-0.032	0.897	-0.168 ^c	0.175	0.491	0.241	0.195	5.27 ^a

Table 4.4b
The Effects of Involvement and other Explanatory
Variables on Information Search and Choice Extensiveness

Product : T.V.

Dependent Variables	X1	X2	X3	X4	X9	X11	X12	R	R ²	\bar{R}^2	F
X5	0.266 ^a	0.236 ^c	0.169 ^c	-0.116	2.20	-0.041	1.59 ^b	0.711	0.505	0.473	15.6 ^a
X6	0.142 ^b	-0.086	0.272 ^a	-0.066	1.41 ^a	0.157 ^c	2.32 ^a	0.741	0.550	0.520	18.5 ^a

Table 4.5a
The Effects of Unidimensional measure of Involvement and
Social Class on Consumer Behaviour

Product : TV

Dependent Variables	X9	X10	R	R ²	\bar{R}^2	F
X5	1.500 ^a	0.300 ^b	0.388	0.150	0.135	10.04 ^a
X6	1.950 ^a	0.254 ^b	0.492	0.242	0.229	18.13 ^a
X7	1.980 ^a	0.063	0.399	0.159	0.145	10.76 ^a
X8	1.122 ^b	0.061	0.266	0.071	0.054	4.32 ^c

Table 4.5b
The Effects of Unidimensional measure of Involvement and
Social Class on Consumer Behaviour

Product : Wristwatch

Dependent Variables	X9	X10	R	R ²	\bar{R}^2	F
X5	0.059	0.097	0.105	0.011	0.000	0.68
X6	-0.532	0.032	0.119	0.014	0.000	0.87
X7	0.369 ^b	0.232	0.276	0.076	0.060	5.00 ^b
X8	-0.527	0.096	0.171	0.029	0.010	1.83

Table 4.6a
The effects of Unidimensional Measure of Involvement and other Explanatory Variables on Consumer Behaviour

Dependent Variables	Product TV				R	R ²	\bar{R}^2	F
	X9	X10	X11	X12				
X5	0.578	0.263 ^b	0.117	2.62 ^a	0.535	0.287	0.261	11.07 ^a
X6	0.716 ^c	0.190 ^b	0.221 ^b	2.920 ^a	0.697	0.468	0.468	26.12 ^a
X7	1.642 ^b	0.037	0.128	-0.053	0.408	0.136	0.136	5.52 ^a
X8	0.956 ^c	0.064	0.003	0.465	0.263	0.035	0.035	2.05

Table 4.6b
The effects of Unidimensional Measure of Involvement and other Explanatory Variables on Consumer Behaviour

Dependent Variables	Product Wristwatch				R	R ²	\bar{R}^2	F
	X9	X10	X11	X12				
X5	-0.062	0.087	-0.015	0.490	0.123	0.015	0.000	0.45
X6	-0.451	0.061	-0.801	0.344	0.143	0.200	0.000	0.62
X7	-0.105	0.154	0.098	0.780	0.316	0.100	0.069	3.31
X8	-1.290	-0.021	0.124	1.522 ^b	0.308	0.095	0.065	3.13 ^c

Note : a:p<0.001; b:p<0.01; c:p<0.05

4.5 Convergent Validation :

Convergent or concurrent validity is another sub-type of criterion related validity. Convergent validation is also important for establishing construct validity of a measure. For a satisfactory construct validity it is necessary that the test correlate with an alternate measure of the same construct.

In our study, the overall involvement is measured by a three-item Likert scale proposed by Mittal (1995). The correlations between the unidimensional measures and different dimensions of involvement for the two product category have been computed for establishing convergent validity. The pattern of correlation presented in table 4.7 revealed that the scores obtained using two alternative measure are satisfactorily associated. It is evident from the correlation analysis that the involvement scale proposed in our study also satisfies convergent validity criterion.

Empirical analyses in the previous sections show that knowledge of the antecedents of involvement is necessary to predict its consequences. Some aspects of consumer behaviour are influenced by specific antecedents; other aspects depend on other antecedents of involvement. Findings of multiple regression analysis in this section also revealed that social class membership represented by a dummy variable also have significant influence on the behaviour of consumers. Similarly ,results of chapter three

showed that involvement profiles of consumers do vary significantly for the two classes of consumers. It promoted us to conduct multiple discriminant analysis (MDA) to supplement the findings of multiple regression analysis.

Table 4.7
Correlation between unidimensional and multidimensional measure of involvement.

<i>Facets</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficients</i>	<i>T-values</i>
PROB	0.23 ^a	2.75
RIMP	0.36 ^a	4.44
PLSR	0.27 ^a	3.25
SEXP	0.18 ^b	2.13

Note : a. $p < 0.01$; b. $p < 0.05$

4.6 MDA : Rationale and selection of variables

The major focus of the present section centres round the issue whether it is possible to discriminate consumers belonging to USC from their counterparts in the LSC on the basis of the antecedents of involvement. To put it in a different way, is it possible to isolate the groups of consumers with homogeneous involvement profiles?

We have already noticed in this chapter that the facets of the involvement profile have varied influences on consumers' decision processes and information search behaviour for the two groups considered in our study. Moreover, since consumers do vary in their perceptions and it is more so when they are drawn from various socio-economic classes it becomes quite logical to examine the inter-group typologies of the consumers drawn from two social classes. This will help perceive whether involvement profiles of the lower social class of consumers differ from that of the upper class consumers. It is visualised to be an attempt in a new direction.

The selection of variables for MDA was based on the wide use of variables considered in earlier studies of similar nature. Statistical relevance of the variables as revealed in the preceding chapter was also kept in view while selecting variables for conducting MDA. It has been pointed out that there is a dearth of empirical work on the behavioural consequences of involvement. Theories on consumer behaviour predict that involvement has a strong influence on consumer decision processes and information search. Since involvement is captured better when all its dimensions are taken into account, it is useful to study whether all antecedents taken together can discriminate the consumers belonging to different social classes. To put in a different way, do consumers from different social classes exhibit different types of involvement profiles and are these profiles heterogeneous enough to predict group membership adequately?

This exercise would enable us to comment whether consumers drawn from a particular social class reveal homogeneous involvement profiles for a variety of products. Again, a careful study of other perceptual variables also show that consumers belonging to different social classes do show significant variations in their perceptions. For example, it has been observed that the upper class of consumers, in general, seek more information which is revealed by a relatively higher score on this variable. Similarly, for product TV, we have observed that the decision making process is more extensive in nature for the USC consumers compared to the LSC consumers. Likewise, the score on the perceived product differentiation variable distinctly exhibit that the upper class of consumers view that the competing brands are quite dissimilar and the difference between the scores on this variable for the groups are quite significant. As such, two sets of variables have been considered for conducting MDA.

The first set consists of four antecedents of involvement and MDA is conducted separately for five products under consideration. Again, since significant relationships have been observed for the other five perceptual variables, the second set consists of all ten variables including the price of the product only for two product categories.

4.7 Findings and interpretation

The results of the multiple discriminant analysis clearly show that the null hypothesis is rejected for all the products considered in our study. We would thus conclude that the differences between the mean discriminant scores for populations from which the sample were drawn not equal to zero. In all five cases the results are highly significant. These results strongly suggest that it is quite possible on the basis of the involvement facets and other relevant variables to reject the null hypothesis of no difference between the mean discriminant scores of the two sets of consumers.

It can be observed from the ANOVA table that all F values are highly significant beyond 1% level . It is also interesting to discern that it is possible to discriminate two groups of consumers on the basis of the antecedents of involvement alone. A comparison of the distances reveal that inclusion of other perceptual variables and price of the product did not contribute significant additional distance (D).

However, before we conclude on the basis of the ANOVA results the effectiveness of MDA to categorise respondents into distinct groups certain aspects have to be kept in view before drawing conclusions . It may be recalled that while performing univariate distance analysis we have noticed 30 to 40 per cent misclassification between the two groups of consumers.

As we have indicated that discriminant analysis provides answers to two important issues. The first issue is : whether two or more groups can be distinguished from one another on the basis of a set of independent variables. We have seen that in this study that the two groups can be distinguished on the basis of the distances between the groups .The second issue is how can the discriminant equation be used to determine which one of the groups an individual most closely resembles ? Before we approach this issue it would be prudent to consider the discriminant equations and corresponding co-efficients on the basis of which the classification is done.

Table : 4.8a
ANOVA Table for testing significance
of 'D'

Product - TV					
Involvement Facets					
<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean squares</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.059	004	0.0140	35.76 ^a	0.045
Within Groups	0.045	129	0.0004		

Table : 4.8b

Product - TV					
All Variables					
<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean squares</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.144	010	0.014	23.12 ^a	0.071
Within Groups	0.071	123	0.006		

Table : 4.8c

Product - Wristwatch					
Involvement Facets					
<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.012	004	0.003	15.00 ^a	0.02
Within Groups	0.020	129	0.0002		

Table : 4.8d

Product - Wristwatch					
All Variables					
<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.068	010	0.0060	15.00 ^a	0.05
Within Groups	0.047	123	0.0004		

Table : 4.9a

Product- Suit Length					
Involvement Facets					
<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.056	004	0.0110	36.66 ^a	0.004
Within Groups	0.004	116	0.0003		

Table : 4.9b
Product - Cigarette
Involvement Facets

<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.051	4	0.0120	40.00 ^a	0.042
Within Groups	0.042	116	0.0003		

Table : 4.9c
Product - Toothpaste
Involvement Facets

<i>Source</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>D</i>
Between Groups	0.006	004	0.0010	10.00 ^a	0.014
Within Gr	0.014	116	0.0001		

Note : a:p<0.001

4.8 Discriminant functions and the classification of individuals

The co-efficients of the discriminant equation and the confusion matrices are to be considered simultaneously before making conclusion regarding the usefulness of MDA in separating two groups of consumers on the basis of some set of values on certain variables. These values along with the ANOVA tables presented in the last section would provide sufficient information helpful for drawing meaningful conclusions.

(a) *Discriminant co-efficients* : The co-efficients of the discriminant equation provide an indication of the relative discriminating powers of the individual variables. The discriminant co-efficients have been reported in tables 4.10 to 4.11. These tables give the vector of the discriminant weights of the function:

$$Z = W_1X_1 + W_2X_2 + \dots + W_pX_p$$

Corresponding to each W_i , we also present the corresponding scaled (standardised) vector co-efficients. Two very common standardisation procedures are in vogue. Under the first method, each discriminant weight is multiplied by the total - sample standard deviation of that variable. The other procedure multiplies the weight by the pooled within - groups standard deviation of that variable. We have selected the first method since the two methods rank the co-efficients in the same way and the ranking also agrees with the original ranking.

The following important points emerge from the information presented in tables.

- (i) The relative discriminatory powers of the variables in a multivariate situation are often quite different from those observed on a univariate basis. However, it was observed that variables X_3 , X_4 and X_{11} , in most cases emerged as the most important discriminators.

- (ii) The computed weights and sealed weights of the discriminant equation clearly reveal that a particular combination of variables can not discriminate the groups for all the products considered in our study, The relative discriminatory power of variables differ substantially between various categories of product. For example, for TV it was observed that variable X_4 , X_1 , X_{12} are the most important discriminators and all other variables have very little or no discriminating powers at all. Similarly, for Toothpaste, a frequently purchased convenience product, we find that variable (X_3 and X_4) are most important discriminators.

Table : 4.10a
Discriminant Coefficients (w) and Standardised
Coefficients (Ws)

<i>Involvement</i> <i>Facets</i>	<i>Products</i>			
	<i>TV</i>		<i>Wristwatch</i>	
	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>
x1	-0.002	-0.005	-0.0007	-0.001
x2	-0.001	-0.002	-0.0046	-0.010
x3	-0.003	-0.007	-0.0018	-0.003
x4	0.011	0.028	-0.0063	0.013

Table : 4.10b
Discriminant Coefficients (w) and Standardised
Coefficients (Ws)

<i>Involvement</i> <i>Facets</i>	<i>Cigarette Suit Length</i>		<i>Toothpaste</i>			
	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>
x1	-0.003	-0.004	-0.004	-0.019	0.0060	0.0100
x2	-0.004	-0.008	-0.001	-0.002	-0.0007	0.0010
x3	0.001	0.001	0.005	0.012	-0.0002	0.0004
x4	0.008	0.021	0.013	0.015	0.0020	0.0030

Table : 4.11
Discriminant Coefficients (w) and Standardised
Coefficients (Ws)
All Variables

<i>Variables</i>	<i>TV</i>		<i>Wristwatch</i>	
	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>Ws</i>
x1	-0.0047	-0.0120	-0.0013	-0.0035
x2	0.0038	-0.0079	-0.0072	-0.0164
x3	-0.0043	-0.0102	-0.0024	-0.0047
x4	0.0075	0.0197	0.0072	0.0155
x5	0.0004	0.0008	0.0023	0.0049
x6	0.0018	0.0035	0.0001	0.0002
x7	0.0011	0.0026	0.0015	0.0031
x8	0.0023	0.0044	-0.0039	-0.0079
x11	0.0062	0.0123	0.0027	0.0072
x12	-0.0077	-0.0185	0.0353	0.0103

4.9 The classification problem : Assigning Individuals to Groups

In the context of discriminant analysis, the decision to classify an individual as a member of a particular group is ordinarily based on the concept of groups resemblance. A direct way of solving the problem of classification is to compute the grand mean discriminant score based on the estimated discriminant equation. The steps involved in application of this assignment rule can be stated as under :

- (i) Substitute the centroid of each group in the discriminant function and obtain the respective mean discriminant scores.
- (ii) For any new case compute the discriminant score and assign the case to that group whose score is closer.

The above rule makes two specific assumptions : (a) the prior probability of a new case falling into each of the groups is equal across groups, and (b) the cost of misclassification is equal across groups.

The intermediate results of classifying individuals are not reported here for clarity and we just report here the confusion matrix along with the percentage of respondents misclassified for each of the five products separately. The above results reveal that only 4 to 24% of the respondents were misclassified in general for all the cases taken into consideration.

Table : 4.12a
Confusion Matrix
Product : TV
Four Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		USC	LSC	Total
Actual State	USC	66	6	72
	LSC	7	55	62
	Total	73	61	134

Misclassification 10%

Table : 4.13a
Confusion Matrix
Product : Wristwatch
Four Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		USC	LSC	Total
Actual State	USC	58	14	72
	LSC	8	54	62
	Total	66	68	134

Misclassification 16%

Table : 4.12b
Confusion Matrix
Product : TV
Ten Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		USC	LSC	Total
Actual State	USC	68	4	72
	LSC	2	60	62
	Total	70	64	134

Misclassification 4%

Table : 4.13b
Confusion Matrix
Product : TV
Four Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		USC	LSC	Total
Actual State	USC	65	7	72
	LSC	3	59	62
	Total	68	66	134

Misclassification 7%

Table : 4.14a
Confusion Matrix
Product : Cigarette
Four Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		<i>USC</i>	<i>LSC</i>	<i>Total</i>
Actual State	USC	61	08	069
	LSC	06	46	052
	Total	67	54	121

Misclassification 11%

Table : 4.14b
Confusion Matrix
Product : Suit Length
Four Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		<i>USC</i>	<i>LSC</i>	<i>Total</i>
Actual State	USC	56	13	069
	LSC	06	46	052
	Total	62	59	121

Misclassification 15%

Table : 4.14c
Confusion Matrix
Product : Toothpaste
Four Variables Case
Assigned by Rule

		<i>USC</i>	<i>LSC</i>	<i>Total</i>
Actual State	USC	48	21	069
	LSC	09	43	052
	Total	57	64	121

Misclassification 24%

4.10. Conclusion :

In this chapter a multivariate analysis has been undertaken to access the effects of antecedents of involvement on the behaviour of consumers. In addition to this, an alternate measure has been employed to establish convergent validity.

The simple correlation analysis conducted in section 4.2

revealed that the various dimensions of involvement are positively associated with information search, choice extensiveness, perceived product differentiation and price of the product. Coefficients have been found to be generally low when advertisement involvement and brand commitment variables are correlated with different facets of involvement

The results of multiple regression analysis showed that the facets of the involvement profile have different influences on the dependent variables. The goodness of fit measure disclosed that the scale demonstrated adequate nomological validity. However, the multidimensional measure of involvement is considered more appropriate than a unidimensional measure in predicting specific behaviour. The results of multiple discriminant analysis also demonstrated that various facets of involvement could adequately discriminate respondent into different classes to which they actually belong. The convergent validity is also established by correlating different antecedents variables with the unidimensional measure of involvement.

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