

## ABSTRACT

### *An Investigation into Consumer Involvement in Trinidad And Tobago: A Developing Country Perspective*

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This paper seeks to measure consumer involvement across several product categories within a developing country context, specifically Trinidad and Tobago. The effects of involvement on selected types of consumer behaviour namely, the time spent in the decision choice process, the use of product features to distinguish differences amongst products, the extent of information search and the choice of reference groups were also investigated.

Primary data was collected through the use of a questionnaire which was administered to a sample of three hundred and sixty respondents at several malls and grocery stores by utilizing the mall/store intercept method of interviewing. Data analysis techniques involved the use of simple and logistic regressions, factor analysis, correlational analysis and t-tests.

The findings from this study would seem to suggest that one cannot fully appreciate consumer involvement without first knowing what particular source of involvement a consumer is exhibiting. Depending on the source of involvement that is acting (product importance, the product's pleasure value, the product's sign or ego value, risk importance and probability of purchase error) consumer behavior differs greatly. For instance, consumers of working shirts, perfumes, facial soaps and jeans were observed to be complex decision makers. These

consumers were concerned with the importance of the product and its pleasure value. However, in the case of ego involvement, consumers were found to be limited decision makers for the products lipsticks and working shirts.

These results thus validate the need for taking into account a consumer's involvement profile (which contains the sources of involvement) for it allows for a fuller comprehension of consumer behavior. Using the profile should facilitate better selection of the information medium, promotional techniques, store layout and the method of distribution that is required to influence a consumer's purchasing behavior.