In continuation of part – 1

BBA (SEMESTER -6)

SUBJECT – CB

UNIT -3

Part -2

By – Mr. Madanjit Kumar Singh

**Concept of pinion Leadership**

Both Opinion Leaders and Opinion Receivers/seekers have their own reasons for providing information and receiving/seeking product information and advice.

Opinion Leaders give product related information and advice sometimes voluntarily on their own and sometimes when are approached and asked for.

Similarly Opinion Receivers/Seekers request for information or listen with patience to all that the Opinion Leader has to say.

Reasons why Opinion Leaders provide information and why Opinion Receivers/Seekers receive or seek information and advice are below.

Opinion Leaders provide information because of the following reasons:

- Opinion Leaders like to give product news, provide expert advice and also love to share their experiences with others. This is because they are involved and interested in a product or service category, and love to talk about it (product involvement).

- communication gives them an opportunity to talk about their interests to others.

Further they may feel so positively and favourably or negatively and unfavourably about a product and/or brand that they feel like telling about it to others (product involvement, self involvement and social involvement)

- As they possess knowledge, expertise and experience with a product category, they feel important and powerful when people approach them for information and advice.

 It confers upon them a sense of superiority or special status over others.

 They take pride in providing information and advice (self gratification, power and pride).

They also feel that others to whom they have given information and advice on new products or services have bought them because of them.

They may be genuinely be benevolent and generous, and out of altruistic concerns may like to help others, especially family, friends, relatives and neighbours (selfless motive: social involvement).

- Opinion Leaders may be also trying to reduce their own level of post-purcahse cognitive dissonance (self-interest).

- Interestingly true, many provide information ----

( a) they may be wanting to try out a new product or service offering after someone else buys and uses it first;

(b) they may themselves be trying to reassure themselves of their own purchase decision by recommending it to others.

(C) they may be dissatisfied with a purchase and like to complain about the purchase of the product and service and/or brand and/or company and/store from where it has been purchased

 Opinion Receiver/Seekers request for information because of the following

reasons:

- Opinion Receivers/Seekers gather information so that they can make the right purchase decision, with respect to the right product and service offering, the right brand, at the right price, from the right store and at the right time. Especially in cases of high involvement products, a person may be less knowledgeable and less involved and can take advice from someone who is more experienced and knowledgeable for that product category.

- They obtain information about new-product or new-usage.

- It reduces the physical and cognitive effort that the Opinion Receivers/Seekers has to take to gather information, evaluate alternatives and take the right decision. They also save on time required to gain information about product and the varying brands.

- Product knowledge and advice reduces the level of uncertainty associated with a purchase. It helps them reduce the perceived risk as they are able to gain product and/or brand knowledge from experts, who are also many a times innovators and first-time users .

- They prefer word-of-mouth communication over other marketing communication as they believe that while the latter have an ulterior interest in making sales, the former is more credible with no ulterior motives.

**Profile or traits and characteristics of Opinion Leaders.**

Consumer researchers and market practitioners have successfully identified traits and characteristics of Opinion Leaders, and developed their profile.

Such traits and characteristics are as follows:

i) Opinion leaders possess high levels of involvement and interest in a specific product or service category. They gather information from various sources (print, electronic andaudio visual, internet and websites etc.) about product development, and are updated about information.

ii) They are subject experts and have tremendous knowledge about the specific product or service category. They are well-informed about product attributes and features, benefits and utility, knowledge about brands, price and availability.

iii) They are product or service category specific; a person who is an opinion leader in a particular product/service category would be an Opinion Receiver/Seeker for another.

iv) In most cases, Opinion Leaders are also consumer innovators. Because of their interest in a product or service category, they have a tendency to purchase a new product offering as soon as it is launched in the market. They act as trend setters and are in a better position to give advice and convince others to make a purchase.

v) Opinion Leaders also possess certain personal characteristics; by nature, they are

self-confident and gregarious. Because of the knowledge and experience that they possess, they are self-confident. They are extroverts and sociable by nature, who enjoy being in company of others, love talking to others and provide them with product news and advice and share their experiences.

vi) As far as characteristics related to social class and social standing are concerned, Opinion leaders generally belong to the same socioeconomic group as Opinion Receivers/Seekers.