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Paper Title: Consumer Behaviour

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Title: Culture & Consumer Behaviour

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Academic Scripts

Introduction:

After studying this session, students will be able-

- To understand the wide range of measurement techniques are used in the study of culture
- To understand three research approaches content analysis, consumer field work, and value measurement instrument.
- To Understand What Subculture Is, and Its Relationship to Culture.
- To Understand Nationality as a Subcultural Influence on Consumer Behavior.
- To Understand Religious Affiliation as a Subcultural Influence on Consumer Behavior.
- To Understand Geographic and Regional Residences as Subcultural Influences on Consumer Behavior
- To Understand Racial Identity as a Subcultural Influence on Consumer Behavior.
- To Understand Age as a Subcultural Influence on Consumer Behavior.
- To Understand Gender as a Subcultural Influence on Consumer Behavior

The Measurement of Culture

- ☐ Content Analysis
- ☐ Consumer Fieldwork
- ☐ Value Measurement Instruments

a)   Content Analysis :

☐ A method for systematically analyzing the content of verbal and/or pictorial communication. The method is frequently used to determine prevailing social values of a society.

Content analysis focuses on the examination of verbal, written, nonverbal and pictorial compositions/communication. The content analysis helps reveal and explainthe content of messages and the varying interpretations. Assessment about the society, and itsculture as well as evolutionary socio-cultural changes can gauged through the content ofverbal, written, non-verbal and pictorial compositions/communication.

b)   Consumer Fieldwork:

☐ **Field Observation**

- ■ Natural setting

- ■ Subject unaware

- ■ Focus on observation of behavior

  Fieldwork may be conducted on consumers, so as to observe their behavior, and draw generalizations about the values, myths, beliefs, customs, traditions and rituals. Such generalizations are drawn on observable in store shopping behavior. Verbal and non-verbal body language are also observed and recorded. Sometimes, instead of being passive observers, the researchers may assume active roles and interact with the consumers (participants) as salespersons. Interviews and focus group sessions may also be used.

c)   Value Measurement Survey Instruments

A variety of value measurement instruments have been used in consumer behavior studies, including the rokeach value survey, the list of values (lov), and the values and lifestyles-values. The rokeach value survey is a self-administered value inventory that is disvided into two parts, each part measuring different but complementary types of personal values. The first part consists of 18 terminal value items, which are designed to measure the relative importance of end states of existence (or personal goals). The second part consists of 18 instrumental value items, which measure basic approaches an individual might take to reach end-state values. Thus, the first half of the measurement instrument deals with ends (e.g., aspects of "happiness"), and the second half considers means (e.g., being "cheerful").

The LOV scale is another measurement instrument that is also designed to be used in surveying consumers' personal values. The LOV scale asks consumers to identify their two most important values from a nine-value list (such as "warm relationships with others," "a sense of belonging," or "a sense of accomplishment") that is based on the terminal values of the rokeach value survey.

- ☐ **Rokeach Value Survey (RVS)**
  - ■ A self-administered inventory consisting of eighteen "terminal" values (i.e., personal goals) and eighteen "instrumental" values (i.e., ways of reaching personal goals)

- ☐ **List of Values (LOV)**
  - ■ A value measurement instrument that asks consumers to identify their two most important values from a nine-value list that is based on the terminal values of the Rokeach Value Survey

- ☐ **Values and Lifestyles (VALS)**
  - ■ A value measurement based on two categories: self-definition and resources
- ☐ **Indian core values**
- ☐ Family Orientation
- ☐ Saving Orientation
- ☐ Festivities
- ☐ Shopping as a Ritual
- ☐ Mythology
- ☐ Food Habits
- ☐ Changing Cultural Trends in Indian Urban Market
- ☐ Achievement Orientation
- ☐ Work Ethic
- ☐ Material Success
- ☐ Middle of the road Approach to Tradition

Indian society is driven by a set of core values, though these may vary in the urban and rural contexts. These values remain basic to Indian culture and are strongly embedded in most sub cultures. The variation in the urban milieu may be attributed to changing lifestyles, the impact of westernization, and the diffusion of technology. Even within the urban context, these values may have further variations or contradictions. Young couples working with high-technology firms may lead a typically western lifestyle (cars, fast food and weekend holidays) but still hold on to or practice certain religious beliefs and customs that are totally ethnic in nature. In general, Indian consumers are culture-conscious in the sense that they conform to the cultural are enduring, or followed by people for a long time; and enable marketers to understand the behavior of consumers. The following are some of the core values of Indians.

☐ **Food habits**

As in most Asian countries, hot, spicy gracefulness are popular in India too. It may be worthwhile to note that food habits have a strong link with culture and are difficult to change. With the exception of magi noodles during the 1980s, there has not been around for several decades, is still not popular barring certain urban and some semi-urban markets. But it is interesting to note that several has almost become part of the eating culture of million of Indians both in urban and rural markets. The success of tiger biscuits, with its low-priced packs, reflects the strength of such a habit.

☐ **Changing cultural trends in Indian urban markets**

The urban setting is very different from the rural or semi-urban market setting. There are target segments in cities comprising professionally qualified, high-salaried people who are into the fast track of life. The cultural values of this segment reflect the trends in the urban markets segment is strongly influenced by the lifestyle and aspirations of the west. The following values can be associated with this niche.

☐ **Achievement orientation**

These aspects contribute to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivational levels and are reflected in the consumption of products and brands. Possessing a middle- end car (like opel or Honda city), membership of prestigious clubs, and holidaying in a foreign resort are some products and services these consumers are interested in procuring. These products/brands reinforce a feeling of accomplishment in individuals and are perceived rewards. Cielo positioned itself in the market; it is a typical example of how a brand positioned the car, a status symbol, as an aspirations product in an appropriate context.

☐ **Work ethic**

As a logical extension of the previous value, contemporary consumers are breaking away from traditional work practices and involved in high tension, fast paced jobs. They experience time pressure and hence prefer time-compression or convenience products. A variety of retail outlets across product categories have emerged in the context.Examples are:-

☐ Ordering of groceries online,

☐ Direct marketing of brands,

☐ One stop shops,

☐ Fast food restaurants like McDonalds and pizza Hut

☐ There is a growing need of services that offer high levels of satisfaction.

Material success

This segment is significantly and markedly different from its equivalent counterparts in terms of education and status two decades ago. Present day young adults have tremendous exposure to the environment through education or work experience abroad. The education and intelligence of these consumers have resulted in their acquiring substantial wealth at a relatively young age.

The wealth is spent on essential products, which have contributed to the service economy like health, amusement, time compression, and convenience.

While anumber of consumers may be using credit cards, neo urban young adults exhibit a compulsive need to buy products and services through credit cards. This segment may possess multiple credit cards; some banks even attempt to get into the consideration set of such consumers by offering discounts to students of premier institutions, in the hope that they are prospective consumers interested in the banking with them.

☐ **Festivities**

Celebrating festivals is very much a part of India's cultures all the states. The subculture within a state (territory) determines the types of festival that is to be actively celebrated. For example, Pongal is not quite popular except in Tamil Nadu. Like most festival in this country, pongal has a special association with the farmers of the state. Durga puja in west Bengol is celebrated with a great deal of enthusiasm every year. But it is not popular in all states even though its variations are celebrated in other parts.

Similarly,Onam in kerela is another example of religion festival. Such festivals are a huge opportunities for marketers. Given that 76 % of the Indians live in rural areas, a member of company step up their advertising campaigns and logistics during the festivity months. Several brands in a number of product categories offer sales promotional programs during festivity season and hundreds of thousands of consumers make use of " value- based" dealing during this time. A number of consumers postpone their purchases, especially durables, in the hope of getting such deals.

☐ **Mythology**

Mythological stories, scriptures, and music are an inherent part of the Indian culture. Apart from creating a brand experience in service like tourism, toys, souvenirs, an artifacts can also be drawn from the Indian culture milieu. Such products are marketed in palces of tourist interest but products are not branded. Most of this may not even have good quality in terms of product finish and durability.

☐ **Middle of the road approach to tradition**

A niche segment of consumers, who are urban, highly educated, and in the upper end of the socio economic strata, adopt middle –of-the-road approach toward ritual and other cultural practices. Most are neither too permissive nor too traditional in their approach toward tradition. In the food segment Indians have traditionally prefer home-cooked food, with eating out being reserved for vary special occasion. In urban India, however, as more and more women are working out side the home, eating out on a regular basis, especially among young professional, has become a part of the culture. Knorr project the middle-of-the-road approach to tradition through its new ready –to-cook packs, which a woman who has limited time for the home can use without altering the cultural practice of preparing food for the family. She also desires to make "restaurant – like food" for her family and using the Knorr packs would allow her family to get a sense of eating out without spending as much money.

2. Sub-cultures

Sub-cultures consist of ethnic groups such as regional, linguistic, rural vs. urban, family composition, economic strata etc. Variations seen within a culture.

•These groups have common traditions, heritage, beliefs, customs and experiences that would differentiate different sub-cultures.

•For example, there are certain common aspects in the Indian culture but almost each state in the country reflects a sub-culture.

•Dress, eating habits, customs etc. are somewhat unique in different parts of India and also, the life style pattern varies.

While culture is defined as the "personality of a society", (inclusive of language, customsand traditions, norms and laws, religion, art and music, etc), it is not entirely homogenous innature. Not all people within a social system, share the same language, religion, customs andtraditions. Every society is composed of smaller sub-units, homogenous within, and heterogeneous outside, all of which when put together make a complex society. Such sub-unitsor sub-groups are known as sub-cultures; people within sub-cultures possess distinctive sets ofvalues, beliefs, customs and traditions etc. The members of a subculture possess such valuesand beliefs, as also customs and traditions that set them apart from people belonging to othersub-cultures. For example, while we are all Indians, and our culture is Indian (with a common national language, Hindi, and common festivals like Diwali), North Indians are different from South Indians. While North Indians, celebrate Lohri, as a harvest festival in January, the South Indians celebrate Pongal as their harvest festival at the same time. In other words, people within smaller units share the same language, religion, customs and traditions; and, this would be different in smaller or larger magnitude to people in other sub-units. A single culture can be broken up into various consumer subcultures. A subculture can be defined as a culture that is not dominant in its society. As consumers from various subcultures, we are different to each other. We have varying values and beliefs, customs and traditions, etc. These get reflected in our perspectives and orientations that influence our purchase patterns and consumption behavior. That is why a study of sub-culture becomes important for a marketer.

Based on the varying criteria, there can be different types of sub-cultures. The important subculturalcategories are nationality, geographical location, religion, race and caste, gender andage. From a marketing perspective, these could also be discussed as market segments, whichneed to be studied and assessed carefully before deciding on a product/service offering andformulating a marketing mix for a particular segment(s).

- Nationality:

Sub-cultures could be based on nationality. While we are all Asians, we aredistinct with respect to culture, and are different in terms of language, customs and traditionsetc. Thus, we are classified as Indians, Nepalese, Pakistani etc.

- Geographical location: Within a country, we could be different across geography, climaticconditions, regions and terrains, and density of population. This is more so in cases where thecountry is large and borders spread across a huge population occupying a vast territory. Peopletend to develop regional affinity and identification, and this gets reflected in the food they eat,clothes they wear, interests they pursue, etc. They constitute as distinct sub-cultures and peopleacross such sub-cultures are different to each other. For example, we can be classified as NorthIndians and South Indians. As consumers, our needs are different and would translate intovarious wants, for example, differences in food habits, and demand for poori-sabji, paratha,idli-vada etc. differences in clothing, and demand for cottons, woolens and silk.

- Religion: People also exhibit differences when it comes to the religions that they belong to.Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis etc. are all different from one another and havedifferent values and beliefs, customs and traditions etc. As consumers, they make purchasechoices and purchase decisions that are influenced by the dictates of their religious leaders,scriptures, and holy books. In fact, many products/services are symbolically and ritualisticallyassociated with religion. For example, as per Islam, non-vegetarian food must be "Halal", and this itself comprises a huge segment that marketers across national boundaries are catering to.

Race and caste: Culture and its components also vary across race and caste. Jats, Rajputs, Pathans and Yadavs are all different from one another. Such racial sub-cultures alsoimpact buying behavior and consumption patterns.

- Gender: Because gender roles have an impact on acts of behavior, gender constitutes animportant cultural sub-group. Males and females across all cultures are assigned different traits
and characteristics that make them masculine and feminine. They also perform different roles insociety and are two distinct sub-groups. It is true that gender roles have got blurred, and bothmen and women are performing such roles that they did not perform earlier. Product usage iscommon to both man and woman; for example, a man shown as using a LG washing machineor making Act II popcorn. Similarly products like shavers and razors exclusive to usage by men,are also being used by women (Gillette thus introduced a razor for women). All this has broughtabout a big socio-economic change and led to cultural transformation. The values espoused bythe generation of today is much different to the one espoused by the previous generation. The pace of change has been further accelerated with households no longer beingsingle income households, but turned to dual-income households. The role of women is nolonger restricted to bearing children and managing the home. Women have started workingoutside, and are contributing to household income. This

has impacted consumer needs andwants as also the priorities. The impact is evinced on consumption behavior, where the 'decider'role is no longer confined to a single person, i.e. the man of the family. Today buying decisionsare jointly taken by husband and wife.

- Age: Infants, kids, teenagers and adolescents, adults and the aged, may also be looked up asdistinct sub-groups. They have different values and beliefs, and all this impacts upon theirpriorities in life. Daily lifestyles, activities and interests, fashion and accessories, food and diet,etc. receive varying priorities across the various sub-groups. For example, an aged personwould prioritize health and go in for nutritious home food as opposed to young man who wouldprioritize work and go in for fast food. Today we see a rising trend amongst kids, adolescents
and the young towards junk food, and they constitute a lucrative segment for restaurantsproviding fast food.

Major Age Subcultures

Marketers and other researchers divide the population into groups depending on the year they were born. There are many differences between these age subcultures.

Generation Y

Gen Y has shifted from TV viewing to the Internet and are less likely to read newspapers. They are the largest users of text messaging and spend a lot of time with online social networks.

- They wereborn between 1977-1994 OR 1982-2000

- There are three groups

    - Gen Y Adults – 19-28

    - Gen Y Teens – 13-18

    - Gen Y Twins 8-12

- Twixtersare between the age of – 21-29 and live with parents.

Generation X

Gen X is careful to work at jobs they like, regardless of salary. The tend to work to live rather than the baby boomers who lived to work. Although they are not designer focused, they do tend to purchase brand names such as Sony.

- They were Born between 1965 and 1979

- They Also referred to as *Xers, busters, or slackers*

- They do not like labels, are cynical, and do not want to be marketed to.

Baby Boomers

The **baby boomers** have a lot of purchasing power due to their size and their propensity to purchase for themselves, others, and their homes. They are mixed on their views of retirement and will therefore purchase in different ways during these golden years.

- They were born between the year 1946 – 1964
- They are Motivated consumers

- They are not anxious to retire and handle it as:

    – Opportunity for a new start

    – A continuation of preretirement life

    – Unwelcome disruption

    – Transition to old age

- **Older Consumers**

    The **older consumer** is an important and growing segment. People are living longer and are healthier and more active at an older age. Many people tend to clump seniors together when, in fact, there are several segments within this group. The young-old tend to travel and purchase at a very high rate.

- They are roughly 65 years and older.

- This is very growing segment due to better medical care, and the aging of the large baby boomer segment

- Three segments by age

    – The Young-Old (65-74)

    – The Old (75-84)

    – The Old-Old (85 and older)

    – Segmentation can also be done on motivations and quality-of-life orientation.

    – Cyberseniors

It is shown that perceived or cognitive age might be a better way to segment people. Those who feel and act younger will purchase consumer products that are generally consumed by a somewhat younger group.

Issues in Understanding Gender as a Subculture

- Sex Roles and Consumer Behavior

- Masculine vs. Feminine Traits

- Consumer Products and Sex Roles

- Women as depicted in Media

Gender:-

Gender plays an important role in some marketing issues. Men and women react differently toward print ads and have very different shopping motives. As such, some consumer products are much more focused to one sex versus the other. It is only in the past few years that men have increased their purchases of consumer care products, including moisturizers and hair care products.

Many women are concerned with the way they are depicted in media and would like to see more of the "real" women that advertisers like Dove have begun to use. Follow this web link to the Campaign for Real Beauty by Dove to learn more about the campaign.

Working Women

- Segments of ALL women

    – Stay-at-home

    – Plan-to-work

    – Just-a-job working

    – Career-oriented working

- Working women are important consumers and comprise about 60 percent of American women. They can be broken into many segments based on "why" they work and their occupational category. Think of women you know who work. Which ones are focused on their career versus working just to pay the bills? How might this affect their purchasing behavior?

Marketers should strive to understand how multiple sub cultural memberships jointly influence consumer's behavior.

Summary :

The study of the culture is a study of all aspects of a society. The elements of culture are transmitted by three social institutions, the family, the peer groups, and the school. A forth social institution that plays a major role in the transmission of culture is the mass media, both through editorial content and through advertisement.

Students learnt a wide range of measurement techniques which is used to study culture. The range includes content analysis, customer field work and value measurement survey technique.

Students got ideas about a core Indian values which are relevant to study the consumer behavior.