



Cultural Manifestations In Consumer Behaviour: An Indological Socio-Marketing Concept

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Abstract:

Culture is the set of social traditions and customs. The form of culture is very extensive and the world is so large that all the population cannot come into contact with each other at one time. Different societies are affected differently by different beliefs, customs, and traditions. Culture includes scientific investigations, achievements, literature and its kind such as drama, poetry, short story, novel etc. Customs, traditions, law, habits, methodology, fashion, festivals are also an integral part of culture along with art, music, dance, sculptures, paintings, religions, moral values, human beliefs, patterns of behaviour, etc. Socially relevant cultural ideas may be classified into four broad categories such as belief, values, norms and technologies. Cultural beliefs are statements that are assumed to express, fundamental truths, about reality and human life. Cultural values are shared conceptions of what is desirable and undesirable in social life. Cultural norms are shared standards regarding acceptable and unacceptable social actions. Technology consists of knowledge about techniques using material objects or social actions to achieve desired objectives¹.

Keywords- Consumer, Indology, Marketing, Behaviour, Culture, Traditions, Motivation, Values etc.

The objective of this paper is to deal with the manifestations of cultural and its impact on the buying behavior of present customers & consumers. The Indian Cultural tradition is perhaps the oldest one on our planet. Indian culture and values (Dharma) has survived through the ages. It is a historical fact that Egypt, Samaria, Greek, Persian and other fountain heads of civilization have perished from the map of the world, but Indian civilization survived through the epoch of history. Credit for its survival goes to the values of the Indian culture which is treasured in the traditions, Ethos, Vedas, Purans, Upanishads, Gita, Buddhist literature, the epics (Ramayana and Mahabharata) and in the medieval Bhakti literature. Therefore, culture is idealistic pole star that guides and determines progression of civilization.

¹ Olsen, E. Marvin (1991). Societal Dynamics – Exploring Macrosociology. *Culture*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., pp.55-73.

Taylor defined culture as “Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society”. On the basis of the above definitions, it can be summed up that culture is a social heritage and not a biological one. It is something organic and idealistic. Culture has a dynamic quality and is unique in nature. It embraces the totality of social life marked by its particular way of living, interacting, celebrating and responding to various problems which arise from time to time.

Culture is basically a normative state of affairs since it is imbued with the moral and other norms which guide human life and actions. Culture is impregnated with values of some kind or the other. Therefore, culture is always an activity of value-seeking and value-realization. Culture is packed with human meanings because the cultural products are all value-realization i.e. art, objects, religious ceremonies, musical enjoyments and aesthetic and spiritual contemplation.

Indian culture has been basically grappling with the idea of spiritual development in various forms since the age of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Values and culture go hand in hand because culture is embedded in values. There are diverse cultures which are embedded in diverse value systems. The highest cultures are those that embody the highest values. It is no doubt true that values themselves arise from social consciousness, especially the moral and political values. Values are the ideals for all societies which are beyond time and history. Such eternal values are posited in Philosophy. The highest form of culture is co-terminus with postulation and realization of the eternal values like Moksha or Nirvana in Indian culture and the values like intellectual freedom from humdrum life and the commitment to the rational realization of truth, beauty and goodness are some of the features of Indian traditions and bring about positive influence in human life as well as business practices. Business is the outcome of human relationship management. It has a holistic approach to know the most graphic and life like picture of the civilization, the cross cultural relations, the political and social life, and character and culture occupation of people which forms the basis of strategy formulations. Privileges, obligations and responsibilities of business houses are not limited to trade practices and earn profits only but include social responsibility, crimes eradication, punishments for the defaulters of social justice, adopting taxation and judicious procedure, etc. Ideological views, literature, art, and languages, as well as, in more recent times, the economic, social and political problems of India as applicable to business and form part of formulation of strategies for business growth. Social culture is the set of two assumptions about belief and values. Belief refers to assumptions based on real life experience. Values are assumptions about ideals that guide and influence human group behaviour. The combination of these beliefs and values in a society create the culture. The culture is demonstrated by sharing things, actions and feelings.

Swami Vivekananda was a great philosopher and advocate of upliftment of the poor people of India and created a general opinion about the modernization, both in public life and

industrialization. Modernization is generally regarded as a process of change, change of traditional society into a society based on science and technology. Modernization can best be defined as the process of transforming the old traditional society and nations to modernity in the field of social, economic, industrial, technological, political, cultural and educational advancements. Modernization is marked by westernization, industrialization, urbanization, secularization, democratization, and vocationalisation. In education, comprehensive and multi-faceted education, use of technology, development of means of transportation and communication, emergence of new social and political system and development of international understanding and co-operation. Modernization involves positive change in material as well as non-material culture including the way of life as a whole. Modernization does not mean that ancient values have been phased out².

Gurvani holds that longing for divine values, encourages man to do ethical deeds, which prepare him physically and mentally for Bhagti and helps to become a Sachiar, the ideal man of Sikhism. To achieve this stage, man has to shun useless controversies (Vad-vivad) enmity (vair-virodh), slandering (ninda), etc. The virtue of patience (sabar), contentment (santokh), pity (dayia), humility (namrta), chastity (jat), truthfulness (sachai), self-control (sanyam), etc. are considered to be the hallmarks of an ethical man³.

Impact of culture on consumer behaviour:

The impact of culture on consumer behaviour is a part of external influences, and influences the purchasing behavior of individuals. There are many influences such as social, economic, psychological, and ethical besides normal customs being historical, cultural and religious. There are such other requirement such as religious requirements, social requirements, technological requirements and requirements of human nature including social strata of society and such other emotional and environmental requirements etc. Therefore it is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral customs and any such influences which influence the customer to go in for purchase of a particular or particular type of product to meet with the needs and their satisfaction. On the basis of such influences the customer lands in the field of making purchase strategies and the marketing field. The concept of consumer behaviour is gaining significance since long. The consumer behaviour is a physiological process and is all related to emotions of the customer/consumer. In the process the consumer starts with recognizing the need of the product and finding a way of solving these needs and makes purchase decisions like planning whether he should buy a particular product and confirm the information, chalk-out a plan and implement the plan of making a purchase. Cultural factors influence consumer behaviour. The cultural factors are the factors that the individual learns at the initial stage of life due to socialization within the family and the other key institutions such as values, preferences, the behaviour pattern and perceptions. The

² Walia, J.S. (2000) Modernisation and Education. *Modern Indian Education and its Problems*. Jalandhar City: Paul Publishers, p. 597.

³ Dhillon, J. K. (2004). Underlying the Philosophy of Guru Granth Sahib. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. Chandigarh: Panjab University, pp. 27-41.

behaviour patterns and perceptions are learnt as individual gains experience in the line. Consumer behaviour influences are not only from personalities and motivations but also by internal relationships within families. Culture functions as a way to bring people together with similar interests, similar backgrounds and similar beliefs and shape their views on a particular matter in society.

Motivational Commitment to Change:

Culture and the influence of culture brings the motivational commitment to change the purchase behaviour of consumers there exists a courage to resist change the pattern of consumer behaviour at the initial stage but with the getting of more information about a product and knowledge of additional benefits to be achieved with the adoption of changed strategies leads the customer to adopt change from the existing procedure or use of a new product. Here the technological advancements in the product also influence the pattern of purchase. With advancement of telephone technology its influence on society is seen as a change of pattern of purchase. Mores, the companies successful execution of new technology which provide better communication service to society that is why the purchase system of modern days have changed from showroom purchase to on line purchase. This type of change is a social change and in communities and institutions. The communication pattern has a further change of professional on campus seminars have changed to webinars is the recent change pattern to due to environmental change in social behaviour has lead to professional change in modern times in mid twenty-first century. Highly motivated change leaders create energy, excitement and momentum in people around them and provide opportunities for others to follow their example and take personal responsibilities for change. More often they use facts about customers and competitors to motivate their people to win the market share, change demand time with the acumen hard work and perseverance.

Research Methodology

This study is the result of descriptive and exploratory research. No statistical tools have been used for the purpose of this study. Thus it is purely qualitative in nature. The marketing system and the behaviour of customers have undergone multiple changes for decades now. Therefor the age old traditions and methods of purchase, obtaining of product information by customers and system of collection of feedback from customers have also undergone a drastic change especially in the present complex situation. Different software's are being used to be close to customer base. Customer data is the most useful resource that any marketing organisation possesses. The marketing functionaries have engineered to mine this data in anyway, which the organisation would like. Customer's transactional pattern is observed and trends are drawn in order to impart a more personalized and professional experience and specialized service for the benefit of customers which in turn enhances the marketing share of the organization.

Leveraging the power of artificial intelligence:

The scientific innovations and researches have tried to make some specialized jobs and help to mankind to excelrate business operations. At some point of our personal and professional life we have wished for a robot that could do our work just like us, however the human brain differentiate from the machines. Artificial intelligence in simple words is an ingenious technology that allows machines to replicate human tasks so as to make our life easier for everyone. Be it repetitive processes done manually, analyzing high volume of data within minutes or finding anomalies and marketing trends, artificial intelligence can do them all. The scope of this technology is huge and can be utilized by all industries globally. Now the obvious question that arises within the business discussions, if machine will do our jobs then what will human do. The purpose of these discussions held at corporate level and at floor level in our marketing and industrial fields is to understand the benefits that this technology will accrue and weight it against difficulties it may purpose. Every sector can apply to reap some advantages. Artificial intelligence has raised a lot of curiosity among researchers and marketing agencies are keen to find out its impact on the future of marketing and consumer behaviour.

Corporate governance in Marketing:

Corporate governance in marketing is to satisfy the customer base of organizations and to find out ways and means to satisfy the customers and look forward customer's dissonance. Corporate governance is the process by which corporations are directed, monitored and controlled. Its structure provides objectives of the company and means of attaining the performance of their objectives. On the other side the interest of the customer and watch for their satisfaction is a paramount sphere where the activities of the companies are judged in social circles. Corporate governance is a formal system of accountability of senior management to corporate stakeholders and other stakeholders such as employees, suppliers, customers and local community. It is a balance and it is also important to me between economic and social goals and also between economic and social goals. According to the philosophy of Kautilya, the root of any business remains in its philosophy and it is also important to maintain ethical standards in every respect. Kautilya also asserted, that philosophy is ever thought of as the lamp of all sciences and the means of all actions and as the support of all laws and duties. It is noted that an integral part of effective corporate governance regime includes provision of civil or criminal prosecution of individuals who conduct unethical or illegal acts in the name of enterprises. Kautilya opines in a most modern way, sovereignty is practicable only with the co-operation of others and all administrative measures and ministers were supposed to observe strict discipline. Kautilya has recommended a strict code of discipline for himself and for his administrators. In the present time the most follow strict code of discipline for carrying out various administrative and marketing works. Where the organizations are required to create corporate culture of consciousness, transparency and openness.

Conclusion

Culture values are widely held beliefs that affirm what is desirable. These values affect behavior through norms. Norms kept in sight by customers and specify as to what is acceptable or non acceptable to customers. Here the quality of product and the satisfaction of the customers are the paramount limited factors which include influence the demand of a particular product in a market. Quality of the product affects the relationship between individuals and organizations.

As far as the Indian society is concerned, the population here is more or less religious and observe various functions, beliefs, congregations and celebrate the birth days, marriage anniversaries of saints, Gods, religious Heads, Prophets Pops national Heroes and freedom Fighters and celebrities and so on, therefore, their purchasing power, interests, motivations to purchase influenced by countryside Melas and social functions. The traditional social structure effect the social order, hierarchy, occupational and educational profiles. Such other traditional mindsets influence the individual orientations and thereby affect the life styles, attitudes, aspirations and resources of information, brand considerations of the customers made during the buying process.

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