
FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The consumer behaviour or buyer behaviour is influenced by several factors or forces.

They are:

1. Internal or Psychological factors
2. Social factors
3. Cultural factors
4. Behavioural / Personal factors

External Influences:

Cultural:

- Culture.
- Sub – culture.
- Social class.

Social:

- Reference groups.
- Families.
- Roles/ Status.

Internal Influences:

Personal:

- Age/ Life cycle stage.
- Occupation.
- Economic circumstances.
- Lifestyles.
- Personality/ self-concept.

Psychological:

- Motivation.
- Perception.
- Learning.
- Beliefs/ Attitudes.

Culture:

Culture is crucial when it comes to understanding the needs and behaviours of an individual. For a brand, it is important to understand and take into account the cultural factors inherent to each market or to each situation in order to adapt its product and its marketing strategy. As these will play a role in the perception, habits, behaviour or expectations of consumers. For example, in the West, it is common to invite colleagues or friends at home for a drink or dinner. In Japan, on the contrary, invite someone home does not usually fit into the local

customs. It is preferable to do that this kind of outing with friends or colleagues in restaurant. While if a Japanese offer you a gift, the courtesy is to offer him an equivalent gift in return. McDonald's is a brilliant example of adaptation to the specificities of each culture and each market. Well aware of the importance to have an offer with specific products to meet the needs and tastes of consumers from different cultures, the fast food giant has for example: a McBaguette in France (with french baguette and Dijon mustard), a Chicken Maharaja Mac and a Masala Grill Chicken in India (with Indian spices) as well as a Mega Teriyaki Burger (with teriyaki sauce) or Gurakoro (with macaroni gratin and croquettes) in Japan.



Sub-cultures:

A society is composed of several sub-cultures in which people can identify. Subcultures are groups of people who share the same values based on a common experience or a similar lifestyle in general. Each culture contains different subcultures such as religions, nationalities, geographic regions, racial groups etc. Marketers can use these groups by segmenting the market into various small portions. Ex: In India, each state has different sub cultures – eating habits, dressing style, preferences change accordingly.



Social classes:

Social classes are defined as groups more or less homogenous and ranked against each other according to a form of social hierarchy. Even if its very large groups, we usually find similar values, lifestyles, interests and behaviours in individuals belonging to the same social class. Every society possesses some form of social class which is important to the marketers because the buying behaviour of people in a given social class is similar. In this way marketing activities could be tailored according to different social classes. Some studies have also suggested that the social perception of a brand or a retailer is playing a role in the behaviour and purchasing decisions of consumers. In addition, the consumer buying behaviour may also

change according to social class. A consumer from the lower class will be more focused on price. While a shopper from the upper class will be more attracted to elements such as quality.

SOCIAL FACTORS:

Reference groups and membership groups:

The membership groups of an individual are social groups to which he belongs and which will influence him. The membership groups are usually related to its social origin, age, place of residence, work, hobbies, leisure, etc. Reference groups have potential in forming a person attitude or behaviour. The impact of reference groups varies across products and brands. For example, if the product is visible such as dress, shoes, car etc then the influence of reference groups will be high. Reference groups also include opinion leader (a person who influences other because of his special skill, knowledge or other characteristics). More generally, reference groups are defined as those that provide to the individual some points of comparison more or less direct about his behaviour, lifestyle, desires or consumer habits.

Ex: families, teachers, classmates, political groups, sports teams





MKBHD's Review of OnePlus 6 Turned into YouTube Ad by OnePlus Without Consent

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Renowned tech personality and YouTuber, Marques Brownlee aka MKBHD, recently published a video review of the OnePlus 6 on his channel. But it appears that OnePlus ran his review video as an ad for promotion without his consent.

Family:

The family is maybe the most influencing factor for an individual. It forms an environment of socialization in which an individual will evolve, shape his personality, acquire values. But also develop attitudes and opinions on various subjects such as politics, society, social relations or himself and his desires. Buyer behaviour is strongly influenced by the member of a family. Therefore, marketers are trying to find the roles and influence of the husband, wife and children. If the buying decision of a particular product is influenced by wife then the marketers will try to target the women in their advertisement. Here we should note that buying roles change with change in consumer lifestyles. For example, if you have never drunk Coke during your childhood and your parents have described it as a product full of sugar and not good for health. There is far less chance that you are going to buy it when you will grow up that someone who drinks Coke since childhood.



Social roles and status

The position of an individual within his family, his work, his country club and his group of friends etc. All this can be defined in terms of role and social status. A social role is a set of attitudes and activities that an individual is supposed to have and do according to his profession and his position at work, his position in the family, his gender, etc. and expectations of the people around him. For example, a consumer may buy a Ferrari or a Porsche for the quality of the car but also for the external signs of social success that this kind of cars represents. Moreover, it is likely that a CEO driving a small car like a Maruti Baleno or a Volkswagen Polo would be taken less seriously by its customers and business partners than if he is driving a German luxury car. And this kind of behaviours and influences can be found at every level and for every role and social status. Again, many brands have understood it by creating an image associated with their products reflecting an important social role or status.





INTERNAL INFLUENCES:

PERSONAL FACTORS:



Age and way of life:

A consumer does not buy the same products or services at 20 or 70 years. His lifestyle, values, environment, activities, hobbies and consumer habits evolve throughout his life. Age and life-cycle have potential impact on the consumer buying behaviour. It is obvious that the consumers change the purchase of goods and services with the passage of time.

Family life-cycle consists of different stages such young singles, married couples, unmarried couples etc which help marketers to develop appropriate products for each stage. For example, during his life, a consumer could change his diet from unhealthy products (fast food, ready meals, etc.) to a healthier diet, during mid-life with family before needing to follow a little later a low cholesterol diet to avoid health problems. The factors influencing the buying decision process may also change. For example, the social

value of a brand generally plays a more important role in the decision for a consumer at 25 than at 65 years.

The family life cycle of the individual will also have an influence on his values, lifestyles and buying behaviour depending whether he is single, in a relationship, in a relationship with kids, etc. as well as the region of the country and the kind of city where he lives (large city, small town, country side, etc.) For a brand or a retailer, it may be interesting to identify, understand, measure and analyze what are the criteria and personal factors that influence the shopping behaviour of their customers in order to adapt. For example, it is more than possible that consumers living in New York do not have the same behaviour and purchasing habits than the ones in Nebraska. For a retailer, have a deep understanding and adapt to these differences will be a real asset to increase sales.

Lifestyle

The lifestyle of an individual includes all of its activities, interests, values and opinions. The lifestyle of a consumer will influence on his behaviour and purchasing decisions. For example, balanced products will do therefore specific products), etc.

A consumer with a healthy lifestyle will prefer to eat organic and go to specific grocery stores, some jogging regularly (and will buy shoes, clothes and specific products.

Personality and self-concept

Personality is the set of traits and specific characteristics of each individual. It is the product of the interaction of psychological and physiological characteristics of the individual and results in constant behaviours. It materializes into some traits such as confidence, sociability, autonomy, charisma, ambition, openness to others, shyness, curiosity, adaptability, etc.

While the self- concept is the image that the individual has or would like to have _of him and he conveys to his entourage.

For example, since its launch, Apple cultivates an image of innovation, creativity, boldness and singularity which is able to attract consumers who identify to these values and who feel valued _in their self-concept _by buying a product from Apple.

Occupation:

The occupation of a person has significant impact on his buying behaviour. For example, a marketing manager of an organization will try to purchase business suits, whereas a low-level worker in the same organization will purchase rugged work clothes.

Economic Situation:

Consumer economic situation has great influence on his buying behaviour. If the income and savings of a customer is high then he will purchase more expensive products. On

the other hand, a person with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products.

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

It affecting our purchase decision includes motivation (Maslow's hierarchy of needs), perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes. Other people often influence a consumer's purchase decision. The marketer needs to know which people are involved in the buying decision and what role each person plays, so that marketing strategies can also be aimed at these people. Among the factors influencing consumer behaviour, psychological factors can be divided into 4 categories: motivation, perception, learning as well as beliefs and attitudes.



Motivation

Motivation is what will drive consumers to develop a purchasing behaviour. It is the expression of a need which became pressing enough to lead the consumer to want to satisfy it. It is usually working at a subconscious level and is often difficult to measure. The level of motivation also affects the buying behaviour of customers. Every person has different needs such as physiological needs, biological needs, social needs etc. The nature of the needs is that, some of them are most pressing while others are least pressing. Therefore, a need becomes a motive when it is more pressing to direct the person to seek satisfaction.

Perception

Perception is the process through which an individual select, organizes and interprets the information he receives in order to do something that makes sense. The perception of a situation at a given time may decide if and how the person will act.

Selective Attention:

The individual focuses only on a few details or stimulus to which he is subjected. The type of information or stimuli to which an individual is more sensitive depends on the person. For brands and advertisers successfully capture and retain the attention of consumers is

increasingly difficult. For example, a consumer who wishes to buy a new car will pay more attention to car manufacturers ads. While neglecting those for computers. Lastly, people are more likely to be attentive to stimuli that are new or out of the ordinary.

Selective Distortion:

In many situations, two people are not going to interpret an information or a stimulus in the same way. Each individual will have a different perception based on his experience, state of mind, beliefs and attitudes. Selective distortion leads people to interpret situations in order to make them consistent with their beliefs and values.

For brands, it means that the message they communicate will never be perceived exactly in the same way by consumers. And that everyone may have a different perception of it. That is why it is important to regularly ask consumers in order to know their actual brand perception.

Selective Retention:

People do not retain all the information and stimuli they have been exposed to. Selective retention means what the individual will store and retain from a given situation or a particular stimulus. As for selective distortion, individuals tend to memorize information that will fit with their existing beliefs and perceptions. For example, consumers will remember especially the benefits of a brand or product they like and will forget the drawbacks or competing products advantages.

Learning

Learning is through action. When we act, we learn. It implies a change in the behaviour resulting from the experience. The learning changes the behaviour of an individual as he acquires information and experience. For example, if you are sick after drinking milk, you had a negative experience, you associate the milk with this state of discomfort and you learn that you should not drink milk. Therefore, you don't buy milk anymore. Rather, if you had a good experience with the product, you will have much more desire to buy it again next time. The learning theories can be used in marketing by brands.

Beliefs and attitudes

A belief is a conviction that an individual has on something. Through the experience he acquires, his learning and his external influences (family, friends, etc..), he will develop beliefs that will influence his buying behaviour. Customer possesses specific belief and attitude towards various products. Since such beliefs and attitudes make up brand image and affect consumer buying behaviour therefore marketers are interested in them. Marketers can change the beliefs and attitudes of customers by launching special campaigns in this regard. To change the brands marketing message or adjust its positioning in order to get consumers to change their brand perception.

