



CONSUMER BEHAVIOR CHAPTER 7:
PERSONALITY, LIFESTYLES, AND VALUES

Personality

Personality refers to a person's unique psychological makeup and how it consistently influences the way a person responds to his or her environment.

- 1) There has been debate about whether personality changes with situations and circumstances. Do people appear to act consistently? Research results are mixed.
- 2) Even though inconsistencies have been found in personality research, it still continues to be included in marketing strategies.
- 3) Personality dimensions are usually employed in concert with a person's choices of leisure activities, political outlook, aesthetic tastes, and other individual factors to segment consumers in terms of ***lifestyles***.

Consumer Behavior on the Couch: Freudian Theory

Sigmund Freud developed the idea that much of one's adult personality stems from a fundamental conflict between a person's desire to gratify his or her physical needs and the necessity to function as a responsible member of society. His principles (note that these terms do not refer to physiological portions of the consumer's brain) included:

- 1) The **id** (which is entirely oriented toward immediate gratification). It operates on the **pleasure principle** (behavior guided by the primary desire to maximize pleasure and avoid pain).
 - a) The id is selfish.
 - b) The id is illogical (it acts without regard to consequences).
- 2) The **superego** (which is the counterweight to the id). It is a person's conscience.
 - a) It internalizes society's rules.
 - b) It works to prevent the id from seeking selfish gratification.

Consumer Behavior on the Couch: Freudian Theory

3) The **ego** (which is the system that mediates between the id and the superego).

The ego tries to balance these two opposing forces according to the **reality principle**, whereby it finds ways to gratify the id that will be acceptable to the outside world. Much of this battle occurs in the unconscious mind.

b. The Freudian perspective hints that the ego relies on symbolism in products to make the compromise between the demands of the id and the prohibitions of the superego.

c. There is a connection between product symbolism and motivation (according to Freudian theory).

Consumer Behavior on the Couch: Freudian Theory

- d. The first attempts to apply Freudian ideas to understand the deeper meanings of products and advertisements were made in the 1950s and were known as **motivational research**.
 - 1) This research focused on interpretations from the subconscious (unconscious motives). This form of research relies on **depth interviews** with individual consumers.
 - 2) Ernest Dichter pioneered this form of interview.
 - 3) Motivational research was attacked for two reasons:
 - a) Some felt that it does work, in fact, it worked too well. It gave marketers the power to manipulate.
 - b) Others felt that the analysis technique lacked rigor and validity.
 - 4) Positives were that:
 - a) It was less expensive than traditional forms of motivational research.
 - b) It was thought to aid in marketing communications.
 - c) Some of the findings seem intuitively plausible after the fact.

Neo-Freudian Theories

Those who studied after Freud felt that an individual's personality was more influenced by how he or she handled relationships with others than by unresolved sexual conflicts. Famous advocates of this thought-path (Neo-Freudians) were:

- 1) Karen Horney—she proposed that people can be described as moving toward others (***compliant***), away from others (***detached***), or against others (***aggressive***).
- a) Alfred Adler—proposed that many actions are motivated by people's desire to overcome feelings of inferiority relative to others.
- b) Harry Stack Sullivan—focused on how personality evolves to reduce anxiety in social relationships.

Neo-Freudian Theories

Carl Jung—developed analytical psychology. He believed people were shaped by the cumulative experiences of past generations. Central to his ideas was the **collective unconscious** (a storehouse of memories inherited from our ancestral past).

a) Shared memories create **archetypes**—universally shared ideas and behavior patterns.

b) These memories would be about birth, death, and the devil (as shown in myths, stories, and dreams).

•Some brands have personalities. The measuring of such personalities has been problematic. Various methods have been used, including the Brand Asset Archetypes model used by Young & Rubicam.

Trait Theory

One approach to personality is to focus on the quantitative measurement of traits or identifiable characteristics that define a person. Common traits are:

- 1) *Extroversion and introversion***
- 2) *Innovativeness***
- 3) *Materialism***
- 4) *Self-consciousness***
- 5) *Need for cognition***
- 6) *Frugality***
- 7) *Environmental Consciousness (new trait)***

Brand Personality

Products, like consumers, have personalities. A brand personality is the set of traits people attribute to a product as if it were a person.

- 1) Brand equity refers to the extent that a consumer holds strong, favorable, and unique associations about a brand in memory. Examples of personality dimensions include old fashioned, wholesome, traditional, and lively, among others.**
- 2) Consumers seem to have little difficulty in assigning personality qualities to all sorts of inanimate products.**

Brand Personality

3) Forging a successful brand personality is key to building brand loyalty but it is often difficult. Many younger consumers can detect if a brand is not living up to its claims and is inauthentic. As a result, consumers rebel and today they vent on the Internet. Researchers call this the “Doppelganger brand image” – one that looks like the original but is in fact a critique of it.

4) The creation and communication of a distinctive brand personality is one of the primary ways marketers can make a product stand out from the competition and inspire years of loyalty to it. This is called animism (whereby inanimate objects are given qualities that make them somehow alive). It is an old practice.

Consumers tend to *anthropomorphize* objects, in other words give them human characteristics.

Lifestyle: what we are, what we do

Lifestyle refers to a pattern of consumption reflecting a person's choices of how he or she spends time and money. It is (in an economic sense) how one elects to allocate income.

- 1) A ***lifestyle marketing perspective*** recognizes that people sort him- or herself into groups on the basis of the things they like to do, how they like to spend their leisure time, and how they choose to spend their disposable income.
- 2) These choices create marketing opportunities and chances for segmentation.

Life style

- 3) Lifestyles can be thought of as group identities. It is more than economics and income disposal choices.
 - a) Lifestyle is a statement of who one is and who one is not.
 - b) Other terms used to describe ***lifestyle*** are:
 - 1. ***Taste public***
 - 2. ***Consumer group***
 - 3. ***Symbolic community***
 - 4. ***Status culture***
 - c) Lifestyles are not set in stone unlike deep-seated values discussed in Chapter 4.
 - d) One emerging lifestyle segment is the “***Urban Consumer.***” These are generally 18-34 year olds mostly African American and are into the hip-hop culture.

- 1) Co-branding strategies are used by marketers to combine products that appeal to similar patterns of behavior.
- 2) Product complementarity occurs when the symbolic meanings of different products are related to each other.
- 3) These products, termed consumption constellations, are used by consumers to define, communicate, and perform social roles.

Psychographics involves the use of psychological, sociological, and anthropological factors to determine how the market is segmented by the propensity of groups within the market (and their reasons) to make a particular decision about a product, person, ideology, or otherwise hold an attitude or use a medium.

- 1) Psychographics can help a marketer fine-tune its offerings to meet the needs of different segments.
- 2) The roots of psychographics were in:
 - a) **Motivational research**, which involves intensive one-to-one interviews and projective tests (yields a lot of information on a few people).
 - b) **Quantitative survey research** (at the other extreme) that uses large-scale demographic research techniques.
- 3) Psychographics is often used interchangeably with lifestyle.
- 4) Psychographics focuses on *why* people buy. Demographics tells us *who* buys.