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# Empirical Analysis of Cultural Effect on Purchase Behavior of Indian Consumer

Vaibhav MISRA<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract:

*Understanding the cultural effect in purchase of any product is important for the marketers to sustain in the competitive environment. Indian consumers are considered as non trusty consumers when considered about the cultural factors in making purchase decisions. The study emphasizes on the necessity of understanding the cultural changes as an important constraint in shopping behavior. The organizations need to analyze the cultural constraints and prepare the marketing strategies accordingly to sustain their positions in the market. The study is also conducted to find out the impact of different social institutions such as government, family and school in transforming the cultural background of consumers. The study will also analyze the influence of social group such as peers, family, and friends in making purchase decision. The study will analyze the impact of different media modes on consumers' final decision making about the purchase of products. The study is conducted in Lucknow with sample size of 200 respondents. The reliability of questionnaire is checked using Cronbach's Alpha, other tools used to analyze are one sample t-test and ANOVA.*

**Keywords:** *Culture, norms, purchase behavior, consumer behavior, values, religion, belief*

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### Introduction

Understanding the shopping behavior of consumers is very important task for organizations. The behavior of consumers is never constant; it keeps on changing from time to time. Every consumer is backed up with different cultural environment. The organizations need analyze the behavior of the consumers after certain span of time. One of the most important constraints in change of behavior of consumers is culture. As every consumer is backed up with different culture; there tastes and preferences also vary within family and society.

Bailey and Peoples (1998) defines “culture is the socially transmitted knowledge and behavior shared by some group of people.” (p. 23), (cited in Burmann, 1999)

Earlier authors define culture in the following ways (cited in Brumann, 1999):

According to Keesing (1981) “Culture ... refers ... to learned, accumulated experience. A culture ... refers to those socially transmitted patterns for behavior characteristic of a particular social group.” (p. 68).

As defined by Tylor (1871) “culture, or civilization ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (p. 1)

As per Linton (1936) definition is “the culture of any society consists of the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior which the members of that society have acquired through instruction or imitation and which they share to a greater or less degree.”

Harris (1975) defined “A culture is the total socially acquired life-way or life-style of a group of people. It consists of the patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are characteristic of the members of a particular society or segment of a society.”

### Literature review

Ilyas et al. (2011), in their study interviewed 300 respondents to find out the impact of culture and religion on consumer purchase behavior. In the study it was found that there is significant impact of religion and culture over purchase behavior. They also stated that the

study is helpful for those marketers who do not consider the impact of cultural determinants on consumer's purchase behavior.

The study conducted by Yakup (2011), discuss that culture, belief and traditions influences the decision of consumers a lot. The study also depicts that cultural factors influence a lot in buying the products. Overall the study indicates that there is impact of cultural on consumer's buying behavior.

Patil & Bakkappa (2012) conducted the study to examine the influence of culture on cosmetics consumer behavior; the study concluded that while selection of cosmetics culture plays an important role in decision making. The study also shows that the opinion of consumers is derived from the religion and state which consumer is associated with. The research is conducted analyze the general perspective of cosmetic consumers understanding of culture.

Lawan & Zanna (2013) conducted the study with the aim of understanding the influence of cultural factors on consumer buying behavior of clothes in Nigeria. The study was conducted on 174 respondents. The study concluded that there is significant influence of culture on consumer buying behavior of clothes, it is also recommended to the marketers to consider the cultural environment as culture is major determinant of consumers' want and behavior, therefore while designing the clothes it is to be taken into consideration for Nigerian markets.

The study conducted by Bahhouth et al. (2012) in Kuwait emphasizes that it is necessary for marketers to understand effect of culture in determining consumers' purchase behaviour. They also explored the consequence of culture on consumer behavior in Kuwait.

## **Objectives**

The study is based on following objectives:

- The study emphasizes on the necessity of understanding the cultural changes as an important constraint in shopping behavior. The organizations need to analyze the cultural constraints and prepare the marketing strategies accordingly to sustain their positions in the market.
- The study is also conducted to find out the impact of different social institutions such as government, family and school in transforming the cultural background of consumers.

- The study will also analyze the influence of social group such as peers, family, friends in making purchase decision.
- The study will analyze the impact of different media modes on consumers' final decision making about the purchase of products.

### **Hypotheses**

The study is based on following framed hypotheses:

- There is no necessity of understanding the cultural changes as an important constraint in purchase behavior.
- There is no impact of different social institutions in transforming the cultural background of consumers.
- There is no influence of social group such as peers, family, and friends in making purchase decision.
- There is no impact of different media modes on consumers' final decision making about the purchase of products.

### **Research methodology**

The study is based on primary data which is conducted in the markets of Lucknow. The study uses simple random sampling and convenience sampling is used to collect the data from the respondents. The size of the sample determined is 200 respondents. The questionnaire is constructed keeping in mind the necessary aspects related to the study.

### **Analytical Tools and Techniques Employed**

The analytical tools and techniques that are employed in the study are:

- Cronbach's Alpha will be used to check the reliability of the instruments.
- One Sample T- Test and ANOVA will be used to test the hypothesis. (Jhunjhunwala, 2008)

The SPSS for windows is used for analyzing the collected data.

### **Results and discussions**

The population determined for the study was of 200 respondents from the study area. The questionnaire was distributed among the respondents using convenience sampling. The number of respondents

responded towards the questionnaire was 177 which is 88.5% of total targeted population.

As per Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.876 for the questionnaire consisting of 11 items on a 5-point Likert scale. The data reliability score alpha is 87.6 % i.e. above 80%, which is at an acceptable level. Any value above 0.80 is considered reliable. Thus, the questionnaire has very high level of internal consistency and thus reliability. The validity of the questionnaire was also established and checked.

**Table 1: Reliability Analysis- Scale (ALPHA)**

Reliability Coefficients		Alpha= .876
N of Cases = 177	N of Items = 11	
Source: Primary Data Analysis		

The age groups of respondents identified are taken from 15 years to above 55 years with class interval of 10. Table 2 indicates that majority of respondents are young. The number of respondents in the age group of 15 years -25 years is 58, which is the highest among all age group. This age group is followed by the age group of 35 years to 45 years with 53 respondents. It can be analyzed that above 55% of respondents are young consumers who falls in the age group of 15 years to 35 years.

**Table 2: Age Group**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age 15 – 25	58	32.8	32.8	32.8
25 – 35	40	22.6	22.6	55.4
35 – 45	53	29.9	29.9	85.3
45 – 55	17	9.6	9.6	94.9
Above 55	9	5.1	5.1	100.0
Total	177	100.0	100.0	

As per Table 3, it can be analyzed that majority of respondents was male. The number of male respondents is 71.8% whereas females who responded towards the questionnaire are 50 which is 28.2% of total responded population.

**Table 3: Gender**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender Male	127	71.8	71.8	71.8
Female	50	28.2	28.2	100.0
Total	177	100.0	100.0	

Table 4, indicates the analysis of cultural importance in consumers' purchase behavior. The responses were analyzed on 5 point scale. The scale was defined using strongly disagree to strongly agree, where 1 refers to strongly disagree and 5 refers to strongly agree. The analysis is based on four determinants of culture namely religion, belief, values, norms. It is analyzed that majority of disagree that religion has no role to play in their purchase behavior whereas; majority of respondents agree that belief, values and norms is play an important role in their purchase behavior.

**Table 4: Cultural Importance in Purchase Behavior**

	Importance of Religion	Importance of Belief	Importance of Values	Importance of Norms
Strongly Disagree	37	23	25	37
Disagree	41	44	39	51
Neutral	40	30	27	17
Agree	44	53	42	50
Strongly Agree	15	27	44	22

Table 5 represents that role of social institution in consumers' cultural transformation. The analysis is based on role of government, school and family in cultural transformation of the consumer. These

social institutions are considered for the study because these are only institutions which have deep influence on consumer. It is analyzed that most of the respondents agree that government (103 respondents) has no role in their cultural transformation. When questioned about the role of school and family, the response received was YES. They agree that school (113 respondents) and family (137 respondents) plays the important role in their cultural transformation. Therefore it can be said that school and family are important cultural transformers.

**Table 5: Role of Social Institutions in Cultural Transformation**

	Government Role in Culture	School's Role in Culture	Family Role in Culture
Strongly Agree	10	38	61
Agree	30	75	76
Neutral	34	32	8
Disagree	55	21	19
Strongly Disagree	48	11	13

Table 6 demonstrates the role of media and known people such as peers, friends, and colleagues etc. in their purchase decision making. It is represented on 5 point scale ranging from extremely influence to no influence. It is analyzed that known people (89 respondents) does not have any influence on their purchase decision making whereas media (124 respondents) do play an important role in their purchase decision making process.

**Table 6: Role of People and Media in Purchase Decision**

	Known People	Media
Extremely Influence	28	25
Influence	42	50
Normal Influence	18	49
Less Influence	75	47
No Influence	14	6



After analyzing the result of one- sample t-test from Table 7 about the influence of known people on purchase decision it is calculated that the value of t is .295 with the value of significance at .768, the result is not significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore it can be said that there is high influence of known people on consumer purchase decision.

**Table 7: One-Sample Test (Influence of Known People on Purchase Decision)**

	Test Value=3					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Influence of Known People on Purchase Decision	.295	176	.768	.03	-.16	.22

Table 8 determines the results of influence of media on purchase decision. After analyzing the results it is found that the value of t is 9.325 and the value of significance is .000. the significance is significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore it can be said that media does not play any role in making purchase decision by consumers.

**Table 8: One Sample Test (Influence of Media on Purchase Decision)**

	Test Value=2					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Influence of Media on Purchase Decision	9.325	176	.000	.768	.61	.93

Table 9 indicates about the impact of social institutions on transformation of cultural background on consumers. After analyzing the results of One-way ANOVA, it is found that government has no role in transforming the cultural background. The value of significance is

0.001 which is significant at 5% level of significance. Whereas, value of significance in case of school and family is .06 and .370 which is not significant at 5% level of significance. Therefore, based on the results it can be said that school and family have important role in transformation of cultural background in consumers.

**Table 9: ANOVA (Impact of Social Institutions in Cultural Background Transformation)**

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Government Role in Culture	Between Groups	28.159	4	7.040	5.237	.001
	Within Groups	231.208	172	1.344		
	Total	259.367	176			
School's Role in Culture	Between Groups	11.366	4	2.841	2.276	.063
	Within Groups	214.736	172	1.248		
	Total	226.102	176			
Family Role in Culture	Between Groups	6.314	4	1.579	1.076	.370
	Within Groups	252.431	172	1.468		
	Total	258.746	176			

## Conclusion

It is concluded that the questionnaire has very high level of internal consistency and thus reliability. The validity of the questionnaire was also established and checked. It is concluded that majority of the respondents were young consumers. This shows that young consumers play an important role in making purchase decisions or purchasing products. Also, it is found that religion does not have much role to play whereas; other elements of culture such as beliefs, norms and values have an important role to play in consumers purchase behavior. The study shows that peers, colleagues and known people have interference in making purchase decision whereas, media have no impact on consumers decision making while purchasing any product. It is also found that in the process of cultural transformation social institution have lots to go ahead for cultural transformation. It is found that school

and family plays an important role in transformation of cultural background whereas; government does not have any role in transforming the cultural background of consumers.

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