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**PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING
CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR**

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ABSTRACT

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<p>This paper's aim is to provide an in-depth elucidation of the many aspects that influence consumer behaviour. The study of consumer behaviour emphasizes the "why" and "how" questions involved in decision making and buying behaviour. This exciting field visits a dynamic blend of themes of consumer marketing strategies, psychology and behavioural discipline. Consumer behaviour in this day and age is highly applicable to modern society as it is an integral part of our everyday lives. This paper examines the many challenges involved with discovering individual consumers, as they differ greatly from one another.</p> <p>It focuses on the rationale behind common consumer decision making processes and analyses the ways in which marketers can better understand how consumers think and behave. This paper outlines the significant factors that impact consumer behaviour throughout the theoretical framework with the topics of: Internal Influences, Motivation, Emotions and Personality and Influencing attitudes and behaviour. These subject matters brings a comprehensive outlook into the complex mind of a consumer by examining individual information processing, learning, and attitude and behaviour change.</p>		

Key Words

Buying Behaviour, Consumer Psychology, Marketing Strategy

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1 INTRODUCTION

Consumer Behaviour in a general sense can be considered to be everything, as every aspect of our lives revolves around the consumption of goods and services. The field of consumer behaviour covers a wide stretch of bases as it focuses on the entire consumption process, involving issues that influence a consumer before, after and during a purchase.

Almost all behaviours that people participate in are in one way or another linked to consumption. Whether it be travelling, shopping, or watching television, individuals are directly or indirectly engaging in consumer behaviour. It can be defined as the processes involved when individuals select, purchase and use products or services to fulfil their needs and desires.

In order to compress the broad subject into a more specified field, a division of consumer behaviour was selected in accordance with an area of interest which is consumer psychology. Consumer psychology deals with the way individuals or groups are involved with consumer activities and the effect it has on them personally. It is quite difficult to comprehend consumer psychology without having an understanding of the ways individual's process information and make decisions. Extensive research of consumer psychology highlighted the underlying aspects of individuals that make up consumer engagement.

This thesis combines psychological theories and marketing strategies to bring together the main ideas of consumer psychology. The fundamental elements accentuated in the theoretical framework are: Internal influences, which consists of perception, attention and interpretation. These topics cover an imperative role in explaining the dimensions of the perceptual process and the effect of marketing stimulus.

Motivation, Personality and Emotions is the second topic that presents a psychological perspective on the motivation process, an insight into differences in consumer personality and the effect of emotions.

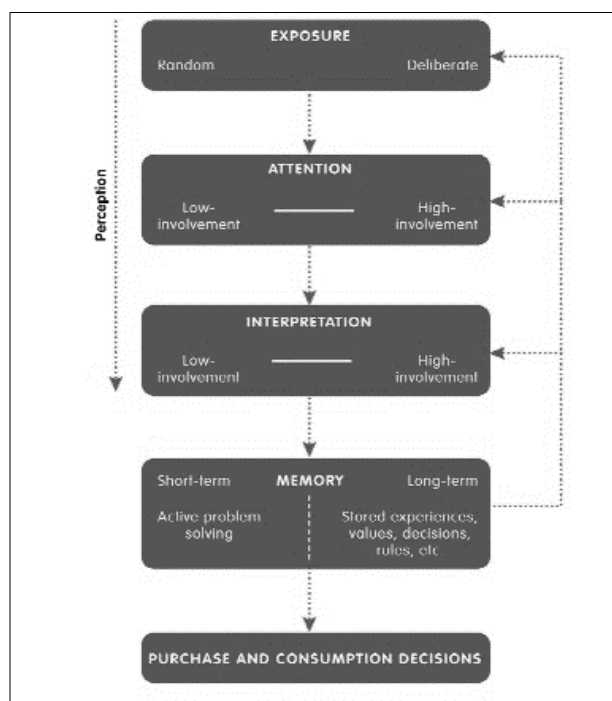
The final subject provides a thorough outlook on attitudes by examining their formation, functional theories and change strategies involved with the Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive (ABC) model. The aim of my thesis is to outline the core elements of consumer psychology in order to better understand this interdisciplinary subject and attempt to provide an insight into the ways marketers can influence consumer decisions.

1 INTERNAL INFLUENCES

2.1 The nature of Perception

The Internal influences that have effect on consumer behaviour consist of an individual's perception, learning, memory, motives, personality, emotions and attitudes. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010, 274-275).

Perception plays a major role in the processing of information and consumer decision making. It begins with consumer exposure and attention to marketing stimuli and ends with interpretation. These three stages make up the process of perception. Graph 1 provides an overview of the perceptual process.



GRAPH 1. Information Processing (Adapted from Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010)

There is a very small amount of information that the consumer processes during the stages of exposure and attention which make these stages highly selective.

The stimuli that does enter the conscience is not processed objectively. The meaning of the stimulus is interpreted differently from person to person and is influenced by unique biases, needs and experiences. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg, 2010) In order for a marketer to communicate their brand or products message effectively to the consumer, it is important for them to understand the nature of perception. Information processing is a process whereby stimuli is perceived, transformed into meaningful information and then stored. As seen in Graph 1 the process begins with exposure which is when stimulus such as an advertisement leads to an immediate response of sensory receptors (e.g. sight, smell, hearing, touch etc.) We process raw data, however perception focuses on what an individual takes away from these sensations and what meaning they assign to them. (Solomon, et al. 2010).

Due to the subjective nature of perception, it is vital the message the marketer is aiming to achieve is portrayed in a very clear manner so that the consumer does not interpret the advertisement incorrectly. An example of a controversial advertisement was an image taken as an ad for Benetton of a black man and a white man handcuffed. This ad was interpreted by its consumers as racist as it was perceived falsely. The consumer's prior assumptions influenced this opinion which shaped the advertisements meaning to them. In this way it is paramount to take into consideration the sensitivity of the design and selection of the advertisement in order to avoid controversial interpretation.

Selective Exposure

This then brings us to selective exposure. One factor that determines how much exposure to a certain stimulus a person accepts is experience. The past experiences of an individual influences the perceptual filters and impacts what the consumer chooses to process. (Solomon, et al. 2010). A major factor of the selective exposure is perceptual vigilance.

This can be found in the example of consumers being highly selective in the way they shop when they enter a store. Consumers are more likely to process stimuli that has relevance to their personal requirements.

A study was made on selective exposure and it was found that only 21 % of U.S. shoppers walked down each aisle of the store. The remaining 79 % just visited the aisles that they required items from and avoided aisles with products that they were not interested in. (Liljenwall, 2004)

Media Exposure

There are differences in the shopping habits of different cultures. In Belgium, France and Holland consumers were found to be highly selective however in The UK, and Brazil consumers were more likely to walk down every aisle of the shop. (Liljenwall, 2004). Media exposure with the use of Television commercials, radio and magazines and so forth can be a concern to marketers as this allows consumers to self-select what they like to watch, listen to or read. As an example, consumers are able to mute a television commercial when they are not interested in listening to it. 'Zipping, zapping and muting' are ways in which consumers can avoid being exposed to advertisements that they are not keen on watching. 'Zipping' is a term used to describe the action of an individual fast forwarding a commercial or a pre-recorded program. Zapping occurs when an individual changes a channel due to a commercial appearing and lastly Muting is turning the sound off during commercials. These all come down to ad avoidance, which are ways in which consumers can selectively avoid exposure to advertising. This ad avoidance has become a global phenomenon and seems to be increasing as ads are taking up the space of the interest, TV and radio. It is causing people to create negative attitudes of marketing and advertising. A study made by Initiative explored and analysed "ad avoidance" on a global scale and found that it was increased by "Lifestyle, social class and demographics". (Initiative, Businessline, 2004)

Moving onto another factor that has effect on exposure called Adaption. It focuses on the degree that consumers recognise a certain stimulus over a period of time. The effect that adaption has to its consumer is that over time this stimulus becomes so familiar that it is ignored. (Cooley. 1902) As an example, a consumer may pass a particular billboard with an advertisement and pay attention to it, however after passing it multiple times this stimulus becomes unnoticed. There are several factors that can lead to adaption. These include: intensity, duration, discrimination, exposure and relevance. (Solomon, et al. 2010) All of these listed factors can effect a consumer and lead to adaption depending upon the individual.

2.2 Gestalt Theories

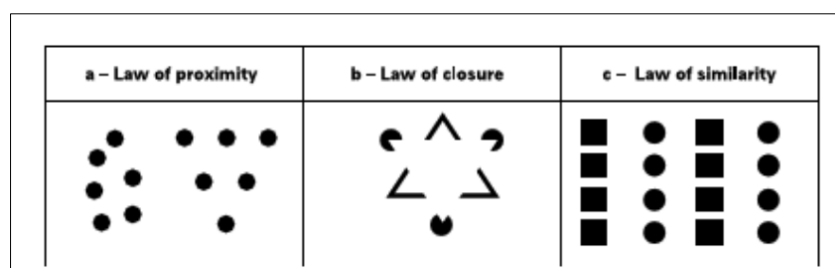
A group of psychologists in the late 1800's and early 1900's Germany were the first to study the organisation of perception. The psychologists that had the most influence were: Johann Wolfgang, von Goethe, Ernst Mach, von Ehrenfels, Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Köhler, Kurt Koffka, and Kurt Lewin. This theory of thought was known to be "The Gestalt School of psychology". The aspect that was systematically analysed was the way features are organised into whole figures. The meaning behind the name gestalt derives from the term being "roughly whole". (Jansson-Boyd. 2010) Their beliefs were that humans are bias and see distinct forms even when they see features of an image that are irregular. This theory has had a considerable impact on the understanding of perceptual processes and it applicable to two dimensional objects which makes it suitable for marketing stimuli.

There are a number of laws that were based upon this research such as the Law of Prägnanz which looks at the way that stimuli is organised into shapes and patterns and perceived as one object.

These concepts were created to help understand consumer perception and the ideas that Gestalt influenced were the law of proximity, law of closure, law of similarity and the figure ground principle. (Jansson-Boyd. 2010)

Law of Proximity

Stimuli that is placed near to each other is perceived as being grouped together. A merchandiser's approach to this principle is the use of display windows, placing items of clothing and accessories together which tells a story and allows the customer to visualize the outfit and potentially buy all the items. This idea is seen in Graph 2 were the dots that are placed close to each other are seen as been a part of a group.



GRAPH 2. Law of Prägnanz (Adapted from Jansson-Boyd. 2010)

Law of Closure

When people look at an irregular geometric figure briefly they fail to notice the intricate details and incompleteness. Instead they see them to be complete and holistic due to prior experiences that assist them to recognise the visual. (Jansson-Boyd. 2010) This law can help to explain the reason why consumers are able to fill in missing words in advertisements for marketing purposes. It encourages consumers to perceive and certain message the process the information in a way that is attractive. Graph 2 gives an example of a triangle with missing elements that people fill in themselves due to prior exposure and familiarity to the object.

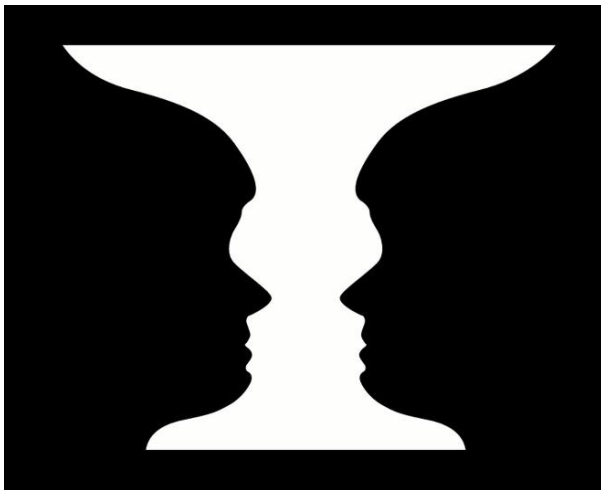
Law of similarity

This idea looks that the way people group objects together due to physical similarity. Wertheimer described in the way that “Other things being equal, if several stimuli are presented together that look similar, the form of the object can be grouped together”. (Wertheimer 1923, 119) Consumers can automatically classify products based upon their appearance and associate them to a particular brand. This can explain the reason that many brands keep their packaging of their products similar so that customers can recognise the design and associate them to the brand. This can also be seen in Graph 2 with the circles grouped together and the squares grouped together due to the similarity of the shapes.

Figure Ground Principle

The ground figure principle works in a way that people perceive items being separate from other surrounding stimuli by having a distinctive form. (Jansson-Boyd. 2010) This principle allows individuals to understand incoming information and process it accordingly. It can be described as one part of the stimulus appearing to stand out as a solid object (figure) with the rest of the stimulus being seen as less prominent (ground). When an object is familiar to an individual they will recognise which item is the figure and which is the ground. In relation to consumers, marketers will often try to make the figure of the image the focal point which is the information that they want to emphasize.

This concept will increase the likelihood of the consumer recalling the information at a later stage. (Jansson-Boyd. 2010) As illustrated in Graph 3 people can perceive the figure and ground of the image differently depending on the viewer.



GRAPH 3. Figure Ground Principle (Adapted from Jansson-Boyd.2010)

2.3 Attention

Attention refers to the degree to which consumers pay attention to stimuli within their range of exposure. (Solomon, et al. 2010). It is primarily the contents of short term memory which is derived from internal and external stimuli. (Kahneman, 1973)

Consumers being bombarded with advertising stimuli has required marketers to become increasingly creative with the promotion of their products to gain consumer attention so that they do not lose their consumers to competitors.

The attention generally occurs when the stimulus activates the sensory nerves which results in the brain processing these sensations. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Given that consumers are surrounded by thousands of different marketing stimuli this can often lead consumers to become highly selective with what they decide to purchase. What captures this attention is determined by the relevance of the message and the consumer's motivation. (Jansson-Boyd .2010)

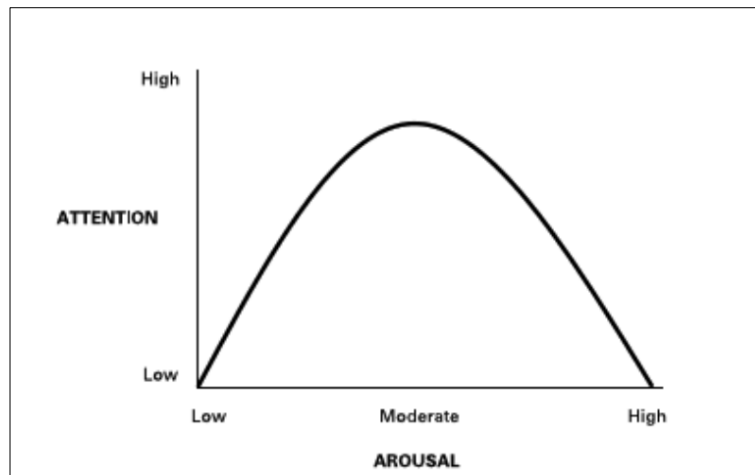
For instance if a consumer has a particular interest in high waisted jeans they will be drawn to this style regardless of what else is on offer.

Others factors that also contribute to the consumer's attention are the prominence and vividness (Rook, 1987) of the message that is being portrayed. (Greenwald, & Leavitt, 1984) Both of these elements have the capacity to capture the attention of consumers on multiple platforms other than advertising.

Most marketers are aiming to ensure that consumers focus entirely on a particular stimuli in order to achieve "focal attention" (Schachtel, 1954) Information that is picked up from a consumer's external environment is temporarily stored in the short term memory which can only store a limited amount of information. Due to this fact consumers tend to only focus their attention to the focal information and ignore the rest of the stimuli. This can explain the reasons why a consumer is more likely to recall elements that captured their attention. (Jansson-Boyd, 2010).

Another significant element of consumer attention is arousal. An aspect that can help in determining the level of attention the consumer is paying is whether not they are aroused. There are many factors that influence an individual's level of arousal and this continuously changes. Being alert can result in a consumer being more perceptive to external stimuli and the amount of information that they can attend to in a given time. Arousal is measures according to a range of low and high levels, a high being alert and perceptive and a low being tired and uninterested. High levels of arousal can also be influenced by exciting events or psychological stimulants (Jansson-Boyd.2010) such as caffeine.

Studies have found that there is a U-relationship between arousal and attention which has the effect of there being a decrease in the level of attention when arousal is low.



GRAPH 4. The relationship between Arousal and Attention (Adapted from Jansson-Boyd.2010)

Graph 4 can help in understanding the reason students find it difficult to concentrate and pay attention in class when they are tired. Essentially when arousal is low, so is attention. Attention then increases when arousal levels reach a moderate level. An individual's cognitive ability is at its best when they are moderately aroused. This in turn will allow them to retain more information. There are multiple factors that can increase arousal in a retail environment such as noise, smell, lighting and temperature. Balance of each of these factors is vital for the consumer to receive the desired level of arousal and not experience the opposite effect.

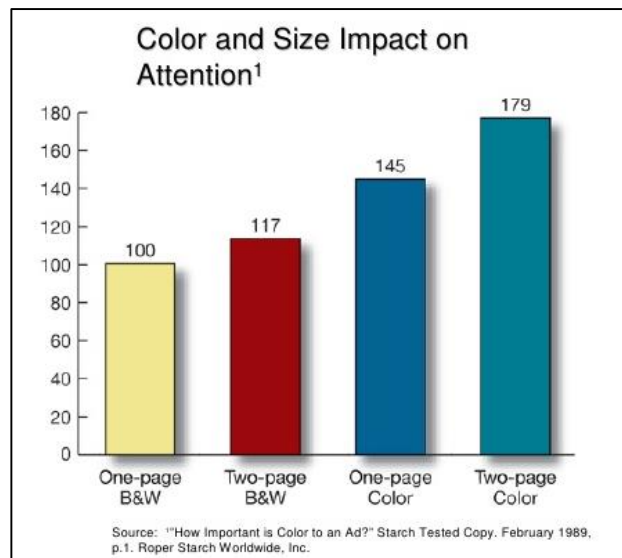
In a marketer's point of view, the visual selective attention of consumers is a particular area of interest. Consumers scan their visual environment and focus their attention on a particular object that catches their attention and take no notice of other stimuli in the background.

This is known as "Visual Selective Attention" (Driver. 2001). What the consumer chooses to focus their attention on is influenced by their perception which triggers the selection process. Studies have found that when a consumer enters i.e. a retail store they conduct a visual search that generally starts by scanning the left hand side of the store and continues to the right.

This can give marketers an insight to the most suitable areas to place displays in order to catch the consumer's attention. (Megaw & Richardson, 1979).

Consumers can be attracted to a product not only visually, but through all senses and stimulus factors. Psychologists Morrin and Ratneshwar found through research that pleasant ambient scents can play a major role in the level of arousal and attention of a consumer, which can later improve brand recall. There are multiple marketing strategies that can be acquired to ensure that products are distinguished from other brands and "break through the clutter" (Jansson-Boyd, 2010) of other products on the shelves.

Many marketers are taking on this strategy of attempting to counter the sensory overload of advertising clutter by buying large blocks of advertising space on the shelves. The main aim with this method is to dominate consumer attention. (Solomon, et al. 2010). Another method that is common is "bookend ad's" which is where a commercial for a brand is separated into different parts, advertising many products. It may be a reappearing visual that catches a consumer's attention and motivates them to purchase the product. An outline of stimulus factors that impact a consumer's attention involve: colour and size, intensity, novelty, personal relevance and brand identity. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Graph 5 below demonstrates the attention attracting ability and differences of black and white and colour advertising ranging in sizes. The coloured advertisement attracted a significantly higher number of viewers compared to the non-coloured advertisement. This indicates that colour contributes to the amount of attention that an ad receives from consumers.



GRAPH 5. Stimulus Factors (Adapted from Roper Starch Worldwide, 1989)

2.4 Interpretation

Interpretation can be defined as the assignment of meaning to sensations. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). In other words, it is the meaning that individual's assign to sensory stimuli. In the same way people's perception of stimuli differs, the meaning that is attached to the stimuli varies. It is a common occurrence for two people to attend an event and interpret it very differently even though they both endured the same experience. Interpretation can be described as they way people comprehend information based upon the particular stimulus, the situation and themselves. Interpretation can be often referred to as perceptual relativity as it is a relative process that cannot be perceived as absolute. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

It is also known to be subjective given its nature of allowing psychological biases. There are so called semantic meanings and psychological meanings related to interpretation. A semantic meaning refers to the relation between signifiers such as words and phrases however the psychological meaning is influenced by an individual's experiences, expectations and the context.

Marketer's interests' lie on the psychological meanings attached to interpretation as it is based on subjectivity rather than reality.

The third aspect is known to be cognitive interpretation, which is an emotional process where consumers place stimuli into categories based on their meanings. This differs based on culture and an individual. (Goodstein, 1993.) What is seen as acceptable in one country may be considered extremely offensive in another. For example in Scandinavia, advertisements that include light nudity are not seen to be inappropriate, yet in America nudity in advertisements are viewed to be improper. For this reason it is important to understand the target audience and take into consideration cultural differences. Products are also categorized into groups of subject or similarity. It is vital for marketers with new product launches to provide consumers with assistance in order for them to better understand the type of product and categorise it accordingly. (Moreau, Lehmann & Markman, 2001).

Affective Interpretation describes the emotional response which is triggered by a stimulus i.e. an advertisement. Emotional responses are spread across a wide spectrum, from positive and inviting to the complete opposite, negative and frustrating. The affective interpretation an individual gains from stimuli is subjective and may not affect another person in the same way. These emotions can come from past experiences or simply preference.

Individual Characteristics

Individuals base their perception and interpretation of advertising stimuli on their personal needs, desires, experiences and expectations. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Consumers are not considered to be passive interpreters of marketing, so it is beneficial for marketers to look into the individual characteristics that make people different. These include traits, learning and knowledge and expectations.

Focusing on consumer traits, there are both physiological and psychological traits that directly affect need and desire and these differences influence the manner in which stimuli is interpreted. An example that highlights these differences are children that are sensitive to leafy greens such as spinach and find it difficult to consume due to its bitter taste. (Turnball & Matisoo-Smith, 2002) From a psychological point of view, consumers are wired to have cognitive, emotional and behavioural predispositions. Studies have found that there are individuals who are inclined to have stronger emotional feelings than others which is referred to as "affect intensity". This affect intensity has proven to affect consumers in the way that increases emotional reactions to stimuli. (Escalas, Moore & Britton, 2004)

Consumers learn about marketer-created stimuli like advertisements through experience and prior knowledge. This experience and knowledge that is gained over time effects the overall interpretation of the stimuli. Generally consumers are thought to have bias attitudes for brands that they favour. Through a study made on "perceptions on price unfairness", consumers were found to infer more positive thoughts on price increases with brands that had a stronger reputation. (Campbell, 1999)

The final individual characteristic that affects consumer interpretation is expectations. Consumer's interpretation is directly linked to their expectations of the brand or product. This can be referred to as expectation bias (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). The expectations that consumers hold on to is a result of learning which tends to happen very quickly. As the old saying suggests "first impressions matter", which in a consumers stand point is very true. Once expectations are established it is very difficult to change.

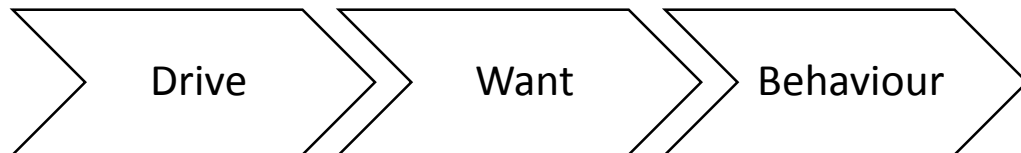
For example many consumers believe high end luxury brands produce higher quality products, as a consequence they compare the performance of the high end product with other cheaper alternative with this bias expectation. (Inman, McAlister & Hoyer, 1990)

1 MOTIVATION, PERSONALITY AND EMOTION

3.1 Motivation

Motivation, personality and emotion are all influential factors that affect consumer decision making and also marketing strategies. In order to better understand the buying habits of consumers these three elements are important to recognise. Motivation can be described as an “energising force” (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010) that activates certain behaviours that in turn provides purpose and direction to these behaviours. In other words it is seen as the processes that lead to certain behaviours. It can answer the question “why” consumers engage in a specific manner. Personality on the other hand reflects the behavioural tendencies that individuals display across array of different situations. It can assist marketers in a sense that it answers that question “what” consumer’s choose to engage in to become satisfied. Lastly Emotions, they are considered to be strong, uncontrollable feelings that have effect on behaviour. These concepts are all interrelated and difficult to separate. A question that psychologists have pondered for hundreds of years is “What motivates Humans?” There are multiple angles in which this question can be analysed and many different theories that help explain why consumers are motivated to purchase goods and services. Motivation is the driving source of behaviour. It is said to have three features, Direction, Effort and Persistence. (Arnold, Robertson & Cooper, 1995) Direction describes what an individual is aiming to achieve, Effort is the amount of energy an individual applies into a job in order to achieve their objective and Persistence is the amount of time that they are willing to sacrifice to achieve their objective. These features propose that everything begins with an underlying need which is activated when there is a discrepancy between a desired state of being and the actual state. (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995).

As this discrepancy increases an outcome of activation of arousal occurs, this is known as drive. The more powerful the drive becomes the greater the urgency of response. Over a period of time specific behaviour patterns are thought to be more effective than others to receive satisfaction, these then become wants.



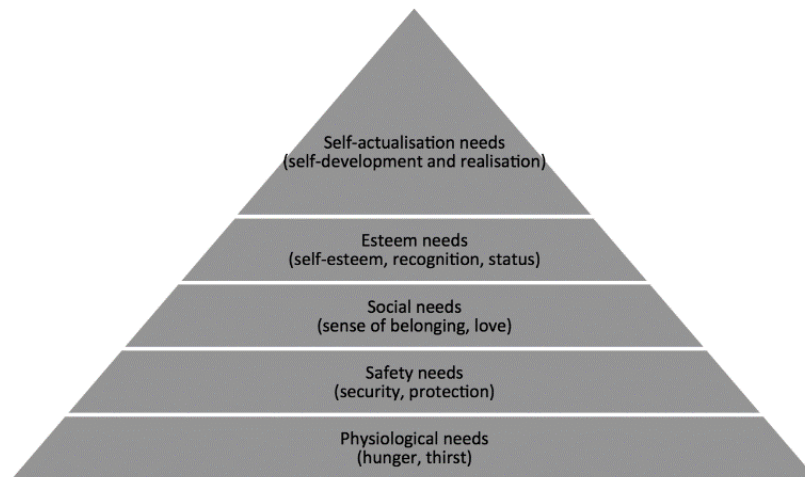
GRAPH 6. Motivation Process (Adapted from Engel et al. 1995)

This simple illustration demonstrates the dynamics of the motivation process and the way in which needs can lead to an action or behaviour. Needs and motives influence consumer's perception of what is relevant and can impact their feelings and emotions.

Over years numerous psychologists have produced different theories of Motivation. There are some that have similar theoretical foundations but others that are not comparable. Two approaches that provide useful insights into consumer behaviour are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and McGuire's Psychological motives. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a macro theory that emphasizes how human needs can be the underlying factor of consumption. (Jansson-Boyd, 2010).

It is based upon four premises. (Maslow, 1970) "The first premises is that all humans acquire the same set of motives through genetic making and social interaction". The Second is "some motives are more critical than others".

Thirdly, "The basic motives need to be satisfied before other motives are activated" and finally "when the basic motives are satisfied even more advanced motives can take place". (Maslow, 1970)



GRAPH 7. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Adapted from Maslow, 1970)

Graph 7 demonstrates the hierarchy briefly and describes each level from the most basic Physiological needs to the more advanced Psychological needs.

Physiological needs: account for food, water, sleep and physiological motives. This covers all of a human's basic necessities in order to survive. The next level is Safety which includes physical safety and security, stability and familiar surroundings. This focuses on feeling satisfied and secure in an environment, an example of a consumer fulfilling their safety needs is organizing health care insurance or purchasing a house in a safe area.

The following level is classed as a psychological requirement which is belongingness, this is reflected in the desire to love, hold friendships and be accepted in society. Ways in which consumers can feel belongingness is by attending a concert or visiting a museum.

Esteem is closely linked to this level as it highlights status and self-respect, these requirements relate to an individual's feelings of accomplishment and achievement. Finally the last level which is at the peak of the triangle, this is self-Actualisation. This stage involves an individual's yearning for self-fulfilment and strive to achieve their own full potential. (Maslow, 1970).



Maslow's theory proposed a new and innovative way of analysing the motivation of human behaviour. Consumer decisions are often led by the need for self-actualisation and can be used to explain the reason some items are purchased. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

The second approach that is used to describe human motivation is found in McGuire's theory of Psychological Motives. He developed a system that classified theories into 16 different categories (McGuire, 1976). His work has assisted marketers in their mission to separate motives that have the possibility to be involved in consumption circumstances. Motivation is divided into 4 categories with the use of 2 criteria. The first is the question "Is the mode of motivation cognitive or affective" (McGuire, 1976) and "Is the motive focused on preserving the status quo or focused on growth". (McGuire, 1976). The four categories are separated into different forms of motives: Cognitive, Affective, Preservation-orientated and growth. They are then divided into categories based upon source and objective to the motive. These subdivided categories look to answer the following questions, "Is the behaviour initiated or is it a response" and "Is the behaviour internal or external in relation to its environment". (McGuire, 1976).

McGuire's model has a third criteria which distinguishes motives that are actively or internally aroused compared to those that are more passive. An example of McGuire's Cognitive Motives are seen below in Table 1.

These categories are used to separate outcomes that are internal to an individual and those that are considered to be fixated on the relationship with the external environment.

TABLE 1. McGuire's Psychological Motives (Adapted from Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010)

Cognitive Preservation Motives	Cognitive Growth Motives
	
<input type="checkbox"/> Need for consistency (active, internal)	<input type="checkbox"/> Need for Autonomy (active, internal)
<input type="checkbox"/> Need for attribution (active, external)	<input type="checkbox"/> Need for Stimulation (active, external)
<input type="checkbox"/> Need to Categorize (passive, internal)	<input type="checkbox"/> Teleological Need (passive, internal)
<input type="checkbox"/> Need for Objectification (passive, External)	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilitarian Need (passive, external)

3.2 Personality

Personality of a consumer drives an individual's behaviour to accomplish their goals in different situations. Analysts are able to look at personality as a variable to help predict the effects of individual traits on purchase and consumer behaviour. (Engel, et al. 1995). These differences enable marketers to provide a clear understanding of the characteristics consumers possess that are more determinant of behaviour.

It is a difficult task to achieve as every individual is so different, so in order for marketers to be effective they must create advertisements that have a strong appeal to consumers and allow them to think, "What product fits in well with my values, personality and lifestyle" (Engel, et al. 1995).

Personality can be defined as “consistent responses to environmental stimuli” (Kassarjian, 1971). In other words, it is a person’s characteristic response tendencies that are repeated in similar situations. The manner in which a consumer responds to environmental stimuli is subject to an individual’s psychological makeup. No two consumers are the same, they may have equal tension reduction but their levels in extroversion can be different which can lead them to engage in dissimilar behaviours.

The most useful theories based on personality that are important for marketers to be aware of are trait theories. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Trait theories allow marketers to segment consumers based on personality differences. This theory proposes that an individual’s personality is made up of predispositional attributes called traits. “A trait can be defined as a distinguishable way in which an individual can be differentiated from another”. (Engel, et al. 1995). Marketers find traits such as risk taking and self- consciousness useful when planning strategies. These three assumptions describe the trait theory, the first is that all consumers have traits that are different from others that allows marketers to segment consumer markets. Secondly, these traits are stable throughout an individual’s lifetime and finally traits can be gathered from the measurement of behavioural signs.

There are many different dimensions of this trait theory in existence, a common theory for marketers is called the Five Factor Model, which is a multi-trait personality theory. It is the most commonly used multi-trait approach which attempts to capture a significant amount of a consumer’s personality using 5 different attributes.

The purpose of this model is to identify five basic traits that are formed through genetics and early childhood learning.

TABLE 2. Five Factor Model of Personality (Adapted from Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010)

Core Trait	Manifestation
•Extroversion	•Prefer to be in a large group rather than alone, Talkative, Bold
•Instability	•Moody, Temperamental, Touchy
•Agreeableness	•Sympathetic, Kind, Polite
•Openness to experience	•Imaginative, appreciation of art, find novel solutions
•Conscientiousness	•Careful, precise, efficient

As seen in Table 2 above there are five core traits that manifest themselves in certain behaviours caused by different situations. This model has been useful in the way it has improved the understanding of behaviours such as bargaining, complaining and obsessive shopping. (Mowen & Spears, 1999). The advantage that the Multi-Approach model brings is increased knowledge of the determinants of different behaviours, as the saying goes, “the more you know, the better you can satisfy the consumer”.

Another theory that focuses more on one single aspect of a consumer’s personality is called the Single Trait approach. It is used in order to identify a limited part of consumer behaviour, more so consumption related behaviours. Personality traits are closely related to motivation and can be the cause of certain behaviours.

There are three traits that are labelled as “needs” which are related to consumer behaviour that are called, “Consumer Ethnocentrism, Need for Cognition and need for Uniqueness”. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

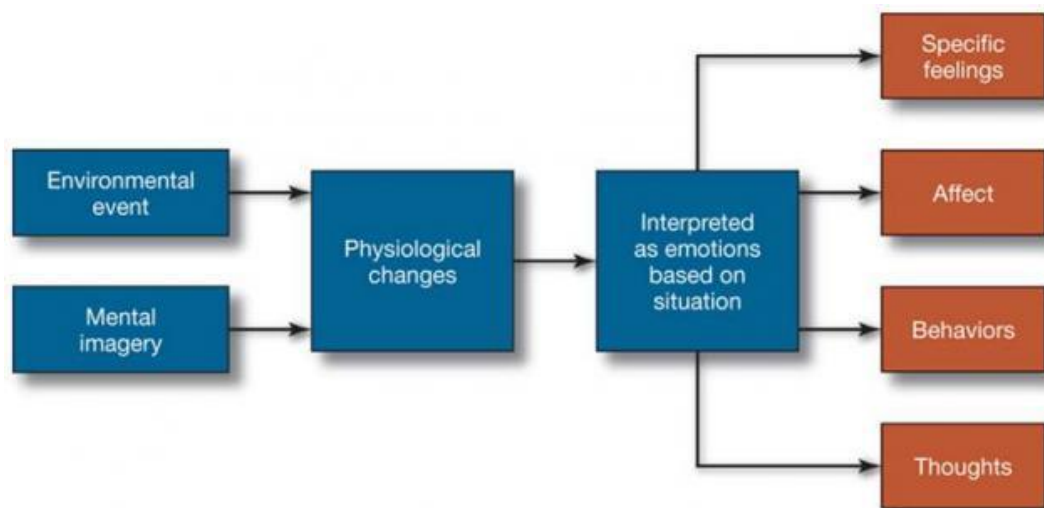
Consumer Ethnocentrism describes an individual's ability to create a bias opinion of the purchasing of foreign products. This can occur in consumers who are conservative and less open-minded about other cultural goods. Need for Cognition describes the levels of engagement and thinking that consumers enjoy in different situations. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). Individuals that have a high inclination for Cognition tend to enjoy processing information that is verbal rather than visual. Research made on (NFC) proved that women had higher levels of Need for Cognition than men, which is significant for media targeting. (Waters & Zakrajsek, 1990). Moving on to "Need for Uniqueness", which describes individual differences in terms of the inclination to be different from others. To a certain individual, the uniqueness of a product is what draws their attention to the product regardless of whether the product is trendy, good quality or pricey. This need ties well with the marketing strategy "deliberate scarcity" which refers to limiting the amount of product manufactured to appeal to consumers who look for this uniqueness factor.

3.3 Emotion

Emotions can be defined as strong, uncontrollable feelings that have effect on behaviour. (Bagozzi, Gopinath & Nyer, 1999) Emotions are closely associated to motivation and personality which makes emotions highly individual. If consumer needs are not attained, it often leads to negative emotions, causing anger, frustration or irritation however if a consumer's needs are attained this can lead to positive emotions such as happiness, excitement and contentment. It can be seen as a simple notion yet it is so often overlooked in advertisements that are poorly constructed.

Emotions play a major role in the consumption of products and if a brand produces advertisements that receive positive emotion it is likely that the product will gain consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Consumers that are considered more emotional than others are affected by an increased amount of affect intensity. This refers to having stronger emotions that sway a consumer to be influenced by a marketing appeal. There are common elements involved in emotional experiences, these include emotions that are triggered by the environment, psychological changes such as pupil dilation and cognitive thought which is the ability to think rationally (Ruth, Brunel & Otnes, 2002). Another component that is connected to emotion is behaviour. Behaviours vary across individuals immensely, nonetheless there particular behaviours that are associated with different emotions. These include: “avoidance responses, fear triggers, anger triggers, grief triggers etc.” (Yi & Baumgartner, 2004). The final component of emotion is “subjective feelings”, which is the labels we attach to generic emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger and so forth. A specific “emotion” is seen to be an identifiable feeling and “affect” is seen to be the aspect of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.



GRAPH 8. Nature of Emotions (Adapted from Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010)

Graph 8 demonstrates the nature of emotions and the effect the environment and mental imagery can have on an individual’s emotions.

Emotions play an imperative role in marketing in relation to product advertising and retailing.

Emotions are seen to be the driving force in consumer arousal and retail benefit. Many consumers seek products that bring beneficial emotional arousal (Ruth, 2001) which can be found in books, films, music etc. There are many brands on the market that aim for consumer emotional arousal through their advertising campaigns and catchy slogans.

Conversely, there are products on the market that bring unpleasant arousal that lead to negative emotions such as over counter medications that treat depression and anxiety. "When consumer's experience emotions that are negative they can become eager to take part in consumption behaviours that lighten their mood."(Cohen, Tuan & Andrade, 2008).

There are not many people that look for unpleasant arousal when purchasing products so brands that produce products that have the opposite effect are great mood lifters. These could include personal grooming products which can lead to stress reduction or fitness programmes that promote healthy body image and self-esteem. So in a marketer's perspective creating associations between certain products and mood lightening effects will increase the likelihood that consumer's in a bad mood will purchase them.

Advertising can often lead to strong emotional arousal, marketers can use this method to engage with consumers regardless of the product they are promoting. Emotional branding strategy is a common advertising technique that many popular company's use to engage with consumers on a more personal level. Take Nike's story of heroism advertising campaign as an example, the use of heroism inspires consumers to fight the villain (laziness) and as their slogan goes, "Just do it".

This form of advertising is stimulating and motivating which heightens its appeal to consumers.



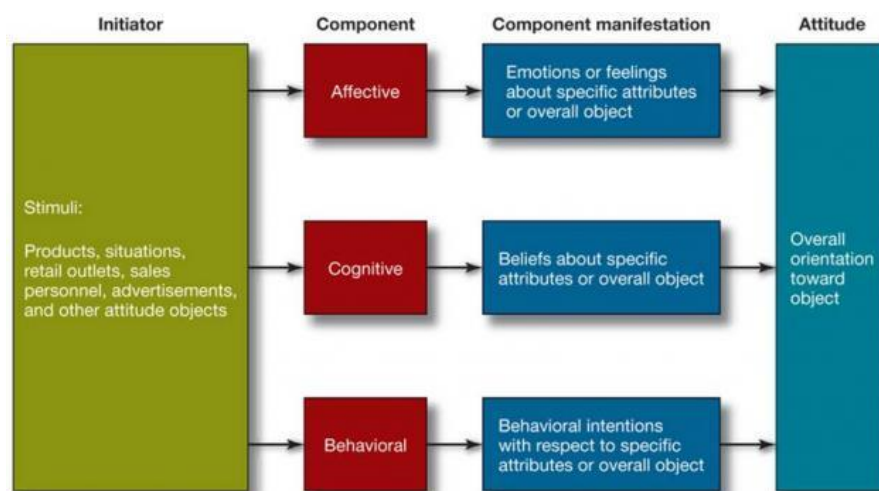
GRAPH 9. Nike's Emotional Branding Strategy (Adapted from Nike, Inc, 2015)

As seen in Graph 9. Nike's branding celebrates achievement and encourages determination which leads to victory. This targets the consumer's desire for greatness and ultimately enhances their "attention, attraction and maintenance capabilities". (Alwitt, 2002). These forms of advertising are noticed by more individuals comparing to advertisements that are neutral. As emotion is essentially increased psychological arousal, advertisements that utilise emotional branding impact consumers to become more alert and attentive which allows messages to be processed more thoroughly. As a result these advertisements will be better retained for recall.

4 INFLUENCING ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR

4.1 Attitude Components

According to physician Morris Fishbein attitudes can be defined as “evaluations of people, objects and ideas.” (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Evaluations are made over time and are personal to an individual’s experiences. As stated previously, they are shaped and formed by perception, personality, motivation and emotion. There are multiple factors that can develop an individual’s attitude, examples of these are friends, family, media, colleagues and so forth. It can describe the way one thinks, feels and acts in an environment whether it’s a classroom, retail outlet or work place. Attitudes are useful in a marketer’s point of view as they have the capacity to direct consumers to products or services that they favour without a large amount mental energy. Attitudes consist of 3 key elements: Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive. These three components are known as the ABC model of Attitudes. Affect relates to the emotional reaction of a consumer and the way they feel about an object. The Behavioural component focuses upon the consumer’s intention to respond in a certain manner toward an object and finally the cognitive element describes the consumer’s beliefs about the object.



GRAPH 10. Attitude Components and Manifestations (Adapted from Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010)

Graph 10 above exemplifies the three separate components that build an attitude, beginning with the stimuli which is namely the consumer's environment. This is followed by the affective, cognitive and behavioural constituents and their manifestation resulting in the overall attitude for the object. This model emphasizes interconnected relationships between knowing, doing and feeling. (Solomon, et al. 2010).

4.2 Formation of Attitudes

The way in which attitudes are generated is not often questioned. However individuals are aware that attitudes are not created from the beginning of life. For instance the opinion that Coke is better than Pepsi is not an attitude that was formed since birth. Attitudes can be shaped in numerous ways dependent upon the particular hierarchy of effects in action. (Solomon, et al. 2010). It can also occur due to classical conditioning, discovered by physiologist Ivan Pavlov. It is a learning process that takes place through associations of an environmental stimulus and a stimulus that occurs naturally.

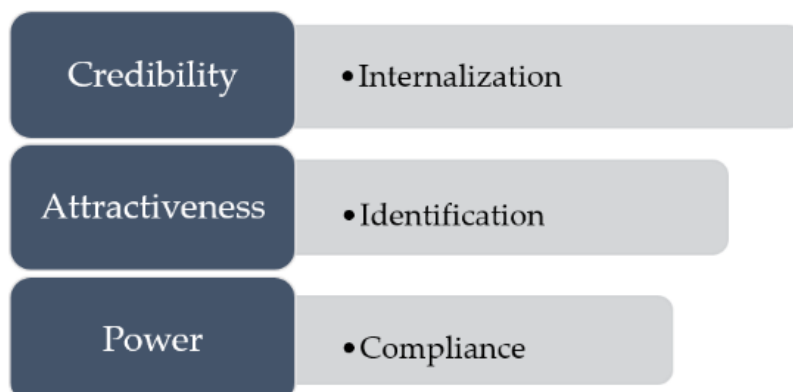
Or additionally it can be developed through instrumental conditioning, in which a behaviour is modified by the effect of its consequence. An example of this learning process could be a student raising their hand in class more often and being rewarded, thus doing it again to receive the same praise. It is crucial to differentiate different forms of attitudes as not all attitudes are created in the same way. (Kelman, 1958).

All consumers vary in the level of commitment they have to an attitude, this is related to the amount of "involvement with the attitude object". (Beatty & Kahle, 1988). There is an increased likelihood that a consumer will consider a brand if it brings them strong positivity. There are three levels of commitment that a consumer can possess. They are Compliance, Identification and Internationalization.

Compliance is the lowest level of attitude involvement, it is when an attitude is formed in order to gain a reward or to avoid punishment. This attitude is flexible and can change according to a given situation. For instance a consumer shopping for a carton of milk may normally opt for a particular brand in a convenience store but chose the only brand available as it's too much effort to go to another store to purchase the favourable brand. This attitude can be labelled as being superficial due to its adaptable nature.

The second level of attitude commitment is identification which occurs when a consumer will alter their own individual attitude to better match another the attitude of a person or group. Advertisements can be influential to consumers in this regard as they aim for individuals to imitate the behaviour presented in an advertisement, i.e. a desirable swimwear model. (Solomon, et al. 2010).The highest level of attitude commitment is Internalization where attitudes become a part of an individual's value system. Internal attitudes are important to an individual, for this reason they are very difficult to change.

For instance a family may have a long lived tradition for all of its children to be married in a particular church as it holds sentimental value. As seen in Graph 11 below, there is a level of credibility involved with this attitude.



GRAPH 11. Levels of Attitude Commitment (Adapted from The McGraw Hill Companies, 2004)

Graph 11 clarifies the levels of attitude commitment and depicts the highest level standing for credibility, the second level standing for attractiveness and the lowest level represented as power. This image gives a clear indication of the categorisation of each three levels and their meanings.

4.3 Functional Theories

Psychologist Daniel Katz is known for the development of his functional theory of attitudes which aims at explaining the way attitudes facilitate social behaviour. (Katz, D, 1960). In accordance with his approach, attitudes exist as they serve a function for each individual. Essentially they can be determined by an individual's motives. Consumers will begin to form attitudes on anticipation of a certain event. (Fazio, Lenn & Effrein, 1984).

Individuals may have the same attitude about a particular product for very different reasons. In this case it is useful for marketer's to understand the attitude that a consumer holds before changing it.

There are four main functions that Daniel Katz developed in his function theory which are: Utilitarian, Knowledge, Value expressive and Ego-defensive. One attitude will always be more dominant than others, even though an attitude can serve more than a single function. The Utilitarian Function is closely linked to reward and punishment. (Solomon, et al. 2010). Fundamentally this function supports the idea that attitudes encourage individuals to achieve goals in order to avoid punishment. Consumers tend to hold positive attitudes about products that steer them to their goals and hold negative attitudes to products that distract them from reaching their goals. An example can be a high-school student that has a positive attitude toward a popular branded mobile to ensure that they are looked favourably upon by their class mates.

This student will also share the same negative attitude towards a product that their peers look down upon. The second function is knowledge, which assists individuals in understanding their external environment and categorising information that they encounter. (Fazio, et al. 1990). Once an attitude is well established it has the ability to guide an individual's information processing.

The Value- expressive function expresses the consumer's central values and self-concept. (Solomon, et al. 2010). Essentially attitudes are an overall statement of an individual. A consumer forms an attitude about a product based on the way it represents them as an individual not due to its objective benefits. By expressing attitudes towards products it validates a consumer's own self- concept. An example of the Value-expressive function is when a consumer will not consider purchasing a product that is tested on animals due to the product or brand being viewed as unethical by others.

Or consumers may express their love for expensive luxury cosmetic brands in order to make others perceive them as having sophisticated taste. Finally the Ego-defensive function, this refers to attitudes that are formed in order to protect an individual from external threats. Psychologist Daniel Katz proposed that individuals may at times hold certain attitudes in order to mask their true feelings to guard their self- esteem. An example of this could be an individual telling their friends that they regularly exercise in order to avoid being looked down upon, when in actual fact they only exercise on a rare occasion.

These four functions can be useful in explaining the different ways attitudes can serve multiple functions in a consumer driven society. This model does not describe all types of attitudes but outlines those that are the most significant and practical in everyday life.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

The “Cognitive Dissonance Theory” suggests that individuals strive for consistency between a particular target behaviour and a target attitude. (Festinger, 1957). This theory can assist in the understanding of attitude changes and also explain the issue of attitude-behaviour discrepancy. The subject that raises attention in this theory is the reason individuals are motivated to take part in activities in order to remain consonant. People are often confronted with situations whereby conflict between attitude and behaviour is present, the theory focuses on these situations where there are inconsistencies between two cognitive elements.

A cognitive element can be an aspect that an individual believes of themselves, behaviours they engage in or observation of their external environment. An example of two cognitive elements are “I am a chain smoker” and “I am aware that smoking causes cancer”. These two statements have dissonance as they are psychologically inconsistent. This creates the smoker to feel a degree of distress and unease which encourages them to make changes to avoid this feeling.

I.e. when a smoker is confronted with a commercial that emphasizes the dangers of smoking the smoker has one of two options, to make a change to their thinking and behaviour or to continue to feel discomfort. Table 3 demonstrates the ways cognitive dissonance can be reduced by eliminating, adding or changing elements. (Solomon, et al. 2010).

TABLE 3. Reduction of Cognitive Dissonance (Adapted from Jansson-Boyd, 2010)

Cognitive dissonance can be reduced by	Example of action taken
● Changing their attitude to a more extreme position.	● I am too busy to come up with suitable ways to give up smoking, and it is unlikely it will kill me.
● Adding consistent cognitions to eliminate the inconsistency.	● Emphasize the negative aspects of giving up smoking, how they may suffer from terrible withdrawal symptoms.
● Rationalizing how important the cognitions are.	● If I go to the gym, it will leave less time for work.
● Changing behaviour so that it is consistent with cognition.	● Actually going to the gym.
● Denying that a contradiction exists.	● Rather than admitting that they never exercise a person may claim to do it: i.e. I walk from the train to work every day.

The Cognitive Dissonance theory can be helpful in explaining the reason why post-purchase dissonance occurs. This is when a consumer's overall evaluation of a product increases when the product is purchased. Consumers will try to justify the reasons for purchasing the product with the statements of dissonance "I don't need this product" and "I deserve this product".

Consumers actively seek purchase-decision reassurance, so marketers should focus on building strong brand attitudes in order for consumers to feel pleased with their purchase.

4.4 Attitude Change Strategies

It is common for marketers to attempt to change consumer behaviour by altering fundamental attitude elements.

Nonetheless it is vital for marketers to go about changing consumer attitudes in a manner that doesn't cause social or ethical damage. It can be effective to change consumer's attitudes however marketers need to develop persuasive messages and strategies in order to succeed. As mentioned earlier the ABC model (Affective, Behavioural and Cognitive components) is what allows individuals to form attitudes, so in order for there to be attitude alteration all three of these elements must be the key focus.

Changing the cognitive component

There are four marketing strategies that can alter the cognitive structure of a consumer's attitude. As seen below in Table 4 these strategies include: Change Beliefs, Shift Importance, Add Beliefs and Change Ideal. The idea behind this concept is that by changing a consumer's beliefs, affect and behaviour will naturally form attitude change also.

TABLE 4. Cognitive component Change Strategy (Adapted from Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010)

Change Beliefs	Shift Importance	Add Beliefs	Change Ideal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •shifting beliefs of performance •providing facts about performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •enhanced evaluative factors •strong product attributes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •add new beliefs to belief structure •improve product features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •change perception of the brand •incorporating elements that are important to target market

Changing the Affective Component

A business's main aim is to influence consumers without directly changing their beliefs and behaviour. (Adaval, 2003). This can be achieved by making changes to the affective component of a consumer's attitude. If a business is successful in implementing these changes it may lead to positive beliefs or increased consumption. There are three change approaches that marketers use to increase "affect" which are: Classical conditioning, affect towards an Ad/Website or mere exposure. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010). As mentioned previously in the topic "forming attitudes" Classical Conditioning works in a way that a stimulus evokes a response that was initially evoked by another completely different stimulus. For instance a brand creates an advertisement with a catchy song, and when a consumer hears that song play they associate it to that particular brand or product. This approach can also be used on visual advertisements such as posters.

Advertisements and Websites have the capacity to modify the affective component of an attitude by increasing the positive response. This is known as the method of "affect toward an Ad or Website. Websites can draw in consumers by utilizing techniques such as invigorating design, celebrity appeal, sensory content (Aweb) or humour. (Coyle &Thorson, 2001).

In most cases marketers use the positive response strategy to gain consumer appeal however there are Websites and advertisements that arouse negative emotions to change attitudes. This style of marketing is often seen in charity campaigns to gain awareness of poverty in third world countries. It can strike emotions that motivate consumers to donate and raise awareness.

The final approach that looks to increase consumer affect is called "mere exposure". This controversial method of bombarding consumers with advertising has proved to be beneficial to sales. An explanation of the effect that brand exposure plays on increased consumption is "Familiarity breeds liking".

This thought that familiarity intensifies consumer satisfaction suggests that repetition of vivid advertisements will bring an increase in profit. Marketer's use this approach by the use of simple reminder advertisements and the placement of products. (Auty & Lewis, 2004). These three approaches of Classical Conditioning, Affect towards an Ad/Websites and Mere exposure and make changes to consumer behaviour without making alterations to beliefs.

Changing the Behavioural component

The behavioural component of an attitude as stated in the ABC model is an individual's tendency to respond in a certain way to an activity or a product. Buying behaviour is said to precede the development of the cognitive and affective component. Or it can come in contrast of the cognitive and affective components. (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2010).

In example an individual has a dislike for diet or sugar free soft drinks due to the unhealthy sweeteners added to the drink however when offered a diet drink at an event, accepts the drink in order to conform with social norms. This individual surprisingly enjoys the drink and changes his/her opinion about diet soft drinks. This change in attitude towards diet beverages may lead to increased learning which can alter the cognitive component.

Making changes to consumer behaviour prior to changing the affective and cognitive components is centred on operant conditioning. For marketers to succeed in behavioural changes their two main focuses should be based upon influencing consumers purchase products simultaneously making them feel rewarded. (Gaeth, 1997). Ways in which this can be achieved is through loyalty cards, samples, discounts or vouchers.

6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the different aspects of consumer behaviour through a psychological magnifying glass. The various topics covered in this text defined the many ways consumption affects individuals and their purchasing behaviour. The themes analysed in this text also established a broader understanding of the reasons why consumers behave and think in a certain manner.

The topic of consumer behaviour can be looked at from multiple angles, however the psychological point of view brings forward the individual differences of consumers by exploring the multifaceted features of consumer psychology such as motivation, beliefs and perception. The psychological perspective is fascinating as it cannot be as easily influenced or explained. With the purpose of outlining these psychological concepts a deeper delve into internal influences, motivational direction and consumer attitudes was necessary.

What is important to remember is that there are many factors that come into play concerning consumer behaviour and the commonly raised question “why do we purchase the products we do” cannot be answered purely by focusing on the psychological influences.

This study aimed at conceptualizing the reason we engage in consumer activities. It is interesting for a consumer to have an understanding of the ways marketing and individual differences can influence information processing and decision making.

Marketing strategies were emphasized in this text as marketer’s have the greatest interest in exploring consumer motivation and behaviour. Their strategies are based on explicit and implicit beliefs about consumer behaviour. Marketing research aims to increase the knowledge of consumers to gain perceptive and competitive advantage in order to better predict consumers’ needs and desires.

The issues outlined in the text provided the reader with a vivid understanding of the many components of consumer psychology and the fundamentals that effect individual consumer behaviour.

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