

Paper –Marketing Management

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Topic- Social & Personal Factors Influencing Buyer Behaviour

Social Factors

A consumer's behaviour is influenced by social factors like reference groups, and social roles and status, family.

Reference Groups: A person's reference groups consist of all the groups that have a direct (face-to-face) or indirect influence on the person's attitudes or behaviour. Groups having a direct influence on a person are called membership groups. Some membership groups are primary groups, such as family, friends, neighbours, and co-workers, with whom the person interacts fairly continuously and informally. People also belong to secondary groups, such as religious, professional, and trade-union groups, which tend to be more formal and require less continuous interaction.

a) **Reference groups** expose an individual to new behaviours and lifestyles, as well as influence attitudes and self-concept. They create pressures for conformity that may affect actual product and brand choices. Marketers try to identify target customer's reference groups. Reference groups appear to strongly influence both product and brand choice.

b) **Family:** The family is the most important consumer-buying organization in society, and family members constitute the most influential primary reference group. The family of orientation consists of parents and siblings. From parents a person acquires an orientation toward religion, politics, and economics and a sense of personal ambition, self-worth, and love.

A more direct influence on everyday buying behaviour is the family of procreation-namely one's spouse and children. Marketers are interested in the roles and relative influence of the husband, wife, and children in the purchase of a large variety of products and services.

c) Social Roles and Status: A person participates in many groups like family, clubs, organizations. The person's position in each group can be defined in terms of role and status. A role consists of the activities a person is expected to perform and each role carries a status. People choose products that communicate their role and status in society.

Personal Factors

A buyer's decisions are also influenced by personal characteristics, which include the buyer's age and stage in the life cycle, occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle, and personality and self-concept.

a) Age and Stage in the Life Cycle

People buy different goods and services over a lifetime. They eat baby food in the early years, most foods in the growing and mature years, and special diets in the later years. Taste in clothes, furniture, and recreation is also age related. Consumption is shaped by the family life cycle.

b) Lifestyle

A lifestyle is a person's pattern of living in the world as expressed in activities, interests, and opinions, Lifestyle portrays the "whole person" interacting with his or her environment.

c) Personality and Self-concept

Personality means a set of distinguishing human psychological traits that lead to relatively consistent and enduring responses to environmental stimuli. Personality is described in terms of traits like self-confidence, dominance, autonomy, deference, sociability, defensiveness, and

adaptability. Band personality is the specific mix of human traits that may be attributed to a particular brand.