



## CONSUMER'S LIFESTYLE: IMPLICATIONS FOR MARKETING & ADVERTISING

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### ABSTRACT

Lifestyle marketing is a process of establishing relationships between products offered in the market and targeted lifestyle groups. It involves segmenting the market on the basis of lifestyle dimensions, positioning the product in a way that appeals to the activities, interests and opinions of the targeted market and undertaking specific promotional campaigns which exploit lifestyle appeals to enhance the market value of the offered product. Lifestyle studies are a component of the broader behavioral concept called psychographics." Harold W. Berkman and Christopher Gilson define lifestyle as "unified" patterns of behavior that both determine and are determined by consumption. The term "unified patterns of behavior" refers to behavior in its broadest sense. Attitude formation and such internal subjective activities may not be observable, but they are behavior nonetheless. Lifestyle is an incorporated system of a person's attitudes, values, and his over behavior.

**Key words:** Lifestyle, market and emerge

### INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle studies are a component of the broader behavioral concept called psychographics." Harold W. Berkman and Christopher Gilson define lifestyle as "unified" patterns of behavior that both determine and are determined by consumption. The term "unified patterns of behavior" refers to behavior in its broadest sense. Attitude formation and such internal subjective activities may not be observable, but they are behavior nonetheless. Lifestyle is an integrated system of a person's attitudes, values, interests, opinions and his over behavior. It is a strategy for the understanding of a market in terms of its most meaningful, recurrent patterns of activities and attitudes and then tailoring products and services and their promotional strategies to fit these patterns. The use of this approach encourages the "existing markets to reveal latent needs that are not yet being served and brings to lore, ways and means through which the existing needs may be satisfied, more meaningfully. Furthermore, lifestyle marketing also allows disclosure of similar needs in adjacent markets, and enables new markets to be seen in the light of their familiarity to the existing markets Thus, lifestyle marketing is concerned with the pattern of such activities that recur frequently among a customer group, and result in heavy purchases of goods and services. It identifies the thought patterns and self-images that accompany these activities so that the members of the group can be efficiently promoted to.

The identification of consumer lifestyles has various implications for marketing and advertising. These implications are described in the following paragraphs.

### CONSUMER'S LIFESTYLE & MARKETING:

The Marketers must not view the middle-class in Meerut Division as an amorphous mass - there are segments with distinctive preferences and purchase patterns. Seven significant lifestyles have been identified by the study and these differ in their perceptions about advertising, media habits and purchase behavior. A study of the lifestyles will provide need-based market segmentation, leading to the development of products and services that appear natural and necessary there.

**MARKET SEGMENTS FOR CLOTHES:**

The marketers of clothes would find their market divided into the following segments: buyers who prefer utilitarian clothes; those who prefer fashionable clothes; those who prefer good quality clothes of their own choice and those who prefer inexpensive clothes irrespective of the quality. The segment preferring fashionable clothes is further divided into two sub-segments consisting of those who prefer inexpensive fashionable clothes and those who prefer fashionable clothes irrespective of the price. Similarly, there are people who prefer low maintenance clothes and those who do not. Thus, the marketer must decide whether he has to tap the fashion-conscious, utility-conscious, quality-conscious or the price-conscious consumers. The fabric quality, designs, colors, and styles shall differ according to the segments that the marketers wish to approach.

**MARKET SEGMENTS FOR FAST FOOD:**

In the case of fast food also, consumers can be classified into those who prefer taste and those who prefer the nutritional contents. Besides this, there are people who prefer to take snack while watching TV and those who do not. While the former are likely to tempt their appetites by seeking greater variety in fast food and ready-to-eat products which are delectable, the latter need to be motivated to eat more frequently or to use snacks while watching TV. They could be encouraged to go in for more frequent smaller meals than three large meals as a way to healthier life. Lifestyle segments that do not like to go out for shopping could be tapped by providing free home deliveries.

**DEMAND FOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES:**

The homes occupy a central position for the 'stay-at-home traditionalists'. As such, services relating to better homes, like, interior decoration, pest control, cleanliness, etc., are likely to be in popular demand. Products related to good, clean homes, like, floor cleaners, disinfectants, glass and floor polishes, tile cleaners, do-it-yourself kits for homecare, appliances to facilitate household chores are likely to find favor with them. Since they prefer to stay at home, rather than go out, free home delivery services, catalogue shopping and direct marketing are likely to charm them. They also prefer to wear clothes of their own choice. Therefore, services of tailors and boutiques to provide them custom made clothes; dry cleaning, and laundry services offering free home delivery are likely to find favor with them, as they prefer clothes that require ironing. Retailers providing free home delivery of their daily needs can lure them into binding relationships. Spiritual values are important for them, and, therefore, they are likely to prefer religious and spiritual discourses, yoga, naturopathy, Reiki, and the like.

The 'progressive provident' make efforts to save money on household expenses. They are, thus, an important market for better value for money spent themes. Add on schemes without extra charges like free maintenance, or free service on contracts, products or brands offering 'more' for the same price, or additional services are going to be particularly attractive. Schemes like free lifelong service with the purchase of a product, or additional discounts on purchases made through credit cards, etc., are going to be popular with them. Since they value education, college and university education, innovative educational courses as well as courses dealing with traditional scriptures will find a ready market in this segment. Furthermore, they prefer utilitarian and expensive clothes. Therefore, boutiques selling such clothes are likely to be popular among them. They also relish spices and are likely to prefer taste to nutrition. Fast food outlets and quick meal or snacks vending outlets are also likely to be popular with

them.

The 'social-climbers' constitute a large market for event managers, party organizers, banquet halls, entertainment companies and travel and tourism marketing firms, as these people are more outgoing and less home oriented. Since they like to shop for items winning them peer group approval, they are a good target segment for status symbol marketing, like, credit cards and club memberships. Social organizations can solicit their membership and active participation for promoting various causes. Food festivals, and gourmet delights are likely to be successful with them as they enjoy eating but have no inclination towards cooking. Their interest in home improvements coupled with active social lives make them a good target for firms providing interior decoration services as well. Brands high on the socially approved list are likely to be popular with them.

The 'security-seekers' are particularly concerned with safety. The services that add to their feeling of security, like, safe deposit vaults offered by banks, banking services, security guards, locking systems, insurance, investment schemes offering assured income and safety of investment, safe transportation, schemes providing medical cover, etc., are likely to allure them. Appliance manufacturers must offer the features of safety in handling, use and disposal to appeal to them. Since they also like to occasionally go out to enjoy their leisure time, short vacation packages and hotel accommodation packages to suit various income categories, travel packs of essentials like toothpaste, soaps, shampoos, jams, sauces, travelling bags, travelers cheques, etc., are likely to find a place with them. Home improvements and food do not appeal to them but they like to dress up well without incurring much expenditure. Therefore, inexpensive clothes are likely to attract them. Since they prefer to wear clothes that require ironing, the laundrettes, dhobis and dry cleaners offering competitive rates as also irons that are easy and safe to handle are also likely to be popular with them.

The 'conservatives' prefer job-oriented education to general education. Consequently, educational courses aimed at vocationalisation, like, computer education, journalism, fashion designing, interior designing, etc., and professional courses, like, medicine, engineering, chartered accountancy, etc., are likely to be more popular than the normal degree courses offered by the universities. Like the 'stay-at-home traditionalists', they are also involved in home improvements and, therefore, constitute a good market for home decoration, cleanliness, pest control services, etc. They are also a good target for up market and trendy fashion boutiques since these people like to dress up in fashion.

The 'privileged' appear to demonstrate no interest in home improvements, or eating, or cooking or dressing up. They, thus, appear to be living simple lives. Social causes, non-materialistic appeals, which are more in tune -with nature, may attract them. Since they may be self- deniers to some extent, donations and charities, yoga and discourses on non-materialism, and active involvement with social causes may be able to attract people from this lifestyle. Brands that tie up their sales or revenue with charity or sharing of social responsibilities are likely to be in their preferred lists.

The 'independents' like to maintain their own identities. Services customized to suit their requirements are likely to be popular with them. Since they prefer to stay in nuclear families, the services of maids, clay care centers, security systems, collection and payment of bills, home repair and maintenance, and delivery at door-step services are likely to be very much in demand. ,

**PRODUCT AND PRODUCT FEATURES:**

Flowing from the existence of segments and sub-segments are the implications for product design and features. The segment which the marketer chooses the style, quality of material used and price of clothes for marketing clothes. The textile-designers as well as the manufacturers of fabrics may consider designing textiles and fabrics, which may not require ironing. The taste, the nutritional contents and the variety of fast foods that are made available to the consumers shall also vary with the lifestyle the marketer of fast food wishes to cater to.

**BRAND LOYALTY:**

Lifestyles have been found to differ on trying new brands. While those who are not associated with trying new brands like the 'stay-at-home traditionalists', 'progressive providents', and 'security-seekers', are brand loyal the 'conservatives' and 'privileged' like to try new brands. The marketers can use promotional appeals and discount schemes to either motivate the customers who are not brand loyal to remain loyal or to use these tools to attract the brand switchers towards their brands. Thus, brand loyalty still exists amongst certain segments and is not dead. Such segments are likely to motivate the marketers towards relationship building and success in retaining customers.

**FAVORABLE WORD OF MOUTH:**

In addition to the above, there are lifestyles which seek the advice of friends on which brands to buy ('social climbers' and 'conservatives') and there are people ('social climbers') who prefer to buy only those brands which are recommended by their peers. Accordingly, the other sources of information are not going to be popular with such people. Therefore, in order to attract sales from these segments, the marketers would do well to identify opinion leaders from amongst those who like to try new brands and motivate them to spread a favorable word-of-mouth for their brands to supplement their selling efforts.

**PACKAGE DESIGN AND LABELLING:**

The findings also have implications for package design and labeling. The consumers belonging to the lifestyles of the 'stay-at-home traditionalists' 'privileged' and 'security-seekers' carefully read nutritional information on packages. Moreover, those concerned with eating the right type of foods are also likely to be attracted by the nutritional contents. These must be appropriately displayed on the package. Need for home delivery services are also likely to influence the package design and technology especially in case of eatables. The design of the package and the packaging material used will also vary with the target segment selected. While a very glossy and expensive package may attract the social-climbers, the progressive and thrifty as well as the conservatives may feel that they are being unnecessarily overcharged, and may in fact avoid purchasing it.

**RETAILS OUTLETS: DISPLAY AND PROMOTIONAL Tools:**

People belonging to the different lifestyles vary in their interest in shopping. The 'social climbers', 'security-seekers', 'conservatives' and the 'privileged' enjoy shopping. They tend to shop more frequently, visit a variety of stores, and exhibitions to compare products, quality, style, colors and prices before making the final choice. They are, thus, active information seekers. This has implications for display of products, point of purchase displays, reminders and promotional schemes so that consumers

are attracted to these stores. Moreover, the retail personnel at these stores need to be adequately trained and informed not only about the marketers' product offerings but also about major competitors so that they act as reliable sources of information for the buyer.

### **STORY LOYALTY:**

While only the people from the 'privileged' lifestyles were found to prefer stores that back up their products' guarantee, people from other lifestyles have shown no such preferences. The marketers must address themselves to questions like what other factors are important in choosing stores, and whether store layout is really important.

Furthermore, people from three lifestyles were found to be store loyal - the 'stay-at-home traditionalists', the 'progressive provident' and the 'conservatives'. The marketer must, therefore, choose retail outlets which encourage store loyalty with the help of promotional schemes, sufficient stocks and retailer services so that a regular customer inflow is assured.

### **CONSUMER'S LIFESTYLE AND ADVERTISING**

**NEWSPAPERS:** An analysis of the reading habits of people has revealed that contrary to the general belief, newspaper reading's not a universal habit. Furthermore, the survey of media habits of the consumers has shown that newspapers are an important source of information for all the two products chosen: it may be used by people for information on fast foods and clothing. Thus, only branded all products can be advertised effectively in the newspapers. The marketers must ascertain the role newspapers can play in advertising their brands.

**MAGAZINES:** Differences have also been noticed among lifestyles on the kinds of magazines they refer to. The 'independents' for example, are likely to subscribe to homemakers magazines, but the 'social climbers' are least likely to use them. The 'security-seekers' prefer to use fashion magazines while people from other lifestyles have not shown any significant preferences for these magazines. Thus, while people from a particular lifestyle may subscribe to a particular kind of magazine, people from other lifestyles may not use them at all. The marketer should, therefore, decide which print media vehicle to use after deciding upon which lifestyle he intends to approach and what their reading preferences are.

**TELEVISION:** People from different lifestyles vary in the amount of time they devote to watching television. While the 'security-seekers' and the 'progressive providents' appear to show no significant interest in watching television, those belonging to the 'privileged' lifestyle spend a considerable time in watching TV. Thus, the exposure to the marketer's messages will greatly depend upon how much time is spent in watching TV by the respondents belonging to a particular lifestyle. This fact signifies that the importance assigned to print and audio-visual media is different and while choosing the ad-media, the marketers must weigh and measure the peculiarities of preferences for each media.

**ADVERTISING MEDIA FOR FAST FOOD:** The people belonging to different lifestyles were found to prefer audio-visual media like television and video for obtaining information on fast foods. In print media, none of the three sources - newspapers, magazines and direct mail - seem to be popular but radio appears to be popular for those belonging to the 'independent' lifestyle. Thus, TV, video and radio emerge as significant media for advertising fast foods.

**ADVERTISING MEDIA FOR CLOTHS:** Lifestyles differ on the media used by them for obtaining information on clothes. While the 'social-climbers' seem to prefer television, the 'conservatives' fancy magazines and the 'stay-at-home traditionalists' prefer movies. Radio, direct mail, newspapers etc. are not significant sources of information for people belonging to any of the lifestyles. Thus, television, magazines and movies are by far the most significant advertising media for clothes.

**ADVERTISING MEDIA FOR SCHEDULING:** People belonging to different lifestyles also vary in so far as the time for watching the television is concerned. While the 'social-climbers' prefer to watch the breakfast TV, the 'independents' prefer to watch the afternoon transmission. Furthermore, the 'privileged' prefer to watch the evening transmission from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., and the 'conservatives' are not likely to watch TV beyond 10 p.m. Thus, the marketer ought to identify the time slots popular with his target audience, in order to reach them more effectively.

**ADVERTISING DESIGN AND CREATIVITY:** People belonging to different lifestyles tend to assign different roles to advertising. While the 'security-seekers' and the 'independents' consider it to be essential, the 'stay-at-home traditionalists' and the 'privileged' consider that it is not essential and can be done away with. Those belonging to the 'progressive provident', 'social-climbers', 'conservatives' and the 'independents' lifestyle feel that advertising has a significant role to play in their lives as it helps to provide better products at lower prices and helps to raise the standard of living. However, only the 'security-seekers' and the 'independents' view it as a good source of information.

The advertiser has, therefore, to select a judicious combination of attractiveness, responsibility and honesty while designing advertisement. The finding also has implications for identifying the target audience, message content, appeal, copy, layout and the setting of the advertisement. Thus, the whole creative process of an advertisement is influenced by the lifestyle the advertiser eventually chooses to reach. Furthermore, since the people from a majority of lifestyles do not spend much time in reading newspapers, the product advertisements should be so designed that they are able to attract attention and develop interest.

**SERVICE ENVIRONMENT:** The service environment is very important and it must be fine-tuned to the ways of life of the particular lifestyle segment(s) that the marketer wishes to tap. The lighting, the furniture and furnishings, the upholstery, the wall decorations, cleanliness, layout and music - the total ambience, must coincide with the expectations of the customers to create a favorable impression about the quality and price of the service. A very plush ambience may discourage the 'progressive provident' while a shabby appearance may drive away the 'stay-at-home traditionalists', the 'social-climbers' and the 'conservatives'.

**PRICE DIFFERENTIATION:** People belonging to different lifestyles also differ in the importance they assign to saving money on household expenses. The progressive provident for example are more economy conscious. The service marketer can, thus, use price discrimination to reap more profits. He can successfully use different price levels to attract customers from different segments by introducing varying service levels for the different prices.

**SERVICE DELIVERY:** The people belonging to different lifestyles also differ in their interest in shopping. While the 'social-climbers', 'conservatives', and 'security-seekers' enjoy shopping, the 'stay-at-home traditionalists', and the 'progressive provident' exhibit no interest in shopping. Thus, the service marketer can approach such segments by reaching them through free home delivery services, providing convenient locations, or mobile units, telemarketing and other direct marketing strategies.

### CONCLUSIONS:

Thus, the understanding of lifestyles has important implications for market segmentation, developing product features, packaging and labeling, store selection and for promotional decisions, including holding of exhibitions, and displays. It helps define the target audience for personal and mass communication efforts, in developing advertising message and creative strategies, media selection, and media scheduling. The understanding of lifestyles has important implications for the service marketer in the area of market segmentation and developing service features, brand loyalty, and use of a favorable word- of mouth, service environment, price differentiation, and delivery of services. Since the lifestyles are product specific, and they are also likely to change in response to the changes in the external and internal stimuli the marketers and advertisers would have to continuously monitor them to remain relevant to their customers and ensure their own survival in the wake of greater need for attracting and retaining customers.

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WATER