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‘Fall to Rise’: A Quest to Revive Performance of Sri Lanka’s Boutique Hotels in Post-Easter Attack	
Ranitha Sachinthana Weeraratna, Nipuni Jayasinghe, Tharuka Ellepola, Nimesh Balasuriya, Eashani Uddeepa and Umasha Kanumale	1-23
Enhancing Ethical Sensitivity and Decision Making Through Accounting Ethics Education Based on Islam	
Muslichah, Enggar Nursasi, Siti Munfaqiroh and Lidia Andiani	24-37
Sea Change at the FASB: From a Universal to a Stakeholder-Oriented Approach	
Nathan S. Slavin and Jianing Fang	38-50
Study of Development of Small-Competitive Cooperative and Business Developments in Dealing with Industrial Era 4.0 in West Java Province	
Mukhtar Abdul Kader, Nurdiana Mulyatini and Wiwin Setianingsih	51-66
The Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on Debt Finance: The Moderating Effect of Accounting Conservatism	
Karim Mansour and Emad Sayed	67-83
Student Perceptions of the Learning Effectiveness of Printed Versus Digital Textbooks in College Accounting Classes	
Pamela Elaine Baker and Patricia Driscoll	84-95
The Impact of Annual Report Readability on Agency Costs: Internal Control as Moderating Variable	
Muhammad Ilham Julianaldri and Tarjo	96-106
Enterprise Risk Management and Company’s Performance: Empirical Evidence from China	
Md. Jahidur Rahman and Zhenkui Cheng	107-119
Buy-o-logy of Indians: A Model of Studying Consumer Behaviour	
C. Joe Arun and Renu Isidore	120-141
Foreign Ownership, Tax Preference and Firm Performance	
Wunhong Su, Liuzhen Zhang, Xiaobao Song and Chun Guo	142-154
Reconceptualizing the Management–Auditor Relationship by Applying the General Partnership Contract to Challenge Independence: Ideals versus Reality	
Khalid Al-Adeem	155-193

Buy-o-logy of Indians: A Model of Studying Consumer Behaviour

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Abstract

Every product is a cultural product and every buying is a cultural buying and therefore it is a cultural relationship between the consumer and the product. A consumer views the product from a worldview born out of different cultural practices that give birth to habits. The consumer uses a particular language to explain his/her worldview. In the process of relationship between the product and consumer, the consumer gives meaning to the product that he/she buys. Once the product is bought and consumed, the meaning he/she had given provides now a sense of fulfilment, a meaning to the consumer's life that is referred to as cognitive resonance. If the product does not give the sense of satisfaction, it will cause a cognitive dissonance that makes the consumer dispose the product. Hence when consumer behaviour is studied, there needs to be focus on (1) worldview that is born out of, (2) culture, and expressed in, (3) language and (4) relationship the consumer has with the product in the process of buying. In the process, the cultural worldview gives the consumer an agency, i.e., human agency, to decide “when, where why and what” to buy.

Keywords: consumer behaviour, Indian consumer market, worldview, culture, language, relationship.

I. INTRODUCTION

The five important conceptual models of consumer choice behaviour include the Andreasen model (Andreasen, 1965), Nicosia model (Nicosia, 1966), Howard-Sheth model (Howard & Sheth, 1969), the Bettman model (Bettman, 1979) and Engel-Kollat-Blackwell model (Engel et al., 1986). Several other mathematical models have been developed by researchers (Frank, 1962; Montgomery, 1969; Jones, 1970; and Chatfield & Goodhardt, 1975) to model how the consumers purchase decision or brand choice based on influences. Following these models of consumer behaviour, other models were developed by store selection (Prasad, 1972), adding more explanatory variables like media exposure (Zufryden, 1973), pricing (Lilien, 1974), and belief system (Belch, 1978) etc. Most of these models were complex and had limited practicality for managerial decision making (Jones & Zufryden, 1980). All of them do not address really cultural differences in buying behaviour and do not provide us with a robust framework or a model of studying consumer behaviour in different cultures.

How does a consumer decide to buy a product? This is what is addressed in consumer behaviour. This decision making which involves the purchase of a product comes from human agency (Archer & Archer, 1996) as it is human agency which gives the consumer the power to decide (Crehan, 2002). Hence human agency needs to be studied well. Human agency is the product of culture and it refers to the various

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interventions in the world. Agency moulds individuals and shapes their attitude. Agency influences the significance of products and the consumers purchase decision (Ratner, 2000). Cultural interactions, cultural practices and cultural habits (Geertz, 1973) form this human agency. Hence human agency is a cultural agency as humans are cultural entities. Hence culture becomes an important principle which needs to be studied in order to understand consumer behaviour. Another outcome of culture is worldview as people characterized with a specific worldview belong to the same cultural background (Crehan, 2002). The expression of the consumer's worldview and culture is in the form of language and consumers thereby form great relationships with the product (Blumer, 1969). Hence the other three important principles of consumer behaviour are worldview, language and relationship. The study of these four principles would help to understand the consumption process of the consumer better.

This paper argues that (1) worldview, (2) culture, (3) language and (4) relationship are four fundamental principles that help really understand consumer and their behaviour in the buying process. If one intends to comprehend why a consumer buys and consumes a particular product or a particular service, all these four principles need to be studied.

The consumption patterns of consumers depend on their worldview, the way they look at life. This is the perspective that determines ways in which a consumer values a product or a service. Soap is a soap. But one looks at it as a product of health and another as a luxury. That comes from experience of having encounters with persons, things, and places.

Worldview is born out of experience that happens in a context and a physical location. It is a cultural context in which there are customs, beliefs and rituals that form the character of individuals and their life patterns in a community. This physical location is an ecosystem that gives birth to tastes and styles. Repeated actions and behaviour help individuals develop habits, which direct daily lives. Meat eating comes from cultural habits developed in and through ritualised actions that are directed by beliefs. Why do you eat beef? You ask them. They will say that it has been our habit, we are used to.

The worldview and cultural habits are expressed through languages that are both verbal and non-verbal. Deciphering the language help decode the consumer mind. What consumers say really about their experience of having had and consumed a product or a service help learn how they view the product or the service by which the future buying could be predicted. This is a semiotics of consumption in which one has to do discursive analysis as discourse is power and it provides framework of how internal motives of consumers to buy products and services play important role, in many ways discursive analysis of what consumers say could show a certain pattern in influences (Foucault & Shapiro, 1984; Macdonell, 1986; and Miller, 1990). When a consumer says that she buys a product for particular reasons that constitute not only knowledge but also how she will practically do in buying the product. It is a form of subjectivity in the consumer that connects between knowledge of the product and relation of her with the product.

A consumer comes with his/her worldview, culture and language to relate to a product or service. In consumer behaviour, relationship is a key to understand why people buy, what they buy, when they buy, how they buy and why they buy what they need and don't need. Consumers give meaning and value to products they buy. Symbolic interactionism says that, "humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things. The meaning of such things is derived from, or

arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others and the society. The meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters” (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). Looking at consumption from this perspective, consumers act towards products based on meanings they ascribe to them and these meanings come from their constant interactions they have with other consumers. Basically, consumption is a relationship in which how a consumer gives value to the product or service (Lai, 1995).

II. LITERATURE STUDY

2.1. The Argument

Every product is a cultural product and every buying is cultural. Therefore, if one wants to study and understand buying behaviour of consumers, he or she should study first the cultural context of the buyer. That will reveal the way a consumer looks at a product or a service (worldview). This worldview is born out of the culture of the buyer in which different cultural practices and rituals give birth to habits resulting in formation of a worldview. The worldview is expressed in language that the buyer uses to reveal why he or she buys and what s/he wants really. When it comes to buying what really the consumer does here is that he or she relates to the product or service having in mind the worldview; in a way buying is a relationship. In the conventional way of studying consumer behaviour is concerned with internal and external influences that lead to purchase decision making process. This paper suggests as a way of studying consumer behaviour is that one must look at worldview, culture, language, and relationship of the buyer.

2.1.1. Worldview

Weltanschauung (German) meaning worldview is the way consumers look at life, both human beings and materialistic life. This view of the world stems out of philosophy. “Worldview creates for a person a general view of the outside world he/she is guided by when making important decisions and committing acts of social significance” (Kyzym & Doronina, 2019, p. 156). Worldview is the amalgamation of the orientation of one’s value system and his/her view of the world in terms of how the world is understood and the capabilities it offers (Van Egmond & De Vries, 2011) It is the biases and the beliefs that the consumer believes in at the present moment (Godin, 2009). The value system of a group of people forms their ideology, also called their worldview which forms the basis of consumer research as it helps to understand consumer behaviour.

Consumerism is an important value intrinsic to a worldview (Fransen et al., 2008). Consumers identify themselves with their own worldview and indulge in consumption practices which support their worldview (Abroun et al., 2019). The way consumers view the world and interpret events depends on their own exclusive set of beliefs, values and previous experiences which form their own unique “model of the world.” And even very similar and common groups would have different worldviews (Endress, 2018). Different worldviews lead to unique and predictable preference variations. At times, varied worldviews could coexist within a consumer and based on which worldview comes to the mind, the decision-making process and behaviour is controlled (Kman et al., 2015). Consumers make purchase decisions that support their worldview. The consumption pattern of consumers is a reflection of their worldview (Arndt et al., 2004). Consumers from different worldviews respond differently to marketing messages (Mathras et al., 2016). Societies rooted in a worldview may view foreign products less favourably when compared to local products which are in sync

with their worldview (Fransen et al., 2008). Understanding the worldview of consumers, helps businesses to influence consumers to purchase their products and to also stray away competition (Hirschman, 1993). When businesses deliver marketing messages that are in line with their consumers' worldview, they tend to buy in as they are able to identify with it (Hennerberg, 2017).

Consumers' have a strong preference for products/services which support their existing worldview. Preference for a product which stems out of the worldview could be strengthened by commitments. When companies understand the worldview, brand loyalty can be achieved by the right packaging of the product. Endorsing the consumer's worldview to key to developing strong bonds with the consumer. Consumers' would perceive persuasion for brand switching as threat to their worldview (Maheswaran & Agrawal, 2004). It is important for businesses to understand their target consumers' worldview and communicate their marketing messages based on what is important to the consumers' which in turn depends on their worldview (Magee, 2019). Two important questions are necessary to understand the consumers' worldview, "What is important to you about _____?" and "How do you know if _____" (p. 23). The first question helps to assess which parameter is the consumer looking at in any product/service. The second question is to assess the rule the consumer uses to match the information given against their worldview. Based on these assessments, the marketing messages can be tailored accordingly to different consumer segments (Endress, 2018).

If marketing needs to be successful, then businesses need to reach out with messages that reinforce the consumers' worldview. Hence the first step is to identify the worldview being addressed instead of merely identifying a group of consumers' as they can have varied worldviews. Only few businesses like Apple and Napster were able to completely change the worldview of the consumer. Steve Jobs was able to do that initially with the Macintosh and later with the iPod. Shawn Fanning was able to change the worldview by making consumers' believe that music should actually be free. However, changing the worldview is not always successful (Godin, 2009).

Businesses who find consumers' whose worldviews were forsaken and target them with appropriate marketing strategies and messages would be successful. For example, brands like Tazo and Republic of Tea were able to find a good number of consumers' whose worldview was neglected by most businesses and convince them with messages about flavour, health and brewing. It is also profitable for businesses, when they are able to reach out to enough consumers' who share the same worldview at minimum cost and the consumers' are also able to trust the marketing messages. Businesses like Porsche Cayenne, Starbucks and Fast Company were able to succeed as they were able to identify the shared worldview for the first time (Godin, 2009).

2.1.2. Culture

Worldview comes from culture which stems from anthropology, which describes the characteristics of the human race. Culture is the way an individual feels (pathos), the way he thinks (logos) and the way he acts (ethos). Culturally, one is born and brought up in a habit. Hence culturally the individual is habitualized. For example, in one's wardrobe there would be only one dominant colour which is a reflection of that person's taste (habit). An individual, who is used to eating spicy Indian food, would prefer eating the similar spicy food in any part of the world. Culture cultures an individual because of his habits. The habits are ritualized in the form of social customs, heritage and tradition.

The word 'culture' was initially used as a noun but later as a reference to a human development process and then as a synonym for civilization and finally as a 'way of life.' In recent times, culture has evolved as "a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development" (Crehan, 2002, p. 41). Culture can be defined as "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (Geertz, 1973, p. 89). People belonging to different cultures have varied construals of others, their own self and interdependence of these two interpretations. These interpretations in turn influence the basic nature of one's experience which encompasses motivations, cognition, and emotions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Consumers' differ in their consumption pattern owing to cultural differences (Sharma, 2020). Cultural differences also cause variations in the creation of brand equity, brand loyalty, perceived brand quality and brand awareness (Yoo & Donthu, 2002). Consumers' cultural values and norms is detrimental in the value perceived from purchasing and using a service/product (Overby et al., 2005). Within a cultural context, the consumers' perceive brands differently in terms of the attributes connected to the brand, which in turn influences the consumers' purchase process (Jung & Sung, 2008). Culture influences consumers' decision-making process and the choice of product. It also influences the consumers' attitude towards products, stores, and loyalty (Khare, 2014). Culture also influences the sharing of brand related information among consumers' (Gvili & Levy, 2021). Consumers' belonging to various cultures ascribe varied brand personalities to a single global brand. Cultural models can help understand the differences in consumer behaviour across cultures. By understanding the culture, global marketing strategies can be designed across countries (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2011).

Culture is an important differentiating factor between the Westerners and the Easterners. Culture influences even the fundamental likes and dislikes of consumers' thereby influencing the way alternatives are evaluated and analysed (Kman et al., 2015). For example, East Asian consumers' are bounded by their cultural values of harmony and have a preference towards conformity which cause them to prefer similar objects. On the other hand, Westerners bound by their cultural values of independence, prefer distinct objects due to their orientation towards uniqueness (Kim & Markus, 1999).

Advertisements can succeed only when a culture's unique preferences are captured. Advertisements in countries with individualistic cultures vary in their content compared to that in countries with collectivistic cultures showcasing a differentiation in the marketing appeal targeting the culture's unique preferences. Individualistic cultures have preferences for success, individual benefits and independence and collectivistic cultures preferred integrity, harmony and group benefits. (Han & Shavitt, 1994). Consumers' belonging to collectivistic cultures employ simpler criteria for selecting luxury brands when compared to those in individualistic cultures (Shukla & Purani, 2012). Culture influences consumption preferences. Consumers' belonging to individualistic countries like North America make consumption choices that reflect individuality and uniqueness whereas East Asians make consumption choices that reflect connectedness and interdependence (Aaker & Schmitt, 2001). Collectivistic culture has a strong influence on the behaviour of Indian consumers' (Sharma, 2020).

2.1.3. Language

Language is an expression of culture. "Language is at the core of a culture. It is central to communication and closely related to thought" (Zhang & Schmitt, 2004,

p. 420). Language is about how a person says what he wants to say. Language is physically born and brought up in a particular place. Language is an important element of marketing communication that influences the experiences of consumers' (Lenoir & Puntoni, 2014). Language plays an important role in influencing the purchase decision of the consumer. People buy the product by the way the company markets the product in an expression which the consumers' can relate to. The way the product is marketed and branded in terms of the expressions used, makes a difference. Companies need to market the product in the language of their target audiences.

Businesses use language which implies closeness in order to draw consumers' closer to the brand by building strong connections and even minor language changes have a huge impact of consumer-brand relationship. When businesses are able to communicate in the right language, which is in sync with the consumer-brand relationship, brand trust increases, which is followed by more favourable consumer attitudes (Sela et al., 2012). The language, the brand employs to communicate acts as a strategic tool and helps to develop the brand equity. Developing a unique language for the brand is important as it acts as a framework to support all the communications like naming of the brand, advertisements, claims, sales promotions and packaging (Morais & Lerman, 2019). Consumer's attitude towards the brand can be moulded via the language employed and it is instrumental in earning the consumers' trust. Language helps to bring out the personality of the brand even during troubled circumstances. Hence brands need to be careful with the language employed in their communications (Sundar & Cao, 2020).

The choice of language plays an important role in the outcome of advertising as it influences brand recall, attention and understanding (Ahn & La Ferle, 2008). Language influences the consumers' memory and perception (Zhang & Schmitt, 2004). The use of the right language plays an important role in the marketing of products and services. It is important to match the marketing language with the communication expectation in order to gain consumers' compliance (Kronrod et al., 2012). The usage of words, even minor changes can influence the reaction of consumers' towards marketing communication to a great extent. Not only are verbs and nouns important, but also insignificant words like conjunctions, pronouns and prepositions need to be carefully employed in brand communication (Lenoir & Puntoni, 2014). The usage of textual paralanguage like emoticons and emojis also improves the presence of the brand messages in social media which in turn helps in strengthening the consumer-brand relationship by positively shaping the attitude towards the brand and increasing the purchase intention (Hayes et al., 2020).

Asian languages are based on ideographic writing systems which are completely different from the alphabetic systems of the Western languages like English. These differences in structure influence the mental representations which translate to affecting the consumers' memory of the marketed information which in turn influences brand recall (Schmitt et al., 1994). Most consumers' grow up in a bilingual environment where they are raised in a native language which is the dominant language and additionally they learn to read and speak in another language which is the non-dominant language. Companies market their products by exposing a bilingual stimulus through the media which contains both the languages (Zhang & Schmitt, 2004). When entering into foreign markets, global businesses undergo a dilemma of whether their brand name needs to be localised via translation into the local language (Chow et al., 2007) or if it needs to be multilingual to cater to a more diverse market segment (Hong et al., 2002) as the congruence between the language of the brand name and the country of origin is

an important factor driving consumers' brand perception (Salciuviene et al., 2010). Marketing messages conveyed in the native language has more reach and emotional connect with the consumer when compared to second languages. Native languages are more preferable to convey emotional benefits instead of cognitive benefits to the consumer. When the purchase decision is governed by emotional factors, the choice of language plays an even more important role in the choice of the product/service (Puntoni et al., 2009).

Impressions are very important to sell a product. Tupperware is another classic example of how language was instrumental in selling the product. Tupperware spent no money on marketing. Tupperware containers were mainly sold by home-makers at Tupperware parties. Their business model was built on word of mouth and the trust which the person had on the agent marketing the product (Gupta, 2010). Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple refused to do market research for his product on the same lines. He felt that consumers' do not know what they really want and his company needs to show the consumers' what they want. He created a market for his products. By observing how people engaged with technology and keeping in mind the desires of the larger consumer population, he developed his products (Smith, 2010).

2.1.4. Relationship

The buying behaviour is finally connected to relationship via the worldview-culture-language trio. Every product is a relationship. Consumers buy a product because they relate to it. After birth, Man longs to be connected. Man is born as a connected human being via the umbilical cord. Man always has a wanting to belong and a wanting to have an organic connection, an organic unity. Whatever Man does throughout his life, is an attempt to go back to that umbilical cord connection. Hence his purchases are only those he connects to and those which will travel with him for life. Man builds emotional connections with the products he purchases. For example, when consumers' buy a pen, they cherish that purchase and feel lost when they lose that pen. Consumers relate to that pen and it becomes a part of them. Not all consumers' will find a pen relatable. For some consumers', cars could be a relatable purchase. Consumers would buy a car if they like the smell of the car or the colour of the car.

Consumer-brand relationship is defined as "the tie between a person and a brand that is voluntary or is enforced interdependently between the person and the brand" (Chang & Chieng, 2006, p. 935). Consumers form relationships with brands after assessing the brand based on interpersonal relationship norms. Consumers make evaluations of the brand depending on the type of relationship they have with the brand. Marketing actions influence consumers' adherence to or violation of the consumer-brand relations. If the marketing action violates (vs. conforms) the relationship norm shared with the brand, consumers' evaluate it negatively (vs. positively) (Aggarwal, 2004). When consumers' develop good relationships with the brand, they consider the "*brands as self*," that is, they consider brands the way they consider themselves. When the brand fails, consumers' with this kind of bounded relationship defend the brand as their own (Cheng et al., 2012). Consumers form relationships with the brand based on group-level connections or connections made at the individual level. Luxury brands like Mercedes is an example of brand relationships which are born out of a desire for an unique identity (individual level) whereas relationship with local brands would be stemmed out of a desire to belong to the country of origin (group level). In most cases, when the self-construal is independent,

the brand-relationships are based on individual level and when it is interdependent, the relationships with the brand are based on group level (Swaminathan et al., 2007).

Building robust consumer-brand relationship is a powerful mechanism to enhance consumer loyalty (Khamitov et al., 2019). Consumer-brand relationship is also related positively to the consumer-product relationship and the quality of the brand relationship (Bakator et al., 2020). The different constructs of consumer-brand relationship include: brand attachment (emotional bond between the brand and the consumer); brand love (consumers' passionate emotional attachment shared with a brand); self-brand connection (brand being incorporated into the consumers' self-concept); brand identification (consumers' feeling of oneness with the brand) and brand trust (consumers' trust that the brand will deliver its stated function). Hence consumers' relationship with the brand depends on attachment, self-brand connection, love, trust or identification (Khamitov et al., 2019).

Businesses need to modify their products and services so that their offering satisfies the consumer and the relationship thus developed with the consumer is strong enough to increase the re-purchase rates and satisfaction levels (Bakator et al., 2020).

Brands like Apple attempt to build relationships with the consumers' by delivering products which are beyond the consumer's expectations. Apple enhances the connection with the consumers' by helping them become better, smarter, faster and more connected. Disney attempts to build long lasting deep relationships with the consumers' by evoking the consumer's childhood memories of their brand. Disney's relationship with the consumers' is built around fun experiences which are blissful to reflect on. Netflix is another product which relates to the consumer deeply by indulging the consumer to consumer specific digital content. Netflix makes itself more relatable to the consumer by recording the history of the viewer in specific profiles and suggesting similar content for each profile, based on the genre of the movies watched earlier. Jeep is another brand which relates to the consumers' and became a part of their own self-identity. The original Jeep was famous among the soldiers and was the symbol of adventure. Consumers relate to the product as part of their childhood memories. Consumers connect to Jeep as a brand which is a form of their self-expression.

III. THE INDIAN EXAMPLE

3.1. Indian Consumer Market

India with its rich history is a complex democratic country where there are regional, socioeconomic and cultural differences (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012). The Indian multi-layered consumer market is characterized by multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-cultural and caste dimensions (Venkatesh, 1994). The Indian consumer market is very different from most other markets of the world. India should be evaluated on its own terms with no comparisons with other countries. The complexity and diversity of the market is very large and not only restricted to the usual differences of demographics, income and religion but also involves social mores, behavioural variations, present and future desires. India has a predominantly young population, with nearly 55% of Indians falling under the age group of 25 years. This implies an increasing personal consumption and an increasing value-conscious consumer demand. The Indian consumer market is growing exponentially, and the Indians are adopting a global lifestyle and consumption pattern. However exponentially the Indian consumer grows, he would never be a replica of his global counterpart as he always stands strongly connected with the regional and cultural framework of the country (Australian Business, n.d.). The Indian consumer market with a predominately young population is

a lucrative marketplace for multinationals to launch their product and earn a share of their wallet. But, the young Indian consumers' have a tendency towards 'variety seeking' which is quite a complex challenge even for marketers who have catered to the Indian consumer market for long. This attitude of Indian consumers' results in dilution of brand loyalty and a search for something different and new. Hence, it becomes all the more important for business to first understand the behaviour of the Indian consumer and then form strong connected bonds (Kang, 2015). It is important for international businesses to study the Indian market in detail and determine the influencers of the purchase decision before launching any product or service. Localizing the product or service by building a business for India is more important than merely importing one into the country with global standards. The products need to be altered to handle the Indian complexities. International businesses like Ikea, Uniqlo and Xiaomi invested years to study the Indian consumer market before launching their service. Studying consumer behaviour, particularly in India, lies in delving deep into these four fundamentals, because worldview is formed in a cultural context of life. Therefore, Indian way of buying is different from an American way of buying.

3.2. Indian Worldview

The worldview of Westerners is very different from that of the Easterners (Nisbett et al., 2001; Lehman et al., 2004). The consumer's worldview is derived from his/her culture hence it varies with every culture (Ratner, 2000). The purchase decision of Indians is influenced by the Indian worldview and the purchase decision of the Westerners is influenced by the Western worldview. The Indian view of looking at life is, "Everything happens to me and I do not make things happen", which is passive human agency. In passive human agency, Man's choices are imposed on the world. In the Indian view, Man lives collectively as a group and the onus of his decisions are not only on him but also on his family (community). This Indian view comes from the Indian philosophy (Nyaya-Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā and Vedanta) which states that Man is only a small part of the cosmic world (Dasgupta, 1975; Chakrabarti, 1999). On the other hand, the Western worldview is all about Man being the centre of the world (*Anthropocene*) and how he utilises the resources available for his benefits, which is active human agency. The Western worldview is based on, Anthropocentrism which is the belief that humans are the most important entity in the universe, superior to nature and all other resources are only for the exploitation of mankind (Mazzotta & Kline, 1995). Anthropocentrism considers the world in terms of human experiences and values. The Western worldview is scientific and sceptical. It always demands proof for belief. Everything is based on truth which originates from science or law. The Westerners consider resources like land to be available only for the development of humans and not sacred. In the Western worldview, it is all about individuation where Man owns all the decisions he makes and is responsible for all his actions. Through the process of individuation, Man develops his own unique self-identity and goals. Individuation is important in the formation of a healthy identity. The Western society is more compartmentalized. In the West, marriage is coming together of two individuals whereas in India, marriage is the union of two communities. The Indian who is grounded by Indian philosophy and has an Indian view would make purchase decisions keeping his family (collective living) in mind and make purchases for family consumption. Indians live together and eat together. The Western thought process is more categorical and rational whereas the Indian thought process is mythical and not definitive.

Worldview differs from individual to individual. The upbringing of the consumers' influences their worldview which in turn influences their purchase decisions. The Indian mind believes that "I do not make things happen" and hence after sales service or on-site customer service is an integral part of Indian buying behaviour. Indian consumers' value this sales argument more than consumers' from other parts of the world. International businesses mostly tie up with local partners to provide high quality comprehensive service to Indian consumers'. For example, when Indian consumers' purchase a television, they need the concerned sellers to send their staff to install that television at their residence. This is most unlikely in Western countries where most products would be assembled by the consumers' themselves by utilising the installation manual. Lenovo provides on-site customer services for all their computers, (desktops and laptops) within the warranty period. Dell gained rapid market share in the Indian market with its customized laptops but because of its failure to provide after sales service for the volume of sales made, Dell's market share declined drastically (Cnet, 2004).

Companies need to package products and market them in a way their target audiences view the world. In order to sell a product or service, companies need to understand this worldview. For some people, food is God, for those who eat only to live, food would be a form of nutrient and for those who live only to eat, food would be a form of ecstasy. When American companies like McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) ventured into India, they attempted to localise the menu, in terms of their products in order to suit the Indian population and their worldview. There were more family combo packages to suit Indians whose purchase decisions are more family centred. McDonalds which was mainly positioned as a hamburger company in the rest of the world projected itself as a family restaurant in India. Mc Donalds also introduced vegetarian alternatives like McVeggie, McAloo Tikki burger and Veg Pizza McPuff. KFC on the other hand, which suffered from being perceived as a non-vegetarian restaurant tried to combat that image by introducing vegetarian alternatives like Veggie Snacker, Veg Zinger burger and Veg Strips. KFC introduced these vegetarian options instead of their red meat in order to cater to the large vegetarian population in India (Prabhakar, 2011).

People of different countries are raised with different worldviews. Understanding that view is instrumental for foreign companies to enter into different countries and compete with that country's local competitors.

3.3. Buying Culture of Indians

Every country has its own unique culture (Hofstede, 2001). Businesses venturing into India need to understand the Indian consumer culture instead of imposing their generalized marketing framework (Eckhardt & Mahi, 2012). Culture plays a very important role while analysing the Indian consumer (Venkatesh, 1994). Indian culture which influences the purchase decision of the Indian consumers' is different from the Western culture while influences the Western consumers' purchase process. For example, India and France (Western country) when compared on the basis of Hofstede's dimensions of culture: power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence, they are different in every dimension. India is higher on power distance and masculinity whereas France is higher on individualism, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence. Power distance which is a measure of acceptance of power inequality is high for India as Indians depend on the power holder for directions and they accept the unequal

distribution of rights. Individualism measures the degree of interdependence. India is low in this dimension as Indians are more of collectivists and they always long to belong to a larger group (family/society). All their decisions are family oriented. In collectivistic societies, consumers' overweigh others' view about products, brands and consumption (Khare, 2014). Long term orientation measures the preparedness for the future. India scores low on this dimension as most Indians believe in "karma" which means that one's present actions will decide his fate in the future and hence time is not linear. Indians do not have a pragmatic approach of the future. Indulgence measures the degree of succumbing to desires. India is more of a restrained society where the gratification of desires is controlled, and indulgence is looked down as evil. Uncertainty avoidance measures the extent of coping to deal with the anxiety of the future. India is low in this dimension as Indians are comfortable with uncertainties and imperfections and don't plan too much. For example, while going on a trip, Indians do very little homework and try to go with the flow. On the other hand, most Westerners would have an itinerary ready with maps downloaded to avoid any chaos. India is more of a masculine society where visual display of success is very prominent. Indian consumers' are hence a great target for luxury brands as being a masculine society Indians love to display their wealth by possessing luxury brands. Hence countries are very different in every dimension of culture (Hofstede, 1991; Shukla & Purani, 2012; and Hofstede Insights, n.d.).

The purchase decision of the individual is largely influenced by habits. A person who has the habit of exercising regularly would make purchase decisions keeping in mind his habit of being fit. He would not indulge in junk food and would prefer healthier options. He would be more indulged in shopping for healthier alternatives like gluten free food, protein supplements, etc. Decathlon¹, the French company targeted the sporting habit of consumers' and was the first to establish a big-format niche retail chain in India. Decathlon has created a sports ecosystem in India, by housing products of nearly 70 sports. A person who has the habit of taking care of one's body would indulge in spa, saloons and shop for cosmetics, skin care and beauty products. International companies like Toni and guy², body shop³, bath and body works⁴, Lush⁵ etc. have all capitalized on that habit. Kama Ayurveda⁶, an Indian company targeted that same habit but differentiated their products by using natural alternatives like Ayurveda to make natural cosmetic products. Kama Ayurveda also has an international presence in over 36 countries by marketing the recognized Indian science. Hamleys⁷, the toyshop chain has invested in the playing habit of kids and has lured them into their stores by offering them an experience. The strength of Hamleys is about how they engage the kids in their stores by allowing them to touch, feel and play with their display toys. Hamleys has been successfully exploiting the playing habit of kids through their world-wide presence in UK, Asia, Europe, North America, Africa

¹ For more details refer <https://www.decathlon.in/>.

² For more details refer <https://www.toniandguyindia.com/>.

³ For more details refer https://www.thebodyshop.in/?utm_source=Optimise&utm_medium=cpv&utm_campaign=1865148_.

⁴ For more details refer https://www.bathandbodyworks.in/buy-2-get-1/buy-2-get-1-body-care?gclid=CjwKCAjwIID8BRAFEiwAnUoK1a6HrrK7BoL-CLhI95QNIHIpNhvMIkAxW3ZzdxQnFL5dkKSUq1M7sRoCyRAQAvD_BwE.

⁵ For more details refer <https://lush.com/>.

⁶ For more details refer <https://www.kamaayurveda.com/>.

⁷ For more details refer <https://www.hamleys.in/>.

and middle east. Several food chains not only localize their menu but also attempt to cater to a wider audience with varied eating habits by offering sections like kids menu and healthier alternatives in their menu. In India, most non-Indian restaurants also have an Indian section in their menu for the Indians who always have the habit of eating Indian food.

Indians are familiar only with two kinds of taste. One is sweet and the other is spicy. They do not understand bitterness, sourness, saltiness or umami. These are the kind of habits which companies need to understand before they introduce their product in the foreign market. Most Indians have the habit of eating rice as the major portion of their food. Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) identified this habit and introduced rice along with their regular KFC chicken. The clothing line Ramraj cotton⁸ capitalized on the habit of Indian men wearing the traditional “dhoti.” GoColors⁹, another clothing line made a business model out of the daily habit of Indian women wearing comfortable bottom-wear. Habits tend to change over the years. Companies need to keep a close watch on the changing habits in order to deliver the right product or service. Restaurants, for example, are no longer a place where the consumer goes to merely eat their favourite food but now a place to socialize and make new friends and meet new people. Another vividly changing habit of the consumer is mobile e-commerce. Online shopping via mobile applications for groceries, staples, provisions, clothing, electronics, etc have all become a habit for most of the consumers⁷. Flipkart¹⁰, Myntra¹¹, and big basket¹² are some of the companies who spotted this changing habit very early and reaped first mover advantages in the Indian market. Another Indian company which revolutionized the restaurant-takeaway-delivery business was Swiggy.¹³ Swiggy capitalized on the habit of Indians’ craving for local foods at popular restaurants which did not have the luxury of the food delivery option. With cloud kitchens, nil minimum order value and live tracking facilities Swiggy has now become a habit for most Indians. Swiggy has helped the consumer indulge more in their eating habit. Hence companies need to identify the habits of their target audience and market products which complement those habits.

3.4. Language as Widow of Indian Worldview

India is a diverse country with twenty-three official languages and over one thousand dialects (Gopal & Srinivasan, 2006). Multinational businesses attempting to enter the Indian market have additions complications owing to the diversity of the Indian languages. Thus, the choice of language plays an important role in developing advertisements especially in India as the language employed for brand communications influences the perception patterns of the consumers’ (Shabalina, 2015). Brand communications made in Indian languages (eg: Hindi) have a deeper connect with the Indian consumers’ and also create a sense of belonging, though messages in English may translate to modernity and sophistication. When multinationals communicate in

⁸ For more details refer <https://ramrajcotton.in/>.

⁹ For more details refer <https://www.gocolors.co.in/>.

¹⁰ For more details refer <https://www.flipkart.com/>.

¹¹ For more details refer [https://www.myntra.com/?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Search%20-%20Myntra%20Brand%20\(India\)&gclid=CjwKCAjwIID8BBRAFEiwAnUoK1YQ6Dda1hc_y3GKStophD7v5uMYgl1njHDivN0G3VhIH9F0I3ImTJhoC_Y8QAvD_BwE](https://www.myntra.com/?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Search%20-%20Myntra%20Brand%20(India)&gclid=CjwKCAjwIID8BBRAFEiwAnUoK1YQ6Dda1hc_y3GKStophD7v5uMYgl1njHDivN0G3VhIH9F0I3ImTJhoC_Y8QAvD_BwE).

¹² For more details refer <https://www.bigbasket.com/>.

¹³ For more details refer <https://www.swiggy.com/>.

Indian languages, they are more favorably evaluated by the Indian consumer (Krishna & Ahluwalia, 2008). Indian languages are more narrative whereas in the West, languages are more categorical, rational and evidence based. Indians always narrate a story for every action of theirs. Indian languages are not definitive. There is never a distinction between a yes and a no. Most Indians voice a negative response but display a positive action. They are more of a diplomat. Westerners on the other hand give very definite responses and always have clarity in their responses. They are more upfront and straight forward. The linguistic preferences of the consumer determine his or her consumer choices. Only ten percent of Indians can speak English fluently as a second language. A latest KPMG report¹⁴ reveals that in India there are 234 million Indian language online users when compared to only 175 million English language users. And by 2021, the Indian language user base will be 75% of the internet user base in India. Indians find Indian language content to be more reliable. The persuasion power of Indian languages is higher than the Western languages, mainly the English language. The response is more proactive for Indian language advertisements (Gupta, 2018). Businesses can engage the Indian consumer if they can communicate in their language. Hence companies need to market their products and services in Indian languages in order to increase engagement as the mother tongue of the consumers' plays an important role in their perception patterns (Shabalina, 2015). In India, regional content has more reach and hence companies need to adopt vernacular-based advertising in order to improve brand intimacy and brand recall (Gupta, 2018).

Foreign companies need to market their product using expressions which the locals of the country venturing into can understand. Taglines are an important marketing tool and help to increase the attention of the consumer by amplifying the memory of the brand (Mantonakis, 2012). Familiar words in local languages build a stronger connection with the consumers' of the targeted local market (Ahn & La Ferle, 2008). Hence, locally modified taglines help brands to connect better with the local consumers' because of increased positive association with the brand image. Businesses can communicate better in local markets by uniquely forming taglines to project a better image of their brand (Do, 2019). For example, Lufthansa, the German airline marketed their product for the Indian market using expressions which Indians wanted. Their video advertisement featuring a grandfather and a grandson who discuss how different Germans are in the beginning of the advertisement find themselves really comfortable in the German airline enjoying Indian food. Their tagline "More Indian than you think" was an expression in the language Indians want (Enspireco, 2017). British airways promoted their airline routes between India and U.K on similar lines. Their tagline "loving India back since 1924" was how they promoted using an expression which Indians could understand. British airways were then Imperial airways in 1924 when they began their first air route in India. Their video advertisement featured a flight attendant who befriends an elderly woman on her first flight to India and how the attendant eventually falls in love with the country (Shradha, 2016) When the food giant, McDonalds¹⁵ entered India, they framed the tagline, "McDonalds mein hai kuch baat" using Indian expressions which could relate to the locals. Their video advertisement which released in 1997 featured a young family cheering up their little son by taking him out to McDonalds. Amazon prime video, the video streaming service

¹⁴ For more details refer <https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/in/pdf/2017/04/Indian-languages-Defining-Indias-Internet.pdf>.

¹⁵ For more details refer <https://www.mcdonaldsindia.com/>.

began its services in India with the tagline, 'India ka naya prime time' (Burnett, 2018). This tagline introduces the service using Indian expressions to the Indian market which was then relatively new to the video streaming service compared to the rest of the world.

3.5. Buying as Relationship by Indians

The products and services which Indian consumers' can relate to are very different from that of the Western consumers'. Indian consumers' relate more to products which have been a part of their childhood. When Kelloggs first made its entry in India in 1994, by introducing its regular marketing mix, the Indian consumers' were not ready to accept the product as they could not relate to it. Indians had grown up eating a well-balanced hot breakfast and they could not replace it with cereal and cold milk. So Kelloggs had to repackage the cereal in the right way, making it sweeter and more dissolvable in hot milk (Taneja et al., 2012). Companies need to mould their products in order to relate to their consumer market.

Companies need to work towards building a relationship between the consumer and the product or the brand. Consumers need products to connect with them in an instinctive human manner. The business model of Starbucks was built around building relationships over coffee. They attempt to create a culture of belonging. Consumers visit Starbucks not to just buy coffee and leave but to bond and relate over coffee. GoColors¹⁶ is an Indian company whose business was to deliver comfortable bottom-wear in style. They made their products relatable to Indian women by branding it as comfort with fashion for women in all sizes and in all age groups. They cater to the young, old, skinny and plus-sized Indian women. They position themselves as western wears for Indian women. Ramraj cotton¹⁷ is another Indian clothing line which revolutionized the traditional South Indian men's wear, "dhoti." The company marketed its brand as adding value to every Indian's lifestyle. Dhoti is a very relatable Indian attire which has been worn by Indians for generations. By venturing into different varieties of cotton wear, Ramraj cotton has delivered relatable products to its consumers'. Grand sweets¹⁸, which began in the south of India and Haldirams¹⁹ in the north, have capitalized on packaged traditional Indian snacks with good shelf life. Indian snacks are a very relatable product for Indians both living abroad and within the country as Indians have grown up eating them and they have deep relationships with them. Most Indians travelling abroad buy these products in bulk so that they can relish Indian taste anywhere in the world. MTR²⁰, Sakthi Masala²¹, Shree Mithai²² etc. have all ventured into that segment. Ikea, the Swedish group reported a sale of six crore rupees on the first day of its launch in Hyderabad in India. Ikea studied the Indian market for years before its launch. They wanted to introduce their products in a relatable format. As part of their marketing campaign, they did a make-over for the bus

¹⁶ For more details refer <https://www.gocolors.co.in/>.

¹⁷ For more details refer <https://ramrajcotton.in/>.

¹⁸ For more details refer <https://grandsweets.com/>.

¹⁹ For more details refer https://www.haldirams.com/?utm_source=bcww_search&utm_campaign=Pure_Brand_EM_TCPA&utm_term=Brand_EM&gclid=CjwKCAjwlID8BRAFEiwAnUoK1RV3wLuZ66ACAqs56GmPsnsRKvMRLpKSpTew4H_MaXea_eaSatlirRoCVh8QAvD_BwE.

²⁰ For more details refer <https://www.mtrfoods.com/>.

²¹ For more details refer <http://www.sakthimasala.com/>.

²² For more details refer <https://www.shreemithai.com/>.

stops in Hyderabad with their trendy bright furniture. This enabled the commoners of the city to touch and feel their furniture and thereby relate to it. They also came up with another breakthrough campaign to relate to the masses. The auto rickshaws which the masses used to commute were transformed with bright coloured paints, seats and cushions. VR glasses were used in each of these auto rickshaws to give the people a virtual tour of the store (Kumar, 2015). By combining technology and local relatable items like auto rickshaws, Ikea was able to build relationships with the Indian consumers’.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Discussion – Consumption Process

In consumer behaviour, there are two types of influences: external influence and internal influence. Internal influence includes the influence of one’s personality, style, perceptions, memory, learning, etc on the buying process. External influence includes the influence of culture, group, society, etc on the buying process. In the consumer behaviour principles, there are internal influences and external influences that lead to decision making in the purchase process.

All the four principles of worldview, culture, language and relationship encompass the external and internal influences and the purchase process that are usually explained in studying consumer behaviour. Worldview is an internal influence that is born out of cultural context, that is expressed in a language by which a consumer relates to a product/service in the entire process of purchase. Thus, the focus of study of consumer behaviour should be on understanding the worldview of consumers’ towards products/services.

Worldview drives the consumer to make a choice of buying and consuming. The worldview is formed in a cultural context where one interacts with groups, families to develop a lifestyle and habits. The purchase process is a relationship a consumer has with a product or a service. Starting from information search about the product, then to search for alternatives, making a choice of purchase, until the post purchase process, there is an act of relationship that a consumer has with the product and the seller of the product.

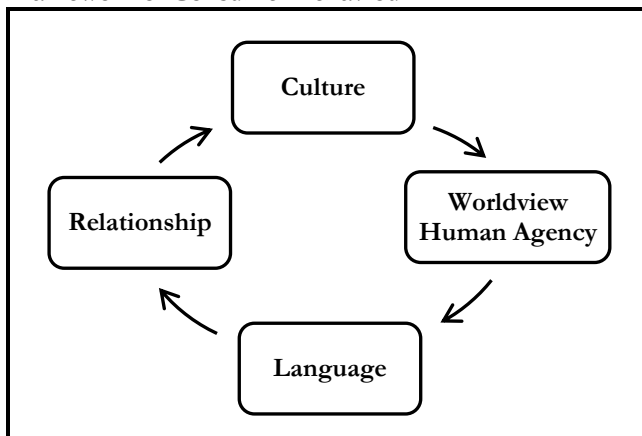
Thus, the internal influence is worldview or cultural worldview, which is born out of culture, which also forms the internal influence. The external influence is the consumer’s relationship with his/her group, family, etc which results in the way of using language, which is also an external influence. Hence businesses need to study all the four principles which influence the consumption process. All these four principles go hand-in-hand in understanding the purchase decision of the consumer in any given market. Businesses should first understand the worldview of the target consumer to first check if their product or service fits into that worldview. If it does not, the product needs to be modified in accordance with the worldview of the consumer. The product should next be altered to embrace the culture of the targeted consumer. The product should be changed to suit the habits of the consumer. This well packaged product should be marketed in the language the target consumers’ want, with cues and impressions that influence their purchase decision. This product which has been packaged with the consumer’s worldview and culture is now all set to build strong relationships with the consumer.

Kelloggs is a great example of how an international brand revamped its products after its initial failure in the Indian consumer market by combining all the four principles of worldview, relationship, language and culture. The main challenge of

Kelloggs was trying to replace Indians' traditional habit of having either idli, dosas or parathas for breakfast with their cold cereal. Kelloggs understood the worldview of the Indian consumer and made its products more economic for the average Indian consumer. Realising India's love for Hollywood superstars, Kelloggs also launched a variant, Kelloggs chocos spider man, a web-designed cereal. Kelloggs made its products more relatable and more suited to Indian taste buds by launching a new variant of cereal which was sweeter and soluble in hot milk as Indians preferred their breakfast hot. Kelloggs also added Indian language like Iron shakti and Calcium shakti to the taglines of its new variants in order to market its products in an expression the Indians wanted. All these efforts taken by Kelloggs helped the brand gain nearly 60 to 65% market share in the breakfast cereal market in India and it hence became the market leader (Taneja et al., 2012).

Successful businesses have excelled in packaging the right products and have delivered them with the right expressions in the different markets of the world. They have made their international presence felt in the various markets with a very local touch. Mastering that art is possible only with the right understanding of the worldview, culture, language and relationship of the consumers' worldwide.

Figure 1
Framework of Consumer Behaviour



V. CONCLUSION

Businesses find it difficult to answer the question, “how do consumers’ make purchase decisions?” When businesses find an answer to this question, they can market the right product to the right consumer and thereby increase their profits by gaining a share in the consumers’ wallet. This article aims to help businesses solve this by analysing the consumption pattern of consumers’ via highlighting four important principles of consumer behaviour. Consumers’ are buying products which are cultural products. Hence when businesses need to understand why consumers’ are buying products they need to first study the culture of the consumer that reveals the worldview that can be studied in the language he or she uses to talk about the product and what he or she wants from the product. The worldview gives an agency to decide what to buy and why to buy. This human agency, which is the power to decide, is expressed in languages as language is looked upon as culture. A consumer in fact relates to the product in the process of buying, in that way buying becomes a relationship between the buyer and the product. Ultimately, the products form lasting relationships with the consumer and when the relationship gives meaning to the consumer, he or she will

have a post-purchase behaviour that would repeat the buying. Hence the principles of (1) worldview, (2) culture, (3) language and (4) relationship form the crux of the consumption behaviour of the consumer. Businesses can enter any local market and succeed if their product is packaged with all these four principles. The products thus packaged, would bring meaning to the consumers' life as purchases change the mental process of the consumers'. A well-packaged product/service would satisfy the consumers' desires and consumers' are able to relate to that product/service by giving meaning to it.

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