11

Personality and Self Concept

Men of great personality achieve greatness.
Personality projects the interest and behaviour of a person.

This chapter deals with personality and self concept. The goal of this chapter is to understand:

- Personality theory
- Theory of Freud
- Emotions
- Self concept

Personality and Self Concept

■ 11.1 Personality

Personality is another internal determinant which influences our consumption pattern. We tend to use products that go with our personality.

Personality may be defined as those inner psychological characteristics that determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment. Inner characteristics are those specific qualities and attributes traits, factors, mannerisms that distinguish one person from another. Personality influences the individual's product choices and brand choices. It also responds to a firm's promotional efforts and, when and how they consume particular products or, services. By associating personality characteristics with consumer behaviour, a marketeer can formulate marketing strategies in an effective manner.

Personality reflects individual differences. Therefore, we can categorise them into groups on the basis of few traits, *e.g.,* low sociability/high sociability, dull/bright, practical vs. imaginative etc. Personality is consistent and enduring and is only one of the factors that affect consumer behaviour. Personality can change due to major life events. These could be birth, death, marriage. It can also be changed by a gradual process.

Trait Theory

A trait is defined as a predisposition to respond in a particular way. Traits are used to define behaviour of consumers.

There are a number of traits given by Cattell and they are sixteen in numbers:

1. Reserved vs. Outgoing
2. Dull vs. Bright
3. Docile vs. Aggressive
4. Serious vs. Happy go lucky
5. Unstable vs. Stable
6. Expedient vs. Conservative
7. Shy vs. Uninhibited
8. Tough-minded vs. Tender-minded

   9. Trusting vs. Suspicious

10. Practical vs. Imaginative

11. Unpretentious vs. Polished

12. Self-assured vs. Self-respective

13. Conservative vs. Experimenting

14. Group-dependent vs. Self-sufficient

15. Indisciplined vs. Controlled

16. Relaxed vs. Tense

   Cattell believes that traits are acquired at an early age, or through learning, or are inherited. This theory is representative of multi-personality theories (more than one trait influences behaviour).

   Trait theory is based on certain assumptions, which are:

1. Traits are relatively stable characteristics

2. A limited number of traits are common to most people

3. The degree of traits possessed by an individual can be measured by using a rating questionnaire in a continuum, on a 1 to 10 scale.

The Psychoanalytic Theory of Freud

Freud proposed that every individual's personality is the product of struggle among three interacting forces: These three are fully developed and are in a state of balance in a healthy person. If any individual is underdeveloped, then this balance is disturbed and there is dissatisfaction with the self and the world.

   Id: It is a source of strong, basic and instinctive drives and urges which demand instant gratification even at the cost of violating the norms of society. It demands instant gratification—Pleasure Principle.

   Ego: It operates on a reality principle, and seeks to achieve the pleasurable demands of the id in as realistic a way as possible. It helps to develop cognition, and controls impulsive behaviour.

   Super Ego: It is the individual's moral code and helps in striving for perfection. Its primary purpose is to restrain aggressive impulses of the id rather than seek to postpone them, as does the ego.

   According to this theory, these three systems are fully developed and are in a state of balance in a normal healthy person. But when one or more of these systems are underdeveloped, then the internal balance is disturbed, which leads to maladjustment and dissatisfaction.

Applications

Consumers have competing desires and want to satisfy their wants. Marketeers, therefore, create fantasies about the product which is used as a basis for influencing consumers.

   Marketeers use flights of fantasy to propel people to buy their products. Hedonism is an appeal to pleasure principle and this approach offers products for an affluent society. Psychoanalytical theory appeals to the buyer's dreams, hopes and fears. It can also provide products which are rational and socially acceptable.

   Id: It is the strong urge or desire which is at the heart of a consumer's motivation and personality. The function of the Id is to discharge tension which it does by demanding instant

gratification, even at the cost of violating the norms of society. Id operates on the pleasure principle. Psychologically, id is the source of all desires and wishes that exist in the form of unconscious images and fantasies. Since all wishes are not satisfied, there is frustration and this may lead an individual to break norms and rules for his satisfaction. It does not deal with objective reality and is subjective.

Ego: This comes into existence because of the limitation of id. Ego operates on the Reality Principle. It tries to achieve the demands of id in a realistic and possible way. The ego develops ways to postpone the wishes of id. If id wants a product the ego restrains it because of financial constraints. It controls impulsive behavior. Id engages in dreams and fantasies which exist as pleasurable imaginations.

Ego can distinguish between dreams and reality. Ego is an individual's social control. It acts as an internal monitor and attempts to balance the demand of id.

Super ego: It strives for perfection. It is the individual's moral code and helps in striving for perfection. It restrains the aggressive inpulse of the id rather than postponing them, as does the ego.

Social-Psychological/Neo-Freudian Theory

It is of the view that social relationships are fundamental to the formation and development of personality. So, consumers have been classified into three personality groups:

CAD Model

Compliant Individuals:	Move towards others for the need of love, affection and approval; are conformists who prefer known brands.
Aggressive Individuals:	Tend to move against others and are manipulative; feel a high need for achievement, power, success; prefer specific brands, so that they can be noticed.
Detached Individuals:	Move away from others: feel a need for self reliance, independence and freedom; are least aware of brands.

Applications

- Different personality types of individuals tend to use different products and brands.
- Compliant types prefer known products and brands, while aggressive types prefer specific brands out of a desire to be noticed.
- Detached types appear to have the least awareness of brands.
- Emphasis on the social nature of consumption *e.g.*, while advertising for personal care products, care is taken not to offend any particular group. Products be advertised which are used in social interactions or when in groups.

Emotions

Emotions control our behaviour. They are relatively uncontrolled feelings which affect our behaviour. We are emotionally charged by environmental factors and events. If somebody misbehaves with us we feel angry. On our achievements we feel happy. Whenever we are emotionally charged, physiological changes also take place within us. These may be faster breathing, perspiration, dilation, or moistening of eyes. Increased heart and blood pressure, enhanced blood sugar levels, etc. Mental activation also takes place, and we recall a lot of

pleasant or unpleasant incidences and can also think rationally. The behaviour of different individuals vary from situation to situation, and emotions are mostly associated with behaviour.

■ 11.2 Types of Behaviour

Emotions have been categorised differently by different thinkers and philosophers. Plutchick categorised emotions into eight types. These are as under:

Fear
Anger
Joy
Sadness
Acceptance
Disgust
Expectancy
Surprise

According to Plutchick, other emotions are secondary and come out of these basic emotions or, are a continuation of the above emotions, *e.g.,* delight can be a combination of surprise and joy. Similarly, contempt can be a combination of anger and disgust. Others have suggested 3 basic emotions. These are:

P Pleasure
A Arousal
D Dominance

These basic emotions gives rise to a number of other emotions as shown in the table given below.

Table 11.1

Dimension	Emotion	Indicator/Feeling
Pleasure	Duty	Moral, virtuous, dutiful
	Faith	Reverent, worshipful, spiritual
	Pride	Proud, superior, worthy
	Affection	Loving, affectionate, friendly
	Innocence	Innocent, pure, blameless
	Gratitude	Grateful, thankful, appreciative
	Serenity	Restful, serene, comfortable, soothed
	Desire	Desirous, wishful, craving, hopeful
	Joy	Joyful, happy, delighted, pleased
	Competence	Confident, in control, competent
Arousal	Interest	Attentive, curious
	Hypoactivation	Bored, drowsy, sluggish
	Activation	Aroused, active, excited
	Surprise	Surprised, annoyed, astonished
	Déjá vu	Unimpressed, uninformed, unexcited
	Involvement	Involved, informed, enlightened, benefited

(Contd...)

	Distraction	Distracted, preoccupied, inattentive
	Surgency	Playful, entertained, lighthearted
Dominance	Contempt	Scornful contemptuous, disdainful
	Conflict	Tense, frustrated, conflictful
	Guilt	Guilty, remorseful, regretful
	Helplessness	Powerless, helpless, dominated
	Sadness	Sad, distressed, sorrowful, dejected
	Fear	Fearful, afraid, anxious
	Shame	Ashamed, embarrassed, humiliated
	Anger	Angry, initiated, enraged, mad
	Hyperactivation	Panicked, confused, overstimulated
	Disgust	Disgusted, revolted, annoyed, full of loathing
	Skepticism	Skeptical, suspicious, distrustful

Source: Adapted from M.B. Holbrook and R. Batra. "Assessing the Role of Emotions as Mediators of Consumer Responses to Advertising". *Journal of Consumer Research*, December 1987, pp. 40:20.

A Classification of 12 categories is also made by R. Batra and M.B. Holbrook in their book *Developing a Typology of Effective Responses to Advertising*. See Table 11.2.

Table 11.2

Emotion	Indicator
Activation	Arousal, active, excited
Skepticism	Skeptical, suspicious
Anger	Angry, enraged, mad
Restful	Restful, serene
Bored	Bored, uninvolved, unimpressed, unexcited
Fear	Fearful, afraid
Desire	Desirous, wishful, full of craving.
Social affection	Loving, affectionate, pure
Gratitude	Grateful, thankful, benefited
Sadness	Sad, remorseful, sorrowful
Irritation	Disgusted, irritated. annoyed
Surgency	Playful, entertained, lighthearted

Administered as "I felt not at all (adjective/very adjective)" (Seven Point Scale).

Source: Adapted from R. Batra and M.B. Holbrook. *Developing a Typology of Affective Responses to Advertising*. Psychology and Marketing, Spring 1990. pp. 22. These authors use the terms affect, emotion is used in this table to be consistent with the text.

■ 11.3 Emotions and Marketing Strategy

Marketeers have also used emotions to arouse the interest of the consumer. They have used emotion as a product benefit and emotion arousal in context of advertising. When we are emotionally aroused, we try to evaluate the product in a positive or negative manner. "The BUNJEE* jumping was a near death experience. Yet I loved it."

We try to seek positive emotions most of the time but, there are many exceptions as shown. Consumers seek products which arouse emotions. These could be for primary or secondary benefits. Movies, books and music are examples of primary benefit. Khajuraho, Taj Mahal, Goa, Essel World positioned as emotion arousing destinations. E-mail or Voice mail are also positioned as emotion arousing products. Excitement and fun can be generated by soft drinks and consumption of alcohol. Luxury cars give a feeling of delight and excitement.

Marketeers also take advantage of negative and unpleasant emotions and, when one feels sad, powerless, humiliated or disgusted, they promote the products to prevent or reduce negative emotions. These could be medicines and such products. Flowers are promoted as an antidote to sadness, slimming gimmicks, personal grooming products (toiletries, etc.) are also used to do away with negative emotions. Anxiety and stress reduction products are also designed for the purpose.

Advertising also plays an important part in reducing negative emotions. Advertisements which have an emotional context such as joy, warmth, disgust, do attract attention more than the neutral advertisements. Physiological arousal takes place and more attention is paid to such advertisements. Family relationships are projected in many advertisements, which bring warmth and joy. Repeated exposure to positive emotions, reinforces product and brand preference. Advertisements having positive emotional appeals are gaining popularity. Emotionally charged advertisements, arouse in an individual a feeling of pride, security, happiness and confidence. Most advertisers use emotional appeals to attract customers. This is done by repeated exposures.

Table 11.3

Dimensions of self-concept	Actual self-concept	Ideal self-concept
Private self	How I actually see myself	How I would like to see myself
Social self	How others actually see me	How I would like others to see me

■ 11.4 Self-concept

Self-concept can be described simply as how one perceives himself and his behaviour in the market place. It is the attitude one holds towards himself. What one thinks of himself. The self concept is not very realistic because an unconcious component is always present. It can be divided into six types, as given below:

*It is a sport where a person jump from a high platform to touch the water after being tied with elastic ropes.

(*i*) *Actual self:* How a person actually perceives himself.

(*ii*) *Ideal self:* How a person would like to perceive himself.

(*iii*) *Social self:* How a person thinks others perceive him.

(*iv*) *Ideal social self:* How a person would like others to perceive him.

(*v*) *Expected self:* An image of self somewhere in between the actual and ideal self.

(*vi*) *Situational self:* A person's self image in a specific situation.

Actual self-concept		Products/media	Desired self-concept	
Private	Social	Services	Private	Social

Self-concept is a social phenomenon. It is an attitude to the self. Consequently, the way we dress, the products we use, the services we require, depend on how we want to perceive ourselves. There is a relationship between the self-image of a person and the product one wants to buy. Products act as symbols for consumers.

People like to use the products which match their personality. These include clothing, leisure products, personal care products. Marketeers want an idea of the self-concept and the image of the brand. This can be done on a differential scale of 1 to 7 of several items as shown on next page.

First the consumers are asked to rate their self-concept on the differential scale. Then they are asked to rate product brands on the same scales. The responses that watch with the brands are expected to be preferred by consumers.

Table 11.4

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Rugged	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Delicate
2. Exciting	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Calm
3. Uncomfortable	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Comfortable
4. Dominating	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Submissive
5. Thrifty	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Indulgent
6. Pleasant	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Unpleasant
7. Contemporary	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Uncontemporary
8. Organised	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Unorganised
9. Rational	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Emotional
10. Youthful	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Mature
11. Formal	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Informal
12. Orthodox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Liberal
13. Complex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Simple
14. Colourless	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Colourful
15. Modest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Vain

After matching the self-concept with the brand image, the individual tries to find products for his satisfaction. If he is satisfied, his self-concept gets reinforced as shown in the figure. The interaction between the product and self-concept can be situation specific. In some situations, the self-concept can be enhanced or reinforced to a lesser or higher degree. Marketeers use these tools as a guide to product and brand choices.
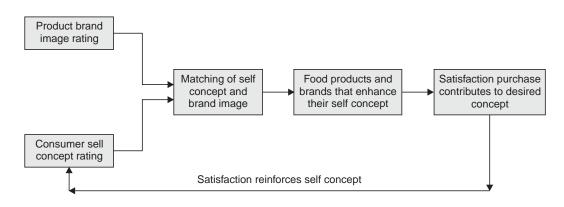

Fig. 11.1 Relationship between self-concept and brand image influence

Questions

1. What is the importance of motivation in consumer behaviour?
2. How does Maslow's hierarchy of needs guide a marketeer to design and sell his products?
3. What are the categories of needs emphasised by McGuire?
4. Explain manifest and latent motives in consumer behaviour.
5. What is the traits theory and, how does it help marketeers?
6. How do emotions help formulate marketing strategy?
7. Explain self-concept with reference to marketing.