



International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

The Religion of Consuming: An Indian Perspective.

Kari Gooli

Assistant Professor, Department of PG Studies in Commerce, SKNG Govt First Grade College, Gangavathi- 583227

State – Karnataka Country- India

Email: gooliesoteric@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Cricket players and Film stars in India enjoy prosperity due to consumption of such services has reached extremity. Brands like Parle and Colgate are spotted under the consumer's heritage of the community for continuing their journey from decades to generations. The Indian Geographical Indicators are still supported by the loyal customers. Reliance telecommunications is successful in cracking the affairs of its Jio sim card with 109 million Indians. The Indian Railways and the India Post are serving the public under the societal ideology at nominal charges. The All India Radio and the Doordarshan are still having the strong consumer bases in this digital era. SBI and its associates are the top choices for banking customers and LIC continues to be the giant in Life Insurance. The story never ends here it goes on and on as the Indian consumers constitute a 'religion' in consuming their dignity based choices. The consuming religion of Indians has its own ideologies and moral philosophy that represents every class of promoter from hawker to Corporate who have sustained in the long run due to the strong consumer bases. The following article aims to discuss the religion of consuming in India across the thrust areas pertaining to the scope of research.

Keywords: India, Consumer, Brands, Religion, Community

Introduction

In India footpaths are flooded by sellers of fast food, tea stalls, fruit sellers etc and every consumer recalls the traditional values of consuming culture that upholds his/her morality for the value of an exchange in pursuit of choosing the desirable product. Hawkers, entrepreneurs, grocery shops, weekly markets and fairs are still stronger as the consumers are bounded with rationality among their choices. The concepts of supermarkets and shopping malls are a bit successful in Indian cities and whereas the urban and the rural customers discourage such practices. *Flipkart, Amazon and Naaptol* are among the new players who were successful in setting the online trend but this is limited for electronic goods and fashionable garments. The divine love towards adapting the historical brands, significance of geographical indicators in matching the product attributes, trustworthy services, ecological factors, communal values, shared beliefs and esteemed needs subject to consuming constitutes a religion of consuming.

Thrust areas of research

A. The spirituality of the consuming religion

The word "religion" comes from the Latin root *relegio* which signifies a bond between humanity and some greater than human power. Scholars identify three historical designations of the term 1) a supernatural power to which individuals are motivated or committed 2) a feeling present in the individual who conceives such power; and the 3) ritual acts carried out in respect of that power (Wulff 1997). Consumers morality in consuming the desirable products gives rise to various traditions, practices and customs that are significant components in forming the religion of consuming. Parks (2000) described spirituality to be a personal search for meaning, transcendence, wholeness, purpose, and "apprehension of spirit (or Spirit) as the animating essence at the core of life" (p. 16). Consumer decisions are spiritually high for the reason it is the spirit that rules out the human intelligence and in such cases supremacy is developed over normal behaviour. The spirituality of the consuming religion is to redefine the values and beliefs in consuming a product where many factors affect the buying motives respective of psychographic and non-psychographic characteristics of a segment type. In switching from a brand it is not easy for a consumer who is more spiritual and religious towards its attributes consumed and had built the relationship with a non-living object. Even though offers disturb consumer behaviour but the spirituality guides the consuming decision by avoiding short term benefits and directing for long term gains. Brands like Parle, Parachute, and Colgate etc have survived from decades for the reason that the consumer is spiritual and religious in consuming them. If weighing costs against benefits was the only strategy of consumers, then everyone would have been subscribed the Jio simcard disconnecting the regular ones. The spirit of all religions leads from darkness to light and in discovering self the follower discovers the truth and this is important to sustain morally.

Research Questions

1. In consuming a product if the consumer is spiritual then is he/she religious? Justify with a practical example.

If a consumer is spiritual then he/she is on high moral grounds subject to consumption and when the same consumer is religious he/she may follow the religious values, principles and beliefs. Let us consider an example of a blockbuster movie released in theatres. For the reason the hero is your favorite star the movie will be watched by you and this is the religious value (religion of consuming) that forces you to support the star. Whereas the spirit is not supporting your attitude because you had already come to know that the movie is an utter flop by your friends who watched it earlier. In religion you are committed because you need to follow an ideology but being spiritual you need specific purpose. In marketing terminology religious value is termed as conventional wisdom and spiritual value is termed as cognitive wiring. But Indian consumer chooses to be more religious and for this reason the film stars enjoy a high level of prosperity. Versatile actors like Amitabh Bachan and Rajanikanth are still loved by their fans to watch them on the silver screen as their fan bases are stronger than others. The values and beliefs of the consuming religion duly support film stars, cricketers, politicians, spiritual leaders and historical brands in India.

B. Bounded rationality

Tilly (2006) in his book 'Why?' traces out four types of rational behaviors.

1. conventions- my friend is waiting for me
2. stories- last year our family was in Goa for celebrating the New Year.
3. codes- we go to Hanuman temple every Saturday(rule)
4. Technical accounts-the cause and effect -(Ramu failed in the exam because he did not study well)

Further he explains that people need common explanations that can convince them among potential groups and finally they adjust with everything which Tilly calls as superior stories. *Consumers sought price, value, quality, and brand familiarity, driven more by personal than societal reasons (Ulrich & Sarasin 1995)*. Consumers buy unethical goods at a cheap rate such as pirated software, used electronic accessories, low nutrient food products, perished vegetables and fruits etc intentionally to save money. The doctrine of consuming religion supports all kind of consumers and all kind of consumptions because religious values support the common good ethics. Bounded rationality is the limited information that the consumer has secured regarding a product and due to unsecured information he/she is bounded rationally. The consuming religion upholds the bounded rationality for the reason it provides freedom to choose because the consumer is rational among the choices he/she makes.

Research questions

1. Status of irrational behaviors in the consuming religion.

Many subscribers of Airtel and Vadafone switched to Jio when the unlimited talk time and internet data of one GB free per day was provided for six months for a single payment. Later when they learnt that other companies are also providing such offers gradually the irrationality turned into rationality and many returned to their loyal brands. The consuming religion always supports the consumer decisions either rational or irrational because the buying motives are always affected in weighing costs against benefits of the desirable product. Every person depositing the savings in the SBI or holding an RD account with India Post are damn sure about the financial security and they will not approach a mutual fund company to get better returns on their investments. Being rational or irrational among choices is always unstable and the consuming religion upholds the consumer morality to choose on their own as religions proclaim equal status to everyone who adapts it.

C. Mythology of the consuming religion in India

Touch screen sets are the adopted children of every Indian house and users include farm workers, construction labours, auto and taxi drivers, students and the upper middle class households. You can find the 'OPPO stores' in every main road of the urban India. Movies, music and documentaries are stored in memory chips and consumer enjoys his/her leisure at their workplaces with the touch screen. Patanjali stores are found in all parts of India and now Baba Ramdev has been introduced in commercial ads. Spiritual classes are forming strong niches and the Yoga and the Ayurveda are successfully commercialized by the Gurus with beards. Boycott Chinese products, Rally for rivers, Swach Bharath are some of the new themes in India turning into great revolutions. Prime Minister's 'maan ki bath' and demonetization of notes are popular among masses. Yogi Adinath the new Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh is going to be the role model to many sadhus(priests) who want to contest in the upcoming elections. Pani puri, Vadapav, Gobimunchuri and Idilis are favorite among fast foods. Milk, eggs and meat are preferred to be the richest protein food supplied by domestic sources. Maggi noodles and Lays chips are enjoyed by children and Cadbury happens to be the most distinguished brand for chocolate lovers of all ages in India. Kissan Jam and Ketchups are accompanied with desi somasa and chapati. A class of consumers loves McDonnell's pizza, burger and sandwich. Steel and Cement industries are manufacturing and disposing a lot of stock as construction sector is busy for the reason our's is still a developing country. Asian paints are making every house in India colorful. The geographical indicators are more significant in supporting cultural values in India. Food grains, garments, spices, fruits etc are top among choices of the consuming class who rely open traditional suppliers for such goods. Banaras sarees, Darjeeling tea, Kolhapur chappals, Kashmiri apples, Mysore Jasmine are better examples. Even traditional music, dance, paintings, cinema are preferred by the art lovers. Bharatnatyam, Kuchpudi, Shastriya Sangeeth, Tabla vadan, Folk dances are highly preferred. Religious places are visited often by travelers and from Kashmir to Kanyakumari Gods of all religion exist to their disciples. Vishnavdevi and Amaranth yatra are a bit risky but Tirupathi, Swami Ayappa, Ajmer and Amritsar are flocked by disciples. Cultural practices like arranged marriages, funeral ceremonies, animal sacrifices, fairs, and melas are popular among communities. Cricket Betting has enhanced the IPL popularity and films like Sultan and Dangal are inspiring the national games. Tax defaulters

such as film stars and other VIP's are providing information about Government schemes on TV. Digital channels prefer the largest audience and serials in both national as well as regional languages are optimum choices of the households. Bollywood stars are more popular among TV shows and Cricketers are busy in inventing movies on their biographies. FMCG Brands like Parle, Nirma, Colgate, Surf etc are the legends unbeatable from decades and Hero Honda bikes and Honda Active scooters are heart touching vehicles of users. Almost all car manufacturing companies are in India and customers for both cheap and costly car do exist. The Hindu, Times of India and Indian Express are leading news papers and magazines like Outlook, Competition Success Review and India Today are highly preferred by the reading community. Internet lovers directly depend on Google and gmail subscribers are in millions. Facebook happens to be the most preferred platform to share personal views and twitter is more preferred by politicians and other famous personalities. Online education is highly preferred by tuition lovers and foreign students are studying in India. Grabbing a seat in IIM'S and IIT'S is the dream come true for many students who wanted to settle down in their life by getting a high paid job in the campus interview while they are in the last semester of their PG. Indian Railways are connecting every nick and corner of the country and Domestic airlines in extending their services to the metros are performing well. Local transport includes bus, taxis, autos, mini tempos serving passengers in rural and urban places and Lorries are preferred for goods transportation. Airtel, Reliance, Vodafone, Idea, Bsnl and other telecommunication companies are under the red ocean strategy as the competition is cut throat. SBI and its associates are merged and other nationalized banks are proposed by the RBI to join the group. Chit fund scandals are common in India and Gold loan companies are mushrooming across the country. Stock Exchanges are flooded by brokers more than investors and love for the yellow metal is still positive. Coaching classes are still the optimum choices for job aspirants of banking and administrative services. The NEET lovers are utmost trying to grab Government quota through vacation coaching academies. Engineers are the top unemployed and underemployed community in India and some software programmers are in threat of losing their jobs. All established Universities and Degree Colleges employ more than 60 percent of the part time teachers and foreign universities are about to join the show. Microsoft, Dell and Apple are ultimate choices for computer hardware in India. The Tatas, Birlas and Ambanis are top families popular for business. Holi, Deevali, Dashra, Ramzaan and Christmas are popular festivals and August 15th and January 26th are the days for National festivals. The digital channels are rapidly increasing due to audience choose topics like environment, education, spirituality, cartoons etc .S.Chand , Himalaya, Tata Macgraw hill are dominant in publishing text books. Amazon, Flipkart. Olx.com and Naaptool are online babies active in promoting a class of goods. Nirma and Wheel are cheaper and Surf and Tide are costly but still everything sells due to consumers bounded to be rational among choices. All heroines are spotted in one add of Lux beauty soap and Fair and Lovely is the women's face cream of the nation. Shaving cream like Godrej and Old spice are classic for loyal customers and men can use Fair and Handsome as their face cream. Local carpenters are designing cots and wardrobes and interior decoration is one of the top emerging industries. Fans and air coolers are manufactured by lot of companies and retailers enjoy better margin for selling. Reebok and Bata are top shoes accompanied by Paragon hawai chappal. All top garments have opened their showrooms throughout India and Gandhiji's Khadi is still impressive memorizing the freedom struggle. Horlicks , Complain, Bournvita and Boost are loved by the children of specific age group and Johnson and Johnson is evergreen for variety of baby products. Bollywood is finding better consumer base among the migrated Indians in the foreign countries and regional cinemas in almost all Indian languages are consumed by the art lovers. Haldiram's rasgulla and jamoon are packed in tins and the Orkay and MTR are more famous for recipe of instant jamoon mix and badam milk shake beverages. Natraj pencil and Camel geometry box are into the student's culture from years. Kangaroo stapler and staples are in use from decades and ITC the top cigarette manufacturing company has introduced notebooks with a new style. The white tooth paste of the Colgate brand is ever green and new debut is Patanjali's Danthkhanti.

Consuming is a religion and not a process.

Research questions

1. *What is the moral philosophy of the consuming religion in India?*

Moral philosophy is being logic in reasoning those standards that are acceptable as attributes in a product like odor, taste, price, brand etc. subject to consumption. The effect of cross culture is so strong on the Indians for the reason foreigners invaded India often and settled here.. The Moghals and British are top among them who affected our culture. But still today the Indian food system is so strong that we do not compromise at any rate. Noodles, Burgers and Pizzas are occasional choices but our regular item like Roti, Chapati, Puri, Idle, Rice etc are highly preferred and in consuming them the role of Geographical Indicators is highly significant. Consumers who have been using the white Colgate paste from years cannot adjust with any of the minted /colored toothpaste for the belief that it cleans the tooth not the mouth. Consider the examples of biscuits, if it is glucose we choose Parle and for cashew net we choose Goodday, in spite of the fact that both companies manufacture all flavors. It is the strong belief of the consumer and in such a stage he/she is religious and establishes morality as a standard in pursuing attributes of a product philosophically. Consumer's moral philosophy is to follow or adopt the religious values, beliefs and practices of the consuming religion.

2. *The impact of consumer ideologies on the consuming religion.-Discuss*

Ideology, at the very least, refers to a set of idea-elements that are bound together, that belong to one another in a non-random fashion. On what principles they intercorrelate, and to what degree, remain matters of dispute (as discussed), but the notion of coherence is difficult to gainsay. (JOHN GERRING, 1997). Food grains and pulses are grown with the help of inorganic fertilizers that are artificial chemicals and are commonly consumed by everyone. But a set of customers who choose such products that are grown with the help of organic fertilizers formed by animal waste and leaves compost and afford high prices as they support the ideology of eco-friendly. In discriminating unnatural /artificial products and supporting issues like health, nutrition, and environment are significant for a consumer class and societal concept upholds their buying motives. Both class of consumer differ in their ideology but consuming values are one and the same. There are a lot of factors that create dilemmas in consumer ideologies such as availability of goods, prices, awareness and others. The consuming religion upholds the consumer morality in choosing their desirable product for the fact they do not possess product knowledge and purchasing power of every customer differs in a socio-economic concept. Being a consumer it is not easy to uphold the societal

value as economic conditions may not support you to afford higher prices. The consuming religion supports consuming ideology and issues like eco-friendly depends upon the preferences that a consumer choose in a product like price, availability, product knowledge, awareness etc.

Discussion

Consuming religion in India is highly affected by the ideologies that the consumer adapts in the due course of consuming products that are desirable and affordable. In the technological world our people entertain cultural practices and our mindset cannot be changed so easily due to shared beliefs. Our own culture supports spirituality and science as our choices in meeting out the psychological needs are on high moral grounds. The consuming religion in India is highly influenced by variety of choices due to the natural resources are in abundant. We prefer pulses, cereals, nuts, vegetables, green plants, spices, milk, meat, egg etc that support our food system which is hygienic as well as economic. In choosing taste and flavor we rely upon geographic indicators and goods are made available by domestic suppliers. Brands will be added to our cultural heritage due to the fact that we cannot imagine our life without brands. The tooth paste, toilet soap, morning tea, news papers, clothes, shoes, vehicles, channels and everywhere there is branding. In providing meaning for a civilized life adaption of brands is essential and they are designing our lifestyle systematically and significantly. Digital products, Banking and Insurance, Transportation, Entertainment, Professional services and the consuming list never ends. Our moral philosophy in consuming goods of our dignity based choices is the bounded rationality among the choices we make. Though ideologies differ we represent the optimum consumption that our consuming religion teaches us. The religion of consuming inspires the consumer to be on high moral grounds as consuming is their moral right.

Scope for Further research

Thrust areas-Cognitive appraisal, Consumer Morality and Bounded rationality

References

1. **Giana M. Eckhardt, Russell Belk, and Timothy M. Devinney**- *Why don't consumers consume ethically*- *Journal of Consumer Behaviour J. Consumer Behav.* 9: 426–436 (2010)
2. **Professor Marylyn Carrigan**- *Revisiting 'The Myth of the Ethical Consumer': why are we still not ethical shoppers* - *Journal of Consumer Ethics* 1(1), April 2017
3. **JOHN GERRI**- *Ideology: A Definitional Analysis*-*Political Research quarterly*-Vol 50 No-4-1997
4. **Patrick G. Love**- *Comparing Spiritual Development and Cognitive Development*-MAY/JUNE 2002 □ VOL 43 NO 3 *Journal of College Student Development*
5. **SHIVAKUMAR UPAVASI**, *An Empirical Study On Consumer Needs, Values and Beliefs: A Prespective Of The Indian Urban Segments.* *aWeshkar Vol. XXII Issue 1 March 2017 WeSchool*