USC Marshall School of Business

MARKETING 525 CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

TU/TH 12:30-1:50 pm JKP 212

Fall 2015

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CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Consumer Behavior, one of Marketing's core subfields, is a managerial discipline that occupies the center of the customer-company interface. It informs the design of marketing strategy and planning by providing insights about the evolving consumer landscape; consumer information processing and decision-making; consumer purchase and product usage patterns and influences; and consumer motivation and meaning. To address these diverse issues and concerns, consumer behavior analyses draw eclectically and opportunistically from the conceptual frameworks of economics, psychology, sociology, anthropology and other basic disciplines. Similarly, studying consumer behavior requires an extensive and diverse methodological tool kit of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Insights about consumers and consumption behavior help marketing professionals design products and marketing programs that resonate with consumers' thoughts, feelings, interests and motivations.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course is organized around *five basic objectives* that are designed to help students:

- 1. Appreciate the *centrality of consumer analyses* to the design, implementation, and evaluation of marketing strategies and programs.
- 2. Discover how *consumer insights inform managerial decision making* about both strategic and tactical matters.
- 3. Learn the basic *analytic frameworks and concepts* that managers use to better understand their customers, as well as broader marketplace behaviors and consumption trends.
- 4. Gain hands-on experience in working with both traditional and cutting-edge *consumer research tools*, with a particular focus on qualitative methods.
- 5. Understand the strengths and limitations of specific, often competing *theories for interpreting* particular consumer issues.
- 6. Improve their abilities to *discover original consumer insights* that go beyond the surface-level findings that survey research often yields.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Running parallel to these objectives, classroom time will be devoted to the presentation and discussion of various consumer theories, concepts, and marketing research tools and procedures. Key issues will also be analyzed in the context of several HBS, Darden and instructor-generated cases. Significant class time will be devoted to practice in designing particular research instruments and protocols, preparation for research fieldwork, and procedures for data analysis.

INSTRUCTOR-STUDENT INTERACTION

If at any point during the course you have questions regarding the preparation of cases, assignments, or other course-related issues, please do not hesitate to contact the instructor. If office hours are inconvenient, contact the instructor to schedule an appointment.

COURSE PARTICIPATION & HOMEWORK

Each student is expected to contribute regularly to class discussion. To a considerable extent, the benefits students derive from the course and its assignments are related to their willingness to expose their experiences, viewpoints and analyses to the critical judgment of the class. Do not be reluctant to express your informed opinions or to ask questions. Course participation accounts for 10% of a student's course grade, and is based on the quality (not quantity) of in-class discussion, the quality of any in-class presentations, demonstrated leadership behavior, and class attendance and classroom behavior. To encourage students adequately to prepare for class sessions, the instructor will often open the class with several "cold call" questions.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR & ETIQUETTE

The classroom is a professional learning environment, and students' in-class behaviors should reflect this. Intrusive classroom exits and entrances are rude, disruptive and discouraged. Students are expected to be attentive to and engaged in instructor lectures, class discussions, case analyses and other learning activities. The in-class use of laptop computers and other electronic communication devices diminishes student users' attention levels and it also tends to distract and annoy their classmates. Consequently, these are not to be used in the classroom, except at the instructor's direction.

HBS & OTHER CASES

This aspect of the course involves the analysis and resolution of strategic marketing problems and opportunities, some of which (but not necessarily all) are summarized in written cases. Each case focuses on a set of marketing issues that a particular company or brand faces. Detailed guidelines for each case analysis are included in the syllabus. It is important to review these guidelines before beginning case preparation. Case analyses will commonly have 2 components (1) general discussion questions and (2) specific tasks that will be key elements of our subsequent in-class case work.

MIDTERM QUIZZES

2 Midterm Quizzes will be administered during the semester. Their dates are indicated in the Course Schedule below. During the week prior to a particular quiz, the instructor will explain the specific coverage and nature of the upcoming Midterm Quiz. Please note: the Midterm Quizzes will cover both the required readings, as well as material developed in class. Make-up quizzes will not be scheduled, except in extraordinary circumstances.

GROUP WORK PEER EVALUATIONS

A great deal of marketing analysis, strategy, and planning materializes from work in teams that include individuals with different backgrounds, skills, responsibilities, and priorities. Active and positive participation from every team member is critical to a successful field research project. Since there is no natural reporting hierarchy in academic course group projects, the members of every team will evaluate each other's contribution. Students who are consistently and persuasively evaluated negatively by fellow team members will have their project grade reduced by a *minimum* of ½ letter grade, or more if the peer evaluations merit it.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' COURSE WORK

Each student will be assigned a final grade based on the following assignments, weighted accordingly:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Preparation</u>	% of Grade	<u>Due</u>
Focus Group Project	Group	10	TH 10/15
2 In-Class Midterm Quizzes	Individual	35	TH 10/8 & TH 11/19
Field Research Project	Group	35	TH 12/03
Top 10 Lessons	Individual	10	TH 12/10 or earlier
Course Participation & Homework	Individual	10	Ongoing

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATES TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS

Introduction to Customer Behavior: Origins, Uses and Analytic Tools

Week 1 TU 8/25	Evolution of CB in Marketing Analysis & Strategy	
	MKT 525: Course Introduction	
TH 8/27	Understanding Consumers and Consumption Changing Consumers' Behavior	Readings 1-3
Week 2 TU 9/1	Models of Buyer Behavior: Analyzing Cadillac's Situation	Readings 4-5
	Qualitative Tools for Consumer Analysis	
TH 9/3	Misunderstanding Consumers	Reading 6
	HBS Case: Kao Corporation	

Consumer Demographics: Market Segments, Trends, Issues & Opportunities

Week 3

TU 9/8 The Demographic Landscape Readings 7-9

TH 9/10 Single-Person Households & "Solo" Consumption Readings 10-14

Increased Longevity: Living and Dying Longer

Consumer Psychographics (Lifestyle) & Generational Analyses

Week 4

TU 9/15 Psychographic Analysis & Market Segmentation Readings 15-20

Geodemographics: "We Know Where You Live" (film)

TH 9/17 Generational Analyses Readings 21-24

Changing Light Bulbs (B): Philips Earth Light (Darden Case)

Diffusion of Innovations

Consumer Encounters I: Focus Groups

Week 5

TU 9/22 Focus Group Theory & Practice Readings 25-28

TH 9/24 Focus Groups (continued)

Field Project Proposal Due

Week 6

TU 9/29 Focus Groups Experiential (JKP ELC 301)

TH 10/1 Focus Group Analysis & Report Preparation (JKP ELC 301)

Consumer Encounters II: Individual Depth Interviews (IDIs)

Week 7

TU 10/6 IDI Logic, Design & Interviewing Procedures Readings 29-30

"Basic Instinct:" Understanding Consumer Motivation

Means-End Chain Analysis

TH 10/8 Midterm Quiz #1 (covers Readings 1-30, and weeks 1-7 class discussion &

handouts)

Consumer Psychology & Decision-Making I: Understanding & Affecting Consumer Attitudes

Week 8

TU 10/13 Changing Consumers' Behavior Readings 31-34

Zipcar Case

Understanding & Affecting Consumer Attitudes

TH 10/15 Focus Group Presentations & Reports Due

"Got Milk?" Campaign Analysis

Consumer Encounters III: Projective Methods

Week 9

TU 10/20 Projective Methods: Logic, Design & Analysis Readings 35-36

TH 10/22 Renova Toilet Paper: Avant-garde Marketing (INSEAD case) Reading 37

Consumer Encounters IV: Consumer Ethnography

Week 10

TU 10/27 Consumer Ethnography: Logic & Practice Readings 38-41

TH 10/29 Field Project Progress Reports

Consumer Psychology & Decision-Making II: Consumer Motivation

Week 11

TU 11/03 Consumer Motivation & Impulse Buying Readings 42-43

Sensory Aspects of Retail Buying Behavior

TH 11/05 The Global Obesity Crisis Readings 44-50

Socio-Cultural Influences, Processes, and Consumer Meaning

Week 12

TU 11/10 Cultural Aspects of Consumption Reading 51

TH 11/12 HBS Case: Gillette Indonesia Reading 52

Week 13

TU 11/17 Consumer Rituals & Ritualized Consumption Readings 53-57

Absinthe Case

TH 11/19 Midterm Quiz # 2 (Covers Readings 31-57 and weeks' 8-13 class discussion &

handouts)

Week 14

TU 11/24 Field Project Consultation

TH 11/26 Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15

TU 12/01 Field Project Presentations

TH 12/03 Field Project Presentations

Field Projects Due Today

Key Dates & Deadlines:

TH 9/24	Field Project Proposal Due (ungraded)
TH 10/8	Midterm Quiz #1
TH 10/15	Focus Group Project Due
TH 10/29	Field Project Discussion Guide Due (ungraded)
TH 11/19	Midterm Quiz #2
TH 12/3	Field Projects Due
TH 12/10	Top 10 Take-Aways Assignment Due

Focus Group Project: My Marshall Experience Report & Presentation Due: TH 10/15

Project Overview

This project will provide students with hands-on experience with the most popular and pervasive qualitative consumer research tool: the focus group. The context for the exercise is students' experiences in the Marshall MBA Program.

Project Structure & Focus Group Administration

Project groups of 8-9 students each will be formed by the instructor. Students will need to determine in advance who will perform the following roles: focus group participant, moderator, and observer/note-taker (laptop recommended). On *Tuesday, September 29*, the focus groups will be conducted in the JKP ELC (3rd floor, rooms A-F), from 12:30-1:50 pm. *The instructor will (1) assign students to focus group teams and (2) prepare the discussion guide*. The focus group will be video-taped (in DVD format) so that students can review the discussion as a supplement to the observers' notes. On *Thursday, October12*, students will again meet in their JKP ELC rooms to begin discussing their key findings and drafting their focus group report.

Report Preparation

The *written report* should be single-spaced with Microsoft Word default margins, and clear section headings. The instructor will provide more details about the report's format and organization early in the term. The report should require approximately 8-10 pages.

Project Evaluation Criteria

The focus group report will be evaluated using these criteria:

- 1. Accuracy and persuasiveness of research conclusions
- 2. Comprehensiveness of analysis and insights
- 3. Use of verbatim data to illustrate key findings
- 4. Plausibility, specificity, and support for recommendations
- 5. Quality of report organization

Top Ten Lessons Every Marketer Should Know Assignment Due: TH 12/10

This integrative assignment involves preparing a list of the top ten lessons for marketers that you've taken way from this course. What are the top 10 things you believe marketing managers need to understand about consumers and their behaviors? You need to sort among and select from a fairly large pool of concepts, ideas, facts or learning that you believe rise to qualify for top 10 status. Just skating across class session "headlines" will not be sufficient. Each lesson needs to be a unique point that draws from your course experiences and has implications for marketers. You are not required to cover all class topics; there are far more than 10! Clearly and succinctly identify each "lesson," and briefly explain how it will help marketers do a better job. Your write-up should not exceed 3 single-spaced pages.

Field Research Project Due: TH 12/3

Project Overview

This project is designed to provide experience in working with both mainstream (individual or group interviewing), and cutting-edge (projective methods, observation) consumer research tools. Students will design a mix of these methods to investigate a consumer issue or puzzle of their selection, in teams comprised of between 5 to 7 members. Topics should be relatively broad in scope (e.g., why people smoke), and focus on basic issues of why, how, where, and when, rather than how many. Projects can focus on product categories, brands, media behavior, consumer segments and trends, or any interesting consumer marketing issue. The scope and sample size of the project make it similar to typical, *exploratory* consumer research projects that marketing departments regularly commission and field. Such projects typically cost between \$50-\$75,000 (or more), so students' abilities to design and conduct, rather than outsource such projects, constitute significant added value to current or prospective employers.

Project Research

There are two required project research components:

1. Interviewing Consumers

Students can opt to interview consumers either individually, using an IDI protocol, or in focus groups. For each project team member, 5 interviews are required. If individual interviewing is selected, each team member should conduct five in-depth interviews. Students who decide to use focus groups should subtract the number of participants from the team's interview quota. Student teams commonly rely on a mix of IDIs and focus groups. For example, a project team with 5 members that conducts a focus group with 5 participants needs to supplement this with 4 IDIs each to reach their interview quota of 25. Both focus groups and individual interviews should incorporate a battery of projective techniques. Specifically, interview guides should include at least four techniques, two from Menu A two from Menu B: Menu A: draw a picture, tell a story to a picture, imagine a dream, brand personification Menu B: cartoon test, word association, sentence completion, person or symbol matching, product or brand lists as consumer cues

2. Observing Consumers

This project component involves observing consumers in their natural habitats. Various approaches to observing consumers include pure observation, interactive observation, "house-calls" to people's homes, photographic/video recording, covert identity role-playing, and netnography. Each group member should spend a minimum of four hours in the field.

Written Report

The written report should include the following elements:

- 1. A statement of your focal consumer topic, and an explanation of your specific research purposes and sub-topics or "variables" that constitute your behavioral model (1-2 pages)
- 2. A summary of your research sample, and of your interviewing and observation procedures (1 p.)
- 3. An organized presentation of your main findings, illustrated with verbatim comments and observational data (7-10 pages)
- 4. A discussion of the key managerial implications of your findings (2 pages)
- 5. Appendices and exhibits, including a clean copy of your IDI or focus group interview guide

Evaluation Criteria

The field project will be evaluated using these criteria:

- 1. Topic and issue fit with research design
- 2. Data quality (depth, extensiveness)
- 3. Analytic soundness (logic and support for findings and interpretations)
- 4. Quality of report organization
- 5. Quality of in-class presentation

Marketing 525 Case Preparation Guidelines

Kao Corporation: Discussion Date TH 9/3

Case Overview

Proctor & Gamble was the pioneer in introducing disposable diapers into the Japanese marketplace. After initial sales and share success P&G's circumstances took a dramatic turn for the worse, as the local Japanese competitors entered the market, capitalizing on P&G's many missteps. This case illustrates the large number and variety of factors that affect marketing outcomes, many of which involve a complex web of consumer behavior issues.

Discussion Questions

- 1. After a short-lived initial success, P&G's Pampers disposable diapers rapidly loss market share to both domestic and foreign competition. Why did P&G's entry into the Japanese diaper market ultimately fail?
- 2. What things can P&G fix relatively easily, and which factors will be more difficult?
- 2. What marketing plan modifications does P&G need to make for the Japanese market?
- 3. How are Japanese consumers and marketing practices different from their counterparts in the U.S.?
- 4. How is diaper consumer behavior different in Japan vs. in the U.S.?
- 5. What factors tend to discourage Japanese women from switching from cloth to disposable diapers?
- 6. What can P&G do to reduce these consumption barriers, and what factors are beyond their control?

In-Class Analytic Work

We will spend much of our case analysis identifying the causes of P&G's downfall in the Japanese disposable diaper market. To sharpen your analytic focus, cluster the failure factors that you identify into 3-C (company, customer, competition) and 4-P (product, price, promotion and place) categories. As you conduct your analysis, consider which failure factors involve functional, economic, psychological, or cultural concerns.

Changing Light Bulbs (B) Philips Earth Light: Discussion Date TH 9/17 Case Overview

Compact fluorescent lights (CFL) are a lighting innovation that emerged in the early 1990s and achieved substantial, rapid success in the industrial/commercial market segment. The penetration of CFL bulbs in the residential market is still quite low, particularly in comparison to that in other developed economies such as Germany and Japan. Although the industry is quite optimistic about CFL's long-run sales prospects, there are reasons to question this analysis.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Why was CFL lighting so well-received in the industrial/commercial market?
- 2. Why have CFL bulbs failed to achieve substantial penetration of the residential lighting market? To structure your thinking about this, rely on the 5 product characteristics (reading #24) that can either accelerate or suppress the rate of new product adoption. The analysis should be comparative in contrasting CFL lighting with incandescent lighting. In other words, what are the relative advantages of CFL vs. incandescent, how compatible is CFL with consumers' lighting behavior and values, etc.
- 3. Assume that Philips decides to manufacture and sell 10 MM CFL bulbs next year. What insight does this give us into which and how many consumers from the innovator, early adopter, early majority, etc. segments (reading #24)? FYI, on average across various markets innovators constitute 2.5% of consumers, early adopters 13.5%, early majority 34%, late majority 34%, and laggards 16%. Finally, FYI, in 2010 there were 117 MM households in the US.
- 4. Assuming that deeper penetration of CFL bulbs into the residential lighting market segment will require increasing consumer marketing efforts and expenditures, what communication theme do you recommend for the campaign? What alternatives did you consider but ultimately rejected?

In-Class Analytic Work

Everett Rogers was a pioneer in developing conceptual models that explain why consumers adopt new products, or fail to do so. We will rely on his Diffusion of Innovation model to analyze why CFL bulbs have been a smash hit in commercial markets and a failure in residential markets, and will also extend Rogers' framework into other new product success and failure situations.

Zipcar: Influencing Consumer Behavior, Discussion Date TU 10/13 Case Overview

Zipcar is a car-sharing service that was started in Boston in 1999, and by 2004 had locations in 21 cities. Today Zipcar has 130 locations in 36 US states plus D.C.; 2 locations in Canada; and 5 locations in the UK. Zipcar positions itself as a low-cost and eco-friendly alternative to traditional car rental and ownership. It is targeted to individuals who live in dense urban environments and/or college towns who do not need a car on a regular basis. Zipcar's consumers pay an annual membership fee and then car rental fees for usage from just a few hours to several days. Zipcar is the largest car-sharing service in the U.S., and represents what some analysts characterize as "collaborative consumption." Collaborative consumption involves the sharing of products that have historically been privately owned, or the sharing of common spaces such as work space, gardens, parking spots, and in peer-to-peer travel (see Airbnb.com).

Discussion Questions

- 1. What are the advantages Zipcar offers consumers compared to traditional car rental services or purchasing a car?
- 2. In your opinion, how big do you think Zipcar can be? What consumer factors will variously encourage or limit its growth?
- 3. Zipcar originally charged a flat fee of \$20 for returning a car late. Today the late fee is \$50 per hour. What do you think that they learned about consumer behavior that caused them to make such a drastic change?
- 4. In what other product or service categories do you think "collaborative consumption" is likely to emerge?

In-Class Analytic Work

Historically, owning a car was a central component of the "American Dream." For many it still is, but Millennials seem to be buying into it less. Significant numbers no longer bother to obtain a driver's license when they are eligible. Even those who get a driver's license have diminished aspirations toward owning their own car. Zipcar has capitalized on this trend, and many observers have characterized the company as an example of the "sharing" or "collaborative" consumption. Class discussion will focus on Zipcar's situation, and also more broadly seek to unbundle what this new consumer "sharing" is all about.

Renova Toilet Paper, Avant-garde Marketing: Discussion Date TH 10/22 Case Overview

Conventional thinking is likely to consider toilet paper (TP) a relatively stagnant commodity product category dominated by multinational CPG giants and private labels, and one in which consumers' purchase decisions are dominated by pricing considerations and, to a degree, brand preferences and loyalty. Renova is a small toilet paper manufacturer located in Portugal that is trying to survive in a difficult competitive environment. Beyond mere survival it would like to remain independent and grow. Among the growth options that CEO Paulo da Silva is considering is launching a black toilet paper either as a limited PR burst or as a fully-fledged line extension.

Discussion Questions

- 1. What is the structure of the TP market? Who are the biggest competitors? What is the role of retailers? What trends in this category will shape its future?
- 2. How do consumers view the TP category? Is it a low, medium or high involvement category? How do people choose what category to buy? What is the role of brands, and why have private label TP products been so successful?

- 3. How will the proposed black TP escape the commoditization trend by introducing which new product benefits into the category? What consumer motivations do these benefits tap into?
- 4. Assume that Renova decides to launch a line of black TP, what strategic pillars (customer target(s) and competitive positioning do you recommend? What is the value proposition for both the end user and for the retailer? What product, pricing, promotion and distribution decisions do you recommend?

In-Class Analytic Work

Marketing managers need to know how to probe consumers about sensitive, even unpleasant topics. Imagine that you have been hired by Renova as a consultant to probe consumers' interest in "avantgarde," upscale, expensive black toilet paper. We collectively need to design a discussion guide that explores consumers':

- (1) Basic orientation toward toilet paper (interest in the category, brand awareness and preferences, purchase decision influences)
- (2) Toilet paper likes and dislikes, pain points, product improvement ideas.
- (3) Reactions to the \$7.00 per roll black toilet paper concept. Since initial reactions are likely to be dismissive and negative, we need to probe the responses, and also, see if we can discover special occasions in which our interviewees might give it a try.
- (4) Interviewee demographics (gender, age, ethnicity, occupation)

In class we will draft a discussion guide that uses open-ended, IDI-type questions. We will need to prepare about 15 questions to cover the above topics. Because toilet paper is a somewhat awkward, embarrassing product, at least 3 of the questions should rely on projective methods (see Reader #s 35-36).

Gillette Indonesia: Discussion Date TH 11/12

Case Overview

Gillette has a relatively long and successful history of selling razors and blades in Indonesia, and the potential for further sales penetration of the market is impressive. A key planning issue centers around which customer strategy to pursue. Even with its considerable resources and marketing expertise, Gillette cannot realistically exploit all attractive customer targets and marketing opportunities. Complicating the situation, in the seven years since the case was published (1996), the Indonesian economy has deteriorated significantly, with consequential negative impact on employment, consumer buying power, and socio-political stability. The case is designed to teach students to craft marketing strategies that incorporate a strong customer orientation, with explicit customer behavior objectives; realistic sales and financial projections; and sensitivity to Gillette's short and long term marketing objectives in Indonesia.

Discussion Questions

- 1. How is Gillette doing in Indonesia, and why?
- 2. To what extent has Gillette enjoyed first mover advantages in Indonesia?
- 3. What factors determine Indonesian consumer demand for razor blades?
- 4. Which of these factors can Gillette influence, and which are beyond its control?
- 5. How can Gillette accelerate the development of the razor blade market in Indonesia?

In-Class Analytic Work

Imagine that you are consulting Gillette on selecting 1 of the 4 Indonesian growth strategies they are considering. Which of the following strategies do you recommend that Gillette pursue in 1999, and what percent of the consumers in the target of your strategy do you estimate will respond positively?

Get ____% of the urban men who don't shave to *start shaving*.
 Get ____% of urban men who shave with knives to *switch to store-bought blades*.
 Get ____% of current blade shavers to *increase their shaving frequency* by _____shaves per month.
 Get ____% of current blade shavers to *replace their blades* every shaves.

We need to consider the economic/financial aspects of each strategy, but also the consumer opportunities and barriers that are associated with each.

Fall 2015 Dr. Dennis Rook

Field Project Proposal Due: TH 9/24

Address the following 3 issues, using no more than 1 typewritten page. Remember, it's only a proposal, and significant details will emerge and evolve over time. On the other hand, your proposal should identify the following (one submission per project team):

1. Core Consumer Question(s)/Issue(s)

Briefly summarize and explain the issue that you'd like to investigate. First, frame your issue or topic in terms of one overall "umbrella" question (e.g., why do consumers eat/not eat sushi?). Then break the big question down into key sub-questions.

2. Behavioral Model

Visually identify the scope of your field project by constructing a model that identifies the larger domain of your research, and which aspects you will investigate. This can be similar to the automobile model we constructed in class. Or, if you are constructing a consumer typology of key segments within a particular product or service space, list the specific consumer characteristics that you will identify. The purpose of the "model," in whichever form you chose to construct it is to provide specificity, focus and boundaries on your project.

3. Proposed Research Design

What type of interviewing will you use: individual (IDIs) or focus groups? What type of field observations do you think you will collect, and where will you gather them?

Project Team Members

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2		
3		
4		
5		
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7.		