

An anthropological view of consumer behaviour

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Anthropology is the study of human race over time. Consumer Behaviour is an important branch of marketing which studies how consumers take decisions on their purchases – whether on impulse or after considerable reasoning and thought processes. This branch of marketing studies evolution of the human mind and the way in which it has impacted the purchase behaviour. It draws heavily from social sciences including psychology, political science and many other areas. This paper looks at the history of the human race and how different events in history have shaped various consumption patterns across the world. First, development of the exchange principle took place before the advent of the modern society. This paper also looks at the development of the concept of value in society and what has been the impact of religion on consumption. Colonialism and industrial revolution brought in further changes with the aggravation of the differences between the haves and the have-nots. We discuss modern theories of consumption with cultural impact and imperialism playing a major role. Then we studied (from literature) the society and culture of various tribes – which gives us an understanding of basic human consumption patterns. Then we go on to the modern exchange system with trade becoming a major influence on consumption. We then discuss the changing consumption basket and the rise of materialism in emerging markets, primarily China and India. This led to the emergence of consumerism and various novel consumer apparatus employed in this process.

Biography

Rahul Gupta Choudhury is a chemical engineer from NIT, Durgapur and a post-graduate in Management from Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow. He was a Fulbright scholar to Carnegie Mellon University, USA. He has worked in the industry for fifteen years – in very reputed organizations and in very responsible and senior positions. Since the last seven years, he is in academics and has been a Professor in some of the best management institutes in the country. He has published six papers in reputed journals and has been a reviewer of a major journal in India.

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