Cross-Cultural Variations in Consumer Behavior
Cross-Cultural Variations in Consumer Behavior

- Language
- Demographics
- Values
- Nonverbal communications

Consumer behavior

Marketing strategy
Cultural Factors Affect Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy

- Culture is the complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals and any other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society.

- Products are adapted to the local culture and assume meaning and uses that greatly enrich the culture and the lives of its members.

  - U.S. vs Japan
    - Contract, Diaper
The Concept of Culture

- The boundaries that culture sets on behavior are called norms, which are simply rules that specify or prohibit certain behaviors in specific situations.
- Norms are derived from culture values, or widely held beliefs that affirm what is desirable. Violation of cultural norms results in sanctions, or penalties ranging from mild social disapproval to banishment from the group.
The Concept of Culture

- **Cultural values**
- **Norms**
  - Specify ranges of appropriate behavior
- **Sanctions**
  - Penalties for violating norms
- **Consumption patterns**
The Concept of Culture

Several aspects of culture require elaboration:

- First, culture is a comprehensive concept.
  - While culture does not determine the nature of frequency of biological drives such as hunger, it does influence when and how these drives will be gratified.

- Second, culture is acquired.

- Third, in most industrial societies, culture supplies boundaries within most individuals think and act.

- Finally, the nature of culture influences is such we are seldom aware of them.
Variations in Cultural Values

- **Other-oriented values**
  - Other-oriented values reflect a society’s view of the appropriate relationships between individuals and groups within that society.

- **Environment-oriented values**
  - Environment-oriented values prescribe a society’s relationships with its economic, technical, and physical environment.

- **Self-oriented values**
  - Self-oriented values reflect the objectives and approaches to life that individual members of society find desirable.
Guanxi

Chinese relationships are complex and are described under the concept of guanxi. The main characteristics are:

- The notion of a continuing reciprocal relationship over an indefinite period of time
- It extends beyond the relationship between two parties to include other parties within the social network (it can be transferred)
- The relationship network is built among individuals not organizations
- Relationships with a senior will extend to his subordinates but not vice versa
- The social relationship is prior to and a prerequisite to the business relationship
Global Cultures

- Mass media and the Internet have had an impact of uniformity among teens around the world.
- They tend to watch many of the same shows, see the same movies and videos, listen to the same music, and they tend to dress alike.
Global Cultures
Global Demographics

- Demographics describe a population in terms of its size, structure, and distribution.
  - A critical aspect of demographics for marketers is *income*—specifically the *distribution of income*.
  - One country with a relatively low average income can have a sizable middle-income segment, while another country with the same average income may have most of the wealth in the hands of a few individuals.
Changes in Cultural Values

- Sensual Gratification/Abstinence
  - Sex
- Postponed/Immediate Gratification
  - Credit card
- Hard work/Leisure
  - Backward-bending labor supply curve
- Active/Passive
  - Television viewing vs cooking, gardening
- Individual/Collective
  - Superman
Individual / Collective
Marketing Strategy and Values

- Green Marketing
  - Developing products whose production, use, or disposal is less harmful to the environment than the traditional versions of the product.
  - Developing products that have a positive impact on the environment.
  - Trying the purchase of a product to an environment organization or event.
- Marketing to Gay and Lesbian Consumers
- Cause-Related Marketing
Marketing Strategy and Values
Gender-Based Marketing

- **Traditional housewife**
  - Generally married, prefers to stay at home.

- **Trapped housewife**
  - Generally married, would prefer to work, but stays at home due to young children, lack of outside opportunities, or family pressure.

- **Trapped working woman**
  - Marries or single, would prefer to stay at home, but works for economic necessity or social pressure.

- **Career working woman**
  - Married or single, prefers to work.
Gender-Based Marketing

- Males and females respond differently to different types of marketing appeals.
- Females respond more favorably to a “help-others” type appeal for a charity.
- Males respond best to a “self-help” appeal.