Consumer Behavior

Attitude Formation and Change:
High Consumer Effort
Part 1
Attitudes

- What are Attitudes?
- In other words, attitudes are overall evaluations that express how much we like or dislike an object or an action.
- Attitudes are learned, and they tend to persist over time.
- As indicated in previous lecture, schemas represent an overall set of associations that are linked to a concept.
Our attitudes reflect the overall evaluation of how much we like the concept based on the set of associations linked to it.

Similarly, just as we have schemas for brands, products, ads, people, activities, and countries, we also have attitudes toward brands, product categories, ads, people, countries, types of stores, universities etc.
Importance of Attitudes

- They guide our thoughts (the cognitive function)
- Influence our feelings (the affective function), and
- Affect our behavior (the connative function).
Importance of Attitudes

Based on the foregoing, we might decide what ads to read, who we will talk to, how we will react to somebody (e.g. salesperson, professor, person from another country, race), where to shop, where to go on vacations/holidays and which political party to belong to etc. etc.
Characteristics of Attitudes

- **Favorability**: This is how much we like or dislike an attitude object.

- **Attitude accessibility**: This is an attitude that can be easily and readily retrieved from memory (e.g. recalling a movie you watched last night or an event such as your first date, first trip to overseas, your first car etc. etc.).
Characteristics of Attitudes

- **Attitude Confidence or Strength**: These are attitudes that are very strong and we have a great deal of confidence in it or we don’t have confidence in it.

- **Persistence or Endurance**: Some attitudes, particularly the strong ones might last for a long time, and vice versa.
Characteristics of Attitudes

- **Resistance**: This is the case of how easy to change our attitudes (when we are not brand loyal or do not know much about the offering).
Forming and Changing Attitudes

For the marketer, the important issue is that an understanding of how attitudes are formed ensures that better tactics/strategies are employed to create or affect consumers’ attitudes toward a new offering or novel ideas (e.g. niche offering).
Cognitive (thinking) Bases of Attitudes when Consumer Effort is High:

A number of theories have been proposed to explain the cognitive bases of attitudes when consumers are likely to devote a lot of effort to processing information and making decisions. These are:

(a) The cognitive response model and (b) The Expectancy-Value Model.
The Cognitive Response Model

- According to Hoyer and MacInnis (1997), the basic idea behind the cognitive response model is that consumers’ reactions to the message, does affect their attitudes.

- Cognitive response are, simply, the thoughts that we have when we are exposed to a communication (they can be recognitions, elaborations, associations, images or ideas). E.G. An ad for a Vacation in Hawaii may attract newly weds.
The Cognitive Response Model

- Researchers have developed three categories to describe the types of cognitive responses consumers have to marketing communications (see for example, Brucks, M. Armstrong, G. and Goldberg, M.C., 1988, Quoted in Hoyer and MacInnis, 1997, 118).

The Cognitive Response Model

- **Counterarguments (CAs):** These are thoughts that express disagreement with the message (e.g. goodness!, it will never work, he’s been paid to do this etc. etc.).

- **Support arguments (SAs):** These are thoughts that express agreement with the message (e.g. this sounds great, I need something like this).
The Cognitive Response Model

- **Source derogations (SDs):** These are thoughts that discount or attack the source of the message (e.g. the guy is lying, I don’t believe this).

- According to the cognitive response model, these responses will affect consumers’ attitudes. In other words, CAs and SDs will result in a less favorable initial attitude or resistance to change.
The Expectancy-Value Model

- This is applied to explain how attitudes form and change.
- According to this model, attitudes are based on (a) beliefs, or knowledge consumers have about an object or action and (b) their evaluation of these particular beliefs (e.g. how good or bad the object/action is – thus we might like Volvo because of its durability and reliance?).
The Theory of Reasoned Action

- The theory of reasoned action (TORA) has been successfully used in understanding attitudes.
- The model provides an expanded picture of how, when, and why attitudes predict behavior.
The Theory of Reasoned Action

- The theory of reasoned action (TORA) model incorporates the principle of attitude specificity (i.e., the more specific the attitude is to the behavior of interest, the more likely the attitude will be related to the behavior). In general terms, marketers must therefore be aware of consumer actions as an outcome from the attitudes toward an offering.
The theory of reasoned action (TORA) model includes not only consumers’ attitudes and how they are formed or changed but also how other people we interact with influence our behavior.
The Theory of Reasoned Action

- In some situations, normative (i.e., what ought to be) influences from others can play a powerful role in how we behave.

- For example, you may have a negative attitude toward fast food but you eat there anyway because of peer pressure.
The Components of TORA Model

- The components of the TORA model are: (a) behavior, (b) behavioral intentions, (c) attitude toward the act and (d) the subjective norms, i.e., peer pressure.

- The basic proposition of the model is that behavior is a function of the person’s attitude toward the act and the subjective norms that operate in the situation.
The Components of TORA Model

- The model further specifies that Act is determined by the consumer’s beliefs about the consequences of engaging in the behavior and the consumers’ evaluation of these consequences.

- Subjective norms are determined by the consumer’s normative beliefs (i.e., what the consumer thinks someone wants him/her to do) and the consumer’s motivation to comply.
The Marketing Implications about TORA Model

- The TORA model helps marketers understand why consumers/customers like or dislike an offering and whether they want to engage in or resist performing a behavior.
- It can help in perceiving the strength of a brand, its weakness and other target markets for the offering.
Devising Strategies for Attitude Change

1. Changing Beliefs (positive or lessen bad) about the offering. Ads such as “…it’s good for your body, it reaches the parts that other beers cannot reach…”.

2. Changing Evaluations (make it more positive or less negative). For example although one may not like a vacation in Libya, marketers might try to convince people about the life experiences etc. etc.) to be gained.
Devising Strategies for Attitude Change

3. Adding a new Belief. Example Marketers might include in the ad for a vacation to Libya that one will make new friends and learn of a different culture.

4. Targeting Normative Beliefs. The model provides information about how normative beliefs influence people. The latter could be capitalized on.