

Consumer Behavior Project

SUBMITTED BY: Leya Matthew

SUBJECT(S): Marketing

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

According to Hawkins and Mothersbaugh (2007), all marketing decisions are based on assumptions and knowledge of consumer behavior. Understanding the motivations and behaviors of the consumers is a vital aspect of any marketing plan or strategy. In this concluding lesson, students build on concepts from previous lessons to plan, execute and reflect on a project on consumer behavior. For this project, they are asked to prepare and survey their peers in the class for their perceptions and behaviors around a particular product. This is then compared to an analysis of the marketing strategies of this product to arrive at some general observations.

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Marketing, I. Foundations of Marketing
- Marketing, II. Consumers and Their Behavior

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- [“Purchase Power: How to Make Smart Consumer Choices”](#)
- [“Economic Partnership: Coffee Beans, Moroccan Rugs and the Future of Fair Trade”](#)

Common Core Standard(s):

1. CCR Standard for Reading: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and make logical inferences from it.
2. CCR Standards for Listening: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on each other's ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
3. CCR Standards for Speaking: Present information, findings and supporting evidence in such a way that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, and the organization, development and style are appropriate to the task, purpose and audience.

Objectives/Purposes: Students will analyze the motivations and behaviors of their peers regarding a particular product and compare this analysis with the marketing strategy of the product/brand.

Knowledge@Wharton Articles: The teacher uses articles depending on the product or brand the students choose to analyze in this project. For example, if a group wants to analyze McDonalds for their understanding of consumer behavior, and the consumer behavior of their peers, you could use the Knowledge@Wharton article: "[Food Fight: Obesity Raises Difficult Marketing Questions.](#)"

Activity:

Students are briefed about the project work (5 mins)

Your task is to prepare and implement a survey in class around the following two questions:

- I. What is the consumer behavior of my peers regarding a particular product?
- II. How far is this understanding reflected in the marketing strategies of the company/brand that offers this product?

Ideally, you should choose a product that is popular with your peer group. You may choose to focus on any of the three aspects of consumer behavior discussed in previous lessons. You are expected to work in pairs and survey at least five students present in class today. You will need to organize and delegate your work in order to complete it within the stipulated time.

The basic concepts that we have discussed in previous lessons are recapitulated here:

Factors affecting consumer behavior

- Economic
- Social
- Cultural
- Demographic
- Personal/Psychological
- Marketing (product value, price, place of availability, and promotions including advertising, public relations, sponsorship, etc.)

The Buying Process

- Need Recognition
- Information Search
- Evaluation
- Purchase
- Post-Purchase Anxiety

Customer Segmentation based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- Physiological Needs
- Safety Needs
- Belonging Needs
- Esteem Needs
- Self-Actualization Needs

Preparation (10 mins)

1. Choose any one aspect of consumer behavior you want to focus on.
2. Decide on a product/service.
3. Once the group decides on a product or service, the teacher and a member of the group identify articles from the Knowledge@Wharton or Wharton Global Youth Program sites that can be useful resources.
4. Prepare the survey questions.

5. Analyze the marketing strategy of the company/brand in relation to your question and expected answers.

Hypothesize on your generalizations (e.g. A majority of students in my class purchase BigMac because it is the closest, cheapest and most filling meal available. Their perception of the Big Mac is based on these promotional strategies: ...)

Sample survey questions:

I eat out:

Every day

Twice a week

Once a week

Rarely

My options when I eat out, in order of how often I frequent them, are:

1.

2.

3.

4.

I frequent option 1. because of

1. Its pricing

2. It is close by and therefore convenient

3. It is a fast food store

4. I like the food offered

5. Any other

Once you conduct the survey, analyze the answers for the questions you have set out to answer. For the sample questions this could be: a) What percentage of my class frequent McDonald's, and why? b) How has McDonalds designed every aspect of the marketing mix in a response to their understanding of consumer behavior?

(For example, the McDonald's restaurant is very close to my school and is more convenient than any other option.)

- Execution (*10 mins*)

Execute your surveys.

- Analysis (*10 mins*)

Analyze your information, and synthesize to validate or nullify your hypothesis, or to generate new generalizations. For example, 50% of the students surveyed purchase the Big Mac at least once a week. Of these, all report that the place of availability was the most significant factor that influenced their decision to buy the Big Mac. (In which case you have to consider the other options available in the same locality and explain why these are not convenient alternatives.)

- Presentation and Feedback (*10 mins*)

Present the most significant points from your analysis and conclusion. Submit the entire analysis and conclusion.

- Wrap-up

Tying It All Together: In this in-class project, students plan and execute an empirical investigation of the consumer behavior of their peers and match this data with their analysis of the marketing strategies of that product/brand.

Practice Outside of the Classroom: This project can be conducted more elaborately as a take-home assignment. The survey can be prepared over several days, and even piloted before it is presented to the entire class. This lesson can also be integrated with math lessons in statistics.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: Depending on the grade level, this project needs to be supported with sufficient resources. The teacher should aid the students as they prepare and execute their survey. Additionally, detailed feedback should be provided for the submissions.

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