

**Review of “Consumer Behaviour – A Practical Orientation”**

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R. K. Ghai and Gurpartap Singh  
Consumer Behaviour – A Practical Orientation  
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Do we need another book on Consumer Behaviour? What is the *raison d'être* for this book? In a nut shell, anyone looking for a reference text on concepts of Consumer Behaviour can use this book. The cover of this first edition contains pictures of consumers in the Indian context. Perhaps this is the key feature of this book. The authors in their preface mention that the key features of the book are coverage of relevant topics according to the syllabi followed in India, emphasis on the concepts with suitable and relevant illustrations, and inclusion of cases to further the understanding of the concepts.

The book has been divided into twelve chapters, namely, Introduction to Consumer Behaviour, Market Segmentation, Motivation, Personality, Perception, Learning Attitude, Persuasive Communication, Social Class and Consumer Behaviour, Culture and Subculture – Major Focus on Indian Perspective, Consumer Protection, and Consumer Research and Audit. The book presents the material in a simple and lucid manner.

Philip Kotler and Kevin Lane Keller have stated that consumer buying behaviour is studied as a part of the subject of marketing and its main objective is to learn the way the individuals, groups or organizations choose, buy, use and dispose of the goods and the factors such as their previous experience, taste, price and branding on which the consumers base their purchasing decisions. A glance at the table of contents manifests the claim of the coverage of the topics in the context of what Kotler and Keller state. However, the reviewer is of the opinion that the flow of the text needs to be relooked at. For instance, in the first chapter itself, the authors have included the consumer decision making models given by Jagdish Sheth, *et al.* These models are quantitative approach to consumer decision making and should be a part of the Consumer Research section.

First of the four areas of improvement is that the chapters appear to be ‘floating islands’ without being connected with each other. This can be amended by putting them under logical sections that can also improve the flow of the book. In its current shape, it appears to be a vehicle to explain all the concepts of Consumer Behaviour without explaining to the reader the significance of each concept and its relevance with the previous or the subsequent concept. For instance, topics like motivation, perception, attitude, etc. are the factors that affect behaviour of individual consumers and thus can be put under the same section heading.

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Second improvement that authors can consider are in-text citations for both conceptual text and images used in the book. Although the references are mentioned at the end, the book shall get better credibility if these references also appear as citations in the text. Also, in the present digital age it would be safer if the sources of images used as illustrations are also mentioned to avoid copyright issues. This is necessary despite the opinion of the authors that these images are available in public domain.

The third area of improvement being suggested is in orientation of the book. Since it says that it is a practical approach to consumer behaviour, the same would be manifested better if the authors could include more examples of the way Indian businesses understand and implement the concepts of consumer behaviour, viz. the way Indian markets are segmented to begin with. Although the basic approach to segmentation is the same as mentioned in most books, but the outcome of the implementation is unique to Indian business milieu.

The fourth suggestion is to include a subject index at the back of the book. That will make the book reader friendlier.

The authors have made an effort to present a book on the subject area that is very vast and deep. It is highly encouraging that they have decided to render Indian-ness to the subject, which is so far missing in whatever available text there is in the market. It certainly is a commendable first attempt by them that can be improved further to become a benchmark for texts on Consumer Behaviour.