

# Consumer Communication Deployment Tactics: An Integrated Framework for Lifestyle Brands and Retailers in India (CCF-LS)

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**Subject Area:** Business Management.

**Type of the Paper:** Research Paper.

**Type of Review:** Peer Reviewed as per [C|O|P|E|](#) guidance.

**Indexed In:** OpenAIRE.

**DOI:** <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3971552>.

**Google Scholar Citation:** [IJAEML](#).

## How to Cite this Paper:

Ganesha, H. R., Aithal, P. S. (2020). Consumer Communication Deployment Tactics: An Integrated Framework for Lifestyle Brands and Retailers in India (CCF-LS). *International Journal of Applied Engineering and Management Letters (IJAEML)*, 4(2), 1-21.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3971552>.

## International Journal of Applied Engineering and Management Letters (IJAEML)

A Refereed International Journal of Srinivas University, India.

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### ABSTRACT

Though consumer communication and orientation is a collective responsibility of all the departments/functions across the organization, a majority of lifestyle brands and retailers in India believe that the consumer communication is the deliverable of a single department/function that is widely and erroneously tagged as Marketing Department. This belief is distracting them from understanding the long-term positive impact on consumer patronage and they continue to use high-cost advertisements as one of the major tactics for consumer communication. A single theory, model and framework of consumer behavior from the existing literature available across perspectives, paradigms, and areas of study (Economics, Behavioral Economics, Psychology, Social Psychology, Anthropology, Marketing and so on) is not entirely applicable that could be adopted to suit lifestyle brands/retailers in India and designing a framework without empirical pieces of evidence is also not appropriate. In this study, (i) we have studied over 28 consumer behavior theories, models and frameworks; (ii) analyzed 24 months' of actual data of a few select organized lifestyle brands and retailers in India; (iii) borrowed experimental findings and insights from previous studies relevant in this context, to identify 50 factors influencing the outcomes of each stage of the consumer decision-making process and selected a few of them that have indicated the high scope of influencing capability by a lifestyle brand/retailer to design an economical and effective framework that is useful in designing consumer communication deployment tactics by a lifestyle brand or retailer in India. The framework is named as CCF-LS.

**Keywords:** Indian Retail, Lifestyle Consumer, Indian Consumer Behavior, Retail Consumer, Consumer Decision Making, Consumer Buying/Purchase Decision, Consumer Theory, Consumer Acquisition, Consumer Engagement, Consumer Retention, Consumer Orientation, Consumer Communication Tactics, Communication Tools, CCF-LS.

### 1. INTRODUCTION :

Over and above the two main research perspectives such as 'positivism' (realist/objective) and 'interpretivism' (subjective), there are various other perspectives each researcher uses in understanding a phenomenon. Imagine a consumer who shops in a retail shop that carries only organic clothing. An economist would explain this behavior by suggesting that this consumer has enough disposable income to pay the higher price. A sociologist would say that the consumer belongs to a social group that prefers organic clothing. A psychological point of view would describe this consumer as seeking status and strengthening his/her identity through this purchase. A biologist would suggest that this consumer needs the skin-friendly properties the organic clothing carry. A political perspective would regard the purchase as a sign of the consumer expressing his/her political beliefs. An anthropologist would account for this behavior as an expression of the fact that this consumer lives in a culture that perceives a difference between conventional and organic clothing. 'This list of examples could continue ad infinitum. The point

would be obvious, however: from each given point of view (or paradigm) we chose to focus on different aspects of the phenomenon observed. Yet, as the example illustrates, it would seem sensible to apply several perspectives to explain consumer behavior, because any of the above perspectives makes perfect sense. And indeed, we see more and more studies subscribing to methodological pluralism (not to be confused with paradigmatic pluralism!). This, however, necessitates transparency and explanation of assumptions. This constant presentation of theories and methods, though, does not in itself achieve the classic aim of social sciences, namely, to strive for certain knowledge about the world and about the way society functions. Perspectivism is the solution to this challenge. Different perspectives provide knowledge about precisely that part of a phenomenon that is enlightened by that perspective. Hence, the more perspectives that are involved, the more complete will be our knowledge about a phenomenon. In an abstract logical sense, this means that by involving all perspectives of a phenomenon this leads to complete and final knowledge about that phenomenon, if, we ensure that while achieving this does not lead to paradigm incommensurability' [1]. 'As a thought experiment, this is nice, but as practical research it is impossible. The more modest aim would then be to acquire more usable knowledge by mixing methods within a given general paradigm, and when doing so one could follow one of the basic research mottos: Research is different from common sense because it is conducted to achieve specific goals, is grounded in theory, relies on specific methods, and is done systematically' [2].

Each individual wants to have a unique identity that could be based on his/her, a) background such as nationality, ethnicity, culture, subculture, social class, affiliation, environment, etc; b) experiences and c) choices. Lifestyle brands attempt to evoke emotional connections between consumers and they need to have a unique identity and most importantly lifestyle brands are increasingly becoming one of the key components of consumer's self-expression [3]. To ensure the scope of this study is focussed, we define lifestyle retailers as the ones, who attempt to offer a complete solution for a specific or wider lifestyle needs of consumers through their products such as Apparel, Footwear, Accessories, and Lifestyle Essentials with an ultimate goal of their products being key contributors of an implicit or explicit statement of consumers personality and identity. Lifestyle retail market size in India is expected to reach 130 billion USD by the year 2023 which is a 77 percent growth when compared to the year 2013 [4]. Based on India's 2011 census, the United Nation's (UN) Department of Statistics and Program Implementation estimates the Indian population to reach close to 1.38 billion by the year 2020 [5]. It is estimated that more than 300 Global lifestyle brands have plans to open their stores in India this year [6]. Organized retailing in India is expected to have approximately 25 percent of the market share by the year 2021 which was at 12 percent in the year 2017 [7]. In addition to this humongous population, exponential growth in several working women, double-income families, middle-class consumer segment, increasing disposable income, rapid adoption of fashion, urbanization, the overall size of Indian retail industry, more and more unorganized retailers becoming organized, the emergence of modern retailing formats and a most importantly enormous increase in internet penetration/usage, simply caution existing and upcoming lifestyle retailers in India to revisit their existing consumer communication deployment tactics frameworks.

Owing to the sheer market size and potential, India has attracted many Global lifestyle brands who have successfully become lifestyle retailers too. Few Global retailers have attempted to offer their product assortment as being an SIS at select large MBO stores, few have offered their product assortment through having EBOs, few have shown their presence only in online stores and few have licensed their brands to third parties or entered into a Joint Venture to offer their products in Indian retail market. To name a few Decathlon, Lifestyle, Max, Levi's, Zara, United Colors of Benetton, Marks & Spenser, H&M, Mother Care, Carter's, Puma, Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Armani Exchange, Diesel, Gas, Gap, The Children's Place, Quiksilver, Superdry, Kappa, Bossini, Calvin Klein, Hanes, Tommy Hilfiger, Ed Hardy, Izod, Nautica, Arrow, U.S. Polo Assn, Jack & Jones, Vero Moda, Tumi, Lee, Hero, Maverick, Wrangler, Fila, and Jockey. India also is a home for a vast number of lifestyle brands originated from India. One can list more than 5000 lifestyle brands in India [8], of which one could list only a few which can be tagged as well-known/familiar/reputed Indian lifestyle brands cum retailers such as, Biba, Manyavar, Soch, Gini & Jony, Blackberrys, Louis Phillipe, Peter England, Provogue, Monte Carlo, Mufti, W for Women, Oxemberg, Indian Terrain, Global Desi, Parx, S Kumar's, Vimal, Mini Klub, Aurelia, Sparx, Campus, Go Colors, Enamour, HiDesign, Lino Perros, Idee, Spykar, Killer Jeans, Flying Machine, Da Milano, Park Avenue, Ethnix, ColorPlus, Lux Cozy, WildCraft, 612 League, WLS, John Players, Fastrack, 109 F, Proline,

Image, Jealous 21, Liberty, Paragon and few more. Few of these are successful in becoming organized lifestyle retailers catering to specific product categories and specific consumer groups. Few companies have been able to establish themselves as purely organized lifestyle retailers who cater to multi-category, multi-brand, multi-location, and multi-consumer groups and one can list all of them as there are only a few National level retailers such as a) Westside, b) Shoppers Stop, c) Central, d) FBB e) First Cry, f) Toons, g) Wildcraft, h) Indian Terrain, i) Pantaloons, j) Brand Factory and few Regional level retailers such as, a) Kapsons, b) Ritu Wears Big Life, c) Stanmax, d) Bindals, e) Sohum Shoppe, f) City Life, g) Chunmun, h) Jade Blue, i) Neeru's, j) Mebaz, k) V-Mart, l) The Chennai Silks, m) Saravana Stores, n) M&M, o) Sirs & Hers, p) Juelle, q) G3 Fashions, r) Pothy's, s) RMKV, t) Naidu Hall, u) Chandana Brothers, v) Nalli and w) Kalyan Silks. Only a few names have appeared in the organized lifestyle retailers list which is possibly indicating that despite humongous population and the retail market size in India, a majority of Indian lifestyle brands and retailers have failed to establish themselves as organized lifestyle retailers and we would attribute a majority of this failure to their lack of understanding consumer behavior patterns. Dominantly a majority of lifestyle retailers in India offer just one of the groups such as a) product-specific; b) gender-specific; c) need-specific; d) fashion-specific; e) function-specific; f) category-specific; g) life stage-specific; h) occasion-specific, and very few cater to multiple products offering to multiple consumer groups.

## 2. THE NEED FOR THIS STUDY :

The prevailing assumption is that majority of lifestyle brands and retailers in India are bewildered with various theories, perspectives, and paradigms available in the consumer behavior knowledge domain and hence, they are not able to design appropriate customer acquisition, engagement, and retention models. There is a wide gap in the understanding of interlinkage between theories, perspectives, and paradigms available in the consumer behavior knowledge domain. This gap can be reduced if we can demonstrate the correlation amongst various theories, perspectives and paradigms available in the existing consumer behavior knowledge domain and transpire the research outcomes into a cutting edge integrated framework which would then be useful for lifestyle brands and retailers in India to design appropriate customer acquisition, engagement, and retention models using rational deployment tactics for consumer communication that plays a major role in the entire journey of a consumer's decision-making. The need for this research indeed was originated due to various gaps found in theoretical, descriptive, empirical literature available in the consumer behavior domain such as a) a majority of studies have focussed on specific consumer behavior attributes and predominantly skewed toward psychological and sociological attributes; b) a majority of studies have focussed on retailing in general and not specific to lifestyle retailing; c) absence of an integrated consumer behavior model for lifestyle brands and retailers in the Indian context; d) a majority of lifestyle retailers in India follow and practice consumer behavior models incorporated by consumer goods and other generalist brands and retailers, and, most importantly e) lifestyle brands and retailers in India are unable to gauge and estimate their consumers' behavior. The present study proposes to understand lifestyle products consumer's behavior across various theories, perspectives, and paradigms to determine an appropriate consumer communication deployment tactics framework for Indian lifestyle brands and retailers.

## 3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY :

**Secondary Research:** Intense and in-depth analysis of data available in the public domain was carried to collect data relating to various aspects of lifestyle retailing in India through company websites, company annual financial reports, Government database, trade, and business journals. Research works relating to Indian lifestyle retailing were surveyed extensively to collect insights, recommendations, and frameworks to understand lifestyle products consumer's behavior patterns in addition to an extensive review of consumer behavior theories across different perspectives, and paradigms.

**Qualitative Primary Research:** Series of open-ended direct interviews were conducted with employees selected through convenience sampling representing different departments/functions from organized lifestyle brands and retailers in the study viz., Human Resource Development, Training and Development, Strategy, Category, Marketing and Communication, Customer Relationship, Warehousing, Finance, Information Technology, Sales, Stores Operation along with Store Sales Personnel to understand their understanding of consumer behavior.

**Quantitative Primary Research:** In the first stage, few organized lifestyle brands and retailers in India were selected who can represent, a) different product categories such as fashion, functional, life-stage specific, product-specific, gender-specific, and need specific products; b) offering single-product category and multiple-product categories; c) serving different consumer target groups at low, mid-low, mid, mid-high, high, and premium price positioning; d) having single and multiple stores; e) offering single brand and multiple brands; f) having presence across Tier-1, Tier-2, and Tier-3 cities; g) having stores across the high street, malls, institutions, and neighborhoods and h) new and established retail store image. In the second stage, 24 months' actual data was collected from these select organized lifestyle brands and retailers to map qualitative findings with the quantitative results. The third stage was to evaluate the level of scope available for a lifestyle brand/retailer to influence the influencers of the outcomes in each of the stages of consumer decision-making in addition to borrowing insights from our previous experimental and empirical studies relevant to the context of this study. The last stage was to design a comprehensive and integrated framework to indicate the rational deployment tactics of consumer communication that would enable organized lifestyle brands and retailers in India to frame strategies concerning consumer acquisition, engagement, and retention through consumer communication.

#### 4. REVIEW OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR THEORIES:

We have found many definitions of a consumer across various domains such as economics, psychology, marketing, anthropology, and sociology. Among all of them, we chose Kardes, Frank R. et. al definition as the same was more comprehensive and that is acceptable for researchers across all the perspectives, domains, and paradigms. Consumer behavior entails all the activities associated with a) the 'purchase' that includes purchase of products or services; acquisition method of products and services; and all the activities leading to a final purchase decision including information search, evaluation of products and services, and payment methods including the buying experience; b) the 'use' that includes use or consumption activities concerning the who, where, when and how of consumption and the overall usage experience, including the symbolic associations and the way these products are distributed within families; and c) 'disposal' of products and services that includes the way consumers dispose of products and packaging, in addition to the consumer's a) 'emotional/affective' responses that refers to consumer's moods or feelings; b) 'mental/cognitive' responses consumer's thought processes; and c) 'behavioral/conative' responses that refers to consumer's observable responses to purchase and disposal of products or services that precede or follow all the activities viz., purchase, use and disposal. The word consumer can refer to any individual and organizational consumers, and more specifically this consumer is an end-user, and not necessarily a purchaser [9].

A consumer's behavior varies owing to many factors that influence them behaviorally, cognitively, and conatively. Consumer behaviour models have been developed to substantiate these various factors that influence consumer behavior and their decision-making process. Several theoretical and pragmatic studies have been sought to determine consumer behavior. We have identified a few of them in brief in this section.

*Economic Model:* According to the economic model of consumer behavior, consumers tend to maximize the utility from products based on the law of diminishing marginal utility. The desire of consumers to obtain maximum gains by spending a minimum number of acts is the basis for the derivation of this model. The model assumes that there is a close similarity between the behavior of consumers and that a homogenous purchase pattern is exhibited in the market. The model is based on a) income effect which indicates that when a person earns more income, he/she will have more money to spend and so he/she will purchase more; b) substitution effect which indicates that if a substitute product is available at a lesser price, then the product in question will be less preferred or less utilized by consumers; and c) price effect suggests that when the price of a product is less, consumers tend to purchase more quantity of that product. Utility theory of demand that deals with consumer satisfaction with the acquisition of a product, introduced by British economist William Stanley Jevons in the year 1870, describes utility as the satisfaction or benefit that comes from consumption and assumed that this can be quantified and measured in utils. Utility theory of demand gives rise to the law of diminishing marginal utility which states that as the consumption of a product increases, the satisfaction declines. Indifference preference theory – developed by economist Vilfredo Pareto, this is a more modern approach to consumer behavior, here, consumer behavior analysis relates to consumer preferences of a combination of goods and services based

on the nature of the goods and not from the ability to measure satisfaction [10-13].

*Psychological Law of Consumption:* Hypothesized by Keynes, the psychological law of consumption or propensity to consume states that when there is an increase in consumer's income, consumption also increases, but not in proportion to the increase in consumer's income. This theory focuses on the fact that consumption relies on income and that there is a tendency to spend less on products than the level of increment in the consumer's income. The theory, however, is often misunderstood and misrepresented by many researchers and psychologists. Based on Keynes writings from the year 1933 to 1939, several important interpretations were made in a recent study viz., a) far from being a simple or straightforward theory, it is a rich and moderately complicated one; b) it does not postulate constant or invariant behavior; c) the psychological law on which it is grounded is not universal, but limited and conditional; d) it embraces many determinants of consumption; e) it is significantly different from standard consumption functions; f) it has an in-built temporal structure consistent with dynamic and static analysis; and most importantly g) it is adaptable to new economic circumstances [14].

*Psychoanalytic Theories:* Under this theory, Freud gives personality three aspects: the id, the ego, and the super-ego, and states that consumer behavior is a result of the interaction between these three. While the 'id' (I want this) triggers pleasure, the 'super-ego' (this is not the way to get it) sees the moral issues and the 'ego' (let us work on it) is the go-between, helping the consumer decide whether to purchase a product/service or not [15].

*Classical Conditioning Theory:* Ivan Pavlov a famous Psychologist, devised a consumer behavior model. He conducted experiments to determine the change in behavior with the help of Dogs. He conditioned the dog's mind to receive a piece of meat every time a bell is rung and measured the extent of change in behaviour based on levels of saliva secretion in dogs. Learning was defined as the changes in behaviour that are developed through practice and personal experience. The learning process consisted of 'Drive' that refers to a strong internal stimulus that demands action; 'Drives' that refers to inborn psychological needs arising out of thirst, physical pleasures, hunger, and pain that create a stimulus that gives out a triggering and non-triggering cues; and 'Reinforcement' refers to activating the decision process and just influencing the decision process that helps to create a purchase or do not purchase decision which gets reinforced over time in a conditional pattern. Pavlovian Model is purely based on psychology and has been widely accepted around the world [16].

*Motivation-Need Theory:* Abraham Maslow put forward his hierarchy of needs theory in the year 1943, sending ripple effects across the entire psychological community in the entire world. Under his theory, people act to fulfill their needs based on a five-part priority system. In order of importance the five needs include, i) physiological (survival); ii) safety; iii) love; iv) esteem; and v) self-actualization. A majority of marketers adapted Maslow's theory to explain the need to tailor marketing messages to consumers in a particular way. Successful marketing campaigns must not only bring awareness to a product but also establish its place somewhere on the hierarchy of needs. Consumers are motivated to prioritize purchases toward the base of the hierarchy, so marketers must draft a message that instills a sense of need or urgency in consumers. Marketers have been able to use motivation-need theory very effectively by creating an artificial need in consumer's minds [17].

*The Sociological Model:* This model of consumer behavior is closely related to the society and the multifaceted groups involved in the same. These groups can be classified into a) 'primary group' consisting of consist of close acquaintances, friends, relatives, and family members; and b) secondary groups consisting of any member in the society based on his/her personality type, and requirements. The sociological model focuses mainly on the lifestyle and lifestyle-related product requirements of consumers in society in a holistic manner [18].

*Theory of the Leisure and Conspicuous Consumption:* Also known as the Thorstein Bunde Veblenian model, that is spending more money on products they are worth. It labels humans as a social animal whose wants, and behavior are shaped by his peer group, irrespective of his/her personal preferences. Naturally, people tend to blend into society to ensure they are also an integral part of it. These theories on consumer behavior help marketers gain insight into what factors lead their target consumers to make their purchase decisions so that they can develop their marketing communications accordingly. 'In a society, the members of the leisure class, often associated with business, are those who also engage in conspicuous consumption to impress the rest of society through the manifestation of their social power and prestige, be it real or perceived'. 'In other words, social status, Veblen explained,

becomes earned and displayed by patterns of consumption rather than what the individual makes financially'. 'Subsequently, people in other social classes are influenced by this behavior and, as Veblen argued, strive to emulate the leisure class. What results from this behavior, is a society characterized by the waste of time and money. Unlike other sociological works of the time, the theory of the leisure class focused on consumption, rather than production' [19-21].

*Theory of Reasoned Action:* Created by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in the late 1960s, the theory of reasoned action focusses its behavioural analysis on the importance of pre-existing attitudes in the decision-making process. The core of the theory argues that consumers act on behaviour is based on their intention to create or receive a specific outcome. In this analysis, consumers are rational actors who choose to act in their best interests. According to the theory, 'specificity' is critical in the decision-making process. A consumer only takes a specific action when there is an equally specific result expected. From the time the consumer decides to act to the time the action is completed, the consumer retains the ability to change his or her mind and decide on a different course of action [22].

*Theory of Planned Behavior:* This theory is an extension of the theory of reasoned action, that states the basic elements of the theory of reasoned action such as a) perceived control of the behavior; b) subjective norms; and c) intentions, impact the intention to follow the behavior. Thus, this theory argues that all or some of these three elements would influence the intention which eventually predicts whether behavior would happen or not. The introduction of perceived behavioral control in the theory of the reasoned action model has paved the way for the theory of planned behavior model and mitigated many limitations in the theory of reasoned action. For example, if a user has the subjective norm, the right attitude, and behavioral intention to buy from online, they might have a behavioral intent of buying. But the buyer does not need to buy online as they might not know about the online payment process, this is what is known as perceived behavioral control [23-24].

*Impulse Buying Theory:* While many of the theories of consumer behavior focus on rational action, Hawkins Stern's impulsive buying theory, believed heavily in the idea of impulse behavior. Stern argued that sudden buying impulses fit alongside rational purchasing decisions to paint a complete picture of the average consumer. Impulse purchases are driven largely by external stimuli and have almost no relationship to traditional decision-making. Stern established four categories of impulse buying viz., i) pure impulse purchases; ii) consumers make reminded impulse buys; iii) suggested impulse purchases; iv) consumers make planned impulse decisions, where they know they want to buy a product, but are unsure about the specifics [25].

*The Input, Process, Output Model:* This model focuses on a) the product that is being marketed; b) the environmental forces; and c) the family background of the consumer. Factors that act as inputs and outputs in this model are i) the marketing efforts in terms of product, price, place, promotion, and the environmental forces such as family, reference groups, culture, and social class, etc. that influence the decision-making process of a consumer. These factors which act as inputs trigger the consumer to identify his needs and ensure that the consumer gets the intention to purchase products after careful evaluation of the factors; ii) the process is concerned with the purchase process. A consumer goes through various steps like need recognition, awareness, evaluation, and purchase to make a buying decision. While a satisfied customer acts as the brand ambassador exerting influence on future purchases, a dissatisfied customer acts as a negative reference point spoiling the marketing efforts of the company to promote the product; and iii) outputs refer to the consumer's response to the marketing efforts of the organization. Some responses that consumers display is concerning buying decision, choice of product, choice of brand, choice of dealer or store, purchase timing and amount, and post-purchase behavior [26].

*Howarth Sheth Model:* This model of consumer buying behaviour substantiates the complexity involved in consumer behavior and takes into consideration various factors like a) consumer's attitudes, b) consumer's levels of perception, and c) capacity of consumer's learning that influence consumer behavior. This model is based on four variables such as i) inputs parameters; ii) constructs that are related to perception and learning; iii) output parameters; iv) variables that are external or exogenous; and v) input parameters. Input parameters are provided by three types of stimuli that are essential to make a purchase decision namely, i) significative stimuli that refer to tangible product characteristics like uniqueness, quality, stock availability, price, and service effectiveness; ii) symbolic stimuli that refer to the perception of an individual about a particular product characteristic; and iii) social stimuli that refer to all factors that belong to the social group to which a consumer belongs and considers reference groups,

family and background, and consumer's financial status in society. Perceptual and learning constructs include four psychological variables influence that influence the consumer's decision-making process such as i) motivation; ii) attitude; iii) learning; and iv) perception. The output parameters that refer to the final purchase decision and satisfaction or dissatisfaction levels of a consumer post-purchase. Finally, four variables that are categorized as the external or exogenous variables in the model refer to the indirect influence exerted on the decision-making process of consumers by factors such as i) financial status; ii) social class; iii) necessity to purchase; and iv) personality traits of individuals. All these four factors are dependent on each other and influence the decision-making process of a consumer [27].

*Family Decision-Making Model:* The role of every member of a family play in the purchase decision is unique. There are six types of members in a family structure who exert influence over the purchasing decision of the others in the family such as i) the 'user' that refers to the person in the family who plans to use the product being purchased and the user may be a single person in the family or the whole family; ii) the 'influencer' refers to the person who keeps the family members updated about products and services new to the market in addition to convincing them to purchase and playing a crucial role in the ultimate decision taken by the family members; iii) the 'preparer' that refers to the person who gives a product its final shape in which it is going to be used by the users in the family; iv) the 'gatekeeper' refers to a person in the family who influences the family members to go in for products that they feel will be useful to them in addition to safeguarding the gates disallowing any product or service information that they dislike from reaching their family members and helping the family in decision-making by filtering information or product attributes to make a purchase decision; v) the 'buyer' refers to the person who buys the product and irrespective of the different kinds of influences exerted by other members of the family, the person playing the role of the 'buyer' makes the final purchase of the product or service; and vi) the 'decider' refers to the person in the family who has the money power to buy a product or service chosen for purchase in addition to having an upper hand in the purchase decision. The extension of the family decision-making model is known as the household behavior model which extensively uses the Cournot-Nash Equilibrium model. There are many modeling approaches in family decision-making such as a) cooperative bargaining and b) non-cooperative bargaining [28-34].

*Nicosia Model of Consumer Decision-making:* This model deals with the level of exposure a consumer gets concerning the purchase decision. This model is based on four attributes such that the output of one field acts as the input of the second field and so on. The first field divided into two subfields such as i) sub-field one consisting of a) product attributes, and b) firm's attributes; ii) the second subfield consists of a) pre-disposition or existing attitude of a consumer towards the product and b) the attributes exhibited by the organization whose products are to be purchased. The second field consists of consumer research and evaluation. The third field is concerned with the purchasing decision of the consumer and the fourth field is concerned with the post-purchase behavior, use of a product, its storage, and consumption. The consumer who is satisfied with a product or service tends to stock the product for regular or future usage and develops a positive attitude. On the contrary, a dis-satisfied customer tends to develop a negative attitude towards the product or the business house. The feedback from the fourth field acts as input for field one. Feedback from field four compels an organization to change the product attributes which in turn act as input for field two. A change in product attributes brings a change in consumer's perception about the product and thus may affect consumer's purchase decisions and subsequently their post-purchase behavior [35-36].

*Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) or Engel-Blackwell-Miniard Model (EBM):* This model of consumer behavior is based on four key components viz., i) 'information processing' that is dependent on many factors that act as stimuli both from a marketing and non-marketing perspective, it consists of four components such as a) exposure that focuses on the message to which the consumer is constantly exposed, b) attention that is, when the message instantly grabs the attention of the consumer, c) comprehension that helps the consumer to comprehend the same in a rational manner, and d) retention that focusses on when all of the activities happen in the perfect manner the message is retained in the memory of the consumer; ii) 'central control unit' that is based on four psychological elements such as a) previous experience of the consumers and their acquaintances about the product, b) criteria based on which a consumer evaluates a product, c) changing the mindsets of consumers, and d) the personality of the consumer based on which he/she takes the purchase decision in addition to interpreting all the information based on the these four psychological elements; iii) 'decision-making process' that consists of recognizing



the problem, internal and external information search, evaluating the alternatives available, and finally purchasing the product in addition to dealing with the post-purchase satisfaction levels as well as dissatisfaction levels which play a crucial role in the future decision-making process of the consumers; and iv) 'influences exerted by the environment' such as a) income level of consumers, b) financial status and social class in society, and c) family Influences and other societal factors. The EKB model has gone through many modifications and in the year 2001 another component 'information input' was added before the first one that is 'information processing' [37-38].

*Bettman's Information Processing Model:* Bettman's model is based on a structural conception of the consumer's decision-making process in general. The model argues that the basic hierarchy such as a) motivation, b) attention and c) information search in addition to intermediate process such as a) perceptual encoding, b) processing capacity, c) memory and d) interruption as the basic components of the consumer decision-making process [39].

*McCarthy's Consumer Decision-Making Model:* This model was a result of small modification to the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) model of consumer decision-making wherein the idea of choice criteria was added as the model argues that setting up and evaluating choices criterion are different from each other [40].

*Andreason Model:* This model is one of the earliest models in consumer behavior. This model emphasizes the importance of information on the overall journey of the consumer's decision-making. The model argues that behavioral aspects of consumers such as a) beliefs, b) norms, c) values, etc., are used to first filter and match the information collected in addition to consumer's search for alternatives/substitutes. Once this level is crossed consumers will then match with the priority, budget, and the fit for the need that might even act as a constraint over the original needs and wants [41].

*Sheth-Newman Gross Model of Consumption Values:* The model comprises of five consumption values that are expected to influence the consumer's choice behavior, i) 'functional value' that is defined as 'the perceived utility acquired from an alternative for functional, utilitarian, or physical performance'; ii) 'social imagery value' that refers to 'all relevant primary and secondary reference groups likely to be supportive of the product consumption'; iii) 'emotional value' that is defined as 'the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity to arouse feelings or affective states wherein alternative acquires emotional value when associated with specific feelings or when precipitating those feelings'; iv) 'epistemic value' that is defined as 'the perceived utility acquired from an alternatives capacity to arouse curiosity, provide novelty, and/or satisfy a desire for knowledge. An alternative acquires epistemic value by items referring to curiosity, novelty, and knowledge'; and v) 'conditional value' that is defined as 'the perceived utility acquired by an alternative is the result of the specific situation or set of circumstances facing the choice maker wherein an alternative acquires conditional value in the presence of antecedent physical or social contingencies that enhance its functional or social value. Various domains of knowledge such as: a) economics, b) sociology, c) psychology, d) marketing and e) consumer behavior have contributed theories and research findings relevant to all these five values [42].

*Solomon Model of Comparison Process:* The model is based on consumer issues through the decision-making and purchasing journey such as a) pre-purchase issues; b) purchase issues; and c) post-purchase issues and most importantly the model explains the importance of exchanges that would happen during these stages of purchase between consumers and marketers whose perspectives might not be the same [43].

*Stimulus-Response Model:* The model treats consumer characteristics and decision process as the central component while connecting four key components that are interactive such as i) stimulus input; ii) communication channels and filters; iii) motivation; and iv) purchase outputs. The model emphasizes the importance of impact on consumer purchase decision-making process an organization can make using available communication channels [44].

*Gilbert Model of Consumer Decision-Making Framework:* This model indicates that there are two levels of influences. The first level of influence is very close to the consumer or decision-maker that includes psychological influence factors such as a) perception and b) learning. The second level of influences include those that are developed during the socialization process and include a) reference groups and b) family influences [45].

*Industrial Buying Model:* This deals with the cumbersome process involved in making purchase decisions

in a typical industrial set up. The decision-making process related to purchasing in an Industrial setup involves many Departments that are concerned with the same directly or indirectly. This model highlights three crucial characteristics involved in purchase decisions by Industries such as i) individuals who hail from different backgrounds, possessing varying psychological outlook are involved in the decision-making process; ii) joint decision-making is inevitable in an Industrial setup; iii) decisions of purchase may lead to opinion clashes between concerned departments or individuals before an amicable solution is found [46].

*The Black Box Model:* This model of consumer behavior identifies the stimuli responsible for buyer behavior. The stimuli such as advertisements and other forms of promotion about the product that is presented to the consumer by the marketer and the environment are dealt with by the consumer's black box. The consumer's black box comprises two sub-components such as a) the consumer's characteristics and b) the consumer decision process. The black box theory is one of the popular methods to describe psychology. It is not possible to open the human mind to look inside, we can only do something to the mind. The art of understanding the human psyche in terms of stimulus and response. 'The black box theory is of mental consciousness, which states that the mind is fully understood once the inputs and outputs are well defined and bind this with a radical skepticism regarding the possibility of ever successfully describing the underlying structure, mechanism, and dynamics of the mind' [47].

*Nudge Theory:* Nudge theory is the concept of a) understanding how consumers think, make decisions and behave; b) helping consumers to improve their thinking and decision-making quality; c) effectively managing change of all kinds; and most importantly d) identifying and modifying existing influences that are not helpful on consumers. In summary, the theory strongly suggests positive 'reinforcement' or 'positive psychology' and is majorly used in behavioral sciences, behavioral economics, and political sciences. The theory was introduced as an ethical concept by academia for the betterment of society [48-49].

*Technology Acceptance Model:* This model is based on the theory of reasoned action that is structured to foresee how users would accept and apply new technology like e-commerce. This model has been conceptualized to identify the acceptability of the technology and perform the modifications to ensure that it is acceptable to the users. This model also explains the fact that acceptability to users is dependent on two key factors such as a) perceived ease of use that reflects the standard to which people believe that they can use the system effortlessly and b) perceived usefulness that outlines the standard to which people believe that they would be able to increase their performance with the use of the system. 'This model is broadly used to elaborate on why customers go online for shopping and perceived usefulness of the technology acceptance model in context to online shopping describes savings in time and efficiency in spending. Perceived ease of use of the technology acceptance model illustrates how easily and conveniently the online shopping system works. Both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence positive attitude and behavioral intent towards online shopping and eventually lead to users using the product or service' [51-52].

*Digital Age Consumer Behavior:* The role of social media and internet marketing is impacting consumer behavior is growing day by day and becoming one of the most important marketing tools for a marketer. One of the key role digital platform plays in the overall decision-making journey of a consumer is that of ease of information search, ease of comparing alternatives/substitutes in addition to helping the consumer to create their identity. Inevitably, marketers in the digital age have to accept the fact that digital influence is here to stay that is expected to become stronger and align their communication strategies. Irrespective of what the consumer wants to shop, the digital age has changed the way consumer decision-making is carried and Google calls this 'Zero Moment of Truth (ZMOT)' that refers to the moment when a consumer is in the research stage of the decision-making process. The significant reduction in the first stage of the consumer decision-making journey also poses significant threats concerning consumer loyalty that needs the serious attention of marketers in the digital age [53].

*Types of Consumer Buying Behavior:* Based on consumer's level of involvement over a purchase decision one can classify buying behaviors consumers into different buying behavior categories such as i) 'complex buying behavior' that refer to an infrequent high-involvement purchase decision; ii) 'dissonance-reducing behavior' that refer to an infrequent purchase with high-involvement when there is a low availability of alternatives with less significance among alternatives; iii) 'habitual buying

behavior' that refer to a low-involvement purchase decision wherein consumers perceive very few significant differences among substitutes; iv) 'variety-seeking buying behavior' that indicates an exact opposite behaviour of a habitual buyer; v) 'impulsive buying behavior'; vi) 'panic-buying behavior' that refer to a collective consumer behavior viz., a) fads, fashions and trends, b) stockout situations in a store, c) stock market movements, and d) buying more than required in the beginning of an end-of-season-sale etc that is caused by various factors such as are a) 'perception' that refer to perceived threat and perceived scarcity, b) 'fear of the unknown', c) 'coping behavior', and d) 'social-psychological factors' that refers to social influence and social trust; vii) 'compulsive buying behavior' [54-60].

*Influencers of Consumer Behavior in Retailing:* Many studies have identified components which could influence consumer behavior concerning retailing such as a) merchandise; b) clientele; c) physical facilities; d) convenience; e) promotion, f) store atmosphere, g) institutional factors; h) post-transactional satisfaction; i) customer service, j) personal selling; k) sales incentive programs; l) store layout; m) attractiveness of the market; n) store locations; o) store size; p) various environmental factors relating to store image influencing their target consumers; q) store positioning and product-price differentiation; r) consumer orientation level of sales personnel; s) store attributes; t) situational factors; u) consumer's households; v) consumer's demographics; w) consumer's shopping patterns; x) consumer's attitudes toward stores; y) implied importance; z) weightage of price levels and the brand [61-86].

## 5. MAPPING EXISTING THEORIES :

During the qualitative primary research a few key perceptions which were unanimous among the lifestyle brands and retailers in the study were, a) online retailers have adopted discounts as their key consumer communication tactic and that has forced us to predominantly skew a majority of consumer communication towards discounts and offer; b) unorganized retailers have geographically covered most of the catchments and their direct and frequent connect with consumers is biggest threat ; c) we spend a lot of time and money in communicating to consumers using all the latest software tools and solutions; d) we record contact details of a majority of consumers and communicate with them regularly on new product launches and offer; e) we actively use the social media platforms to reach out existing and potential consumers; f) we run variety of loyalty and reward programs; g) we spend lot of money to advertise about the brand and store across the country; h) we regularly renovate stores to cope up with latest store interior designs and trends; i) our sales personnel are well groomed and trained; j) we have robust systems and standard operating procedures across all the processes of retailing; j) we give the same shopping experience to consumers across all our stores irrespective of the city; k) share of loyal and repeat consumers is significantly less in our stores; l) to ensure higher quality of communication, a significant portion of consumer communication is controlled and managed centrally; m) we have consumer help desks in all our stores and a dedicated team of consumer grievances redressal in the central office; n) stores and shop-in-shops at shopping malls generate highest revenue per store per month and consumers of these stores spend higher than other stores; o) stores in Tier-1 cities generate higher revenue in addition to building premium brand/store image in consumers' minds.

Basis qualitative insights, analysis of last 24 month's data and 28 consumer behavior theories, models and frameworks, we were able to identify four key stages of consumer behavior relevant for lifestyle brands/retailers in India viz., Stage 1 – Origin of Purchase Intent; Stage 2 – Evaluation by the Consumer; Stage 3 – Purchase Decision; Stage 4 – Patronage, besides, to list causes and influencers for each of these stages and map lifestyle brand/retailer's scope available in influencing these influencers as depicted in tables 1 to 4.

Table 1: Stage 1 – The origin of a purchase intent

Stage 1	Causes	Outcome	Influencers of Outcome	Lifestyle Brand/Retailer's Scope of Influence on Influencers
<b>Origin of Purchase Intent</b>	Need; Want; Demand	To Fulfill Now or Later	Personality	Low
			Values	Low
			Attitudes	Low
			Interests	Medium
			Opinions	Medium
			Lifestyles	Medium
			Life-Stage	Low
			Age	Low
			Gender	Low
			Location	Low
			Income Level	Low
			Beliefs	Low
			Situation	Low
			Occasion	Medium
			Peers	Low
			Friends	Low
Family	Low			
Reference Group	Low			
Society	Low			
Digital Media Persuasion	Low			
Product Persuasion	High			
Brand Persuasion	High			
Store Persuasion	High			

Table 2: Stage 2 – Evaluation of purchase options by the consumer

Stage 2	Causes	Outcome	Influencers of Outcome	Lifestyle Brand/Retailer's Scope of Influence on Influencers
<b>Evaluation</b>	Experience; Exposure; Expertise; Alternate; Substitute	Where; Which One; How Much; When; to Purchase	Product	High
			Price	High
			Promotion	High
			Place	High
			Affordability	High
			Situation	Low
			Occasion	Medium
			Peers	Low
			Friends	Low
			Family	Low
			Reference Group	High
			Society	Low
			Digital Media Persuasion	Low
			Product Persuasion	High
			Brand Persuasion	High
			Store Persuasion	High

It is imperative to note that there are about 50 unique factors that influence the outcomes of every stage of consumer behavior. Every influencer identified across each stage of consumer behavior has been allotted with the level of capability of a lifestyle brand/retailer by i) low, ii) medium, and iii) high. These levels would be useful in designing an integrated model of consumer behavior for lifestyle brands/retailers in India in addition to indicating short-term and long-term financial implications of taking control over each of these influencers.

**Table 3: Stage 3 – Actual purchase-decision by the consumer**

Stage 3	Causes	Outcome	Influencers of Outcome	Lifestyle Brand/Retailer's Scope of Influence on Influencers
<b>Purchase</b>	Product; Price; Promotion; Place; Service	Purchase; Not to Purchase; Repeat Visit Intent; No Repeat Visit Intent	Product Availability	High
			Product Quality	High
			Product Durability	High
			Product Uniqueness	High
			Original Price	High
			Offered Price	High
			Offer Authenticity	High
			Offer Customization	High
			Offer Duration	High
			Convenient Location	High
			Store Exterior	High
			Expert Sales Personnel	High
			Empathetic Sales Personnel	High
			Empowered Sales Personnel	High
			Authentic Sales Personnel	High
			Need-Based Sales Pitch	High
On-Time Delivery	High			
Transparent Transaction	High			
Safe Transaction	High			
On-Time Grievance Redressal	High			

**Table 4: Stage 4 – Patronage-decision by the consumer**

Stage 4	Causes	Outcome	Influencers of Outcome	Lifestyle Brand/Retailer's Scope of Influence on Influencers
<b>Patronage</b>	Consumption; Satisfied; Not Satisfied	Active Promoter or Passive Promoter or Detractive Promoter	Product Value	High
			Product Experience	High
			Service Experience	High
			Shopping Experience	High
			Transaction Experience	High
			Post-Purchase Service	High
			Influencer Reward Systems	High

**6. CONSUMER COMMUNICATION DEPLOYMENT TACTICS FRAMEWORK (CCF-LS) :**

Thus far, we have observed that a majority of consumer behavior models, theories and frameworks have focussed on identifying factors involved in the overall consumer decision-making journey and these factors are very helpful in designing an effective and economical communication framework that would integrate a majority of factors being identified and reviewed in this study. We believe that the basic “4P’s” Marketing Mix proposition which was originally framed by McCarthy sixty years ago is still relevant and has a significant influence on consumer behavior in the Indian context [87].

Framework 1 indicates the mapping of various consumer communication tactics and tools to be deployed that are efficient and economical concerning different consumer behavior stages such as i) origin of purchase intent; ii) evaluation; iii) purchase; iv) patronage and positive impact level of these communication tactics on consumer patronage with the lifestyle brand/retailer by i) low, ii) medium, and iii) high.

Communication Deployment Tactics		Consumer Behavior Stage			
		Stage 1 Origin of Purchase Intent	Stage 2 Evaluation	Stage 3 Purchase	Stage 4 Patronage
Positive Impact Level on Consumer's Patronage	High	Persuasion	Marketing Mix	Sales Personnel; Sales Pitch;	Post-Purchase Engagement by the Sales Personnel
	Medium	Catchment-Specific Advertisement	Persuasion	Marketing Mix	Influencer Reward Systems
	Low	Social Media	Social Media	Non-Customized Offers	Post-Purchase Engagement by the Centralized Help Desk

**Framework 1:** Integrated consumer communication deployment tactics framework for lifestyle brands/retailer's in India (CCF-LS)

Evidently, out of 50 various factors that were identified as influencers of outcomes of each stage of consumer behavior about 74.00 percent of factors demonstrate a high scope of influence on influencers available for a lifestyle brand/retailer. Out of these 34 high scopes of influencing factors a majority of them are either derived or output by nature and the factors that play a key role of input in the order of priority are i) Marketing-Mix, ii) Sales Personnel (Virtual Salesperson in case of online store), iii) Sales Pitch, iv) Persuasion and v) Post-Purchase Engagement.

**I) Marketing Mix:** We determinedly followed the integrated Marketing Mix framework for lifestyle retailers and brands in India that was developed by us in a previous experimental/empirical study to design CCF-LS and mapped Marketing Mix as one of the significantly important consumer communication tactics that would influence the consumer behavior. The real treatment effect that was found during the experimentation of rationalizing Marketing Mix was 96.17 percent improvement in the consumer repeat store visit rate that demonstrates a significantly positive correlation [88-89].

**II) Sales Personnel:** A significant and positive association with a strong determination between sales personnel consumer orientation level and the consumer repeat visit rate was found in one of our earlier experimental studies. This indicates that lifestyle brands/retailers need to give utmost importance to a) the number of sales personnel in a store; b) sales personnel performance measurement methods; c) empowerment level of sales personnel; d) sales personnel's overall development in addition to utilizing them as brand ambassadors that would be most efficient and economical [90-94].

**III) Sales Pitch:** An experiment of applying a Need-Based sales pitch technique which is based on the real needs of consumers concerning their life-stage rather than pitching for sale which assumes that the consumer's or the sales personnel's awareness levels on the consumer needs are correct has shown significant improvement in the overall store's profitability and most importantly sales personnel attitude towards consumer orientation and consumer repeat store visit rate. Using sales pitch as one of the consumer communication tactics plays an important role in bringing focus in the sales personnel minds to fulfill both explicit and implicit needs of consumers thereby creating a positive perception in consumer's minds in making the store their preferred choice of store for frequent visits and purchases [95].

**IV) Persuasion:** We have prioritized Product-Market penetration (that helps in persuading consumers) over advertising activities as one of the key consumer communication tactics. We believe that Lavidge and Steiner's original 'hierarchy of effects model' conceptualized during the 1960s, that argues, a consumer's journey of purchase decision begins with 'Awareness'. 'Awareness combined with Familiarity' should be given priority in the beginning stages of establishing a true lifestyle brand/retailer image in employees, investors, competitors, and consumer's minds. Consumer retention rates or

consumer loyalty are output in nature whereas 'Awareness and Familiarity' are input components of consumer purchase decision-making process. Lifestyle brands need to attempt persuading consumers through their rational distribution channel mix that is inevitable in India across: a) MBO Local Retailers (example – Channabasappa & Sons Davanagere); b) MBO Regional Retailers (example – Kapsons Punjab); c) MBO National Retailers (example – Shoppers Stop); d) EBO Offline; e) EBO Online; f) MBO Speciality Online Retailers (example – Myntra); g) MBO Generalist Online Retailers (example – Flipkart) and lifestyle retailers need to attempt persuading consumers through their rational store location mix that is inevitable in India across a) High-Streets; b) Shopping Malls; c) Institutional Areas [96-101].

**V) Post-Purchase Engagement:** This consumer communication tactic must be embedded into sales personnel's role definition and job description in case of brick-and-mortar retailing and a dedicated team to engage with consumers post-purchase in case of online retailing. Even though it is difficult to customize these engagements in the case of online retailing, it is highly customizable to consumers in the case of brick-and-mortar retailing with the help of sales personnel who has interacted with the consumer in person during the purchase stage of consumer buying behavior.

## 7. CONCLUSION :

A single theory, model and framework of consumer behavior from the existing literature available across perspectives, paradigms, and areas (Economics, Behavioral Economics, Psychology, Social Psychology, Anthropology, Marketing and so on) was not entirely applicable that could have been adopted to suit lifestyle brands/retailers in India. However, an empirical/experimental orientation in addition to the thoughtful application of existing theories, models, and frameworks in the domain of consumer behavior and marketing was the key approach in designing the CCF-LS framework. Some of the key theories from which we have borrowed insights were a) McCarthy's 'Marketing Mix'; b) Lavidge and Steiner's 'Hierarchy of Effects Model'; c) Lindquist's 'Store Image' constructs; d) Weitz's 'Salesperson Consumer Orientation'; e) our 'Need-Based Sales Pitch' model; e) Nudge theory of 'positive reinforcement'; f) Solomon model of 'Comparison Process'; g) Andreason's model of 'Importance of Information'; h) Nicosia's 'Level of Exposure'; i) Maslow's 'Motivation-Need' theory in addition to the 'Input, Process, Output' model. Consumer communication in India is a costly affair owing to India being one of the largest countries with consumers belonging to the widest range of Religions, Regions, Languages, Sub-Cultures, Ethnicities, and Economic backgrounds which makes it difficult for any lifestyle brand/retailer to communicate economically and effectively. The CCF-LS framework has been designed to keep this divergent aspect of Indian consumers that attempts to deploy the most economical and efficient tactics for consumer communication across each stage of the consumer decision-making journey. What was glaring during the qualitative primary research stage of this study is the fact that a majority of lifestyle brands/retailers believe consumer communication is the role of one specific department in the organization that is widely and erroneously tagged as Marketing Department and this belief always distracts other key departments in the organization from consumer orientation. The CCF-LS framework acknowledges this issue and incorporates many other relevant departments/functions to actively play an important role in consumer communication.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS :

The sustainable success of a lifestyle brand/retailer in India significantly depends on the trueness level of their image that is carried in consumers' minds and not the revenue or profit they generate. To ensure a lifestyle brand/retailer gets a true lifestyle image in consumers' minds, they need to think beyond revenue and profit which is what has to be the main criteria while deciding on the rational deployment of various consumer communication tactics. Be cognizant of the fact that, few brands/retailers may be trying to capture the bigger market share by just focussing on increasing the revenue by spending on high-cost advertising tactics; few may be trying to show exponential growth in their revenue to attract more investors; few retailers may be assuming that consumers acquired by the retailer that were based on advertising tactics as their key components of selling proposition are going to be loyal to their store forever; few may be trying to create short-term positive perceptions in consumers' mind to impress existing and potential investors, few may be opening many stores in premium locations with larger size to tag them as experiential, anchor or destination stores assuming that this effort would lead them to create a premium brand/retailer image; few may be expanding their presence in catchment areas irrespective of

their target consumer groups to promote their brand to attract new investors and franchisees; few conglomerates may be trying to show their presence in the lifestyle retailing segment to enhance their overall group portfolio and hence adopting high-cost advertisement tactics; few may be selling premium priced products or categories to position themselves as premium lifestyle brand/retailer, and most importantly few may be assuming that the consumer communication is the deliverable of Marketing Department and no other departments/functions are responsible for such deliverables and so on. What is very important is the understanding of Indian consumer behavior relevant for your brand's/store's positioning, various stages of the consumer's decision-making process, causes and influencers of outcomes of each of these stages and most important influencers on which a lifestyle brand/retailer have the scope of influencing in addition to their short-term and long-term business goals. Consumer orientation is not just the deliverable of a single department/function in an organization, it is a collective responsibility and deliverable and most importantly the role played by sales personnel is very important. Finally, we would like to suggest leadership members of lifestyle brands/retailers in India apply an unbiased empirical approach while making decisions related to the deployment of consumer communication tactics and we believe that the CCF-LS framework would help them to gain an economical, effective and competitive advantage in employees, investors, competitors, and consumer's minds. In addition to using the CCF-LS framework to make decisions concerning the deployment of consumer communication tactics we recommend, they also insist on their senior management teams in the organization to align key result areas (KRAs) and key performance indicators (KPIs) to include consumer orientation measures in the performance evaluation systems across departments/functions of the organization.

#### **9. LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH :**

The main limitation of this research work is the coverage of various stakeholders viz., number and type of lifestyle retailers, product categories, consumer groups, employees, price positioning, and different types of Marketing Mix in designing the CCF-LS framework. This might limit the generalizability of the research findings to other sets of lifestyle retailers. The second limitation would be the empirical validation is restricted to a few organized lifestyle brands and retailers in India selected for the study and hence the generalizability of the findings and suggestions to other lifestyle retailers in India. The third limitation would be our ability to identify factors involved in the consumer decision-making process that can be influenced by a lifestyle brand/retailer while designing the framework, we could have missed a few. However, as the proposed CCF-LS framework is based on, i) proven theories in the field of consumer behavior; ii) exhaustive empirical research findings of this study; iii) recommendations from our previous experimental and empirical research studies which are relevant in this context, it would be instrumental in economical and effective designing of consumer communication deployment tactics for lifestyle brands and retailers in India.

#### **10. SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH :**

We strongly recommended that the CCF-LS framework is used by researchers to further test its validity and reliability in addition to finetuning it further if required for lifestyle or non-lifestyle brands and retailers. Based on short-term and long-term the key business objectives of lifestyle brands/retailers, the CCF-LS framework can be used as a basic tool while deploying various consumer communication tactics.

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