

Chapter 2

Consumer Behaviour

2.1 Introduction

“The consumer, so it is said, is the king... each is a voter who uses his money as votes to get the things done that he wants done” [Samuelson in Oxford Dictionary of 20th Century Quotations, 2000:274].

There is no question about it – consumers are paramount to the economy. All marketing decisions are based on assumptions about consumer behaviour [Hawkins et al., 2001:8, Mulkern, 2001:126; and Labbe, 2000:38]. In order to create value for consumers and profits for organisations, marketers need to understand why consumers behave in certain ways to a variety of product and services offered.

In order to determine the factors that influence the preferences of the Millennial Generation, an understanding of how consumers generally think and behave in buying situations is vital. This chapter starts off with a model of consumer behaviour, which will serve as the foundation of this chapter’s structure. The first part of the model takes an in-depth look at internal, external and other influences that are relevant for the purpose of this study, whilst the second part examines the consumer decision-making process in detail.

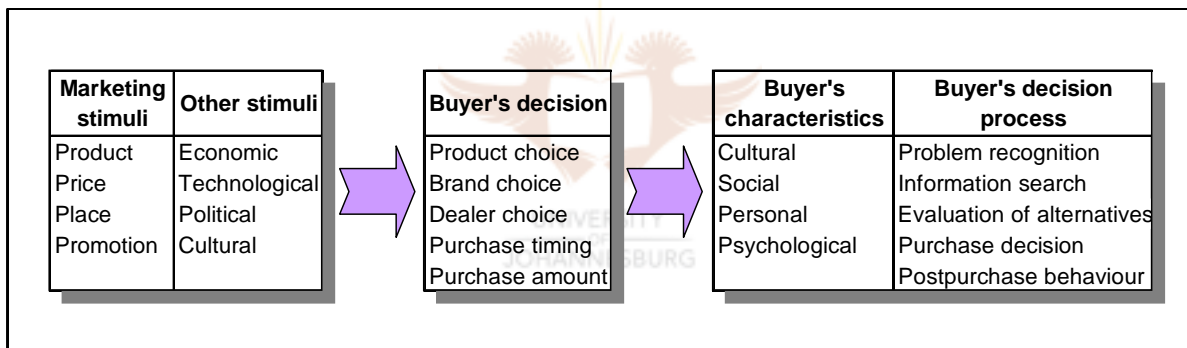
2.2 Model of consumer behaviour

Understanding consumer behaviour and “knowing customers,” have and never will be simple. Consumers may say one thing but do another. They may not be in touch with their deeper motivations. They may respond to influences that change their mind at the last minute. These issues have lead to theories like that of the black box approach taken on by Futrell [2000:67]. It refers to how marketers are not able to tap into consumer minds, thus “keeping them in the dark.” In other words, marketers can apply various stimuli and observe the conduct of consumers, but they cannot observe the consumers’

actual thought processes. This hidden information is considered to be the *black box*. In an attempt to obtain some understanding, marketers study consumer behaviour. Many researchers [Hawkins et al. 2001:7; Bearden et al. 1997:49; and Engel et al., 1995:4] describe consumer behaviour as the study of individuals or groups and the mental, emotional and physical processes they use to select, obtain, consume and dispose of products or services, to satisfy needs and wants, and the impact that these processes have on the consumer and society.

There are numerous models trying to explain consumer behaviour. These models generally deal with various stimuli, influential factors, the decision-making process and outcomes. Some models are very basic and categorise all variables such as the one proposed by Kotler's [2000:161], which is illustrated in figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Model of buyer behaviour

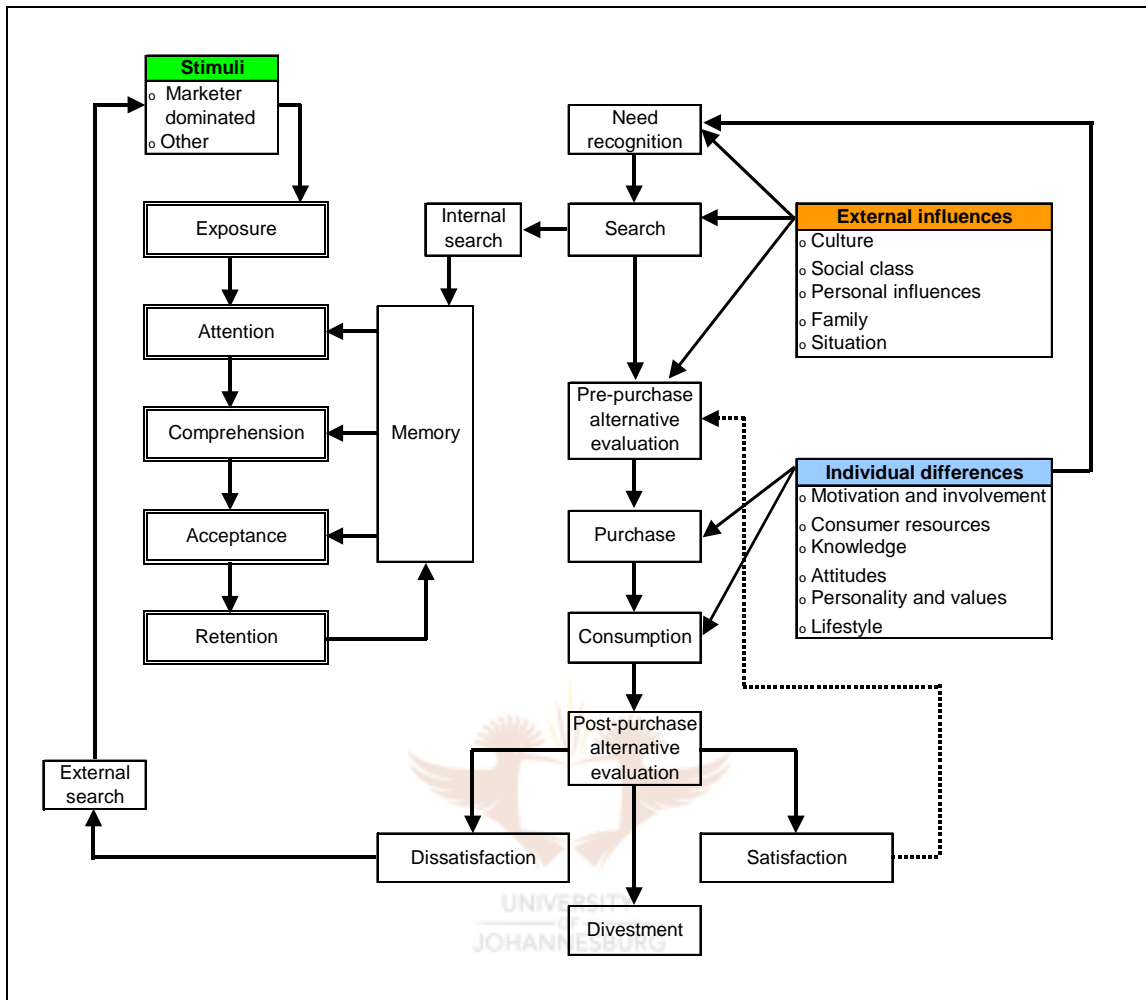


Source: Kotler, P., 2000, *Marketing management*, Millennium edition, U.S.A.: Prentice-Hall, p. 161.

Figure 2.1 shows how the marketing mix and other stimuli enter a consumer's thoughts. The consumer then has to make certain decisions, which are directly influenced by their personal characteristics. For a marketer, the ideal end result would see the consumer making a purchase.

Other models contain more detail and would focus on specific issues as demonstrated by Engel et al. [1995:154] and Hawkins et al. [2001:26] in figure 2.2 and figure 2.3 respectively.

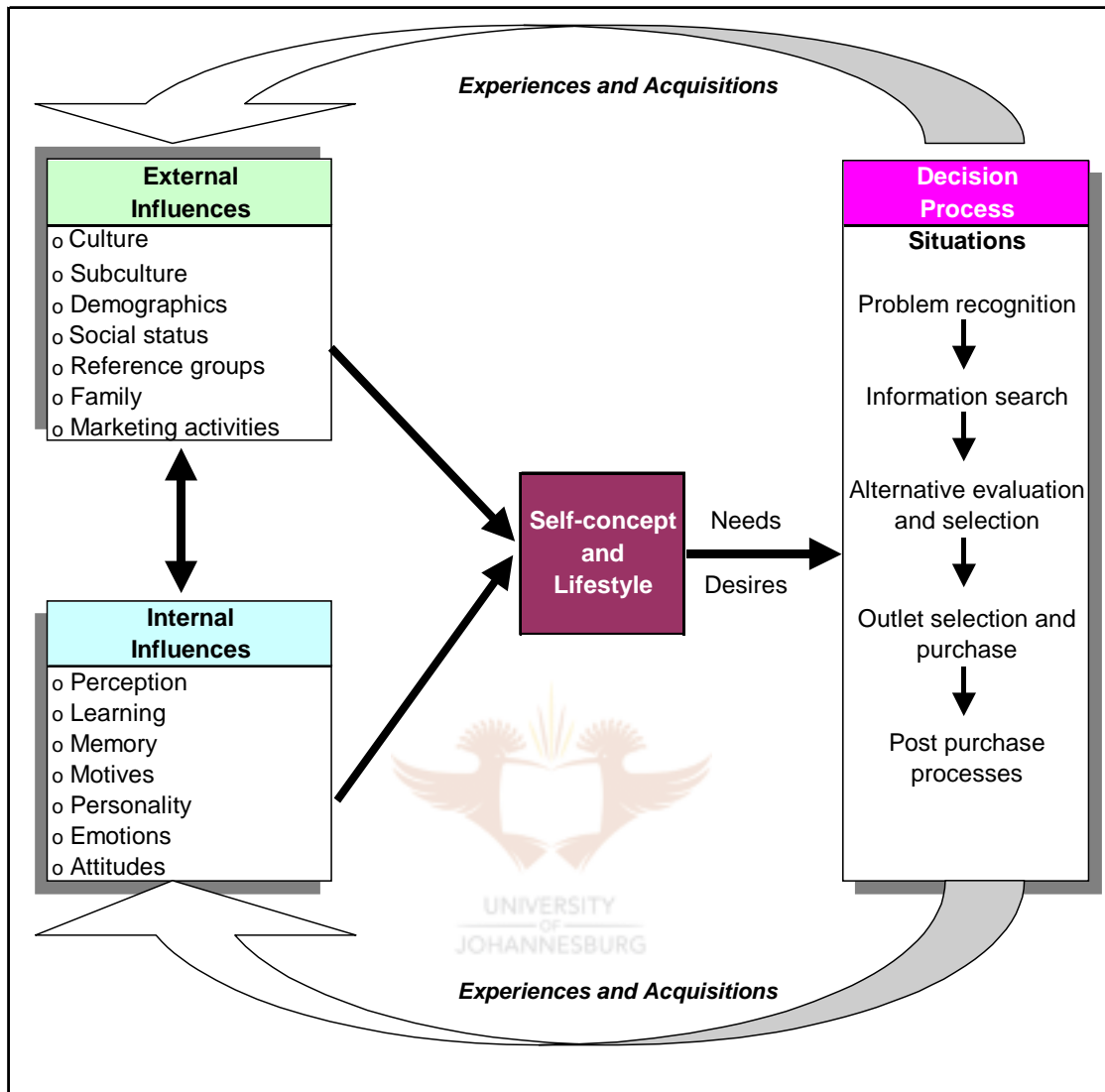
Figure 2.2 Consumer decision-process model



Source: Engel J.F., Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W., 1995, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: Dryden Press, p. 155.

Figure 2.2 indicates the impact of environmental influences and individual differences on the consumer. They play an important role when it comes to the decision-making process. This process spurs on a consumer's memory recall, which can then be used in carrying out a purchase and deciding whether it was a satisfactory action or not.

Figure 2.3: A model of consumer behaviour



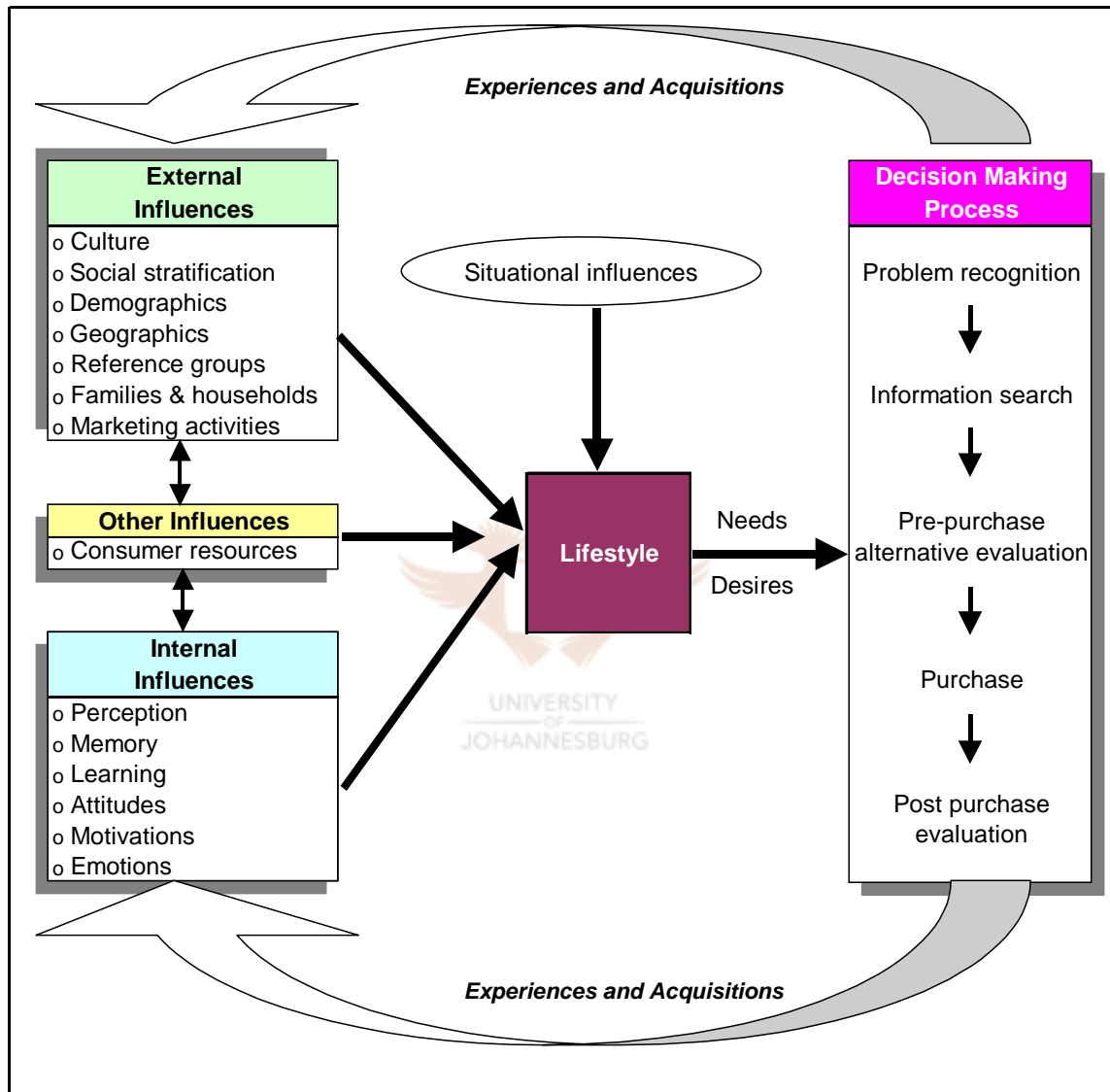
Source: Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 26.

In figure 2.3 a person's self-concept and lifestyle is the central role of consumer behaviour. External and internal influences can produce and affect needs and desires, ultimately affecting the decision-making process. As this cycle of need satisfying takes place, the consumer gains experience.

Based on the objectives of this research study an adapted model of consumer behaviour is used. The chosen foundation model for this research study is that proposed by Hawkins et al. [2001:26]. It is an easier model to understand in terms of a child's thinking and lifestyle, as the scope of this study does not go into as much depth as

discussed with the model put forward by Engel et al. [1995:154] but also requires more than Kotler's [2000:161] basic marketing approach. An adapted model captures the general structure and process of consumer behaviour, as shown in figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4: A model of consumer behaviour.



Source: Adapted from Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 26.

Figure 2.4 shows how the decision-making process is activated when consumers interact in various exchange processes, which in turn, gives the consumer more experience, finally influencing their lifestyle via the internal, external and other influences. The role that each of the previously mentioned influences play is primarily determined by the consumer's buying decisions and respective involvement. It is important to note that

situational influences are capable of influencing the model at any point. Emotions and consumption, for instance, may be subjected to situational predicaments at any given time [Hawkins et al., 2001:26].

It is imperative to bear in mind that figure 2.4 is only a conceptual model. It is not capable of envisaging particular consumer behaviour but does allow room for speculating the behavioural nature of the consumers. An individual grows mentally, physically and emotionally based on the influences of internal and external factors. The former consists mainly of physical and psychological influences whilst the latter consists of sociological and demographic influences. The lifestyles and self-concepts then create needs and wants, which have to be satisfied by making use of consumption decisions [Hawkins et al., 2001:26].

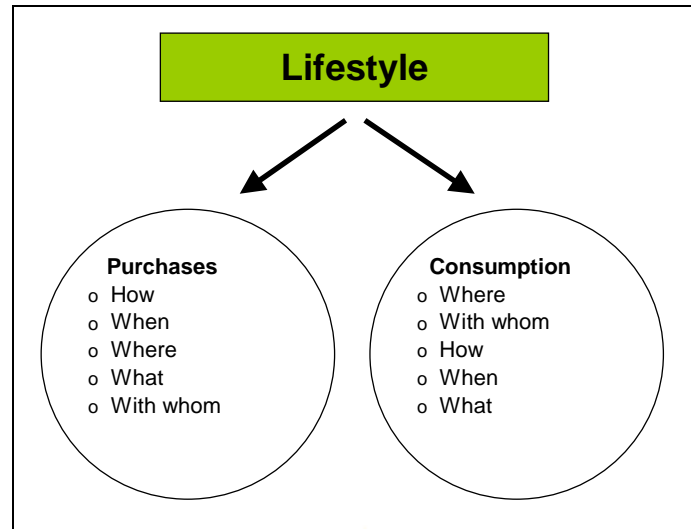
The model on consumer behaviour will be broken up into sections in this research report. The starting point will first be the lifestyle concept. The second section deals with internal influences, namely perception, learning, knowledge and memory, attitudes, motivations and emotions. The following section will then discuss external influences such as culture, social stratification and demographics, reference groups and families and / or households. Issues dealing with consumer resources will comprise the fourth section with regard to the chosen model of consumer behaviour. The fifth section, that is, the decision-making process, will be divided into five phases, each taking a look at the steps, namely problem recognition, search for problem solving information, alternative evaluation, purchase, and post purchase evaluation.

2.3 Lifestyle

As illustrated in figure 2.4, the central concept of consumer behaviour is lifestyle. A lifestyle is the person's pattern of living in the world as expressed in activities, interests and opinions. It portrays the "whole person" interacting with his or her environment [Kotler, 2000:168 and Hansen, 1998:181]. In other words, it refers to how people live, how they spend their time and money, what activities they pursue and their attitudes and opinions about the world they live in. It is determined by consumers' past experiences, innate characteristics and current situation [Burgess, 1998:37]. Lifestyle is affected by

both internal and external influences as depicted in figure 2.3. On the other hand lifestyle influences all aspects of the consumer decision-making process as shown in figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5: The influence of lifestyle.



Source: Adapted from Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 436.

With reference to figure 2.5, it illustrates how lifestyle can influence the rational thinking and logic used by consumers in purchasing and consuming goods. Consumers use lifestyle to construe the events happening around them and to interpret, conceptualise and predict events as to reconcile their values with events [Whelan, 2001:20; Churchill & Peter, 1998:211; and Hansen, 1998:185]. Consumers, however, are not often aware of the role lifestyle plays in their buying behaviour [Hawkins et al., 2001:436]. For example, a child would not think along the lines of “I’ll go have a muffin at ‘BP’s Wild Bean Café’ so that I can maintain my lifestyle.”

Attention is now directed towards the three categories of factors that have the potential in influencing the life style variable, namely internal influences, external influences and other influences.

2.4 Internal factors influencing consumer behaviour

Internal influences are able to play a huge role in affecting a consumer's behaviour and include the following issues namely, perception, memory, learning, attitude, motivation, and emotion.

2.4.1 Perception, memory and learning

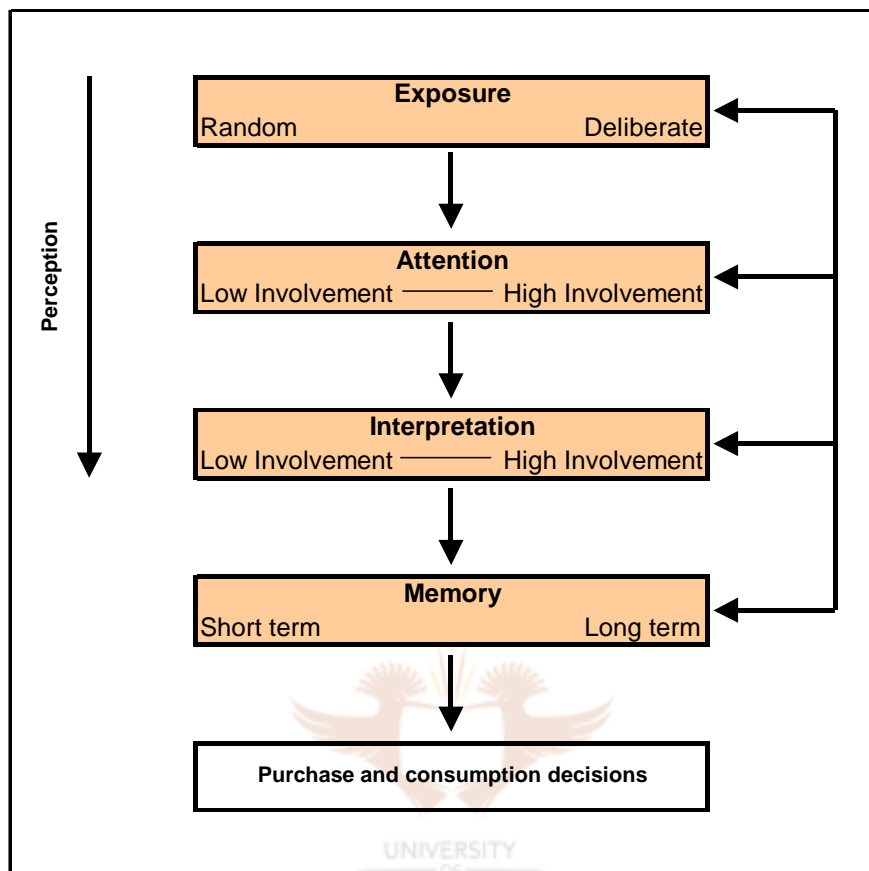
2.4.1.2 Perception

Perception has been defined as the process by which an individual selects, organises and interprets information inputs to create a meaningful picture of the world [Hawkins et al, 2001:284; Kotler, 2000:173; and Shimp, 1997:122]. Consumers are constantly bombarded with information every day. Information processing is susceptible to a consumer's perceptual defences, namely selective attention, selective perception and selective retention. It is impossible for consumers to allocate their time and effort in addressing each bit of information. Therefore, this concept is known as selective attention [Hawkins et al., 2001:284 and Singh et al., 2000:59].

Selective perception refers to the way which all consumers, either adults or children, perceive the information they have given their attention to. There is a tendency to manipulate and interpret information into personal meanings that will fit consumer preconceptions [Kotler, 2000:173]. Children have been found to more creative in their efforts [Ayman-Nolley, 1999:267 and Brassington & Pettit, 1997:103]. One of the most influential aspects that come into play with regard to selective perception is that of noise. Noise can be any message, commercial or not, that can distort or prevent information from being sent and received efficiently [Arens, 1999:12]. Often consumers will learn things but will forget them because they don't conform to their beliefs and attitudes. These bits of information are only transitory. This is the reasoning behind selective retention [Keenan, 2001:25 and Jones & Sasser, 1995:89].

A diagrammatical breakdown of perception is shown in figure 2.6, followed by an examination of each stage of the information-processing model.

Figure 2.6 Information processing for consumer behaviour.



Source: Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 284.

With regard to figure 2.6, as soon as a stimulus is within a person’s receptor nerve’s range, exposure has then taken place. This range includes the actual person as well as the person’s environment. A child, for instance, may be doing homework with the radio on and not be listening, but exposure would still have taken place. People participate in one form of exposure at a time and are always seeking information that they believe will help them achieve their goals [Hawkins et al., 2001:285].

Attention occurs when the stimulus activates one or more sensory receptor nerve and the consequential sensations go to the brain for processing. This occurrence, however, always takes place within the context of a situation. Different consumers may devote different levels of attention to different stimuli in different situations [Hawkins et al.,

287]. For example, the members of a family may pay attention to various things whilst stopping at a petrol station.

Attention is determined by three factors, namely individual factors, situational factors and stimulus factors. Individual and situational factors will be discussed later on in this chapter. For the time being, a look at stimulus factors will suffice. Stimulus factors are physical characteristics of the stimulus itself that tend to attract a consumer's attention independently of their individual characteristics. Categories of stimulus factors can include contrast, colour, movement, isolation, size, intensity, format, and positioning [Hawkins et al. 2001:287; Burgess, 1998:53; and Shimp, 1997:122]. A bright, neon yellow and red 'Shell' logo at night would be an example.

The way that a consumer assigns meanings to sensations is known as interpretation. It is a function of the pattern formed by the characteristics of the stimulus, the individual and the situation [Arens, 1999:132]. Individual related characteristics, such as prior learning, play a significant role in influencing interpretation. A relevant issue at this stage, that deserves some mentioning, is that of expectations. The case in point would rationalise the way younger consumers see everyday objects and thus have expectations of these objects [Hawkins et al., 2001:297]. A 'Red Band' book at 'C.N.A.', for instance, is expected to be cheaper than other books but seldom is.

It often happens that consumers are misinformed subsequently leading to inaccurate knowledge on their part – otherwise known as misperception [Keenan, 2001:25]. When misperceptions are present in a consumer's mind, goods and services may not seem so attractive to consumers. Corrective measures, such as re-informing consumers correctly, are in order [Bennett, 2000:92 and Li et al., 2000:425]. A consumer, for instance, incorrectly heard that 'Total La Boutique' stores do not sell doughnuts. The consumer would then purposefully not go to the respective store every time he wanted to buy some doughnuts.

2.4.1.2 Memory

A person's memory is the total accumulation of prior learning experiences. It consists of two interrelated components, namely short-term and long-term memory. The former,

otherwise known as working memory, is that portion of total memory that is currently in use. The amount of information that it can store is limited thus making it an active, dynamic process and not a static structure [Hawkins et al., 2001:341; Nurrenbern, 2001:1107; and Shimp, 1997:126].

Short-term memory houses two types of information processing activities: elaborative activities and maintenance rehearsal. Elaborative activities are defined as: "...the use of previously stored experiences, values, attitudes, beliefs and feelings to interpret and evaluate information in working memory as well as to add relevant previously stored information" [Hawkins et al., 2001:341]. An example is that of a child using his existing knowledge, on ice-skating, in learning how to use a pair of roller blades.

Maintenance rehearsal on the other hand is something quite different and is defined as follows: "... the continual repetition of a piece of information in order to hold it in current memory for use in problem solving or transferral to long-term memory" [Hawkins et al., 2001:341]. A scholar repeating mathematics formulas or definitions several times, in preparation for a school test, is a typical example of maintenance rehearsal.

Long-term memory, the second component of memory, is seen as being unrestricted in the quantity or quality of information it is capable of storing. Remaining with the topic at hand, a difference between explicit and implicit memory needs to be addressed. When a consumer makes a conscious recollection about an event (such as a trip to the local café) they were exposed to, then they are making use of their explicit memory. An example of implicit memory usage would see how a consumer tries to non-consciously retrieve a previously encountered stimulus that refers to an association with a brand [Shimp, 1997:126; Engel et al., 1995:502; and Hawkins et al., 2001:345]

2.4.1.3 Learning

Learning is the term used to explain the procedure by which a consumer's memory and behaviour are altered as a result of conscious and non-conscious information processing. It has been suggested that learning comprises of two types, namely declarative and procedural. Declarative learning involves the subjective facts that are known (for

example, that wheels, a saddle and pedals are components needed in riding a bicycle), whereas the procedural learning refers to the understanding of how these facts can be used (knowing how these components can be used in actually riding a bicycle) [Hawkins et al, 2001:324; Shimp, 1997:126; Burgess, 1998:40; and Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000:255].

It is crucial for marketers to acquire a thorough understanding of what consumers know (or don't know) for a simple reason – what consumers buy, how much they will pay, where they buy and when they buy are influenced by the knowledge they possess. Such understanding may lead to discovering significant gaps in consumer learning that, when closed, will increase the likelihood of a purchase. A misinformed consumer, for instance, may not understand how a product works, resulting in the product not being purchased or used correctly [Hawkins et al., 2001:333; Swait, 2001:135; and Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996:38].

People are constantly making efforts in trying to learn the right information efficiently and effectively. Learning can take place on two levels, namely high-involvement learning and low-involvement learning. High-involvement learning refers to times when a consumer is encouraged to process or learn material whilst low-involvement learning deals with a consumer that lacks drive in processing or learning information [Hawkins et al., 2001:325]. The next section deals with the way that children learn and how this influences their behaviour.

Studies dealing with the way that children think often have not been taken seriously but the works of Jean Piaget set the change in motion [Papert, 1999:104]. Generally speaking, children are not capable of processing and remembering all types of information presented to them [Hawkins et al., 2001:212 and Hall, 2000:153]. Children go through different stages as they mature physically, mentally and as consumers. The different stages are illustrated in table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Piaget's stages of cognitive development.

Stage	Period	Ave. age	Description / Characteristics
1	Sensorimotor intelligence	0 to 2 years	Although cognitive development is seen, the child does not "think" conceptually.
2	Pre-operational thoughts	3 to 7 years	Language development and rapid conceptual development.
3	Concrete operations	8 to 11 years	Ability to apply logical thought to concrete problems.
4	Formal operations	12 to 15 years	Greatest level of cognitive structures which allow the child to apply logic to all classes of problems.

Source: Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 212.

Table 2.1 indicates how a child's development starts with cognitive advances. This progresses to a child being able to voice their opinions and start to grasp basic conceptual issues. The child is then later on able to tackle problems rationally and ultimately is capable to implement relatively informed choices keeping time, space and causal relationships in mind [Cairns, 2001:20].

Piaget [Goswami, 2001:257] recognised that the acquisition of each new way of thinking would not necessarily be synchronous across all the diverse domains of thought. Instead, he believed that the chronology of the stages might be exceedingly variable, and that such variability might also occur within a given stage. Thus the ages of realisation that Piaget gave for the different cognitive stages are only rough estimations.

This study deals in particular with stage 3 in table 2.1. At the age of eight years children are starting to think for themselves and strive for more independence whilst staying within mental boundaries. Although there are other formats in classifying the way that younger consumers learn, as proposed by the likes of John Dewey, Maria Montessori and Paulo Freire [Papert, 1999:104], all formats have one thing in common – children are not able to deal with information that is abstract, generalised, unfamiliar or in large quantities

[Hawkins et al., 2001:213]. There are, however, instances where children are capable of out-learning adults. The information technology field is believed to be one of these areas [Cochrane, 1995:25].

The learning that children undertake plays a major role in moulding them as both adults and as consumers. Piaget [in *Early Childhood Today*, 2001:43] concluded that children do not think like adults. Their thought processes have their own distinct order and extraordinary logic. Children are not “empty vessels to be filled with knowledge” (as traditional pedagogical theory had it). They are “active builders of knowledge – little scientists who construct their own theories of the world.”

From a child’s perspective, learning takes place at home and in the market place. Consumer socialisation is the procedure by which consumers gain experience that can help them in their daily activities in the market place [Engel et al., 1995:780 and Carlson et al., 1992:31]. The way in which children are socialised as consumers will be discussed in the section dealing with families.

Product knowledge involves an array of information, which includes product attributes and terminology, consumer beliefs about products, and awareness of products within a product category [Li et al., 2000:425 and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:284]. Product knowledge types can be analysed in two ways namely, awareness analysis and image analysis. Awareness analysis looks at what consumers’ awareness sets contain [Burgess, 1998:39]. Making consumers familiar with a brand’s name has long been recognized as an essential prerequisite for building a brand. Image analysis would examine the associations consumers have with the brands in their awareness sets. These associations may involve the brand’s physical properties as well as its benefits and feelings that come from product consumption [Bennett, 2000:92].

Purchase knowledge consists of any information that is relevant with regards to acquiring a product. This information can be divided into two issues: where should the product be purchased and when should this purchase take place. The issue of where a product should be purchased comprises of different channels filled with many competitors. Consumers have to consider each business entity’s physical location, whether they sell the desired product and how to locate it within the store [Levy & Weitz, 1998:230].

When consumers are not familiar with a store's layout, they become more dependant on in-store information. This increases the consumer's involvement and could subsequently identify unrecognised needs that have to be satisfied [Levy & Weitz, 1998:540]. With regards to the timing of purchases, often a setting unfolds when consumers know when products are placed on sale and thus delay purchasing some items [Churchill & Peter, 1998:486].

User knowledge refers to the way a product can be used and what peripherals are needed in doing so. The adequacy of consumers' usage knowledge is important especially because of the fact that uninformed consumers will less likely buy the product [Cravens, 1999:112]. The way that some rural African people are taught the basics about using toothpaste as part of oral healthcare is an example [The Star, 2002:14].

Another predicament occurs when consumers possess incomplete information about the different way or situations in which a product can be used. Efforts have to be made in order to eradicate this problem [Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996:374]. The way that the snack food company, 'Simba', educates consumers via written instructions on how to use their 'Tazo' toys in different ways illustrates this point.

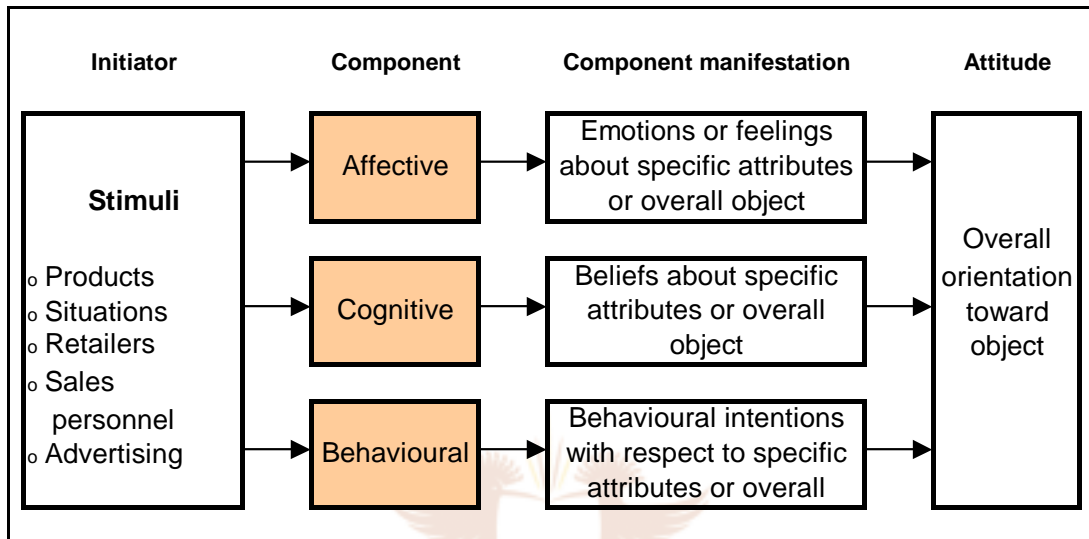
It should be mentioned that a purchase that has been made by a customer who is either uninformed or misinformed, can still result in a negative evaluation due to not being able to use or consume the product in the correct or intended manner [Laroche et al., 2000:1 and Lovelock & Wright, 1999:246]. A common example is that of a consumer who has just bought a cell phone airtime recharge voucher but does not know how to use it.

2.4.2 Attitudes

Attitudes refer to a consistent favourable or unfavourable orientation towards objects, concepts or situations [Hawkins et al., 2001:394 and Brassington & Pettit, 1997:108]. Attitudes consist of three components, namely cognitive, affective and behavioural. The cognitive component houses a person's knowledge and beliefs about an object. An example would be that a consumer believes that all convenience stores are open twenty-four hours a day. The affective component represents a person's feelings about an object. A child, for instance, may love the smell of freshly baked cookies in a retail

store. The behavioural or conative component refers to a person’s action or behavioural tendencies toward an object or activity. The way a consumer makes the effort to buy and eat her preferred chocolate illustrates this point [Zikmund, 2000:386; Hawkins et al., 2001:394; and Kotler, 2000:175]. The components of attitudes are shown in figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7: Attitude components and manifestations



Source: Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 395.

The first two components, namely affective and cognitive, are conceptualised as determinants of attitudes – a person’s overall evaluation of a product or activity is seen as being determined by the person’s beliefs and / or feelings about the product or activity. For some products, attitudes will be more dependent on beliefs, such as buying a toothbrush, whilst other products may be more dependent on feelings, such as going to a music concert. The behavioural component, however, is not seen as a determinant of attitudes but a manifestation. In other words, a consumer’s behavioural intentions will depend on the other two components and the varying extents of their influence [Kim et al., 1998:145; Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:108; and Hawkins et al., 2001:399].

A critical aspect of these components that needs mentioning, is that they tend to be consistent. In other words, a change in one component results in a change in the other two. This does, however, depend on the influence of other factors [Hawkins et al., 2001:399]. For example, a consumer cannot turn a favourable belief and feeling (“I like eating ice cream”) into an action due to the lack of ability (“... but I don’t have enough

money to buy any.”). Other cases in point might see a child not buying any ice cream because he does not know where it is located in the store or the store has run out of ice cream or even because of a parent’s influence.

Attitudes can be used to predict consumer behaviour. During the years many approaches, such as psychometrics and scale development, have been developed in attempting to measure attitudes [De Meuse & Hostager, 2001:33; Riggio, 2000:707; Ghalam, 1997:13; and Manolis & Levin, 1997:666]. Attitudes are usually good predictors when they are measured at a time relatively close to when the behaviour is to take place generally speaking. To demonstrate this, consider asking a child what he plans on doing for the weekend on a Friday. His reply should be relatively accurate. However, his answer would be less accurate if were asked the same question a month earlier. This suggests that the ability to predict future behaviour will depend on the time interval between when attitudes are measured and when the to-be-predicted behaviour actually takes place. Even a fairly short time interval does not necessarily ensure accurate prediction [Kraus, 1995:64 and Lowry Miller, 1993:104]. For instance, what happens if the child plans on spending the weekend at a friend’s house but his parents plan on taking him elsewhere?

On occasion, it is believed that social influences can affect behaviour to a greater extent than personal attitudes. This has been deduced from the theory of reasoned action – stating that behavioural intentions are determined by either attitudes or subjective norm (perceived social influence) [Bredahl, 2001:23 and Subrahmanyam & Cheng, 2000:269]. An example is a child, despite his beliefs, agreeing to like a retail store purely because of the attitudes demonstrated by his friends. This subject will be scrutinised in the section dealing with reference groups.

Attitude accessibility is another type of influence under discussion. In order for attitudes to be able to influence behaviour, they have to be accessed by the consumer. Even though there is a lot of information, much of it will not be accessed by the consumer in any given moment [Arens, 1999:134]. A young girl, for instance, may not be able to decide whether she has a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards a cold drink simply because she cannot remember what it tastes like.

The last influence in this section is that of direct experience. Attitudes are often formed as a result of an experience a consumer has had with a product or service [Kempf, 1999:35]. The way a consumer regularly buys staple items from the same convenience store is an example. It must also be noted that experience is sometimes not needed in enabling a consumer to form an attitude [Kirzner, 2001:47 and Lovelock & Wright, 1999:67]. For example, a child that has never played the computer game 'Tomraider' may have a positive attitude towards it just by having watched the movie.

2.4.3 Motivation

Motivation is generally referred to as a creation representing an unobservable internal force that stimulates and compels a behavioural response and provides precise direction to that response [Hawkins et al., 2001:362; Kotler 2000:171; Schiffman & Kunuk 2000:266; and Engel et al. 1995:404].

A person is said to be motivated when his or her system is aroused and driven towards a behaviour in satisfying a desired goal. The stronger the drive, the greater the perceived urgency of response. To a consumer, this drive can be viewed as either a need or a want [Mowen, 2000:96; Arens, 1999:136; and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:23]. To illustrate the difference, consider a thirsty child buying a cold drink in a retail store. The child *needs* something to drink and can buy anything within his financial limits. The problem arises when he *wants* a 'Powerade' but can't afford it. He can, however, satisfy his need by buying another beverage.

There are a number of factors that can act as catalysts in motivating consumers. The more prevalent ones, which include product consumption and acquisition; time; changed circumstances; individual differences and marketing influences will be discussed in the section dealing with need recognition.

For many years, psychologists and marketers alike have tried to classify needs. Some of their lists are lengthy and creative. [Cravens, 2000:76; Zikmund, 2000:6; Walker et al. 1999:22; and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:23]. It is generally believed that catering for consumers is far easier and effective once one gathers some understanding with regard to

social and personal needs. Four of the most significant contributors, namely Herzberg, Freud, McGuire and Maslow are discussed in the following section.

i. Herzberg’s theory

Frederick Herzberg [in Bennett, 2000:155] developed a two-factor theory that distinguishes dissatisfiers (factors that cause dissatisfaction) and satisfiers (factors that cause satisfaction). This can be viewed in table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Herzberg’s comparison of dissatisfiers and satisfiers

Dissatisfiers	Satisfiers
o Pocket money / salary	o Achievement
o Relationship with seniors	o Recognition
o Relationship with peers	o Work itself
o Personal life	o Responsibility
o Status	o Advancement
o Relationship with subordinates	o Growth
o Work conditions	
o Parent's policy	
o Supervision	
o Security	

Source: Adapted from Bennett, J.A., 2000, *Managing Tourism Services*, 4th edition, Pretoria, South Africa: J.L. van Schaik Publishers, p. 155.

Herzberg’s theory postulates that the dissatisfiers neither contribute to nor result in satisfaction. In addition, satisfiers have to actively be present to motivate a purchase and that it is impossible to motivate consumers by utilizing environmental factors [Bennett, 2000:155].

ii. Freud’s theory

Sigmund Freud [in Kotler, 2000:172] assumed that the psychological forces shaping consumer’s behavior are mostly unconscious and that a consumer cannot fully understand their own motivations. In other words, a consumer (either an adult or child) will examine a product and react to it using their stated capabilities and less conscious cue such as shape, weight, size, colour and brand just to name a few.

iii. McGuire's theory

McGuire's theory uses a set of motives that accounts for a limited range of consumer behaviour. These need categories are summarised in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: McGuire's classification system

Type of need	Description
o Need for consistency	The desire to have all facets, such as behaviours and attitudes of oneself consistent with each other.
o Need for modeling	How a person's behaviour is based on what others do.
o Need for self-expression	The need to express one's identity to others.
o Need for re-inforcement	The reason why actions take place because of promised rewards.
o Need for assertion	A consumer's need for engaging in activities that will bring about an increase in self-esteem and the way which others view them.
o Need to categorise	The way in which one can categorise and organise information and experiences in some meaningful yet manageable way.
o Need for cues	How one looks for cue or symbols that enable inferences to personal feelings.
o Need to attribute causation	The need to determine who or what cause the things that happen to us.
o Need for independence	The way which an individual is not dependent on others but independent. Culture can influence the exact opposite.
o Need for ego-defense	The need to defend our identities or egos.
o Need for novelty	How one looks for variety and different ideas.
o Need for affiliation	The way which one wants to develop mutually helpful and satisfying relationships with others.

Source: Adapted from Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 363.

iv. Maslow's theory

Psychologist Abraham Maslow [Hawkins et al., 2001:363 and Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000:89] postulated that what motivates people to act is unfulfilled needs and that people meet certain basic needs before being highly motivated to meet other needs. People acquire their motives through genetic endowment and social interaction, some being more important than others. Thus, Maslow ranked needs in a five-level hierarchy, otherwise known as prepotency and is shown in table 2.4 [Kotler, 2000:172].

Table 2.4: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Need Level	What it entails	Typical factors
Self-Actualisation Needs	A desire to know, understand, systematise, organise and construct a system of values.	Self-development and realisation
Esteem Needs	Striving to achieve a high standing relative to others, including mastery and reputation.	Self esteem, recognition, status
Social Needs	Striving to be accepted by intimate members of one's family and close associates.	Sense of belonging, love
Safety Needs	Concern over physical survival.	Security, protection, peace of mind
Physiological Needs	Fundamentals of survival.	Food, water, shelter, sex, sleep

Source: Adapted from Kotler, P., 2000, *Marketing management*, Millennium edition, New Jersey, U.S.A.: Prentice Hall, p. 172.

In general, according to Maslow's macro theory, people first try to meet the needs at the bottom of the hierarchy – the physiological needs, such as the needs for food and rest. As the needs in the bottom categories become satisfied, people move on to fulfilling needs in the higher categories, such as the needs for safety, affiliation, esteem and self-actualization [Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:104].

Some studies have concluded that once a consumer has satisfied a need, that particular need ceases to motivate the consumer. Subsequently another more important need is then pursued by the consumer [Kotler, 2000:172]. To illustrate this point, consider a hungry child. Once the child's hunger has enticed him to buy and eat a pie, he will no longer be hungry and therefore not seem interested in pursuing his need for hunger. However, he might now be thirsty – this need will be his new motivation. Other studies have taken the view that lower-order needs never stop motivating consumers [Engel et al, 1995:421]. Continuing from the previous example, the child may still want to pursue his hunger need, as he may also desire to eat a packet of sweets.

Furthermore, the question as to whether convenience retailers are capable of accomplishing simultaneous need satisfaction can be addressed by Maslow's theory. This is evident in cases when consumers are able to satisfy more than one need with a particular purchase [Hawkins et al., 2001:363]. An example is a child that wears a 'Billabong' sweater, which can satisfy his physiological, social and esteem needs.

While Maslow's hierarchy of needs has been criticised as lacking empirical research to sustain its validity [Churchill & Peter, 1998:143], it can help marketers in many ways. The model suggests some of the many needs that may motivate consumers to partake in an exchange. For example, manufacturers of cigarettes need to think not only in terms of meeting a consumer's needs for something to smoke, they can also serve affiliation needs. The marketers of 'Marlboro' cigarettes have successfully branded the product as a symbol of masculinity in the Western world – something a smoker may want in achieving his affiliation needs [Pechmann & Ratneshwar, 1994: 236].

Whilst the previously mentioned theories will be of some use to this research study, the author believes that Maslow's theory will play the lead role in this area of discussion. The hierarchy of needs theory is a more simplistic approach to motivation, making it more appealing to the needs and desires of children. Whilst the Millennial Generation are adapting to ever-changing societies, it is anticipated that Maslow's approach is still able to be as effective as it has been since its inception. The only caution to bear in mind is that of distinguishing between adult needs and children needs – something that this report hopes to shed some light on. A child, for instance, may believe that sweets are important whilst an adult may disagree.

2.4.4 Emotions

An emotion is referred to as a strong, mental or instinctive feeling that affects consumer's behaviour due to its virtually uncontrollable nature [Hawkins et al. 2001:378; Bagozzi et al., 1999:184; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996:64; and Bennett, 1995:38]. A few of the physiological changes that take place include increases in perspiration, blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugar levels. In addition, eye pupil dilation and more rapid breathing can also be present [Hawkins et al., 2001:378].

All consumers experience different emotions at different times. These emotions are often triggered by environmental influences [Taylor, 2000: 146]. There are, however, times when an individual's internal processes acts as a catalyst, therefore making it an issue that needs to be addressed as it is another form of internal influences found in the model of consumer behaviour [Kotler, 2000:556].

The degree of emotion will often depend on the individual and can vary from a mild emotion to an extreme one. Subsequently associated behaviours, such as anger leading to violence, come into effect. In addition, an individual also experiences subjective feelings such as jealousy and fear. Consumers often recall these subjective feelings as being their emotions. Cognitive thought, however, is the accompanying aspect when these emotions take place. In other words, people start to think in varying degrees [Hawkins, et al., 2001:378 and MacKay, 1999:182], particularly children [Brigham & Kauffman, 1998:25 and Schickedanz, 1994:274]. A child, for instance, may lose self-control over being frustrated or simply being bored. It is this reasoning that has lead to attempts in trying to categorise emotions into a more understandable format. The breakdown of emotion is illustrated in table 2.5.

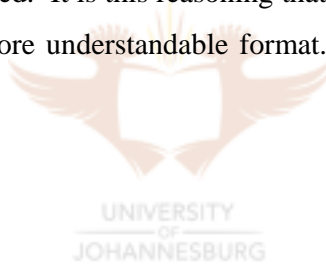


Table 2.5: Emotional dimensions, emotions and emotional indicators.

Dimension	Emotion	Indicator / Feeling
Pleasure	Duty	moral, virtuous, dutiful
	Faith	reverent, worshipful, spiritual
	Pride	proud, superior, worthy
	Affection	loving, affectionate, friendly
	Innocence	innocent, pure, blameless
	Gratitude	grateful, thankful, appreciative
	Serenity	restful, serene, comfortable, soothed
	Desire	desirous, wishful, craving, hopeful
	Joy	joyful, happy, delighted, pleased
	Competence	confident, in control competent
Arousal	Interest	attentive, curious
	Hypoactivation	bored, drowsy, sluggish
	Activation	aroused, active, excited
	Surprise	surprised, annoyed, astonished
	Déjà vu	unimpressed, uninformed, unexcited
	Involvement	involved, informed, enlightened, benefited
	Distraction	distacted, pre-occupied, inattentive
	Surgency	playful, entertained, lighthearted
	Contempt	scornful, contemptous, disdainful
Dominance	Conflict	tense, frustrated, conflictful
	Guilt	guilty, remorseful, regretful
	Helplessness	powerless, helpless, dominated
	Sadness	sad, distressed, sorrowful, dejected
	Fear	fearful, afraid, anxious
	Shame	ashamed, embarrassed, humiliated
	Anger	angry, agitated, enraged, mad
	Hyperactivation	panicked, confused, overstimulated
	Disgust	disgusted, revolted, annoyed, full of loathing
	Skepticism	skeptical, suspicious, distrustful

Source: Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 379.

The previous sections have specifically dealt with internal influences. As indicated earlier in figure 2.5, there are numerous external factors that have significant contributions to the behaviour of consumers. These external factors, namely culture, social stratification, demographics, geographics, reference groups, families and / or households and marketing activities will be discussed in the following section.

2.5 External factors influencing consumer behaviour

External influences play a significant role in affecting a consumer's behaviour and include the following issues namely, culture, subculture, social stratification, demographics, geographics, reference groups, families, households and marketing activities.

2.5.1 Culture

Culture is referred to as the complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society. Culture includes abstract and material elements. It influences attitudes, values, personality types, religion and material possessions and so on [Hawkins et al, 2001:42; Rice, 1993:122; Kotler, 2000:161; Tian, 2000:273; and Burgess, 1998:15]. There are few pertinent issues that need some attention in elaborating the full concept at hand.

Firstly, culture sets broad boundaries within which consumers tend to think and act. This is what is referred to as norms. Violation of these norms result in penalties ranging from mild social disapproval to banishment from the group. Conforming to norms is generally given explicit and obvious rewards, such as working hard at work in order to get a job promotion. However, some norms are expectant without a reward, such as joining the back of a queue when attempting to pay for a purchase in a store [Murray, 2002:16; Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:112; and McCort & Malhotra, 1993:91]. This example highlights what some store edutainment systems have tried to accomplish - assisting children in their socialisation in what is deemed as appropriate consumer behaviour [Creighton, 1994:35].

Secondly, culture is of a scholastic nature and is acquired. Unlike animals, whose behaviour is more instinctive, humans are not born with norms of behaviour. Instead, they learn their norms through imitation or by observing the process of reward and punishment in a society of members who adhere to or deviate from the group's norm [Rotella & Zaleski, 2002:75; Hawkins et al., 2001:42; and Smith 1997:243]. In light of this sentiment, Corbell [1999:163] added, "the learning of culture must be a voluntary

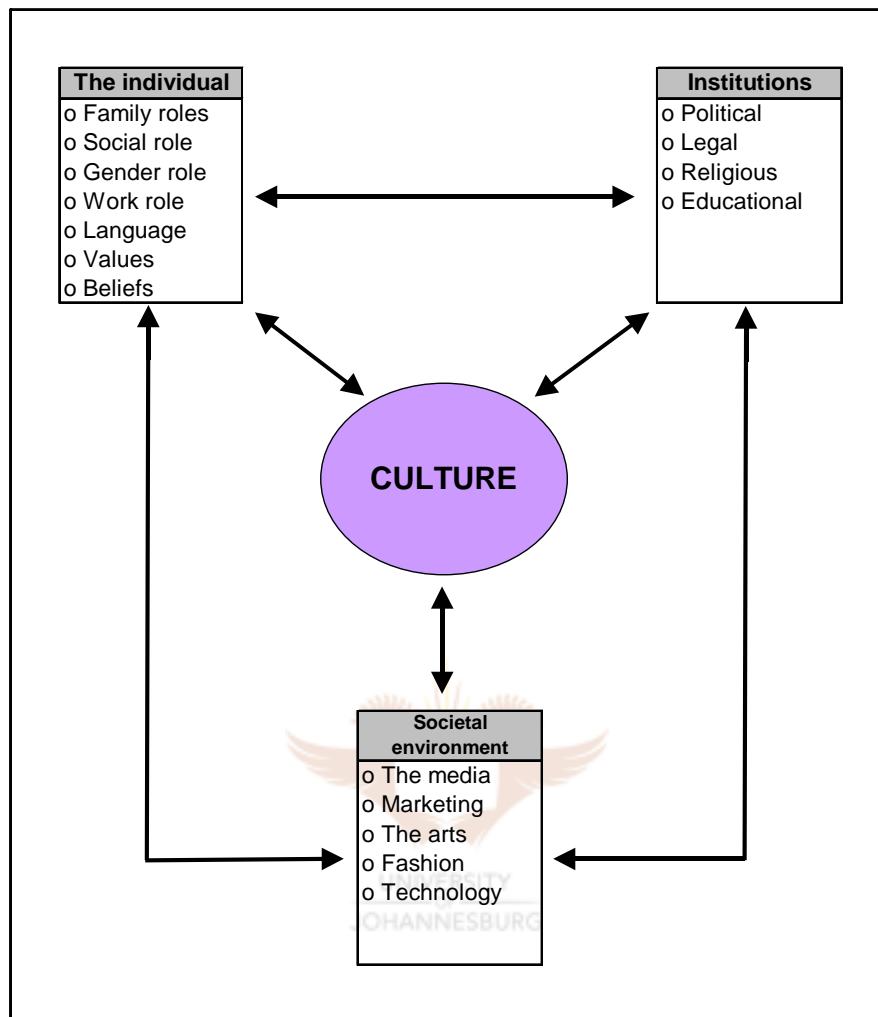
action, motivated by social requirements.” This explains the way a growing child acquires a set of values, perceptions, preferences and behaviours through his or her family and other key institutions [Murray, 2002:16; Ying yi et al., 2000:709; and Kotler, 2000:161]. An illustration is that of an Afrikaans girl that enjoys milk tart and biltong whilst an English girl might enjoy Yorkshire pudding and sausages as a result of their parents’ culture.

Thirdly, consumers are seldom aware of how culture influences their lives. Consumers think and act in similar ways as do other consumers simply because it feels “right.” This explains why certain human behaviour may be acceptable to some cultures and yet on the other hand, manages to offend other cultures. It generally boils down to how people share a common set of convictions that organise and relate many specific attributes [Hawkins et al., 2001:717; Zhang & Gelb, 1996:29; Hutcheson, 1993:4; and Cateora & Graham, 1999:99].

The fourth point is that culture is inculcated – it is passed down from one generation to the next through institutions such as family members and religion [Holden, 2001:657; Jacobs Jr., 1999:13; and Manrai & Manrai, 1995:115]. It should be noted that culture is also adaptive (the fifth issue) [Smith, 1997:243]. As culture evolves, it may be possible to associate benefits of a product or brand with new values or it may be necessary to change the product if that value is no longer gratifying in society. This can easily be verified by watching a television show from the seventies. This issue has given rise to something referred to as cultural borrowing – a responsible effort to borrow those cultural ways as seen helpful in the pursuit for better solutions to a society’s particular problems [Cateora & Graham, 1999:105]. For example, South Africans may follow the European fashion industry trends.

Finally, culture is regarded as a comprehensive concept, thus including almost everything that influences a person’s thoughts, feelings and behaviours. There are numerous interactions around a consumer’s culture [Walker et al., 1999:108 and McCort & Malhotra, 1993:91]. For example, a consumer may not be aware of the extent of her culture’s influence when shopping at a retailer. The multiple interactions of culture are illustrated in figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8: The interaction of culture



Source: Brassington, F., Pettitt, S., 1997, *Principles of Marketing*, Great Britain: Pitman Publishing, p. 111.

Figure 2.8 illustrates the interaction culture plays with respect to the way in which individuals, institutions and the social environment co-exist. This role is often considered to be the most influential of all possible external influences [Kotler, 2000:161].

Although verbal differences exist amongst cultures, as evident in comparing the English language used in Great Britain, United States, Australia and South Africa, there are non-verbal differences too. This has been described as the arbitrary meanings a culture assigns to actions, events and things other than words [Hawkins et al., 2001:56]. The most significant cases to this study regarding the topic at hand will now be discussed.

The meaning of time can vary in two ways across cultures, namely time perspective and interpretations assigned to specific time usage. According to Edward Hall [in Cateora & Graham, 1999:130], the former can be divided into two perspectives. The first, known as polychronic time or P-time, is generally typified by long-term relationship building and simultaneous involvement of activities that receive priority over adhering to schedules. Asians and Indians are examples of cultures that make use of polychronic time. Monochronic or M-time in contrast consists of doing one thing at a time and being prompt and concise when dealing with appointments. This leads to short-term relationships. Time is seen as being tangible and linear object. In other words, it can be scheduled, saved or wasted. German and Australian cultures are typical examples.

The last point, regarding time usage, addresses the way that consumers take their time in responding to decisions. Generally, it is assumed that important decisions take more time in arriving at a conclusion or result. This, however, may not always be the case with younger consumers [Hawkins et al., 2001:57]. For instance, an expensive purchase for an adult may take a few days to think about, whereas a child may do so within minutes.

Space is an aspect that differs particularly in the working world. It is generally accepted that people in authority have bigger offices. Personal space, however, varies amongst South Africans, as some believe in maintaining a “space bubble” around them whilst others believe that standing too far away from the other person is being rude. When this “space bubble” is burst by someone else, they in turn regard him or her as being pushy and rude. A queue at a cashier is where consumers typically experience this. The influence of etiquette is brought into play by the previous scenario [Hawkins et al., 2001:58 and Gannon, 1998:44].

Symbols and colours play a role in influencing non-verbal communications [Hawkins et al., 2001:59 and Cohen, 1996:187]. The male / female icons used at garage restrooms exemplify the issue of symbols, whilst a relevant colour example sees how most South Africans generally assume that babies dressed in pink are girls and babies dressed in blue are boys.

Within cultures it is often found that subcultures exist. A subculture is a segment within a culture that shares a set of meanings, values or activities that differ in certain respects from those of the overall culture [Arens 1999:143 and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:111]. The term microculture is sometimes used, as some experts believe that the word *subculture* connotes inferiority [Engel et al., 1995:612]. Any culture can be divided into several types of subcultures, each with its own characteristics, yet existing within the whole. It all depends on the onlooker's perspective just how detailed a division is required [Tian, 2000:273 and Churchill & Peter, 1998:151]. A brief list of subculture dimensions with relevant examples are shown in table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Subculture dimensions.

Subculture dimensions	Examples
o nationality	South African, Austrian
o religion	Christianity, Islam
o gender	female, male
o age	Generation Y, Baby Boomers
o lifestyle	punks, gothic
o racial group	Indian, White
o geographic region	Gauteng, Mpumalanga
o income	middle, low

Source: Adpated from Kotler, P., 2000, *Marketing Management*, Millennium edition, New Jersey, U.S.A.: Prentice Hall, 2000, p. 161.

It should be pointed out that the above categories are not clear-cut cases as many consumers actually have overlapping attributes. An example is that of two different racial groups that share the same religion yet their lifestyles are completely different. This has brought about the acceptance that everyone is part of several subcultures [Hawkins et al., 2001:147].

Subcultures tend to transfer their beliefs and values from generation to generation. Racial, religious and ethnic backgrounds affect consumers' preferences for styles of dress, food, beverages, transportation, personal care products and household furnishings to name a few [Burgess, 1998:16]. It is anticipated that this research study will encounter various behaviours from the Millennial Generation as they are continually growing up. The following section deals with archetypal consumer learning conditions that are

grouped under three headings namely, self-oriented values, environment-oriented values and other-oriented values.

2.5.1.1 Self-oriented values

- Hard work / leisure

Consumers may view work as being a burden that they detest, whilst others may see work as helping them fulfill their lives. Another aspect looks at whether people will either work for internal rewards or external rewards [Murray, 2002:16; Hawkins et al., 2001:54; and Fay, 1992:50]. For example, does a child go to a shop to buy bread and milk because they have been given extra money for sweets if they do, or is it because they actually like going to the shop or perhaps that they are expected to by their parents?

- Active / passive

This refers to the way that consumers are either expected or not expected to take on life's challenges. An active approach be the way that physical skills and feats are valued more highly than less physical performances [Hawkins et al., 2001:52 and Levy & Weitz, 1998:140]. Children, for instance, are often encouraged to choose their own purchases when going shopping with their parents.

- Postponed gratification / immediate gratification

Some individuals may believe that *carpe diem* (seize the day) is very important. They will subsequently live for the moment and take each day one at a time. In contrast to this, others may believe that it is more important to "save for a rainy day" [Hawkins et al., 2001:54]. This approach might encourage a child to save some of his pocket money and not spend it all at once.

- Material / non-material

Some people may push the notion that material wealth accumulation is vital in sustaining social well being. This notion can either take the form of being instrumental or terminal. The former refers to materials that are acquired to enable an individual to do something. For example, a consumer buys a computer so that they

can work more effectively and play games in their leisure time. An acquisition for the mere sake of owning something, such as art, is known as terminal materialism [LaBarbera & Gurhan, 1997:71 and Hawkins et al., 2001:53].

- Religious / secular

This refers to the extent of religious impact on daily activities [Holden, 2001:657; Burgess, 1998:16; and LaBarbera & Gurhan, 1997:80]. For example, Islamic consumers generally live a more religious oriented life than some Christian consumers. This subsequently would see how their shopping hours differ due to religious commitments.

- Sensual gratification / abstinence

Some cultures may shun upon the idea of people overdoing the minimal requirements needed in satisfying desires such as eating and drinking. For example, a child may not be allowed to have sweets after a meal, as the meal is seen as being sufficient enough in settling hunger pains. The other side of the coin reflects how some consumers might find form of overindulgence totally acceptable [Rotella & Zaleski, 2002:75; Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:112; and Rose, 1991:91].

2.5.1.2 Environment-oriented values

- Performance / status

An individual's performance is sometimes attributed to their opportunities and rewards and at other times, to their position and class. The issue as to whether all individuals have the same opportunities and privileges in life can be contentious. As a result, a dimension known as the power distance index is used in determining the degree to which people accept inequality in power, authority, status and wealth as natural or inherent in society [Cateora & Graham, 1999:98]. Geert Hofstede [in Engel et al., 1995:637], the creator of this dimension, found that cultures with high power distance index scores are more apt to have a general distrust of others since power is seen to rest with individuals and is coercive rather than legitimate. This results in perceptions that those in power are entitled to privileges.

- Risk taking / security

This aspect, postulated by Hofstede [in Engel et al., 1995:636], examines society's view on whether a person is seen as being courageous or stupid in tackling new ventures that are unpredictable. Cultures with high-scoring uncertainty avoidance indices, are highly intolerant of ambiguity and as a result tend to be distrustful of new ideas and behaviours. Mavericks, with their unconventional approaches in risk taking therefore do not easily fit into conservative cultures. Cultures scoring low in uncertainty avoidance are associated with a low level of anxiety and stress, a tolerance of deviance and dissent, and a willingness to take risks [Lovelock & Wright, 1999:73].

- Tradition / change

Some people are of the belief that changing traditions are totally unacceptable regardless whether new and improved ways of life have been discovered [Flanagan & Finger, 1998:304 and Griffith, 1998:50]. A café owner, for instance, might believe that store changes are not necessary despite modern business trends. Even uncontrollable changes such as natural disasters and war sometimes have no impact. Some consumers believe that culture is not a dynamic, living process and will not easily change their ways of life [Cateora & Graham, 1999:101]. Opposition to this concept (cultural borrowings) has already been addressed.

- Problem solving / fatalistic

The previous point draws attention to the way that consumers deal with problems that they encounter. Some cultures will reveal how trials and tribulations are met with little mental and physical effort on an individual's part, whilst others will explicitly express their disappointment and concern accordingly [Hawkins et al., 2001:51]. A child, for instance, might complain to a storeowner alone or with the help of a parent about a disappointing purchase. This example draws on the matter of providing the right environment and degree of response from influential adults could result in children pursuing interests [Hall, 2000:153]. Piaget simply said: "Children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves, and each time that we try to teach them something too quickly, we keep them from reinventing it themselves" [Papert, 1999:104].

Moreover, behaviour could never become progressively skilful with practice unless the child knew something about the results of certain actions in advance of launching them. One could never learn from one's errors unless one knew in advance the kinds of actions that could pull one away from error and towards success. [Russell, 1999:247].

- Cleanliness

This refers to how important hygiene and health is to various people. Some cultures place a high value on maintaining personal and public hygiene whilst others do not because they do not accept the concept or simply do not know any better. An illustration is that some rural Africans lack the knowledge and importance of oral healthcare and subsequently do not make use of toothpaste [Cateora & Graham, 1999:360].

- Nature

This last environment-oriented value deals with the manner that people regard nature as either being something that can be conquered / improved upon or something that has negative connotations [Hawkins et al., 2001:51]. Attempts have been made to interpret the way this influences a child's socialisation [Easterling & Miller, 1995:531], subsequently giving rise to green marketing – a term used to identify concern with the environmental consequences of a variety of marketing activities [US Newswire, 2000:1; Ottman, 1998:10; and Churchill & Peter, 1998:44]. An example is that of the fictional ostrich character 'Zibi', who promoted recycling amongst younger consumers.

2.5.1.3 Other-oriented values

- Youth / age

This measures the extent on the way that daily activities are focused on either adults or children. It also looks at the role of children in decision-making and their position in society. Some cultures may place a high priority on children and results in an environment that revolves around its youth. Other cultures may operate in a manner

similar to the old cliché “children should be seen and not heard” [Hawkins et al., 2001:47; Kotler, 2000:166; and Hong, 1999:641]. Although it is sometimes thought that western societies are youth orientated, Jerry Large [2002:8] argues that “our lives have distinct borders, and children are not welcome in most workplaces. Modern American child rearing is as much about stashing children away as it is about actual parenting.”

- Masculinity / femininity

This factor, another one postulated by Hofstede [in Engel et al., 1995:637 and Hawkins et al., 2001:48], defines the extent to which societies hold values traditionally regarded as predominately masculine or feminine. Men have generally been identified with the need for acquisition of money and materials, assertiveness and respect for achievement, whilst women have generally been associated with environmental concerns and nurturing. These roles are, however, going under major changes (where culture permits it) and the trend today sees a blurring of gender roles [Chirazi, 2002:18; Canedy, 1998:6; Levy & Wietz, 1998:110; Headley, 1997:60; and Witt, 1997:253]. Typical examples include more working mothers and housekeeping fathers.

- Extended / limited family

Although this subject is dealt with extensively in the section dealing with consumers’ families, a brief look for the time being will suffice. It has often been regarded that families form the basis for societies and have a lifetime long impact on individuals regardless of their backgrounds. The difference lies in that some cultures believe in having large families, thus demonstrating their wealth or ensuring that their elders are comprehensively looked after in the future. Individuals are seen to be liable in ensuring the well being of the entire family. This, however, is contradicted by beliefs that smaller families are more mobile and economically viable in providing the best for each member. These members subsequently do not feel as obliged to take care of the entire family [Kotler, 2000:166].

- Individual / collective

This aspect, as postulated by Hofstede [in Engel et al., 1995:636], examines whether consumers are pushed into thinking and doing things for themselves or are driven into working as a group with one purpose in mind. Collectivism pertains to building strong cohesive groups with unquestionable loyalty in exchange for the protection given to consumers. Cultures, that are high in individualism and collectivism, found in Australia and the U.S.A. promotes the idea of people being independent and unique, whilst countries like Japan and India (those with low respective scores) believe otherwise. South Africa, however, has cultures that promote both ways of thinking [Hawkins et al., 2001:46 and Gannon, 1998:38].

- Competitive / co-operative

Success in life is viewed by some people only to be attainable by competing successfully against others. The analogy of “being in a rat race” is all too familiar with these types of consumers. This drive for success sometimes sees parents push their children too hard, often resulting in unhappiness [Guthrie & Matthews, 2002:33 and Taylor, 2002:17]. In contrast to these beliefs, there is the notion that success is possible by forming alliances and conglomerates. This is the rationale behind the Japanese Keiretsu for instance [Brierty et al., 1998:30].

2.5.2 Social stratification, demographics and geographics

Social stratification refers to an influence that affects the ways consumers behave. Virtually all societies exhibit social stratification. The respective social classes that emerge are relatively homogenous and enduring divisions in society, which are hierarchically ordered and whose members share similar values, interests and behaviour [Engel et al., 1995:681 and Churchill & Peter, 1998:155]. In other words, a person is ranked according to one or a few dimensions valued by society such the amount of money one earns or where one lives.

The result of social structuring subsequently reflects a community’s expectations for a lifestyle among each class as well as the positive or negative social estimation of honour

and respect given to each class. Although it is generally believed that most industrialised nations do not conform to strict and tightly defined social classes [Engel et al., 1995:682; Hawkins et al., 2001:120; Arens, 1999:140; and Burgess, 1998:17], social classes do, however, have certain determinant variables as shown in table 2.7.

Table 2.7 Determinants of social classes.

Economic Variables	Interaction Variables	Political Variables
o Occupation	o Personal prestige	o Power
o Income	o Association	o Class consciousness
o Wealth	o Socialisation	o Mobility and succession

Source: Engel J.F., Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W., 1995, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: Dryden Press, p. 682.

Occupation is often seen as the best single indicator of social class in the field of consumer behaviour. One of its benefits is in examining different consumption patterns and behaviours. For example, does a good occupation provide a better salary, which in turn allows more consumption? A further step in this direction takes a look at a person's occupational position compared to others in the same field. Income and wealth are related to possessions. Possessions are symbols of class membership – not only the number or quality of possessions, but also the nature of the choices made [Engel et al., 1995:683 and Brassington & Pettitt, 2001:110]. An example is that of a child who is able to buy more sweets than another due to having more pocket money because of wealthy parents. In addition, the wealthier child can also buy branded sweets (such as 'Manhattan's') as opposed to generic ones. Products and brands often seek to be positioned as symbols of status [Kotler, 2000:162]. This is evident in a case where younger consumers might regard a friend to be wealthy if they had a 'Sony Playstation' or satellite television.

Consumers are generally more at ease when surrounded by people of similar values and behaviour [Deshpande, 2001:100]. This focuses attention on the variables (as shown in table 2.8) that epitomise the essence of social classes, namely prestige, association and socialisation. Prestige describes the manner in which one person respects another whilst association deals with the way that people live their everyday lives in similar ways. Socialisation refers to how a person learns the skills, attitudes and customs to participate

in the life of the community. Social class behaviour and values are clearly differentiated in children by the time they have reached adolescence. The numerous examples given in the section dealing with the way children learn have provided suitable illustrations of socialisation [LaBarbera & Gurhan, 1997:84; Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996:68; and Engel et al., 1995:684].

Dealing with the political variables in table 2.8, class consciousness refers to the degree to which people in a social class are aware of themselves as a distinctive group with shared interests. For example, children know which groups at school are classified as “nerds”, “weirdos”, and sporty.” This example is vital in citing the impact on a child’s socialisation and child rearing values. Power describes the manner in which leaders are formed in the respective class groups [Hong, 2000:457]. The control factor is becoming more important to youngsters as parents are readily seeing their own authority slightly diminishing [Murray, 2002:16]. Mobility and succession is a dual concept related to the stability or instability of stratification systems. Succession refers to the process of children inheriting the class position of their parents [Hong, 2000:457; Engel et al., 1995:687; and Mitchell, 1995:40]. A child that has grown up in an environment of luxury and is nurtured profusely, may for instance, follow in her parents footsteps with regard to where she fits in society’s classes.

A closing issue that deals with the determinants of social class is that of values – shared beliefs about how people should behave. This indicates the social class to which one belongs. When a group of people share a common set of convictions that organise and relate many specific attributes, it is possible to categorise an individual in the group by the degree to which he or she possesses these values [Hawkins et al., 2001:717].

With regard to demographics (the study of characteristics of a human population) and geographics (the study of characteristics of a geographical region), the only issue that needs introduction for the time being is that of different types that are able to influence consumer behaviour and social stratification. A list of potential geographic categories includes population size, density, climate and region. An inventory of possible demographic categories includes age, gender, race, occupation, religion, family size, nationality, education and income [Hawkins et al., 2001:112; Cravens, 2000:116; and Kotler, 2000:263].

As consumer wants, preferences and usage rates are often associated with demographic and geographic variables, it is expected that the demographics of the targeted Millennial Generation will heavily influence the recommendations to the respective retailers. The previously mentioned demographic categories are dealt with in setting up the marketing questionnaire for this research report and are examined in chapter four.

2.5.3 Reference groups

Reference groups are generally defined as groups whose presumed perspectives or values are being used by an individual as the basis for his or her current behaviour, beliefs and feelings [Hawkins et al., 2001:226; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000:203; Levy & Weitz, 1998:139; Churchill & Peter, 1998:155; and Engel et al., 1995:716]. Reference groups play a huge role in the lives of young consumers as they are sometimes easily moulded into consumers depending on their reference groups.

Groups are generally classified in four categories, namely primary, secondary, aspirational and dissociative. Primary groups (such as family and friends) are often regarded as the most influential and are characterised by frequent, informal interpersonal contact. They are viewed as social aggregations that facilitate unrestricted face-to face interaction. This reasoning explains why similar-minded children like to play with each other. Secondary groups, on the other hand, have limited face-to-face interactions and are typically more sporadic and less comprehensive and influential [Churchill & Peter, 1998:156; Hawkins et al., 2001:227; and Kotler, 2000:163]. Community organisations, schools and religious groups are typical cases in point.

Aspirational groups exhibit a desire to adopt the norms, values and behaviour of others with whom the individual aspires to associate. Consumers will therefore adapt themselves accordingly, to what they seem to be a positive attraction, regardless of realistic rationalisations and their capabilities. For example, a young girl may be exposed to television and store advertising, and want to get hold of as many 'Coca-cola' bottle-top liners in order to win a cell phone. She may believe that having a cell phone will allow her to fit in with a trendy group of girls at her school. The fact that she is allergic to gassy cold drinks and has no money somehow does not hinder her aspiration. Groups

portraying a less desirable appeal are called dissociative groups. Individuals can be seen to reject their values and behaviour. This motivation steers the individual away from one group but closer to another group [Martin et al., 1999:165; Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:115; Hawkins et al., 2001:227; and Kotler, 2000:165]. A scholar, for instance, might try to dissociate himself from children that shoplift.

According to Hawkins et al. [2001:232] reference groups can take on three influential forms, namely normative, informational and identification. Normative (or utilitarian) influence occurs when an individual fulfills group expectations to gain a direct reward or to avoid a sanction. This has sometimes been referred to as the relationship between rewards of compliance as compared with the costs. Approval and symbols of esteem can provide incentives and rewards, whilst restriction on freedom of choice or lost time can be seen as costs, for example. The resulting actions will be determined by a consumer's perception of the profit inherent in the interaction. This in turn is dependent on how conspicuous the action is [Hawkins et al., 2001:233]. A child, for example, may prioritise what brand of potato chips he is to consume, as everyone is exposed to his choice and will therefore approve or disapprove.

Informational influence is the way an individual accepts the opinions and behaviours of others as providing credible and needed evidence about reality. This influence is more apparent when consumers are confronted with difficult product assessments and is usually based on either the resemblance of the group's members to the individual or the proficiency of the influencing group member [Hawkins et al. 2001:232 and Rummel et al., 2000:38]. A young girl may not want to shop at a certain retailer because her friends told her that it is far too expensive, is an example.

The last form of influence is that of identification (or value-expressive). This comes into play when an individual, in an attempt to satisfy psychological association needs, has internalised the group's values and norms, leading the individual to accept these characteristics as their own. Mannerisms are subsequently in line with the group's values, despite the fact that there might not even be motivation in actually becoming a member [Hawkins et al., 2001:233]. To illustrate this concept, consider a group of children having their lunch together. The newcomer might notice that everyone has a

lunch tin. He might then discard using brown-paper bags and use a lunch tin instead, seeing that everyone else does.

Reference groups are able to apply varying amounts of influence to certain situations that consumers find themselves in. The following issues are generally held true, particularly with younger consumers. Firstly, the more relevant a particular activity is to the group's functioning, the stronger the pressure to conform to the group norms concerning that activity. For example, children dress differently when they play outside or go to a fancy restaurant together. Secondly, an individual with low self-confidence is more susceptible to being influenced. A young girl that lacks self-esteem and confidence could be a prime target of peer influencing for instance. Thirdly, a group's influence is the strongest when the use of the product or brand is visible to the group or it is deemed to be a luxury. For example, 'Toblerone' chocolate may be seen as "special" chocolate. Finally, the more commitment an individual feels to a group, the more the individual will conform to the group norms [Hawkins et al., 2001:233 and Rummel et al., 2000:38]. An illustration is that of a desperate person who dresses, talks and acts differently (despite personal feelings) in order to be accepted by a particular peer group.

Since children are still on a learning curve, they are constantly susceptible to the influence of certain individuals known as opinion leaders. Opinion leadership occurs when individuals seek information from each other or as a by-product of normal group interaction. Young consumers often ask for assistance from reference groups or family members. The likelihood of this taking place increases when the consumer has a high need for social approval and feels unable to make decisions regardless of whether they possess the necessary information or not [Kotler, 2000:165 and Burgess, 1998:19]. Robinson and Champion [1999:535] found that children tend to believe utterances from speakers who were better informed than them and disbelieved those who were less informed – all with no age-related differences.

A lot of studies of child development still centre upon individual differences in social status, tacitly overlooking relational constraints inherent in the ecology of the reference peer group. [Santos & Winegar, 1999:1]. It is always hoped that children will be positively influenced by what their parents deem as "acceptable" peers [Rotella & Zaleski, 2002:75 and Frankel & Myatt, 1995:300]. Parents have limited control in this

area, sometimes leading to paranoia and over protectiveness with regard to this research's respective age categories [Pettit, 1999:768]. In contrast, socioethological approaches have stressed that natural groups provide a variety of distinct social roles that may have a differential impact upon individual growth and development [Santos & Winegar, 1999:1]. Furthermore, some believe that social isolation is to the detriment of a child's socialisation [Mervis, 1998:467 and Creighton, 1994:35]. A question of interest is do these peers actually play such a significant role?

2.5.4 Families and households

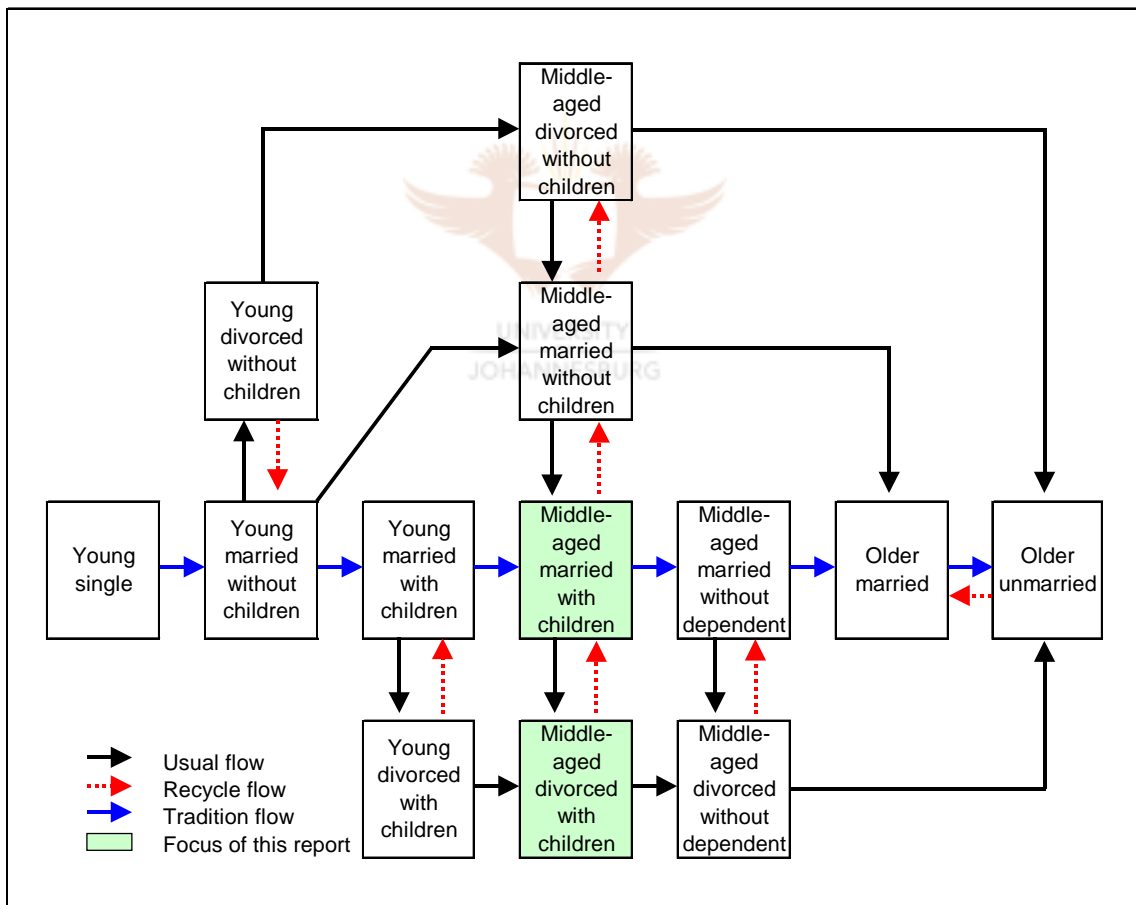
Traditionally speaking, a family is usually referred to as a group of two or more people related by blood, marriage or adoption that reside together. This family would consist of a father and a mother living in a socially approved relationship with their own or adopted children. The extended family includes grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and in-laws, whilst a blended family consists of a couple, one or both which was previously married, their children, and the children from the previous marriage of one or both parents [Hawkins et al., 2001:193; Engel et al., 1995:742; and Kotler, 2000:165].

The terminology and its content described in the previous paragraph have been undergoing numerous changes as society has changed. The typical family configuration is becoming very complicated, particularly for the Millennial Generation, and is sometimes referred to as a household. Examples would include a household consisting of two parents of the same sex or a group of non-related people living together. Households are becoming a more important unit of analysis for marketers because of the rapid growth in non-traditional families and non-family households [Hawkins et al., 2001:194; Rindfleisch et al., 1997:313; and Engel et al., 1995:743].

It is inevitable that families and households will evolve over time. This gradual change carries many implications for retailers and personal needs. In other words, how will retailers and brands be able to evolve in such a way that they will appeal to the families and households of the Millennial Generation? In addressing this issue, attention must be given to the life cycle of the respective entities [Rindfleisch et al., 1997:312].

The family life cycle refers to the manner in which family members evolve. As this takes place, the needs and desires of the family also change, affecting what can be afforded, where spending priorities lie and how a purchasing decision is made. All this constantly changes as the family matures and moves through the various stages of its life cycle. Many researches point out that the family life cycle, although still useful, has become outdated in the new millennium. The changing lifestyles and external environment has changed dramatically since the inception of the family life cycle concept [Schaninger & Danko, 1993:590; Hawkins et al., 2001:196; and Churchill & Peter, 1998:159]. This has resulted in changing it to a household life cycle in order to reflect the modern society. Figure 2.9 illustrates the stages of a modern household life cycle.

Figure 2.9 Stages of a modern household life cycle



Source: Adapted from Churchill, Jr., G.A., Peter, J.P., 1998, *Marketing: Creating value for customers*, 2nd edition, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 159.

Figure 2.9 shows how the traditional evolution takes place (from left to right). The life cycle starts out with a young, single person. As this person ages, they would get married,

have children and raise the children until they were ready to move out of the house. The deviations of the traditional family life cycle are the result of divorces, several marriages and deaths. Although there are various ways of illustrating the modern life cycle, it is by no means perfect, as some issues are not taken into account [Churchill & Peter, 1998:158 and Hawkins et al, 2001:197]. Life long singles, gay markets, delayed marriages and parenthood are some examples.

As this research study is focusing on children between the ages of nine and twelve, it would seem fitting that the 'middle-aged married / divorced with children' (also known as 'full nest II') category be the focal point. The appropriate 'full nest II' category would include single parents and married couples, both with the children in the applicable age groups. Roughly speaking, this respective category is characterised by an increase in income of an employed spouse (usually the father) whilst the other spouse (usually the mother) returns to work after having cared for the children since birth. The household's consumption includes buying goods in bulk and extra mural activities for the children [Kotler, 2000:168]. Single parents, however, consume more goods that are time and energy saving [Hawkins et al., 2001:202 and Coley 1998:218].

The way in which families are structured will have an impact on the way a child learns. For instance, research has shown how the uniqueness and age difference of one child can influence the socialisation of his or her siblings [Klein, 2002:169] and how divorced mothers' relationships with biological fathers and single men also play a role [Coley, 1998:218 and Heath & Cavanaugh, 1993:781]. It is believed that children from intact families have advantages in both educational attainment and social well being [McLanahan & Sandefur 1994:3] as well as in enhanced occupational placement and earnings attainment [Powell & Parcel 1997:33]. Likewise children from larger families have lower levels of verbal facility and lower levels of mathematics and reading achievement [De Gruyter, 1994:417]. Furthermore, children from larger families have less favourable home environments, lower levels of educational achievement and higher levels of behavioural problems [Hong, 2000:457 and Downey, 1995:746; and Parcel & Menaghan, 1993:120]. This is sometimes attributed to the amount of the family's available income [Booth, 2002:63]. Although no South African statistics are available, during 2000, the estimated annual expenditures on a child, aged 9 to 11 years, by

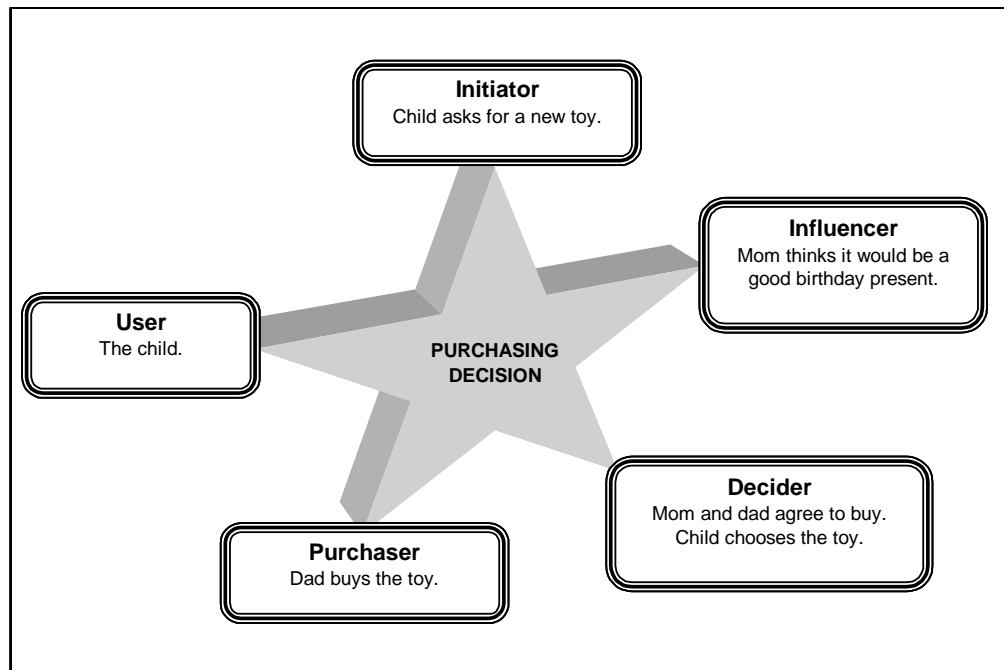
husband-wife families in the United States totaled \$165,630 [World Almanac & Book of Facts, 2002:69].

Families are sometimes referred to “small businesses” and reflect the influences and activities of the individuals in the family. Individuals often buy products for the family as well as their own use [Burgess, 1998:19]. Three variables that help elucidate how families function include adaptability, cohesion and communication.

Adaptability measures the ability of a family to change its power structure, relationships rules and role relationships in response to situational and development stress. The degree of adaptability shows how well a family can meet the challenges presented by changing needs. Cohesion is the emotional way that family members bond with each other. It measures how close or apart individuals are from the rest of their family. Communication is a dimension that is dependent on the first two variables. Positive communication skills enable a family to adapt and bond easily, whilst negative communication skills restrict adaptability and cohesion [Liebman, 2001:8 and Engel et al., 1995:744]. Family communication concerning consumer issues and consumption is an imperative aspect of consumer socialisation, because such communication is one of the processes by which parents pass on market place skills and knowledge to their children. [Carlson et al., 1992:31].

Family decision-making is the process by which decisions that directly or indirectly involve two or more family members are made [Hawkins et al., 2001:206]. The decision-making process (which is the last section of this chapter) is different for individual purchases and purchases made by a family. An example of the possible roles that different family members play when buying a toy is illustrated in figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10: The nature of family purchase roles

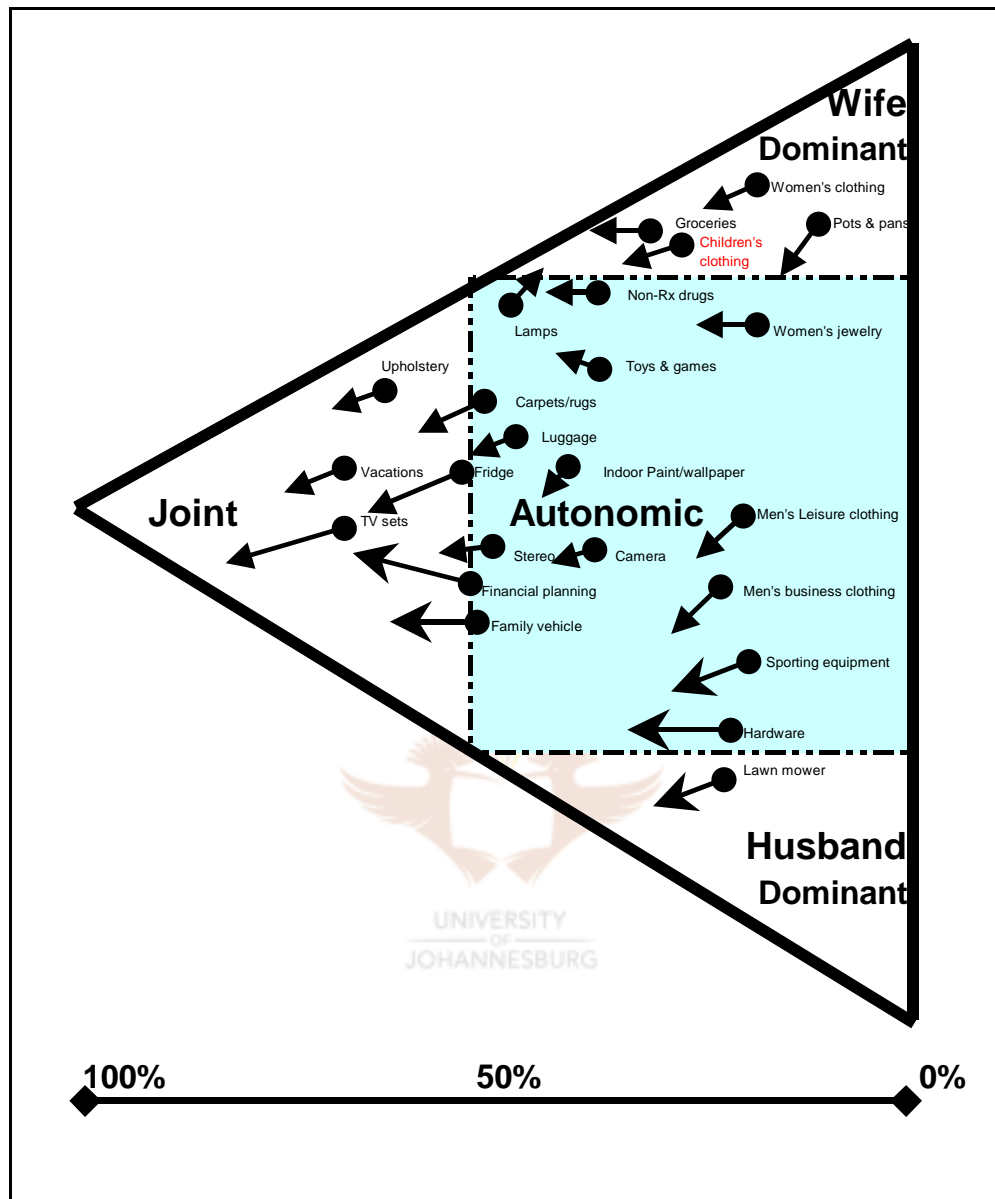


Source: Adapted from Kotler, P., 2000, *Marketing Management*, Millennium edition, New Jersey, U.S.A.: Prentice-Hall, p. 176.

Any family member is capable of playing any role and subsequently influencing the final outcome. A mother, for instance, may be the initiator, decider and purchaser when buying a cold drink for her child at a café. Another scenario might see the father as the initiator and decider, whilst the child is the influencer and the mother the user. It is useful to note that during important purchases, the family may look for information to assist them [Hawkins et al., 2001:206].

The nature of family buying roles has subsequently led to family decision-making being traditionally categorised (as shown in figure 2.11) as husband-dominant, wife-dominant, joint or individualized [Engel et al., 1995:750; Creighton, 1994:35; Witt, 1997:253; and Hawkins et al, 2001:207].

Figure 2.11: Family decision-making roles



Source: Engel, J.F., Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W., 1995, *Consumer Behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: Dryden Press, p. 750.

Figure 2.11 shows how the bottom part of the triangle is deemed to belong to decisions made by the husband, whilst the top part reveals the decisions predominantly made by wives. The centre point is the contribution made by both the husband and wife. This traditional view, of what men and women would buy, is believed to be outdated and therefore cannot be used to the extent used in the past by researchers. The increase of single parents and the decline of gender differences are typical complications [Chirazi, 2002:18; Engel et al. 1995:750; Canedy, 1998:6; and Ruth & Commuri, 1998:400]. One

will also notice that the role played by children has been left out. More and more researchers are agreeing that the influential role of children is increasing, thus qualifying the need for new research models [Fairall, 2001:73 and Kwai-Choi Lee & Collins, 2000:1181; Kim & Lee, 1997:307; and Beatty & Talpade, 1994:332].

It is postulated that families partake in two types of decision-making processes. The first is consensual, where the family agree on the purchase but need to agree how it will be achieved subsequently leading to some form of information searching. A case in point is how a family all agree on stopping at a particular petrol station on their holiday journey. The second type of decision-making process, often regarded as the norm, is accommodative, where the family cannot agree [Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:118 and Lackman & Lanasa, 1993:110]. For example, two parents may refuse to buy their children fizzy cold drinks, despite their children's plea.

It is inevitable that disagreements will occur during family decision-making. There are, however, general approaches used by consumers to resolve conflicts. Bargaining is used when a parent is prepared to only buy one toy from the collection, as opposed to buying the whole collection as requested by the child. The way a child explains to his mother why he needs something is known as reasoning. When a parent, as a result of conflict, ignores a child, they demonstrate the use of playing on the child's emotions. Impression management is the manner in which facts are misrepresented in order to win. A parent, for example, may use tactics beyond a child's comprehension in order to settle an issue. Sometimes additional information, such as a third-party opinion, is needed. When a parent refuses to pay for something their children desire demonstrates the use of authority [Palan & Wilkes, 1997:159].

Consumer socialisation is the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace. A child's family provides the basic framework for socialisation [Engel et al., 1995:780 and Carlson et al., 1992:31]. This framework of learning is divided into two categories, namely directly relevant and indirectly relevant. The former deals with knowledge that is needed to do things in carrying out a purchase. A child, for instance must know how to compare prices and brands, know how to select a product and then pay for it. Knowledge that prompts a purchase and results in different behaviour refers to indirectly relevant

consumer learning [Hawkins et al., 2001:213 and Qayumi, 2001:63]. For example, a consumer does not need to know that a product is prestigious in order to buy it.

The two types of learning just described, are deliberately and casually taught to children by their parents through modelling, mediation and instrumental training. Modelling occurs when a child learns appropriate or inappropriate consumption behaviours by observing others. This generally takes place without explicit instruction from the role model whilst the child “learns” without making much mental or physical effort [Weiyun He, 2001:75]. For example, a child could learn how to smoke a cigarette merely by watching an adult smoke. Mediation occurs when a parent alters a child’s initial interpretation of, or response to, a marketing or other stimulus [Hawkins et al., 2001:214 and Headley, 1997:60]. For example, the ‘Windows’ television advert shows that ostriches can fly. Despite what children have been taught, some might believe the advertisement causing parents to re-enforce the truth. Instrumental training occurs when a parent or sibling specifically and directly attempts to bring about certain responses through reasoning or re-enforcement [Engel et al., 1995:539 and Rindfleisch et al., 1997:319]. Parents, for example, might continuously explain to their children which snack foods are healthy to eat.

When combining all the previously mentioned terms, consumer socialisation is far more appealing and efficient for younger consumers. Studies have shown how starting at a young age can mould children into better consumers once they grow up to be adults [Otnes et al., 1995:622; Creighton, 1994:35; and McNeal, 1992:34]. One report even found that instilling a sense of commitment and loyalty was possible amongst children as young as five years old [James, 2001:233]. This has been one of the reasons why retailers try to present their offerings in such a way that it appeals to mothers and children in hope that children will learn to look forward to a trip to the store. An example is illustrated by store edutainment that imitates adult offerings whilst teaching children that consumerism is more than just purchasing items but rather a gateway to human interactions [Creighton, 1994:35].

2.6 Consumer resources

Consumer resources refer to all of the demographic, physical, psychological and material means consumers have to draw on, including income, self-confidence, health, intelligence, energy level, eagerness to purchase and education [Walker et al., 1999:177; Burgess, 1998:26; and Churchill & Peter, 1998:31]. These different forms have subsequently been analysed under three categories, namely economic resources, temporal resources and cognitive resources.

Economic resources refer to the financial means available to a consumer. Measuring economic resources today is rather complicated. Bartering and tax evasion are two examples that can complicate the matter [Parkin & King, 1995:138]. The challenge lies in defining variables that mean the same for everyone and that permit comparisons over time or across market segments [Parkin & King, 1995:595].

Consumers drive economies, by being responsible for over two-thirds of all economic activities. Expenditure is heavily influenced by what consumers believe will happen in the future. Current income is the primary determinant of products such as food for a family, but consumer confidence about future income is essential in understanding purchases of vehicles and other durable goods. Consumer confidence is a main factor influencing whether consumers will increase their debt levels or defer to pay off debt [Kaufman & Barnes, 2001:C1 and Parkin & King, 1995:11]. A case in point might result in a mother giving her child less pocket money because of high inflation rates and low consumer confidence levels. It is possible that the economic climate will influence the amount of money that parents spend on their children or the level of pocket money that children receive [Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:243].

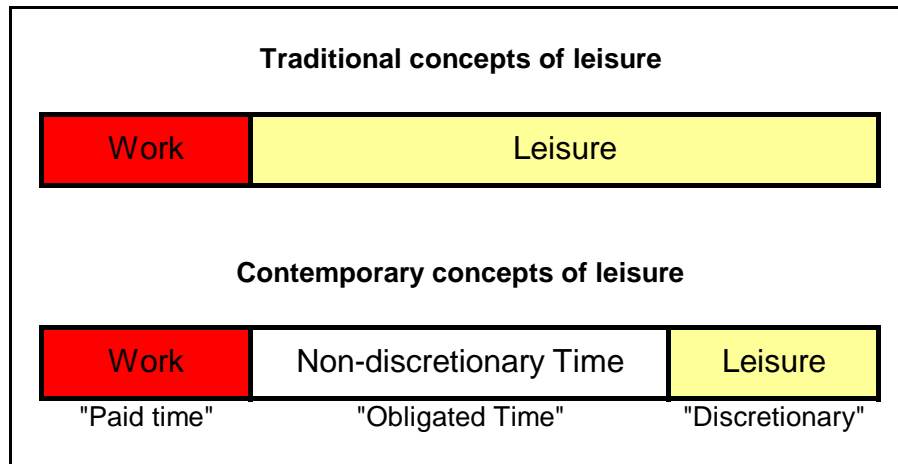
It is also important to examine consumers' wealth and credit. Wealth, measured by assets or net worth, is correlated with income. The government and private research organisations collect many statistics on income but relatively few about assets or net worth [Kolitz & Quinn, 1997:17]. Thus, it is more difficult to target consumers and / or their children based on wealth. Marketers usually use income as a proxy for wealth.

Credit extends the income resource at least for a period of time. Actually, because the cost of credit must be subtracted from the consumer's total resource availability, credit reduces the ability to buy goods and services in the long run. In other words, the Millennial Generation would indirectly, possibly have less spending money [Kolitz & Quinn, 1997:305].

With regard to limited temporal resources, consumer resources consist of two budget constraints, namely money budget and time budget. As already discussed, money plays an important role but does not single handedly explain how consumers behave. Despite the fact that some consumers are wealthy, they may be able to purchase more of everything but yet it is impossible for them to *do* more of everything. This would require them to use more of their time. Unlike money budgets, which have no theoretical expansion limits, time has an ultimate restraint [Hawkins et al., 2001:488 and Manrai & Manrai., 1995:120]. To illustrate this concept, consider a rich and a poor child. The rich child may be able to buy whatever he pleases in a café, whilst the poor child will not be able to do the same. Never the less, neither of the two children can purchase more time.

Many consumers value leisure time as highly as they value money because of their increasing lack of time – thus increasing the need for timesaving entities such as convenience stores [Mayland, 2000:31 and Fay, 1992:50]. Initial research explained timestyles - the way which consumers allocate time among various activities, as comprising of only two components, namely work and leisure. Recent research has modified the original conceptualisation as can be seen in figure 2.12 [Engel et al., 1995:313].

Figure 2.12: Conceptualisations of consumer time budget



Source: Engel J.F., Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W., 1995, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: Dryden Press, p. 31.

It should be noted that only discretionary time can truly be regarded as leisure time. This has been summarised as follows: “It is that period when an individual feels no sense of economic, legal, moral or social compulsion or obligation, nor physiological necessity. The choice of how to utilize this time period belongs solely to the individual” [Voss, 1967:91 in Engel et al., 1995:31].

An added impediment in defining leisure takes place when individuals are paid for activities they might otherwise choose as discretionary activities. An artist, for instance, can be paid for doing something, which he regards as a discretionary (leisure) activity [Corbell, 1999:163 and Churchill & Peter, 1998:32].

Some goods and services require the use of time with the product. Examples would be watching television or playing rugby. The logic behind consumers buying these types of goods depends on how an individual spends a typical 24-hour day. Consumers may earn a lot of money but live in time poverty. Such consumers require a value from the limited hours available for discretionary activities. They may be willing to pay more money to enjoy their leisure time thereby expanding market potential [Fay, 1992:50 and Levy & Weitz, 1998:111].

An increasing trend reveals how consumers can gain discretionary time by decreasing non-discretionary time expenditures through the purchasing of goods and services. A

good example is a consumer that recharges her cell phone account, draws money and buys snacks for the kids, whilst having her car washed after filling up with petrol at a garage [Churchill & Peter, 1998:32].

An increasing trend is that of polychronic / dual time usage – combining activities simultaneously, thus allowing consumers to accomplish several goals at the same time [Cateora & Graham, 1999:130]. For example, a consumer on the move can eat whilst driving and listening to a financial news report on the radio.

The last consumer resource category to be inspected, deals with cognitive issues. Whilst the backbone to this fragment has already been discussed in the section handling perception, memory and learning, a few important issues need to be addressed.

Cognitive resources represent the mental capacity available for undertaking various information-processing activities. Capacity is a limited resource as consumers are able to process only a certain amount of information at a time and must therefore be selective (as mentioned in section 2.3.1) in allocating their efforts. Some stimuli will gain attention whilst others will be ignored. This attention will vary in direction and intensity [Burgess, 1998:30; Hawkins et al., 2001:294; Arens, 1999:132; and Bearden et al., 1997:144]. In exemplifying this, consider a child staring at a television set whilst her father talks to her. She may miss her father's message simply because she was too engrossed with watching television.

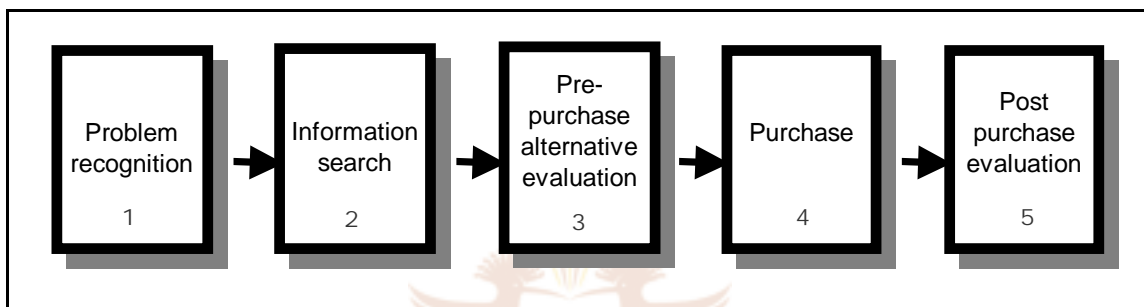
Many products are simply not noteworthy enough to consumers to warrant a “large” investment of their limited cognitive resources. These products can be called low-involvement products. In many respects, consumers are “cognitive misers” as they find acceptable rather than optimal solutions for many of their consumption needs [Hawkins et al., 2001:505]. As information overload is discussed in detail in the decision-making process, it can however, be mentioned that research suggests that consumers may be unable to stop short of overloading themselves when faced with a sufficiently rich information environment [Keller & Staelin, 1987:200].

Now that internal and external influences on consumer behaviour have been discussed, it is also important to focus on the decision-making process because of its ability to help explain the manner in which consumers act in the market place.

2.7 The decision-making process

The decision-making process consists out of a sequence of five steps (which will be dealt with latter on in this section) as illustrated in figure 2.13.

Figure 2.13: Steps of the decision-making process



Source: Adapted from Kotler, P., 2000, *Marketing Management*, Millennium edition, New Jersey, U.S.A.: Prentice-Hall, p. 179.

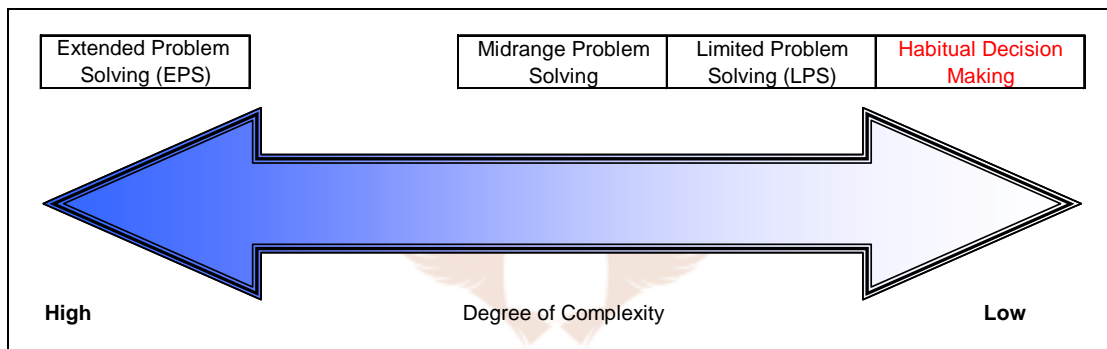
Each stage in the decision-making process should not be seen as being separate scenarios but rather as a blend of each one into another. Purchase involvement is accredited to playing a role in this regard and is defined as the level of interest in the purchase process, triggered by the need to consider a particular purchase [Hawkins et al., 2001:504]. In other words, it is a temporary state of a consumer, susceptible to various influences.

A peculiarity, however, has to be mentioned between purchase involvement and product involvement. A consumer may be very involved with a brand or product category but still have a low involvement with a particular purchase of that product because of internal and external influences [Hawkins, et al., 2001:505]. A child, for instance, knows what her favourite chocolate brand is but doesn't necessarily give it much thought when she actually wants to buy one.

One attempt in explaining the concept of complexity and involvement is to consider a continuum of decision-making complexity ranging from high to low. When consumers

lack experience and are making a decision for the first time, they need to use something as their point of reference in order to assist them in carry out problem solving processes. If this process is complex, it is called extended problem solving. Limited problem solving, however, represents a lower degree of complexity [Burgess, 1998:7]. Engel et al. [1995:155] have added another dimension of midrange problem solving to the middle of the continuum. The consumer decision-making continuum is illustrated in figure 2.14. Since this research study focuses on children in the fast moving consumer goods convenience industry, it is believed that extended problem solving will play a minimal role.

Figure 2.14: Consumer decision-making process continuum



Source: Engel, J.F., Blackwell, R.D., Miniard, P.W., 1995, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, U.S.A.: Dryden Press, p. 155.

According to figure 2.14, the consumer decision-making process continuum can be categorised into four types, namely extended problem solving, midrange problem solving, limited problem solving and habitual decision-making. These categories are discussed in the following section.

i. Extended problem solving

Levy and Wietz [1998:121] define extended problem solving as a purchase decision process in which customers devote considerable time and effort to analysing alternatives. It is the response to a high level of purchase involvement. Experts concur that when extended problem solving is activated, all stages of the decision process are likely to be followed. It is likely that many alternatives will be evaluated and a wide variety of information sources consulted. Furthermore, the decision on how and where to make the

purchase also may require additional search and evaluation. Generally speaking, purchases of this nature occur extremely frequently amongst adults. Children, however, do not really experience this process and thus extended problem solving will not be discussed at length [Kotler, 2000:177; Engel et al., 1995:156; Churchill & Peter, 1998:149; Hawkins et al., 2001:507; and Swait, 2001: 135].

ii. Midrange problem solving

Midrange problem solving lies between extended problem solving and limited problem solving as indicated in the continuum in figure 2.14. These types of decisions that consumer have to make generally encompass issues that are not of extreme natures (either complicated or very simple) [Engel et al., 1995:157]. An example is that of two children that have to decide on which flavour packet of chips they have to share.

iii. Limited problem solving

Limited problem solving is defined as a purchase decision process involving a moderate amount of time and effort. It usually involves internal and limited external search, few alternatives, simple decision rules on a few attributes and a little post-purchase evaluation. In most situations, consumers (including children) are engaged in limited problem solving because they have neither the time or the resources, nor the motivation to engage in extended problem solving [Hawkins et al., 2001:506; Levy & Weitz, 1998:122; and Kotler, 2000:177].

Limited problem solving is a buying situation, which occurs less frequently and probably involves more deliberate decision-making than routine problems do. Customers also engage in this type of buying process when they have had some prior experience with the product or service and tend to rely more on personal knowledge than on external information. The goods will usually be moderately expensive (varies amongst consumers) and perhaps will be expected to last for a while. Thus the risks inherent in a “wrong” decision are that much higher (refer to extended problem solving). There will, therefore be some element of information search and evaluation but this is still unlikely to absorb too much time and effort [Churchill & Peter, 1998:149].

In other words, need recognition leads to buying action - extensive search and evaluation are avoided because the purchase does not assume great importance. A note must be made that this is not always the case as the usage occasion may act as an influencer [Desai & Hoyer, 2000:309 and Burgess, 1998:10]. For example, a child may want his mother to buy a particular cold drink for his birthday party because he wants to please his friends.

iv. Habitual problem solving

Habitual, routine or nominal problem solving is defined as a purchase decision process involving little or no conscious effort [Levy & Weitz, 1998:123]. There is virtually no information search and evaluation and the buying decision is made simultaneously with (if not in advance of) the problem recognition stage. Consumers do not consider this type of purchase an important one and are not highly involved in it [Hawkins et al., 2001:506]. This is one way in which they are able to simplify the pressures of life. The items that fall into routine problem solving tend to be low risk, low priced and frequently purchased. These so-called low involvement purchases simply do not carry enough risk for the consumer, whether in terms of financial loss or damage to social status, to get excited about the importance of “making the right decision” [Churchill & Peter, 1998:148].

Habitual problem-solving purchase can be explained by a simple three-stage model [Mittal & Kamakura, 2001:131; Arens, 1999:130; and Kempf, 1999:40]. The stages are as follows:

- Stage 1: awareness of the brand or product.
- Stage 2: trial.
- Stage 3: if stage 2 was satisfactory, then repeat purchases will take place.

Generally speaking, marketers are keen on seeing consumers making habitual purchases. It must also be kept in mind that habitual purchases differ from brand loyal purchases. Consumers that are highly involved in their purchase tend to be more brand loyal whilst consumers that are not as involved, brand usage over a long period may be little more

than habitual behaviour [Kotler, 2000:268]. An example of habitual behaviour is illustrated when a mother buys her family 'All Gold' tomato sauce, not because she is committed to the product, but because her family always seem to be satisfied with the product. She might consider buying another tomato sauce such as 'Crosse & Blackwell' if something influences her to do so, such as a price reduction or "buy one get one free" promotion or simply if the product is out of stock.

Brand loyalty occurs when customers like and consistently buy a specific brand in a product category. They are reluctant to switch to other brands if their favourite brand is not available [Huang & Yu, 1999:523 and Yeo, 1999:37]. Arens [1999:136] refers to it as being "the consumer's conscious or unconscious decision, expressed through intention or behaviour to repurchase a brand continually." Store or company loyalty means that customers like and habitually visit the same store to purchase a type of merchandise [Burgess, 1998:10]. For example, if a child always buys his favourite comic at a preferred local café, the child has a fairly high degree of product involvement but a low degree of purchase involvement because of brand loyalty.

v. Special categories of buying behaviour

Not all purchases are planned comprehensively in advance. Purchases can be fully planned, partially planned or unplanned. A fully planned purchase usually is a consequence of a purchase, which requires a lot of input from the consumer in the form of extended problem solving and high involvement. In other words, the buyer knows exactly what he / she wants and will carry out any actions needed in satisfying his need. For example, a person about to embark on a grocery shopping trip will draw up a list of products or brands that he / she intends on buying. His / her visit to the grocery store will subsequently consist of scanning of shelves. It should be pointed out that this scenario can be affected by either the consumer's knowledge of the grocery store's design and layout and / or any time pressures that restrict the consumer's browsing and in-store decision making [Laroche et al., 2000:1 and Burgess, 1998:63].

With a partially planned purchase the chosen brand is decided upon at the point of sale [Hawkins et al., 2001:610 and Burgess, 1998:63]. Situational influences play a part but will be discussed later on. An unplanned purchase tends to be similar to impulse buying

[Hawkins et al., 2001:610; Kotler, 2000:397; and Piton, 1990:509]. Unplanned purchases exist when no purposeful intention was made by a consumer to execute it while: “Impulse buying occurs when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful and persistent urge to buy something immediately. The impulse to buy is hedonically complex and may stimulate emotional conflict” [Rock, 1987:191].

This statement can be viewed in such a manner that experiential perspectives are the dominant forces. Impulse buying is considered to consist of the following characteristics [Hawkins et al., 2001:610; Engel et al., 1995:159; and Shimp, 1997:518]:

- excitement and stimulation;
- compulsion and intensity;
- minimal objective evaluation (emotional considerations are dominant);
- a state of psychological disequilibrium in which a person can feel temporarily out of control;
- disregard for consequences; and
- spontaneity.

Consumer's actions that can easily be examined and explained all fit into the previously mentioned types of consumer decision-making. There is, however, another category that does not easily slot in anywhere, namely variety seeking. Variety seeking takes place when consumers are happy with the brand they are currently using but seek something new [Messinger & Narasimhan, 1997:311]. This situation arises often when there are many similar alternatives, frequent brand shifts and high purchase frequency [Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:48]. A child buying tomato-flavoured 'Simba' potato chips, instead of his usual purchase of 'Willards' tomato chips is an example.

The products sold at garage convenience stores and traditional cafés, nevertheless require a consumer to make some decisions when making a purchase. It is therefore meaningful to take a closer look at the steps that consumers undergo when making a purchase.

2.7.1 Problem recognition

Problem recognition or need recognition is the first step of the consumer decision-making process and occurs when an individual realises a difference between what he or she perceives to be the *ideal* or *desired* state (the situation the consumer wants to be in) of affairs compared with the *actual* state (the consumer's current position) of affairs at any point in time. The difference between the two states can either be minimal or immense [Hawkins et al., 2001:508 and Bearden et al., 1997:103]. In other words, it is a state of desire that initiates a decision process that in turn occurs through the interaction of individual differences and environmental influences. Need recognition can therefore be as straightforward as discovering there is no bread in the house or it can be as ambiguous as feeling the need for an uplifting experience after a school exam.

The extent of the problem and number of problems influence a consumer and the decision-making process they embark on. Sometimes consumers undertake a complex decision process requiring substantial amounts of time and effort. More common, however, are rather simplistic processes in which relatively little time and effort are devoted to the decision [Swait, 2001:135 and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:96].

The presence of need recognition does not automatically activate some action – it depends on a few factors. Firstly, the recognised need must be of sufficient importance. The urge of buying a sweet, for instance, may be regarded as a significant need to a child, whilst an adult may not think this need is warranted. Secondly, consumers must believe that a solution to the need is within their means. If need satisfaction is beyond a consumer's economic or temporal resources, action is unlikely. This is also the case where lack of availability plays a role. An example is that of a child wanting to buy his / her favourite cold drink but cannot either due to lack of money or that the retailer does not stock it. Problem recognition, if it is to lead anywhere, therefore requires both the willingness and the ability to fulfil the emerging need [Hawkins et al., 2001:508; Engel et al., 1995:176; and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:89].

A foremost source of problem recognition is need arousal, particularly when that need is related to self-image. A need must first be “activated” before it can be “recognised”. Unless the consumer recognises a need for a product, no sale will take place [Kotler,

2000:179; Nelson, 2001:B1; and Burgess, 1998:45]. Needs represent enduring predispositions to behave toward certain goals. The will to achieve some sort of meaning in life is the primary drive behind every purchase and consumption decision. This meaningfulness occurs when values are realised [Brassington & Pettit, 1997:104; Kahn & Isen, 1993:257; and Churchill & Peter, 1998:143]. A child, for example, may consider buying a toy as being something meaningful.

One of the study's focuses thus far, has been on factors that have an effect on need recognition but that are largely beyond a business's ability to influence in some advantageous way. This does not, however, prevent businesses from influencing consumer need recognition.

A contentious issue is whether or not marketers create needs. Marketers are often accused of creating a need for a product that would not exist had it not been for marketing activities, particular advertising. Supporting evidence [Hawkins et al., 2001:373] shows how people have used many products to gain social acceptance and displaying status and so on before the advent of advertising or marketing. Marketers, however, do create *demand* – the willingness to buy a particular product or service. Demand is caused by need satisfaction. Marketers follow this protocol to help boost the survival of any business. They have numerous methods and mediums at their disposal in accomplishing this but all methods have one thing in common – to make consumers aware of something [Kotler, 2000:179 and Nelson, 2001:B1]. This “creation” is the result of active and inactive problems. Active problems refer to problems the consumer is aware of or will become aware of in the normal course of events. Inactive problems deal with problems in which the consumer is not yet aware of [Hawkins et al., 2001:511; Rotella & Zaleski, 2002:75; and Schickedanz, 1994:274]. To demonstrate this concept, consider a child walking past a café. The child did not think of or feel like buying an ice cream until she saw the big ice cream advertisement outside.

A fundamental issue among efforts to activate need recognition is whether an attempt is made in stimulating primary or selective demand. Marketing activities that centre on primary demand are, in essence, attempting to elicit generic need recognition. An example is the way in which youngsters are targeted by the milk industry and encouraged to drink more milk. Selective need recognition, however, occurs when the need for a

precise brand within a product category (selective demand) is stimulated [Engel et al., 1995:181]. An illustration of this concept is when a child is happy with his choice of packet of chips until he sees how another potato chip brand is offering a free toy in their packet.

Where physiological needs such as the need for food and water are involved, the problem recognition may be a slow dawning or may lead to a sudden impulse for the consumer. This occurs when the consumer, realising that the current position or feeling is not the desired one, decides to do something to change it through a purchase [Clark, 2000:134]. A child, for example, may slowly decide to purchase something to eat, as he gradually gets hungry, or he might do so immediately upon getting hungry.

At times, consumer problem solving involves careful evaluation and weighing of utilitarian (or functional) product attributes. Utilitarian needs are related to basic functions and material benefits. When you are thirsty, for instance, you would want something that will help quench your thirst [Churchill & Peter, 1998:144]. Often the term rational decision-making is used when this is the case. At other times, hedonic benefits (needs related to the desire for pleasure and self-expression) will dominate, and the consumption object is viewed symbolically in terms of sensory pleasures, daydreams or aesthetic considerations [Frogas & Ciarrochi, 2001:239 and Wang & Chen, 2000:169]. An example is someone who enjoys drinking pleasant smelling gourmet coffee sold at 'BP's Wild Bean Café'. It is important to note that this situation can meet both utilitarian and hedonic needs. Buying and consumption generally reflect a mixture of both the utilitarian and the hedonic.

Many potential factors can act as catalysts in activating the recognition of needs or simply prompt consumers in satisfying a need or want. The most relevant categories that are able to cause problem recognition are the following:

- Product consumption itself can often trigger need recognition. In many buying or consuming situations, a need is recognised simply because of a disposition situation. For example, a mother packed the last packet of chips in the house in her son's school lunch box. She knows that she will have to get more chips on her way home from work for her guests that will be visiting tonight. Thus, need recognition occurs

because of an anticipated need in the immediate future resulting from a change in the actual situation [Burgess, 1998:49].

- Acquiring a product may, in turn, activate the need for additional products [Burgess, 1998:49 and Setlow, 2001:16]. A typical example would be a consumer that purchases a 'Gillette' shaver. Razor blades will have to be purchased for the shaver to work. An example relevant to children would be a child buying a PEZ sweet dispenser, which would require buying PEZ sweets in order to play with the toy.
- The passage of time can be a potent activator of consumption needs. Someone who gets thirsty over time is a typical example. A case in point relevant to this study might refer to a thirsty motorist on a journey. Time gradually deteriorates the consumer's actual state until it becomes sufficiently discrepant from the desired state to arouse a need. Time can influence the desired state as well. As consumers grow older, they often experience changes in their tastes and values, which in turn, alter their desired state [Hawkins et al., 2001:520 and Allegrezza, 2000:2]. The type of books children read as they grow up illustrates this point. Likewise most children may not enjoy sherbet as they grow older.
- The changes in a consumer's life can activate a need. For example, a child that has left nursery school and is about to enter primary school will need to buy a school uniform. Changes within the family can also trigger need recognition. The birth of a child, for instance, results in modified requirements for clothing, food and furniture. This would mean that convenience stores have to adapt or provide goods according to how consumers change mentally and physically [Burgess, 1998:48 and Alreck, 2000:891].
- Marketing influences are able to act as a potential motivator. What the examples given so far have in common, however, is that the impetus to go into a purchasing decision making routine comes from the consumer. The consumer identifies or recognises the problem, independently from the marketer, and looks for a solution [Hawkins et al., 2001:518 and Marney, 2001:33].

Marketers can use the marketing mix elements to influence the choices of solution. Stimulating consumers' awareness of their needs is often an essential objective that, when neglected, can have unfavourable consequences for businesses [Kotler, 2000, 179]. One of the best ways in stimulating the importance of need satisfaction is to remind people about it [Marney, 2001:33]. A general example would be a holiday advertisement stressing the importance of relaxation. An example that would appeal to this research study is that of an advertisement asking parents when last their children had been treated to an ice cream from a convenience store.

2.7.2 Search for problem-solving information

The second step in the consumer decision-making process is searching for problem solving information. This section comprises out of two issues, namely search and information. Search can be defined as the motivated activation of knowledge stored in memory (internal search) or acquisition of information from the environment (external search). Once need recognition has occurred, the consumer may then engage in a search for potential need satisfiers [Kotler, 2000:179; Moorthy, 1995:263; Hawkins et al., 2001:528; and Chiquan, 2001:505; and Burgess, 1998:50]. For example, a motorist who needs petrol will start looking for petrol stations

Information is referred to as the knowledge a consumer currently possesses or is on the look out for. In order for a consumer to make a meaningful decision when making a purchase, he / she will need some direction to what type of information is required. Consumers often start off by examining what evaluative criteria are suitable and the existence of diverse alternative solutions. Furthermore, consumers also try to assess the execution level or characteristic of each alternative solution on each evaluative criterion [Hawkins et al., 2001:529].

Internal search is nothing more than a memory scan for decision-relevant knowledge stored in long-term memory. If this scan reveals sufficient information to provide a satisfactory course of action, external search is obviously unnecessary. Many times a past solution is remembered and the relevant information is used [Bettman et al., 1998:187; Engel et al., 1995:183; and Levy & Weitz, 1998:129]. The fact that

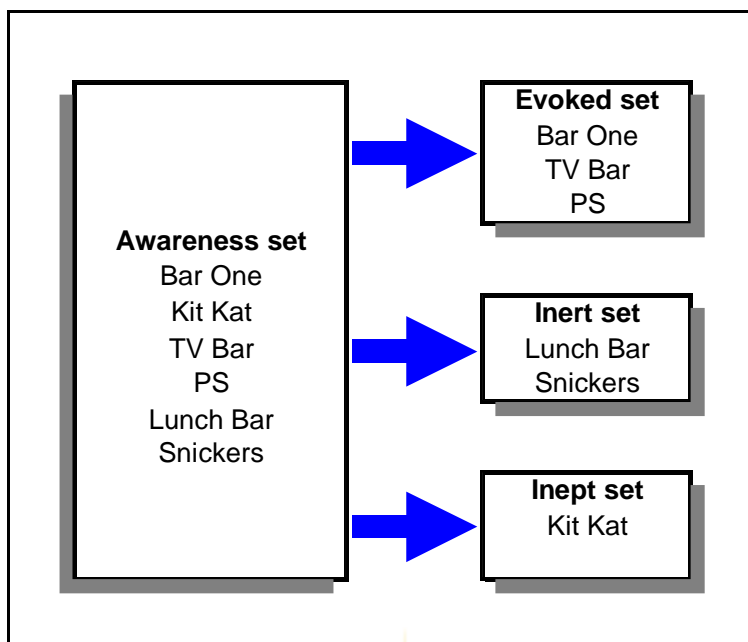
consumers chose to rely on their existing knowledge would seem inadequate for suggesting that decision-making has not take place [Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000:149].

The degree of satisfaction with prior purchases will also determine the consumer's reliance on internal search. If the consumer has been satisfied with the results of previous buying transactions, internal search may suffice [Shiv & Huber, 2000:202]. A child, for instance, may recall buying sweets at 'Joe's café'. It was a good experience for the child because the sweets tasted good, did not cost a lot of money and were easily available. The child should then be happy with relying on internal search should he want to buy sweets again.

Whether consumers rely solely on internal search will heavily depend on the adequacy or quality of their existing knowledge. First-time buyers are unlikely to possess the necessary information for decision-making while experienced and satisfied buyers may find their knowledge to be inadequate for products that were purchased a long time ago. The amount of time between purchase occasions is referred to as the inter-purchase time. A child, for instance, that buys sweets everyday from a café he passes on his way home from school, would have an inter-purchase time of about twenty-four hours. It is during the inter-purchase time that there are possible significant product changes in terms of prices, features, new brands and new stores. Even if product changes have been minimal, internal search is hindered by large inter-purchase times due to problems of forgetting. Nor may existing knowledge be sufficient when the present consumption problem is perceived to be different from those in the past [Swait, 2001:135 and Churchill & Peter, 1998:145].

The awareness set or consideration set refers to the way consumers determine the alternatives from which their choice can be made. A consideration set comprises out of three subcategories, namely the evoked set, inept set and inert set. The evoked set is made up of the brands a consumer will evaluate for the solution of a particular problem, whilst the inept set refers to the brands that the consumer actually avoids or dislikes. The brands that the consumer feels indifferent to are known as the inert set [Hawkins et al., 2001:531 and Levy & Weitz, 1998:135]. These three concepts and their significance to one another are illustrated in figure 2.15.

Figure 2.15: Subcategories of the awareness set



Source: Adapted from Hawkins, D.I., Best, R.J., Coney, K.A., 2001, *Consumer behavior*, 8th edition, New York, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 532.

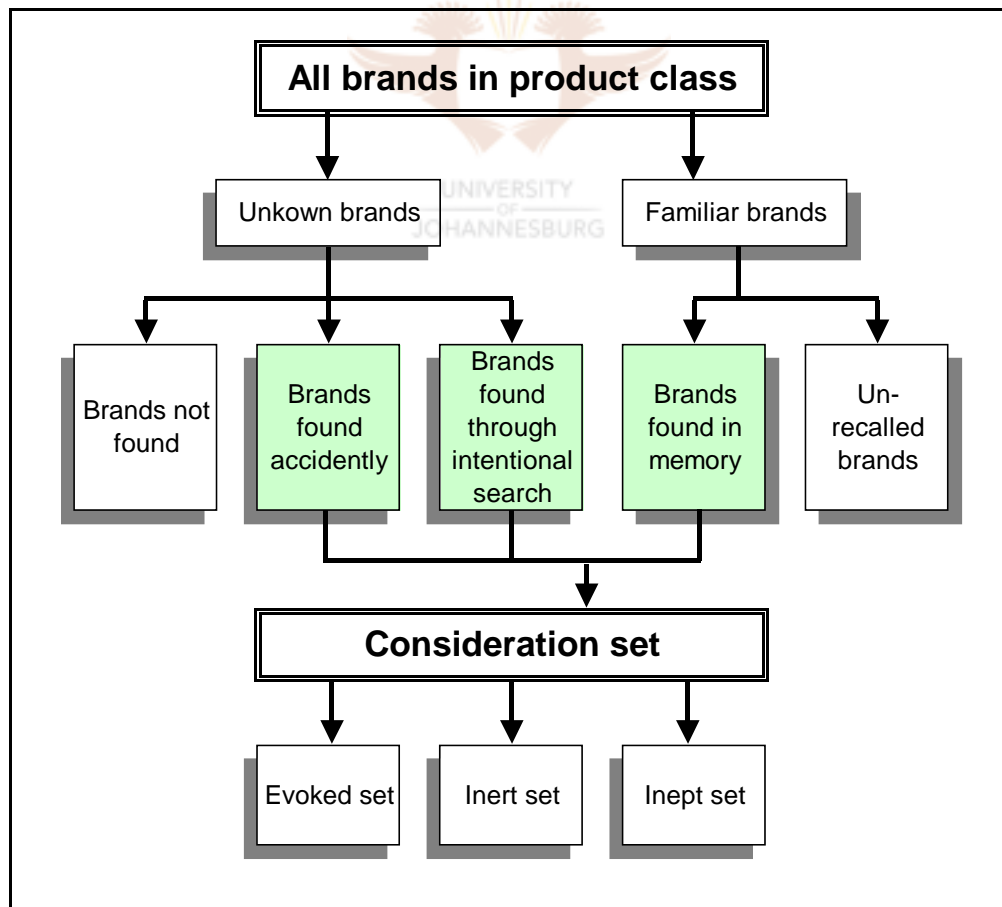
Figure 2.15 illustrates the different chocolates a particular consumer had thought of buying. The consumer is aware of six different chocolates, of which three of them, will be evaluated by the consumer (evoked set). The consumer feels indifferent to 'Lunch Bar' and 'Snickers' (inert set) and dislikes 'Kit Kat' (inept set).

The consideration set will typically contain only a subset of the total number of alternatives available to the consumer. With reference to the previous example, the consumer could only recall six chocolates, whilst leaving out the likes of 'Tempo', 'Swing', 'Caravan' and so on. The number of alternatives will differ depending on the person, the product and situation. Some consumers will have many alternatives, some will have a few and some might even only have one alternative because of strong brand loyalty [Desai & Hoyer, 2000:309 and Kardes et al., 1993:62]. Well-known brands therefore seem to have a better chance in being included in consideration sets [Churchill & Peter, 1998:146]. Burgess [1998:60] summed the importance by saying: "One thing is certain, if you're not in the consideration set you won't make the sale." This reasoning has made it an imperative challenge for marketers to gain a favourable entry into a

consumer's consideration set. For example, Sutton [1987:82] found that it was easier for a new product or brand to enter the consideration set than it was for an existing one that had been considered previously, but rejected.

The construction of a consideration set, can be illustrated by the example of a father wanting to buy a computer game for his son. He has two options in collecting information – external search and internal search. External search would see him intentionally surfing the Internet stores and talking to friends about the situation. The other option is for the father to use his memory for information, which would help him come into possession of a game for his son. The possibilities that he comes up with will make up the awareness set [Arens, 1999:145]. Consumers frequently will not identify all the possibilities [Desai & Hoyer, 2000:309 and Churchill & Peter, 1998:145]. Forming a consideration set for choosing a product is shown in figure 2.16.

Figure 2.16: Forming a consideration set for choosing a product.



Source: Adapted from Churchill, Jr., G.A., Peter, J.P., 1998, *Marketing: Creating value for customers*, 2nd edition, U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, p. 145.

Figure 2.16 shows how the awareness set is usually a subset of all the possible alternatives, excluding brands that are not found or un-recalled [Churchill & Peter, 1998:145 and Miniard et al., 1991:27]. A child running an errand to buy a detergent for the household, for instance, will recognise the brand the family uses by the product's appearance (such as particular colour and size) even if he cannot recall whether they use it or not.

When internal search proves not to be a totally reliable option, the consumer may decide to collect additional information from the environment [Bettman et al., 1998:189 and Levy & Weitz, 1998:129]. External search can be either pre-purchase search or ongoing search. Pre-purchase search refers to an external search that is driven by an upcoming purchase decision, bearing a particular objective in mind. The primary drive behind pre-purchase search is the desire to make better consumption choices. In contrast to pre-purchase concept, ongoing search refers to information acquisition that occurs on a relatively regular basis, regardless of sporadic purchase needs [Hawkins et al., 2001:529]. Ongoing search may be encouraged by desires to develop a knowledge base that can be used in future decision-making. The enjoyment derived from this activity can also be an inspiring factor. There is no denying that many consumers enjoy ongoing search for no particular reason. Consumers may browse through a shop, without having specific purchase needs, simply because it is "fun" for them [Chiquan, 2001:505 and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:90]. To illustrate the two types of external search, consider an expecting mother that keeps an eye out for any baby products on the market (ongoing search). Eventually when the baby is born, she will then engage in pre-purchase searching once she is ready to purchase particular baby products such as diapers and toys.

In helping consumers during their external information search, numerous sources are at their disposal. Some of the pertinent external sources include [Hawkins et al., 2001,534 and Engel et al., 1995:185]:

- the internet;
- personal sources (such as friends);
- experiential sources (such as product trial);

- general purpose media;
- marketing sources (such as salespeople and advertising); and
- society.

The amount of information search will also depend on how consumers weigh up the cost / benefit equation. Consumers want to ensure that the value that they receive from searching will be greater than that of the cost of executing the actual search process. The cost of search includes both time and money [Swait, 2001:136; Hawkins et al., 2001:542; Churchill & Peter, 1998:18; and Levy & Weitz, 1998:129]. Consider buying a new house, for instance. Time is spent in viewing show houses and petrol is used in getting to these various locations. In addition, more money will be spent when the actual house is purchased. The benefits on the other hand, might include tangible advantages, need satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment and other psychological rewards. Similar costs and benefits in the previous example may appeal to a family looking for a reasonable garage to stop at when travelling in a foreign area.

Much research has been executed with regard to the variety of factors that influence search [Bettman et al. 1998:190; Moorthy et al., 1997:263; and Kotler, 2000:179]. There are four fundamental types of influences with regard to information search and weighing up the costs and benefits involved, namely product characteristics, market characteristics, consumer characteristics and situation characteristics.

Product characteristics have many influential capabilities. Firstly, the extent of differentiation between the features of products can affect the extent of consumer search. As brands become more distinct, the potential payoff from search grows larger [Kotler, 2000:288]. Secondly, the importance of price in influencing consumers varies noticeably. At times it plays a key role in the decision process [Levy 1999:15 and O'Neill & Lambert, 2001:271]. A child with little pocket money, for instance, may prefer one product to another due to it being a lot cheaper. Higher prices will generally create more concerns about the financial implications regarding the purchase [Hawkins et al., 2001:544]. One study, an exception to the norm, revealed that most shoppers were unable to recall the prices of goods that they had placed in their trolley [Dickson & Sawyer, 1990:42]. Consumers may sometimes consider convenience or a brand name

over a product with the lowest price [Dolliver, 2001:29; Liebman, 2001:8; and Burgess, 1998:60].

Thirdly, the stability of a product category can manipulate search. In other words, how often does the entire composition of a product change? Experienced consumers can rely more heavily on their existing knowledge for categories such as cigarettes and milk that change relatively little over time [Kirzner, 2001:47]. The final point with regard to product characteristics is that of search sequence. The sequence of search refers to the order in which search activities occur. Much research has been done in determining the order in which product attribute information is acquired [Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000:154; Kotler, 2000:179; and Mitchell, 2000:34]. This, however, does not fall within the scope of this study.

Market characteristics can vary a lot but one of the most common ones is that of distance. The number of stores that the consumer visits will often be determined by how far each store is located from the other. The greater the distance, the more likely it is that the consumer will visit fewer stores. The similarity among retailers such as layout and variety also plays a role, as consumers perceive important differences. If the differences are significant enough, chances are that searching will take place [Campo et al., 2000:219 and Burnett & Baker, 2001:4].

Consumer characteristics refer to elements that make an individual unique to others. As many typical components, such as learning and social status have already been discussed, two points of interest need to be brought to mind, that of perceived risks and a purchase's importance. Typical risks that a consumer would contemplate [Hawkins et al., 2001:606 and Lovelock & Wright, 1999:73] are listed below:

- financial risks – monetary loss and unexpected costs;
- functional risks – unsatisfactory performance outcomes;
- sensory risks – unwanted impacts on any of the human five senses;
- temporal risks – wasting time and consequences of delays;
- psychological risks – personal fears and emotions;
- physical risks – personal injury or damage to possessions; and

- social risks – how others think and react.

With regard to the list of potential risks, a young consumer might ask themselves various questions in order not to be put in an undesirable position. What will my friends think, will it taste good, am I wasting my money, will it quench my thirst and so on. Consumers, particularly children, often engage in very little external search before a purchase, regardless of importance. There are, however, quite a few consumers that make important purchases despite not doing much internal or external searching [Brassington & Pettit, 1997:97 and Gregan-Paxton & John, 1995:567]. Situation characteristics such as physical features and task definition are also capable of influencing a consumer's search process and will be discussed in the section dealing with purchases.

2.7.3 Alternative evaluation

Alternative evaluation is the third step in the consumer decision-making process and can be defined as the process by which alternatives are evaluated and selected to meet consumer needs [Engel et al., 1995:206; Kotler, 2000:180; and Churchill & Peter, 1998:146].



There are numerous ways for consumers to make choices, which include attribute-based choices, attitude-based choices and affective choices. Attribute-based choices are implemented when a consumer makes use of precise product attributes to make comparisons between different brands. For example, a child may compare the price of each brand of potato chips for sale at a convenience store before making a purchase. However, if the same child were to make a comparison using his / her personal opinion, then it would be regarded as an attitude-based choice [Hawkins et al., 2001:562; Kotler, 200:180; and Aaker, 1997:135]. Affective choices deal with purchases where the consumer evaluates a product with the focus on the feeling and experience derived from the action. [Hawkins et al. 2001:564]. A mother, for instance, might buy her son some sweets to help cheer him up when he is sad.

Judging the performance of choice alternatives using salient evaluating criteria plays a crucial role in the alternative evaluation process. Consumers are sometimes not capable

in making truthful and precise judgments. This may at times lead to children making inappropriate purchases, which has led to organisations that are in favour of protecting younger consumers from businesses that try to take advantage of the youth [Hawkins et al., 2001:217; Voight, 2000:46; Smith & Cooper-Martin, 1997:5; and Macchiette & Abhijit, 1994:55]. An example would be a law prohibiting children from buying cigarettes.

Consumers often use surrogate indicators or signals such as the price of well known brands when they ascertain a product's attributes or performance level [Hawkins et al., 2001:574; Chang & Wildt, 1996:58; and Boulding & Kirmani, 1993:111]. The consumer's experience with a product will often determine the signals that they make use of [Burgess, 1998:61]. For example, it is rather difficult to determine the safety of a convenience store's location. The consumer might therefore look at the lighting in the area to help ascertain some sort of safety level. The surrogate categories most relevant to this research study are brand name, country of origin and price. A brand name's potential to influence a person's product evaluations has been well investigated [Peters, 1999:12; Webb Pressler, 1997:1; and Aaker, 1995:29]. The brand name appears to serve as an indicator of product quality in many cases. Deciding which pair of denims is of a better quality, for instance, the consumer will check to see if they are 'Levi's', 'J-exchange' or 'Mr. Price' denims. This example also demonstrates the fact that a status symbol is considered to be part of quality, which in turn will motivate some consumers in making a particular choice [Dodds et al., 1991:307].

The importance consumers place on a brand name depends on their ability to judge quality. Consider determining the quality and effectiveness of using a painkiller as an example. Are private brands, such as 'Panado', equivalent to a generic brand of painkillers sold at 'Dischem'? If so, why is 'Panado' more expensive? Consequently, a brand name becomes particularly essential in judging quality. This dominance is what drives some consumers in being prepared to pay more for a painkiller, even though more knowledgeable consumers are familiar with government regulations regulating painkillers' contents [Engel et al., 1995:209].

Country of origin or nationalism refers to the manner in which a consumer considers where a product is produced as part of their evaluative criteria. As globalisation is on the

increase, more countries are experiencing tougher foreign competition in their own backyards. Consumers may therefore sometimes want to be committed to their strong sense of patriotism. [Swanepoel, 2002:14; Kaynak, 2000:1221 and Cateora & Graham, 1999:147]. The way that 'Bokomo Foods' explicitly remind South Africans on their products to buy their South African cereals is a good example. Other businesses have gone one step further and state that not only are their products made in South Africa but that they are also owned by South Africans. 'BJ's' fast food restaurants are an example. Price can play a role as a surrogate indicator and already been discussed in the section dealing with information search.

As consumers judge alternative brands on numerous evaluative criteria, they must have some method to select one brand from the various choices. These methods are referred to as decision rules consumers use to make a selection from the choice alternatives. They can range from basic procedures that require little time and effort to highly structured ones that involve more time and effort [Engel et al., 1995:222 and Hawkins et al., 2001:576]. Bear in mind the fact that there is no single particular decision rule used for every consumer. The most recent decision rule models see the process as being cognitively oriented - consumers that shape judgments largely on a conscious and reasonable foundation [Kotler, 2000:180].

Decision rules are simplified as consumers are constantly having to make trade-offs between the quality of their choice and the amount of time and effort that is needed in executing the decision [Lee, 2000:117 and Brassington & Pettitt, 1997:92]. In many cases, consumers will adhere to decision rules that result in satisfactory results whilst ensuring that not too much time and effort was wasted in making the decision. It may appear to them that too much mental and physical energy is required in undergoing a route to benefit from optimal results. This type of thinking is more common in goods such as cold drinks, which do not require a lot of thinking and thus lack in importance [Mittal & Kamakura, 2001:131]. There are times, however, when consumers are more encouraged in making decisions due to complex decision rules being made use of. An example would be that of a time-pressurised mother shopping for groceries.

A vital academic distinction between these complex rules is whether they involve a non-compensatory or compensatory course of action. Non-compensatory decision rules are

typified by the fact that a product's weakness on one attribute cannot be offset by its strong performance on another attribute [Hawkins et al, 2001:577 and Burgess, 1998:61]. To illustrate this concept, refer to an example where a consumer wishes to purchase something at a café to nibble on. Consumers are always eager on anything that is very healthy, but the problem lies in that these particular snacks would then be inferior with regard to taste. The snack's strong point (health) cannot overcome its weakness (poor taste) [Baltas, 2001:57]. When a perceived product attribute weakness may be offset or be compensated for by its perceived strength, compensatory decision rules are applied [Hawkins et al., 2001:577]. For example, a good tasting hamburger is worthwhile when you are hungry despite its high price.

2.7.4 Purchase

Once an alternative is chosen and a final decision has been made, the consumer then moves to the purchase phase - the consumer then attempts to put his thoughts into action. There are certain concerns, which the consumer must address in executing a purchasing action, such as whether to buy, when to buy, what to buy, where to buy, and how to pay [Kotler, 2000:182]. For instance, consider a child that decides to buy 'Digimon' collectable stickers on Saturday at 'Georges café' and intends to use his pocket money in doing so. There are, however, several issues, such as new information, exterminated alternatives, changed circumstances, changed motivations and timing that might prevent the child from following through with his intentions.

It is expected at this stage of the decision-making process that consumers have made up their mind and chosen a course of action. This, however, is not always the case. It is generally believed that consumers can go through three fundamental sequences when making a purchase decision. The first sequence comes into play when a consumer selects an outlet first then followed by a brand. The opposite of the latter would refer to the second sequence, whilst the third sequence deals with a simultaneous selection of the two [Hawkins et al., 2001:597]. These sequences are heavily influenced by the attributes of the outlet (such as cleanliness), the product (such as size), consumer characteristics (such as learning) and situational influencers (such as social surroundings). The product and consumer characteristics have already been discussed. The outlet attributes will be dealt with in Chapter three. The only new concept introduced is that of situational influences.

Situational influences are defined as: "... all those factors particular to a time and place that do not follow from knowledge of personal (intra-individual) and stimulus (choice alternative) attributes and that have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behaviour" [Hawkins et al., 2001:478].

Situational influences are able to influence the consumer decision-making process, internal and external influencers. In other words, these influences are independent of the consumer or object's (such as an advertisement) characteristics. These influences have been grouped into four categories, namely communication situations, purchase situations, usage situations and disposition situations. Communication situations take place when a consumer is exposed to either personal (conversations a consumer has with friends for example) or non-personal (advertisements and publications for example) communications [Engel et al., 1995:794]. The purchase situation involves the settings in which consumers acquire products and the usage situation refers to the settings of where and how consumption takes place. Consider a child going on a school tour. He / she might need a cold drink that is not in a glass container (due to regulations) and might need one that can close. The child will then most likely be looking for a cold drink sold in a plastic bottle. The fourth situation, that is, the disposition situation, deals with issues of consumers disposing products they have used [Hawkins et al., 2001:478]. In keeping with the preceding example, the child may dispose of his / her cold drink bottle in various ways such as putting it in a recycling container or giving it to someone else to throw away.

The previously discussed categories of situational influences comprise of five characteristics that have varying degrees of influence, depending on the consumer and the current activities. The five characteristics include physical features, task definition, social surroundings, antecedent states, temporal perspectives and the information environment.

i. Physical features

This includes an array of aspects that are able to influence consumers and is synonymous with retail stores. For example, things like aromas, layout, lighting, sound, store location, weather and décor are all able to play a role. The term atmospherics has

subsequently been used to refer to the previous examples and is examined in chapter four [Levy & Weitz, 1998:562]. Some role-playing aspects are controllable whilst others are not (such as the weather), from a marketing point of view [Churchill & Peter, 1998:163].

Unforeseen events such as an economic recession, acts of God or war are capable of influencing the consumers in carrying out their intentions to buy. This is referred to as changed circumstances [Kaufman & Barnes, 2001:C1 and Cateora & Graham, 1999:10]. A curfew placed on consumers during a declaration of martial law could influence consumers for instance. These consumers would have to shop during designated time periods and not whenever they choose to.

The number of people that surround the consumer are also influential. There are times when large crowds are appreciated and other times not by consumers [Engel et al., 1995:802]. A consumer, for instance, may enjoy being surrounded by people at a party but would prefer less people when having to wait in line at a cashier checkout point.

ii. Task definition



This refers to whether purchases are intended for personal use or to be given (or used) to others. Consumers behave differently when they have to shop for others as both givers and receivers experience anxieties. Social expectations and ritualised consumption situations, such as birthdays, can put pressure on consumers to do things they would not necessarily do, consumption wise. This will also vary depending on the occasion and nature of the “receiving” consumers [Hawkins et al., 2001:488 and Churchill & Peter, 1998:165]. A child, for instance, may want to impress his teacher by giving her an expensive gift. The child’s mother would then look for gifts that would satisfy her child, his teacher and herself. In other words, a cheap pair of men’s underpants would be inappropriate.

iii. Social surroundings

Consumers are sometimes surrounded by other consumers during the consumption and at other times not. There may either be positive or negative repercussions [Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996:86]. For example, a consumer might enjoy being surrounded by people

when going shopping, whilst someone else might prefer the comfort of shopping on the Internet in the privacy of their home. In addition, individuals often are affected by their social surroundings depending on the importance of their present company [Hawkins et al., 2001:486 and Ho, 2002:12]. The way a child wears old clothing when going to Veld School and trendy, impressive branded clothing at a party illustrates this point.

iv. Antecedent states

Temporary characteristics of a consumer, such as moods and momentary conditions, are known as antecedent states. A distinction, however, has to be made. Moods are less intense and interruptive than emotions, and generally not associated to a specific event or object. Consumers use terms such as “happy” and “peaceful” to describe their state of mind and will actively manage their mood states accordingly. For example, a sad person will try to cheer himself or herself up by doing something they enjoy, whilst a happy person might want to stay happy and will also do something they enjoy doing. In this case a father might consider buying his daughter some sweets either when she is happy or sad. Momentary conditions, on the other hand, reflect a person’s states of being [Engel et al., 1995:795]. A person that is tired is an example. This consumer subsequently will try to eradicate the problem of being tired by drinking an energy drink.

v. Temporal perspectives

As already pointed out earlier on, this situational characteristic refers to time being able to affect consumers in a various ways. For example, consumers that lack time may result in visiting fewer stores and making rushed purchases, thus eliminating certain alternatives [Arens, 1999:144]. This has lead to the general assumption that the less time there is available, the shorter the information search will be, the less available information will be used and the more sub-optimal purchases will be made [Hawkins et al., 488]. In addition, the demand for many products is highly time sensitive [Enis, 2001:35 and Burgess, 1998:22]. Christmas decorations, for instance, are in great demand during the month of December but not in May.

vi. Information environment

This characteristic plays an important role particularly with regard to learning and memory as it deals with any product-related data that a consumers encounters. The extent of its influence will depend on four issues, namely information availability, format, form and information overload.

Information availability refers to both external information and internal information that can be utilized by the consumer. When a child cannot remember what an item costs and cannot ask for assistance is an illustration of the lack of information availability. The format of information represents the manner, which information is organised and is able to affect the sequence of how decisions are made and the amount of time taken in doing so. The way chocolates are priced using stickers or bar codes is an example. The form, on the other hand, refers to how information is presented either semantically (“excellent”, “good”, “average” and so on) or numerically (88% for example). The latter method allows consumers to differentiate products a lot more easily [Engel et al., 1995:799].

Information overload may, however, cause problems for the potential purchaser. There is evidence to suggest that consumers cannot cope with too much information at product level. Thus the greater the relevance of the information to the consumer, the easier it is for consumers to digest and process that information as part of their decision-making. In other words, better and more extensive information may actually lead to poorer buying decisions [Keller & Staelin, 1987:213].

There is clearly a fine balance to be achieved between keeping imagery and messages clean, simple and easily understood, thus giving consumers enough information to allow them to appreciate the full depth of a product’s character and the range of its potential benefits so that they can develop appropriate expectations and post purchase evaluative criteria [Arens, 1999:131].

With regard to postmodern consumption research [Robertson & Kassanjian, 1991:566], three issues are of particular interest to this study and are exemplified by issues pertaining to sacred, profane and compulsive consumption. The difference between

sacred and profane is described as follows: “We take the sacred in the realm of consumption to refer to that which is regarded as more significant, powerful, and extraordinary than the self. The profane, by contrast, is ordinary and lacks the ability to induce ecstatic, self-transcending and extraordinary experiences.” [Belk et al., 1989:13]

This definition is thus explicitly seen as being more than typical everyday needs of consumers. The sacred dimension reflects transcendence of ordinary mundane existence. Two domains in this regard have been identified, namely significant places and tangible items [Engel et al., 1995:270]. An example of the former would be the traditional café a child grew up shopping at. The latter could be almost anything from a family heirloom to a toy.

A note should be made at this point stating that marketers do not create sacred object and places – they develop on their own accord in an inimitable manner to every individual as a result of means, which include, collecting, quintessence, pilgrimage and rituals. A collection usually starts out as a voluntary action but becomes addictive and compulsive. Collections soon serve as part of one’s extended self-concept – which explains why profane to sacred conversions occur the moment an item is entered into a collection. The process often continues over a lengthy period due to the sense of power and progression given to the consumer. The paradoxical outcome is both a simultaneous desire for and fear of completing a collection. For example, young consumers collect Pokémon Tazos. Quintessence refers to how a consumer believes that a product is perfect regardless. The product appears to make the consumer’s world a better place. A child, for instance, might believe that ‘Smarties’ are the perfect sweet. Pilgrimage depicts a case where a site of consumption in the past is viewed as a special place [Burgess, 1998:64 and Fairall, 2001:72]. An adult that returns to his / her childhood local café is an example.

A ritual is a set of repetitive, expressive, symbolic behaviours that occur in fixed sequences whilst creating or re-enforcing feelings. Through rituals, possessions become transformed and imbedded with one’s personal identity [Hawkins et al., 2001:492 and Collins and Coltrane, 1995:480]. Burgess [1998:64] postulates that this process can happen through grooming, possessions, time, divestment and exchanges.

Grooming refers to the fact that the natures of many items are perishable and are need of constant replacement or replenishment. The way that a young bicycle fanatic takes care of his bike is an example of grooming. Possession can be explained by people generally take pride in talking about what they have acquired and showing them off to others. A child and his friends, for instance, might discuss the latest computer game they have. Time deals with the periodic occurrences that include holidays, social events and special occasions. When an item has aged through time or has lost its spark, consumers generally go through some emotional experience. This is referred to as divestment. An irreparable antique watch illustrates this point. The final category with regard to rituals is that of exchanging. The purpose of this action is that of passing something of oneself on to another person [Burgess, 1998:64]. A mother passing on some of her jewellery to her daughter is a typical example.

Once a consumer has managed to endure all the influences ranging from stock-out situations to sales personnel, he / she is able to complete the purchasing action. This would normally see the consumer exchange money (either cash or with the use of a credit card) in return for a product.

2.7.5 Post purchase evaluation

The post purchase evaluation is the last step in the consumer decision-making process and deals with the way that a consumer evaluates, uses or consumes a product after purchasing it. This usually takes place in four different ways, which include short-term storage in anticipation of later usage opportunities, usage at the earliest convenient opportunity, long-term storage with no specific or anticipated use in mind and aborting the consumption process [Hawkins et al., 2001:631 and Engel et al., 1995:264].

Many reasons, such as new information, family interference and time, are able to interfere with this step and have already been examined. One other reason does, however, deserve special mention – buyer's regret. Buyer's regret or cognitive dissonance is the result of a consumer evaluating a product after consumption or usage. This is where an assessment is made on whether needs have been satisfied and consumers are psychologically uncomfortable trying to balance the choice made against the doubts still held about the process undertaken. This situation is even more evident if

the decision process has been difficult, or if the consumer invested a lot of time, effort and money in it and there is some doubt as to whether the right decision has actually been made [Hawkins et al., 2001:628; Sweeney & Hausknecht, 2000:369; and Arens, 1999:146].

Generally speaking, the more alternatives that have been discarded by the consumer and the more appealing those alternatives appear to be, the greater the dissonance. Conversely, the more similar to the chosen product the rejected alternatives are, the less the dissonance. A young consumer, for instance, may have the choice of buying one of two similar cold drinks. He / she might experience less dissonance after choosing one over the other if their price, appearance or even taste are the same. It is more likely that dissonance will occur with extensive problem solving purchases. An example is a consumer having second thoughts on the new car he / she has just bought after going to a lot of effort in searching for information [Sweeney & Hausknecht, 2000:369; Churchill & Peter, 1998: 147; and Taylor, 1997:233]. In addition to cognitive dissonance, a consumer can also experience consumption guilt. This is the outcome when the consumer experiences negative emotions or feelings of guilt after using the previously bought product [Hawkins et al., 2001:630]. A general example is that of an overweight woman who knows that she should not be indulging in so many chocolates but continues to do so, resulting in her feeling guilty or a child feeling bad after eating a stolen sweet.

Post purchase evaluations can take one of two forms, namely customer satisfaction or customer dissatisfaction. Satisfaction can be defined as a post-consumption evaluation that a chosen alternative at least meets or exceeds expectations. Dissatisfaction is the opposite response. Generally speaking, consumers will work towards reducing psychological discomfort by trying to filter out the messages that undermine the choice made. Research has shown that consumers will exhibit a higher probability of buying a product should they be satisfied and tend to say good things about the product to others [Kotler, 2000, 182; Lovelock & Wright, 1999:97; Ross & Baldasare, 1998:35; Levy & Weitz, 1998:137; and Churchill & Peter, 1998:147].

Society's needs and demands for superior products and good service has put immense focus on post purchase reassurance. By and large, consumers turn out to be more

difficult to please as they become more intelligent and sophisticated [Hilsenrath & Flint, 2001:A2; Mulkern, 2001:126; and Mayland, 2000:31].

Consumers partake in a buying situation with certain expectations, which fall into three performance categories namely, ideal, equitable and expected. Ideal performance refers to the optimal performance level, which a consumer expects. A normative judgment reflecting the performance one ought to receive given the costs and efforts devoted to the buying actions and consumption is regarded as equitable performance. The last category is that of expected performance. This is likely to be the actual performance that is executed. Consumers generally make use of this category in deciding whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied because this is the logical outcome of the pre-purchase alternative evaluation process [Engel et al., 1995:275 and Lovelock & Wright, 1999:93].

Consumers usually base their expectations on three principles, namely instrumental performance, symbolic performance and affective performance. Instrumental performance is based on the physical functioning of the product. In other words, does it work properly? Symbolic performance refers to the aesthetic or image-enhancement performance. An example would be sunglasses - they protect the consumer's eyes from sunlight (instrumental performance) but are also able to let the consumer fit in with a specific social group (symbolic performance). Affective performance deals with the emotional response that owning or using the product provides. For example, do you feel good when buying a particular product? [Hawkins et al., 2001:641 and Arens, 1999:130]].

In light of the previous paragraph, it is imperative to note that only once a product is consumed or used, can the consumer make comparisons and draw up conclusions. Most researchers are of the opinion that these conclusions are a subjective evaluation of the difference between expectancy and actual results [Sweeney, 2001:203; Mittal & Kamakura, 2001:131; and Lovelock & Wright, 1999:76].

The importance of meeting or exceeding consumer expectations is paramount. The positive side of creating satisfied, loyal consumers has already been discussed, however, some research results have revealed that approximately a third of consumers have shown that they are dissatisfied with the product or service that they have paid for [Singh &

Wilkes, 1996:355]. Their dissatisfaction responses generally can take the form of the following categories [Hawkins et al., 2001:642 and Kotler, 2000:183]:

- voice responses – complaining to the store or manufacturer;
- third party responses – taking legal action;
- exit options – stop buying a product; and
- private responses – negative word-of-mouth communications and changing consumption patterns (such as switching brands).

The results can be misleading due to the fact that many people that are unhappy with their purchase don't actually complain. It is believed that only a third of unhappy buyers make the effort of complaining, let alone try to exchange their purchase. Dissatisfaction, on the other hand, is seen as a poor indicator of complaint behaviour [Mulkern, 2001:126; Blakeley, 2000:122; Lewis, 2000:11; and Jones & Sasser, 1995:94]. According to Smith [1993:55], dissatisfied customers will tell up to eleven other people about their bad experience, which is two to three times more people than a satisfied customer will talk to. Unsatisfactory experiences can encourage customers to patronise other stores and brands. Determinants of complaint behaviour have also been linked to internal and external influences previously discussed [Burgess, 1998:65 and Levy & Weitz, 1998:137]. Ultimately, the retailer can and should try to create a positive influence on consumers. Current and future attempts are addressed in the next chapter.

2.8 Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to attain a better understanding of the way in which consumers behave in the market place. Three of the most popular frameworks are made use of in order to adapt a model suitable for the Millennial Generation. This adapted model is the foundation to the discussion on consumer behaviour. The central part is considered to be that of a consumer's lifestyle – a person's approach to life with regards to various opinions, interests and activities.

Consumers are susceptible to internal influences. Perceptions, memory and learning play a role in how consumers perceive and remember information. This process begins at a young age and is essential for a child to be successfully socialised. As a child develops,

he / she starts to orientate themselves consistently towards concepts and objects. This is referred to as attitudes. Furthermore, through the use of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, certain issues, such as social and physiological needs, are found to motivate consumers to respond in any way necessary in order to satisfy needs and wants. In addition, strong, instinctive or mental feelings that affect behaviour (referred to as emotions) will vary among consumers and the situations that they might find themselves in.

External influences are capable of influencing consumer behaviour in many ways. Culture describes a person with regards to their beliefs, habits, customs, morals, knowledge and law. As a person acquires a culture, he / she realises that there are certain boundaries to act within but is not always aware of the greater picture of its influence. The boundaries that are introduced may range from issues dealing with space, time, symbols, and colours to values that orientate one personally, environmentally and socially – often resulting in the formation of subcultures.

Due to different social backgrounds and hierarchal classes, consumers are often proactive in either associating or dissociating themselves with others that carry favourable or unfavourable traits. This is what is referred to as reference groups. One of the primary groups is that of consumers' families. Families evolve over time and businesses are forced to adapt to their changing needs. One way in which this is accomplished is to understand the nature of family-purchase roles. Through the use of appropriate child-rearing techniques and sound family structuring, younger consumers are equipped to tackle almost any marketing challenge.

A consumer's resources involve any demographic, physical, psychological and material means used in dealing with daily life. Time, however, is one element that consumers have little control over and subsequently determines whether a consumer has a shopping experience that requires a lot of effort (mentally and physically) in satisfying needs.

These needs are often only realised when a consumer recognises it by themselves or with the help of marketing stimuli such as an advertisement. This is often the first step taken when a consumer is following a decision-making process.

The second step is that of searching for internal information (such as existing knowledge) or external information (such as asking a friend) that will help make the decision-making easier for the consumer. The chosen approach will often depend on the adequacy or quality of existing knowledge and the weighing up of costs versus benefits. This can be aided by considering product characteristics, market characteristics, consumer characteristics and situation characteristics.

Alternative evaluation, the third step, is when the consumer considers all his / her available options in order to get the best result in satisfying his / her needs. Typical issues that will be considered involve product attributes, personal attitudes, affective concerns and surrogate indicators (such as brand names). The strategies in which consumers execute their notions in choosing alternatives are synonymous with decision rules.

The fourth step considers the purchase phase and how situational influences are able to come to the fore. Situational influences are independent of the consumer or object's (such as an advertisement) characteristics. Social surroundings (such as number of people present), task definition (person who will use the product), physical features (such as lighting) and information availability are crucial concerns for a consumer when just about executing their intention to purchase something.

Post purchase alternative evaluation is the fifth and final step in the decision-making process. A consumer would typically examine the consequences of his / her purchase. The result may be either satisfying or unsatisfying. Unsatisfied consumers are often the result of a prevailing cognitive dissonance. This feeling of regret or guilt is often not attended to by either the consumer or the responsible business entity.

This draws this chapter on consumer behaviour to an end. The next chapter will take an in-depth look at current and futuristic state of affairs of garage convenience stores and traditional cafés.