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Cross Cultural Marketing:

Understanding the Values and Cultural Paradoxes

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Abstract

Nowadays, India appears to be an attractive consumer market, based on strong demand for products like for the cars, mobiles, luxurious clothing, watches etc for the past several years. Furthermore, as a result of Foreign Direct Investment and Globalization, India became open and moreover both, investors and business leaders from all over the world are showing more interest in the country from the business perspective. Therefore, it is essential to realize that cultural differences are playing a very important role in achieving success in Indian marketplace and is complicated too.

India is a diverse country in terms of people, language, religion, cultural practices, customs and traditions. It is known to be one of the oldest civilizations in the world with a history spanning more than 10,000 years. The culture of India has been shaped by the very history, its unique geography and the incorporation of customs and traditions from its invaders as well as neighbours and more importantly by preserving its ancient heritages. Overall, India shows a mix of strong tradition of its cultural values at the same time as it is undergoing rapid change.

Keywords: Cross – Cultural Marketing, Rokeach Value Survey, Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions, Indian Context.

Introduction:

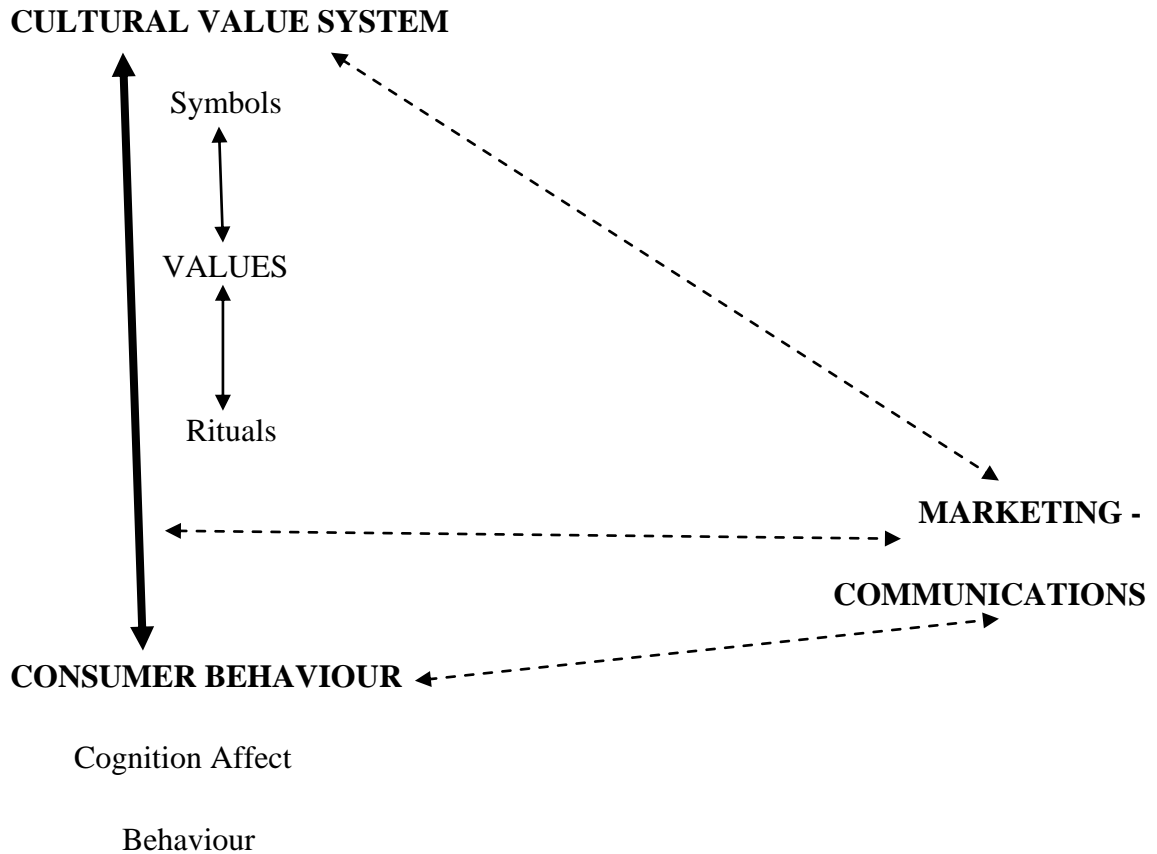
For the last 20 – 25 years, India has been on the radar of many leaders, viewing from the corporate point of view and is among the fastest growing economies. Since the 1990, the opening of the doors for the outer multi – national companies led to converging needs and tastes of consumers and further, facilitating standardised form of marketing and advertising. With a population of over one billion, the market opportunities are too growing with the rising middle class population, increasing income levels, growing number of working women and consequently, increasing purchasing power.

Culture and Consumer Behaviour;

Hofstede equated culture to “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (Hofstede H. , 2005). Definition

allows comparing one culture from another, shaping reality, a blueprint and evaluating a plan of action. The model is adopted to explore interaction between culture and consumer behaviour.

Figure 1: A Model of Interaction of Culture and Consumer Behaviour.



Source: Adopted from an integrative framework for cross-cultural consumer behaviour, authored by (David, 2001).

Model emphasizes that the cultural value system includes of the unique values, which allows individuals in a culture to be different from another, but somewhat same to their group(s) they belong. A Model shows that culture plays an important role in buyer's buying behaviour, which reinforces the manifestations of the culture (Peter, 1998). Marketing Communications serve as a catalyst to send values and their specific meaning from culturally constituted world to consumer market. Furthermore, culture influences buyer's behaviour through its manifestations—rituals, symbols and values.

Rituals. The concept of rituals came into being from religious rituals. Rituals are interpreted as results of religious or mystical being. Rituals allow affirming, evoking, assigning or revising the traditional symbols and bringing up with the meanings of cultural order (David, 2001). Rituals are important under Cultural Value System because it involves the consumption of goods and services and further knowing of one's behaviour.

Symbols. Symbols are categorised of processes and objects that include of a meaning that is varied to a particular group of people (Geertz, 1973). Symbols are displayed differently in different cultures, and their meaning is interpreted accordingly. Sometimes, language may include a set of symbols in the form of gestures, postures, pictures or may be in the form of objects. Finally, a consumer in order to define the social self, allow themselves to consume the product which describes the symbolic meaning or expresses cultural values (Durgee, 1986).

Values. (Rokeach, 1973) Stated value as “an enduring belief that one mode of conduct or end–state of existence is preferable to an opposing mode of conduct or end–state of existence”. On one hand, India is known for its cultural values, but on other hand the values are too changing comparing to outer world. Viewing to Rokeach Values, terminal values differentiate between preferred end states of being whereas instrumental values define the preferred modes of behaviour of means to achieve end states. Both Terminal and Instrumental values are described in **Table 1**, shown below.

Table 1: Rokeach Values.

Terminal Values

Value	Definition (Concerned with)	Examples
1. Comfortable Life	comfort	Prosperous, well – off
2. Exciting Life	an exciting life	Stimulating, active
3. Sense of Accomplishment	accomplishment	Achievement, culmination
4. World at peace	peace	Peaceful, concord

5. World of beauty	beauty in nature and arts	Charming, splendid
6. Equality	equality	Equity, impartiality
7. Family Security	family security	Home, stability
8. Freedom	freedom	Free, liberty
9. Happiness	happiness	Happy, euphoric
10. Inner Harmony	inner harmony	Balanced, orderly
11. Mature Love	social & spiritual intimacy	Intimacy, maturity
12. National Security	safety	Defended, shielded
13. Pleasure	an enjoyable, leisure life	Enjoyment, satisfying
14. Salvation	salvation	Immortality, heaven
15. Self – Respect	self – esteem	Self – assurance, worthy
16. Social Recognition	respect from others	Admired, appreciate
17. True Friendship	close companionship	United, fellowship
18. Wisdom	mature understanding	Sense, insight

Source: Adopted from a time-based analysis of changing Consumer Values in India, authored by (Madhavan Parthasarathy, 2015).

Instrumental Values

Value	Definition (Concerned with)	Examples
1. Ambition	hard – work	Aspiring, eager
2. Broadmindedness	open – mindedness	Flexible, unprejudiced
3. Capability	competence	Effective, proficient
4. Cheerfulness	being light-hearted and joyful	Animated, jovial

5. Cleanliness	cleanliness	Neat, unadulterated
6. Courage	standing for one's belief	Bold, unwavering
7. Forgiveness	a willingness to pardon	Acquit, overlook
8. Helpfulness	working for welfare of others	Assist, support
9. Honesty	the truth	True, ethical
10. Imagination	being daring	Creative, visionary
11. Independence	self – reliance	Self – sufficient, autonomous
12. Intellect	intellect	Intelligence, reflective
13. Logic	rationality	Consistent, rational
14. Love	affection	Fond, beloved
15. Obedience	obedience	Dutiful, observant
16. Politeness	courtesy mannerly	Courteousness, civil
17. Responsibility	being accountable	Reliable, responsible
18. Self – Control	self - control	Controlled, perseverant

Source: Adopted from Instrumental values: A five-nation comparative study, authored by (Abraham, 1998).

Hofstede's Cultural Framework;

In order to enhance the understanding of the Indian Culture, the study by Hofstede is incorporated to breakdown culture into smaller dimensions that help bring to light the differences of one culture from another within India. Hofstede outlined the concept of six dimensions in order to enhance the difference between various forms of culture particularly at national level, and personality at individual level. Characteristics of cultural – dimensions are described in **Table 2.**

Table 2: Hofstede's six – cultural dimensions.

<p>Small power – distance cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hierarchy is for convenience • Status unimportant to show power differences 	<p>Large power – distance cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hierarchy means existential inequality • Status important to show power differences
<p>Collectivism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship/loyalty prevails over task • Universalism 	<p>Individualism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task prevails over relationship • Particularism
<p>Feminity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus orientation • Cooperation and sharing recommended and rewarded 	<p>Masculinity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts to find out who is best • Competition even in same team recommended and rewarded
<p>Weak uncertainty – avoidance cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inductive thinking • Belief in generalists and common sense 	<p>Strong uncertainty – avoidance cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deductive thinking • Belief in experts and their knowledge
<p>Low scoring countries on LTO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only one absolute truth • Quick results expected 	<p>High scoring countries on LTO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No absolute truth • Perseverance is highly regarded
<p>Indulgence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher percentage of people declaring themselves very happy • Higher importance of leisure 	<p>Restrained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer very happy people • Lower importance of leisure

Source: Adopted from Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind, authored by (Hofstede H. , 2005).

Purpose of Research:

While Reviewing the Literature, it was reviewed that no study was found till date that could be related to the understanding of the value system of Indian Culture using the Rokeach Value Survey. Viewing to the Hofstede Cultural dimensions, few studies were found in regard to Indian scenario but, somehow are limited to the extent. So, in order to identify intra - cultural dimensions and the value system, this research was brought into consideration.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To analyze various (PDI/IDV - COL/MAS/UAI/LTO/IVR) cultural dimensions on Hofstede's framework.
2. To explore both terminal and instrumental values (Rokeach Values) of Indian context.

Methodology:

- a. Research Design;

The Research Design of the study is exploratory cum analytical in Nature.

- b. Collection of Data;

The Research is based on Processed Data. The Data is collected from the Hofstede online centre for the year 2015 – 16 containing all six cultural dimensions for India.

- c. Statistical Technique;

Content Analysis is brought into consideration for the following paper.

Analysis and Results:

Table 3: Cultural Dimensions score for India.

INDEX	PDI	IDV – COL	MAS	UAI	LTO	IVR
SCORE	77	48	56	40	51	26

1. India scores high with **77** on power distance dimension. It means that there is inequality in regard to power and distribution of wealth within society. So, in Indian scenario, being at the 'number – one' is important, defined by luxury, expensive and fashion brands. In, high power distance countries like India, culture includes of the desirable values which means people are highly indulged in showing off what is right and wrong, and moreover are living to expectations of others (Mooij, 2014).
2. India shows a collectivistic culture by scoring **48** on Hofstede's Individualism versus Collectivism dimension. Viewing to India for past 20 years, collectivistic culture is rapidly moving towards individualistic, but the **IDV – COL** score had remained same at **48** (Hofstede, 2016). This indicates that the actions of the individuals are highly influenced by westernized culture and moreover, are becoming more materialistic.
3. Indian nation is recognized as a masculine nation by scoring **56** on **MAS – FEM** dimension. This states that countries like India loves to 'live in order to work' attitude,

focus of individuals is towards success and achievements. The centre of individual's life rotates around the work and, performance appraisal at workplace is given high priority (especially in private sector).

4. India scores **40** on uncertainty avoidance dimension. This determines that Indians have low preference for avoiding uncertainty. Looking onto the Indian context, individuals are bind to religious rules, beliefs and had to go along them. Moreover, India scored close with USA on this very dimension, which implies that individuals give high preference towards value risk taking and furthermore, demonstrate a high tolerance for difference or errors (Fred Garcia, 2014). Rationally, India is considered as a peaceful nation where tolerance for the unexpected is high.
5. Indians are longer – term oriented, scoring **51** on **LTO** dimension. It states that individuals are more indulged in thinking about the future, as here the concept of karma comes into being. Individuals tend to follow the fated path rather than following the actual path. India had a very long history, and religions are more of considered as a philosophy – an amalgamation of ideas, views, practices and beliefs. Viewing to several religious aspects, Indians rank high on this dimension and too ranked at early and late majority with regard to diffusion process.
6. India scores **26** in terms of Indulgence on behalf of Hofstede's cultural framework. Score implies that Indian culture seems to be more restrained form of culture. Indian people have a belief that their actions are restrained by social norms and making changes in the norms is somewhat considered wrong. Lastly in Indian scenario, duty is prioritized more important than leisure.

Rokeach Values;

Terminal Values

Looking onto the Values, Indians show very least interest towards following values – world at peace, world of beauty and national security. It dictates that the people in India push – on their ideas, beliefs and thoughts from one generation to another, and try to be fixed to their root values. This implies that individuals in India, on one hand are not at all concerned with world at war or peace; rather they are busy with their own work (Banerjee, 2008). Furthermore on other hand, joint families are shifting towards nuclear families. This indicates that the values like

family security; mature love, salvation, equality and social recognition are decreasing and increase of following terminal values – freedom and pleasure. Respect for elders and parents are continually decreasing as individuals are becoming more materialistic and self – independent.

Instrumental Values

Viewing to the Instrumental values, collectivistic countries like India are based on strict hierarchical differentiation with powerful and autocratic leadership. This indicates that nation like India are more devoted towards ambition, love, independence and intellectualism values (Madhavan Parthasarathy, 2015) and hence, more Instrumental values have become insignificant with span of time – cheerfulness, forgiveness, helpfulness and politeness values (Abraham, 1998). However, competitive individualism is severely frowned on in Indian society because it can break old traditions and disrupt relationships, but youth doesn't bother about it anymore. Moreover, Indian youth is the one which are rapidly changing their values as viewing from globalization point of view and mostly adopting to westernized culture. So, too traditional values like – loyalty and obedience are decreasing (Jae Min Jung, 2009).

Major Results:

India, as a country, is so heterogeneous in nature that it is complex for a marketer to identify common threads of Indian culture and their specific core values. There are many different sub – cultures that co – exist in Indian society with their own distinctive values, norms, beliefs and lastly consumer behaviour. So, in India individuals are socialized by getting input from their specific culture and their core – values (Banerjee, 2008). The brief summary of Indian Culture gives hints to marketers about the people interested in their own values and social system. In Indian Culture, the values of the extended family are predominant, although individuality is currently developing in Indians, including a large degree of freedom in feeling, thinking and cultivation of one's inner life. As Indians are shifting from 'risk-restrained' to 'risk-takers', the desired values are changing and furthermore, individuals are becoming more open to new things and items. Therefore, Study may allow marketer to:

- a) Understand and decide as which culture to target first, with expansion of business within the country.

- b) Understand and decide for choice of segmenting the local market on behalf of their tastes, preferences and choices within the country.

Furthermore values are shifting, as values like – self-actualization and self-interest can easily be determined in Indian culture also. This relates to the difference between the desired versus desirable values, distinction between what people want for their own to how people thought about the world ought to be. However, it is very important viewing from marketing agency point of view, to understand the Indian cultural dimensions and values, in order to formulate a successful strategy and further marketing message should follow the local values. As India consist large number of sub – cultures, it will be impossible for company to modify message for each zone, it’s diversity that needed to be kept in mind. Moreover, it is explicitly pointed out that India belong to High – Context Culture, as a result of intimate relationships among people, a structure of social – hierarchy exists, individual inner feelings are kept under strong self – control and information is widely shared through simple messages with deep meaning.

Implications:

1. ‘**Cultural Segmentation: Act Global, Think Local**’ Strategy can be brought into use viewing from marketing agencies viewpoint. It states that companies can get benefits of globalization in production, labor, distribution etc, and moreover can build good relations with local customers and employees. Revolving around the Indian culture, advertising style may vary in accordance to languages, religions and value – systems, so advertisers shall make ad – campaigns accordingly.
2. Marketers can view their brand on the **Centrality – Distinctiveness** Map which offers insights about competitive Opportunities and threats, by recognizing themselves on any one quadrant. The C – D Map is stated in **Figure 2**,

Figure 2: The Centrality to Distinctiveness Map.

Unconventional	Aspirational
Peripheral	Mainstream

Source: Adopted from A better way to Map Brand Strategy, authored by (Niraj Dawar, 2015).

Analyzing to the External environment, marketers can make a successful winning strategy and further, try their maximum to convert their threats into opportunities.

3. As to target the Indian culture, among six clusters – **Family Cluster** can be brought into existence. It implies to following implications for marketing,
 - I. Older people are more credible than younger people, as age equals wisdom.
 - II. Indirect messages are appreciated and too seen more civilized.
 - III. Hierarchy is important, as messages from senior people have status.
 - IV. To summarize, **Table 4** is constructed, to closely understand the following cluster.

Table 4: Family Cluster – To organize for cost effectiveness and maximum impact across cultures.

FAMILY CLUSTER
1. Old = Wisdom
2. Loyalty
3. Hierarchy
4. Simple structure
5. Top down
6. High context = Civilized

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