Consumer Behaviour
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Lecture - 34
Social Class and Mobility, and Lifestyle Analysis

We will continue with our discussion on the sociological influences on consumer decision making
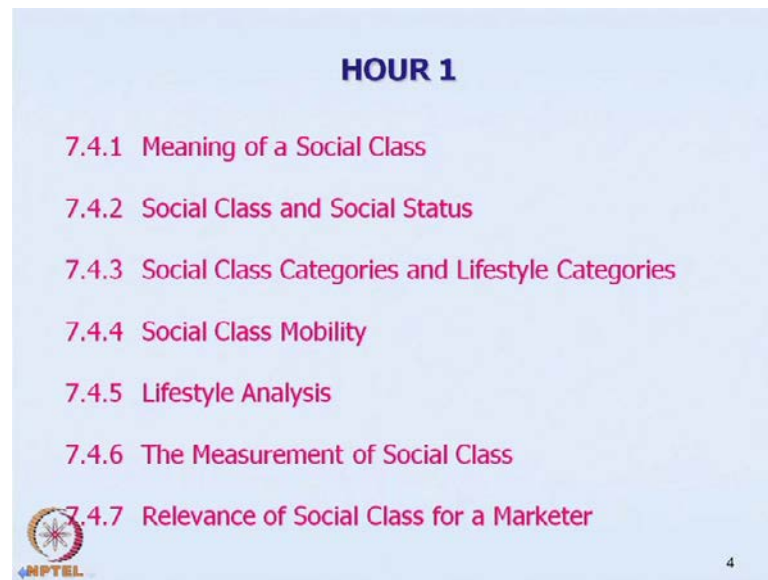
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And in today's session we will be talking of module 7.4 which is social class and mobility, a life style analysis.

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This particular module we will be covering in a total of 1 session and we shall be discussing the meaning of social class, social class and social status, social class categories and lifestyle categories, social class mobility and lifestyle analysis, the measurement of social class and the relevance of social class for a marketer.

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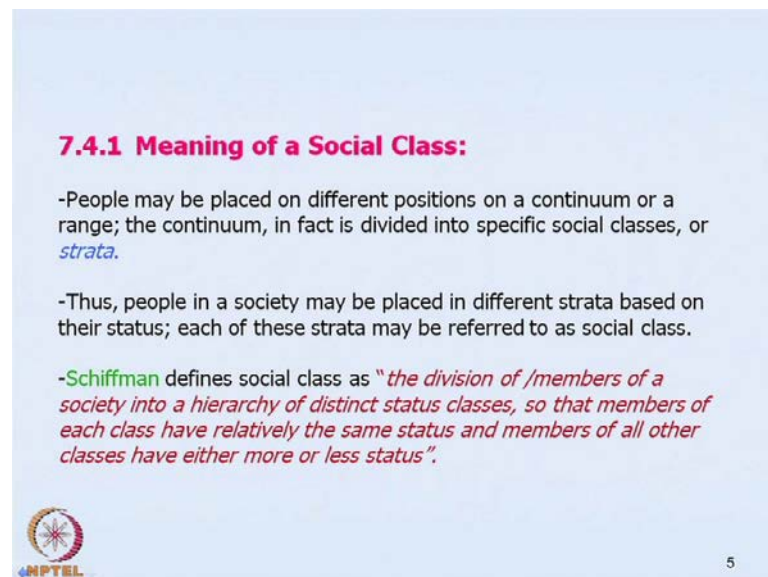
So, let us begin with a discussion on the meaning of social class. Now, people can be placed on different positions on a range or on a continuum. In fact this particular continuum is divided into a specific social classes or strata. People in a particular society

may be placed in different strata based on their status. So, each of these strata here is referred to as the social class. So, what we witness in and around us in the social structure is number of strata into which our social unit is you know classified and each of these strata exhibits status, exhibits different point on the continuum and we range them from a low to high or from high to low. People within these particular strata are said to belong to a particular status type and so, when we speak about this strata in terms of a social class.

So, people in a society will be placed in different strata based on their status and each of these strata may be referred to as a social class. Schiffman defines a social class as the division of members or you know of a society into hierarchy of distinct status classes, so that member of each class the relatively have the same status and the member of all other classes have either more or less status.

So, schiffman defines the social class in the form of divisions in the society, you know which is more hierarchical in terms of distinct social classes, distinct status classes, so that members of a particular class, the member of the class are regarded as begin inferior or superior members of other class and within a particular status be assumed to be similar each other. So, the members of the each class have relatively the same status and members of the all other classes have somewhat higher or somewhat lower status.

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7.4.2 Social Class and Social Status:

-Social class is measured in terms of *status.*

-A person belonging to a particular class is said to hold status similar to members of that class.

-So social class is defined in terms of the amount of status the members of a particular class relatively have, in comparison with members of other social classes.

6

Now, relate social class and social status. We say that social class is measured in terms of status. People belonging to particular class are said to belong to particular strata or particular status. They are said to hold status similar to members of that particular class.

So, social class is defined in terms of the amount of status of the members of the particular class have in comparison to the members of the other classes. Now, this stratification of the society into strata or into social classes or into you know a distinct structure where people within a particular class hold a particular status and they said to belong to either higher than the others to lower than the others. So, this kind of a certification is basically done on three factors: one is wealth here, meaning the amount of money that the person possesses the income or the economic assets that he possesses. Second is the power that is, ability to exert control over others, ability to be able to gain or have control, ability to able to influence others. And third is in terms of prestige or recognition that the person holds.

So, based on the income or the economic assets, based on the power and ability to influence other people around them and based on reputation as the person has gained we can actually classify the society into the various strata or we can the classify the society into the various social classes. However marketer, researchers, consumer, behaviorist and academicians have tried to study even sociologist. Majorly, the sociologists have tried to study this you know division, not in terms of these elements but, they decide or tented to study the strata in terms of the income. And the income here is related to education and occupation. So, the stratification of the society according to sociologists, according to you know other researchers in marketing or in consumer behavioral study.
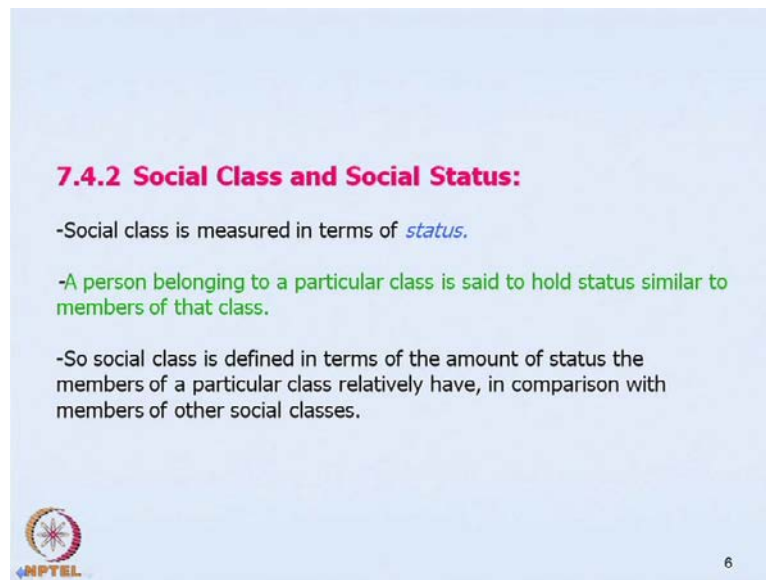
They have tried to use 3; you know 3 indexes which can be used in conjunction with each other which is income, education and occupation. So, they define a status in terms of demographic variables of income, education and occupation. The education would determine the occupation and the occupation would be determinate of the income of a consumer or a person earns and consumer earns they will buying a disposable income savings that he have at the end of the day. So, income, education and occupation are used in conjunction with each other. While talking about the social structure, while talking about the social class or the stratification, this has relevance for a marketer, this has relevance in terms of the buying patterns and consumption behavior and it is very

important to study to understand dynamics of social class in terms of one hierarchal structure and in terms of similarity within similarity within a social class.

So, while we see the hierarchal structure on low to high or high to low and we have the upper class, middle class and the lower class and further divisions have also been made within upper, lower and middle and into 3 more or 3 more you know categories as upper upper and upper middle and upper lower and middle upper and middle lower and middle middle and lower upper and lower middle and lower lower. So, while these stratification has been made and they basically represent a very hierarchal structure where this people in the society are placed in the different classes and they represent the groups which are either superior or inferior, either lower or higher to them with people in their own class being similar to them.

So, social class in here is hierarchal in nature and the hierarchy ranges from low to high, based on income, based on education and based on occupation the people holds these various ranks and such that people in the particular rank are similar to others and similar to themselves and others in their rank and different to across these ranks. So, people in the particular social class view themselves being having a status to others in the own class and having the status is either higher or lower to other people in other classes. So, they look upon themselves either equal to or inferior to other in terms of higher social classes and superior to other in terms lower social classes. So, it would be either be equal or upper or lower. So, this is how the society is arranged in a hierarchical structure.

The second which we discuss is the similarity of people within a social class. Within a social class people are similar to one another and this similarity is not only witnessed in terms of income, education and occupation but, also their values their customs, their norms, their attitudes, their lifestyle patterns you know everything whether it is their opinions, values you know norms judgments, belief's, general attitudes they all are similar in people exhibit similarity with respect to all of these when it comes to people of their social class. So, within a particular social class people are similar to each other and the similarity amongst. So, what were see is there is a similarity amongst the same class is the and there is dissimilarity when compared to the people whether the higher or lower class. Now, talking about these 2 characteristics: 1 hieratical structure and 2 similarities within a social class both of these are very relevant to a marketer. In terms of the hieratical structure each of these are different slabs or each of these are different strata and were looked upon as segments and marketer can you know target any in all of these segments and positioned their products or service offerings or brands accordingly.

So, it gives them a basis for market segmentation. Also, people with in a social class you know exhibit certain characteristics certain norms they are similar to each other. So, in order to seek social approval social acceptance they like use products services or brands and the other people in their social class are using. Specially, this is true when the other directed and they are susceptible to interpersonal influence where they would buy such product or service offerings or brands which are being used are brought and used in their

social class. So, they look for social approval, they look for acceptance and they want to behave like a other people in their strata. Also, also people begin to brands with their social classes and some kinds of brands are related to be the brand are suppose to be related to you know in terms of reputation worth. So, some brands are looked up with lot of reputation, with lot of worth, with lot of value on that people in a particular class will try and find some congruence and some similarity with that brand in terms of the reputation the value the worth of the brand.

So, you know people would prefer having and buying such brand, which will relate to the social image which will relate to their class and they avoid buying such brands which relate to you know either are the lower or higher. So, they are social class influence on the actually consumption or product and service offerings are certain kinds of brands get related to certain kinds of strata and the people with in strata they will either look up to a brand as you know higher repute or in lower repute and they will try and buy such brands which will fall in that par and with their own social class and with their own strata. Also, when we talking about the hieratical structure people in the lower class look upon the people in the next class as aspirational groups or as the reference groups and so the people in the higher social class acts as reference group for a people in the lower class people immediately in the lower strata will want to emulate the once in the upper this gives the market for me 2 products or immediate products or the economy versions of product for which a lower class will become a huge segment. Also such people aspire to become a like people in upper class and so when you know they aspire to become a people in upper classes and they use certain products or service offerings or brand which the people in the immediately upper class, upper strata or when reference groups are using.

So, this is in terms of characteristics both in the hieratical structure and similarity are of people in the social class hold relevance for a marketer. So, it very important to study social class and social strata and understand the hieratical structure which could you know which has lot relevance for a marketer for segmentation market targeting positioning for you know in creating a reference group appeal for, in creating a reputation for brand which people could relate to their social class and etcetera. And also, people belong to particular strata are exhibit certain values norms, judgments, believes, attitudes which will be similar to one another with people in their class.

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7.4.3 Social Class Categories And Lifestyle Profiles:

-Various classifications of social class have been proposed.

-Sociologists have divided the society into distinct class divisions that number two, three, four, five, six and even nine class social structures.

-*Which of the classifications is most useful, depends upon the purpose of the researcher, and also on the amount of detail that the research/study requires.*

-Consumer researchers are interested in the social-class structures primarily for the purpose of viewing them as potential markets for their products and service offerings.

-For reasons of uniformity, researchers prefer to adopt a three class structure, and thereby divide social classes into upper, middle and lower classes.

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11

Now, let us come to the next topic here which is social class categories and lifestyle profiles. So, various classifications of the social class are as been proposed, I just have mentioned some. Sociologists, basically divides the society into 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 or 6 or even 9 social structures. So, which of these classification will be most useful will depend upon the purpose of the researchers and also depend on the amount of detail or amount of the descriptive that study requires. Generally, seen you know researchers prefer to use a 3 tier structure where they divide the social class into upper, middle and lower. Now upper, middle and lower means the certain characteristics associated with each of these classes each social class is characterized by the certain lifestyle factors which in terms of norms, attitudes, believes, values, opinions and behavior. They are similar to people in the own class and different across classes. The people from the middle class may serve as aspirational groups as reference group appeal for the lower and similarity the people of upper class may act as a reference group appeal for the people in the middle class. So, you know people in particular class possess believes, norms, attitudes, values, interest, behavior that may be a hybrid of 2 or more classes.

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7.4.4 Social Class Mobility:

-People in community can move from one strata to another.

-They can move either up or down the social class; this mobility gets exhibited in two forms.

i) Individuals can move either up or down in social-class standing across generations,
i.e. while their parents may have belonged to one strata, they begin to belong to another, either upper or lower.

ii) Such a transition may also be seen through one's life,
i.e. as a person becomes independent and starts earning, he may belong to one class and as he progresses in life, he may begin to belong to another.

But, what we see today is in terms of or more of social class mobility where, people are moving across strata, they are moving from one class in to another. Now, this mobility gets exhibit in 2 ways: one, individual can either move upward downward social class standing across generation while for example, their parents may have you know belong to 1 strata and they may begin to belong to other strata. So, this particular mobility is seen across generation, a father may be belong to middle class but, the son because of his education and because of his occupation and because of his income that he begins to earn within his own lifespan is seen himself move up the social ladder into the upper class.

There is another you know transition which we see which will happen through once life. If a person become independent very early and starts earning and he may belong to 1 class and as he progresses in life and he may belong to another class. So, individual may move up and down across generation or you know it may happen through one's own life in particular phase. So, it could once situation where the parents belong to a strata and the son belongs to another and another in his own life he moves starts as a lower or as he starts as a middle class person and he ends being a very successful man and hands up the strata into the upper class.

Now, upper mobility is very commonly it is a very common phenomenon which may witness as this. Higher classes become aspirational references so people at the lower class, marketer realize these and use symbols of high class status as they represent as

their products as also in their advertisements both in terms of the contents and in terms of context. It is also been seen that product and services and brands which were earlier restricted to a particular social class and were within in the realm of the social class are moved beyond and are being used of the people and other social classes as well. So, something was earlier restricted for the middle class this also a lower class which has today which is access to such products and to such brands. The impact of aspirational groups and the impact of reference group appeal as well as the ideal self image are very sharp.

So, as I just mentioned because of this aspiration because of this desire to use products which the people are in higher class are using there is a strong market for me too imitation of a product of a economy version. So, the marketer who you know who influence the upper class and the lower class influence the me too marketer either as you know as cloners or as counter fetters who basically come up with product to satisfy the lower class. So, through cloning or counter fleeting they come up with products which they are close semblance to the regional and the me-too products are become successful in this field because they had been used by the people for whom the original is beyond their pocket or beyond their realm.

So, they use something which is similar to what is meant for the upper class of the premium segment. So, here what we witnessed today is the shop rise in the social class mobility which is happening where, the role of reference groups, aspirational reference group, ideal self image and ideal self concept and all of these is happening very rapidly and having an impact on the marketers who are beginning to come up with cheaper versions or economy versions or counter fleets and clones of the original.

7.4.5 Lifestyle Analysis:

-Consumer behaviorists and researchers have studied lifestyles of the community and made generalizations.

-Lifestyles have been assessed in terms of activities, interests and opinions (AIOs).

-They have been measured as a general measure as well as a specific measure. In terms of marketing, the general measure relates to the use of product and service offerings by people belonging to a social class.

-As a specific measure they relate to brands, whether economy, middle-range or premium.

-Thus, lifestyle analysis may be used as a general measure or as a specific measure.

Let us now come to lifestyle analysis, consumer behaviorists and researchers are studied lifestyle of community are made generalizations. Lifestyles have basically being assessed in terms of AIO are the activity interest and opinion. So, consumer behaviorists and researchers have tried to study the lifestyle patterns of a person which has a bearing and consumption pattern as well in terms of the AIO or the activity interest and opinion. Now, they have been measured, they have been used as a specific measure in terms of marketing the general measure relates to the use of particular products or service offerings and the people belong to the particular class. As a specific measure they relate to the brand whether economy brand or middle range or the premium brands. So, lifestyle analysis may be used as a general or as a specific measure. You know when researchers go for such lifestyle analysis they try to measure the social class, try to measure the impact of lifestyle patterns on the persons general behavior or specific behavior with respect to the marketing.

So, in terms of general behavior it related to the kind of product and services that a person from a particular lifestyle can be uses and the specific will be with respect to the brand he or she uses. So, as such brand themselves get reputed or get positioned as premium brand or as a economy brands or as a middle range brands. So, marketer basically make use of lifestyle while making product decision a while making pricing decisions while making strategies with respect to the distribution and with respect to the communication. For all these the marketers can benefits from the study of lifestyle

pattern do make use of general lifestyle while making decision with respect to the product or price or place and promotion. So, this also includes assessments of new product opportunities, segmentation, targeting and positioning and other decision related to the marketing strategy. So, on the one hand they make you know make use of specific lifestyle while related to the brand positioning pricing or any other decision related to marketing. So, both in terms of being general to the purchases process as well as specific to the brand or the brand purchases marketer try to use the knowledge or they try to use take bearing draw learning's from lifestyle and they try to incorporate these while designing their strategies either with respect to the STP or with respect to the 4 p's. So, lifestyle analysis may be used as a general or may be specific measure. We have a marketer have proposed certain frames for lifestyle analysis.

We will be discussing a few of the frame works were we will be talking about 4, we will be talking about 5 different frame works which are been proposed by a researchers or research group or consultant organization. They have tried to study a lifestyle analysis and how they try to relate it to the marketing context.

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S.No.	Lifestyle framework	Description
1.	**Values and Lifestyle VALS**	Goal: To segment the consumers -Segments consumers into eight consumer segments, viz., innovators, thinkers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiencers, makers and survivors. -Based on two dimensions, primary motivation and resources.
2.	**VALS 2**	Goal: To segment the consumers, and measure consumer buying patterns -Segments consumers into eight consumer segments, viz., actualizers, fulfillers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiencers, makers, and strugglers. -Based on two dimensions, self-orientation and resources.

Frameworks for Lifestyle Analysis

So, let us see here we have the first lifestyle frame work in the form of the VALS or the values and lifestyle. This particular frame work was proposed by the in 1970s and was later on adopted and as VALS 2. So, we will discuss this lifestyle frame work in little more of detail subsequently. Now, goal the goal of this frame work is segment the

consumers. So, consumers have been segmented into 8 groups: innovators, thinkers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiences, makers and survivors. And it is based on 2 dimensions the primary motivation and resources. So, based on this 2 dimensions consumer are identified into 8 different segments with as innovators, thinkers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiences, makers and survivors.

This scale was originally proposed in 1970s and was modified later and came to be known as VALS 2. Where, the goal now here became as to segment the consumer and measure the consumer buying patterns. So, again the consumer are segmented into 8 groups, the segment consumer into 8 segments which are actuallizeres, fulfillers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiences, makers and strugglers. So, they brought about some change in these in the terminology and that based it on into 2 different dimensions which were self orientation and resources. So, instead of primary motivation the dimension was substituted what was called the self orientation and the consumer have been segmented and the basic goal of this module is identified segments and measure by consumer buying patterns. The third lifestyle frame work is the list of values which is basically to assess the values, the dominant values with in a consumer the various values which play a role in consumer decision making.

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The assumption behind the scale is that personal values are linked to consumption. They are regarded as memorable sets of variables which are more closely related to

motivations then, a demographic and psychographic measure. So, these values are basically the personal values which are bearing on the consumer decision making process and consumer and consumption process. They are regarded as measurable sets of variables that are closely related to motivations and not to as much more to motivations and the other psychographic and the other demographic variables. So, the measures the list of values is the measure of 9 values sense of belonging, being well respected, security, fun and enjoyment, warm relationship with others, self fulfillment excitement, sense of accomplishment and self respect.

So, these are the 9 personal values which are been proposed by this particular frame work says, which tries to asses you know how consumption impacted by a personal values which are more related to the motivation then, to other psychographic and demographic components.

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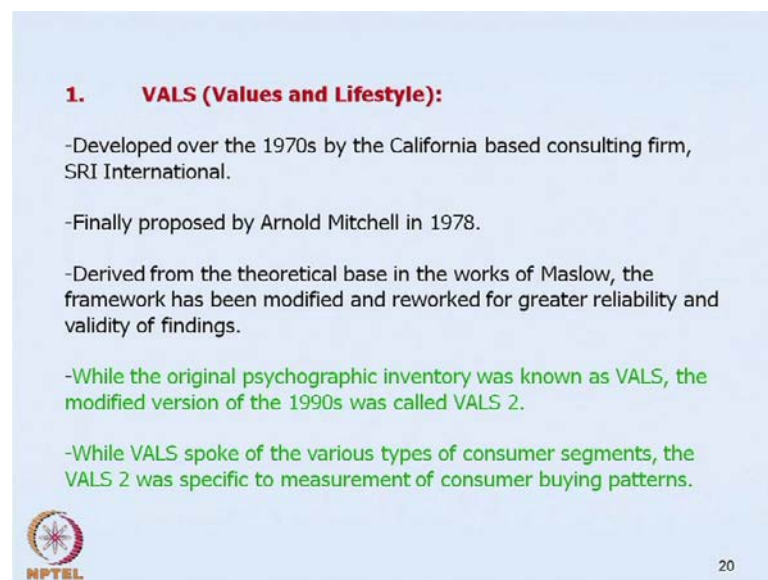
S.No.	Lifestyle framework	Description
	Frameworks for Lifestyle Analysis	
4.	Geo-Demographic Analysis (PRIZM)	Goal: To analyzes geographic regions and relate them to consumption behavior. It is based on the premise that lifestyle, and thus consumption, is largely driven by demographic factors. Identifies a total of 62 lifestyle clusters.
5.	Yankelovich's MONITOR MindBase	Goal: To consider the individual's position on a set of core values with his or her life cycle stage. The values identified include materialism, technology orientation, family values, conservatism, cynicism versus optimism, social Interaction, and activity level. People are grouped into 8 high-level segments.

Another frame work which has been proposed and is very famous is the PRIZM frame work which is also actually called as a geo-demographic analysis. This particular frame work here the goal is to analyze geographic regions and relates them to consumption behavior. So, it is basically based on the assumptions that lifestyle and consumption is largely determined by demographic factors and it actually identifies 62 lifestyle clusters. So, it basically relates how consumption behavior can be related to a geographic regions and how a behavior of consumption pattern are largely impacted by demographic factors.

And finally, we have a Yankelovich's monitor mind base where this is another frame work the goal is to consider the individuals positions on the set up core values with his or her life cycle stage. So, where a person is with respect to the lifestyle will have a impact on the core values and the individual position on a set of core values will be based on his or her life cycle stage. So, the various values are identified here in terms of a include materialism, technology orientation, family values, conservation, cynicism versus optimism, social interaction and activity level. And people are grouped into 8 segments. The model basically tries to see where an individual stands, you know in terms of the core values across the different phases of these lifecycle.

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Now, we will be talking little more in detail about the VALS and the VALS 2. This particular frame work VALS was developed by the California based consulting firm called SRI in 1970s and it was finally, proposed by the person by the name Arnold Mitchell in 1978. So, while it was developed by a SRI consulting at California in 1970s that was formally by Mitchell in 1978. And the original inventory was called VALS, it was modified in the 1990s and it came to known as VALS 2. So, VALS spoke about different consumer segments were VALS 2 spoke about the segments and they related to the measurement of consumption patterns. So, while the VALS spoke about the various consumer types of segments. VALS 2 was more specific to the measurement about consumer buying patterns.

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-According to the proponents, consumers could be of three kinds, viz.,

a) *need-directed* (these are consumers who make purchases based solely on their needs and wants),

b) *outer-directed* (these are consumers who make purchases based on their perceptions of the manner in which others view them), and

c) *inner-directed* (these are consumers who make purchases out of an inner need or inner beliefs).

-The VALS framework illustrates a system for grouping of US adult consumers into various categories according to psychological and sociological criterion.

-The framework provides valuable inputs to marketers especially in areas of promotion strategy, viz., message content and context, as well as choice of media.

Now, according to components or according to those who proposed this frame work, consumer could be of 3 kinds: the need directed, the outer directed and the inner directed. The needs directed are those who make purchases are based on their needs and wants, slowly on their needs and wants. The outer directed are you know are those consumer who make purchases on the basis of how others view them, they make purchases on the basis of perception about how others viewed them. And the third is the inner director who makes purchases out of their own inner values or their inner beliefs and their inner needs. So, the VALS here basically are the system of grouping the US adult consumer into these various categories according to their sociological and psychological orientation. And this particular frame work provides a tremendous to marketers especially in the area of communication strategy in the message content and the message contest as well as the choice of the media.

So, according to the proposers lead by Mitchell. The consumer could be divided into 3 categories they could be the need directed, the outer directed and the inner directed. The need directed they drawn solely by their needs and wants. The inner directed who are you know basically propelled by their own inner believes and inner a motives and the inner values. And the outer directed is basically acted out on basis of others on the perception of what others feel or say of them. And so, based on this the proponents of VALS frame work proposed that the US adult population could be categorized into various categories based on the sociological and psychological orientation.

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Now, the VALS basically classify individuals into 2 dimensions. The 2 dimensions are primary motivation which is the horizontal dimension and the resources which is the vertical dimension

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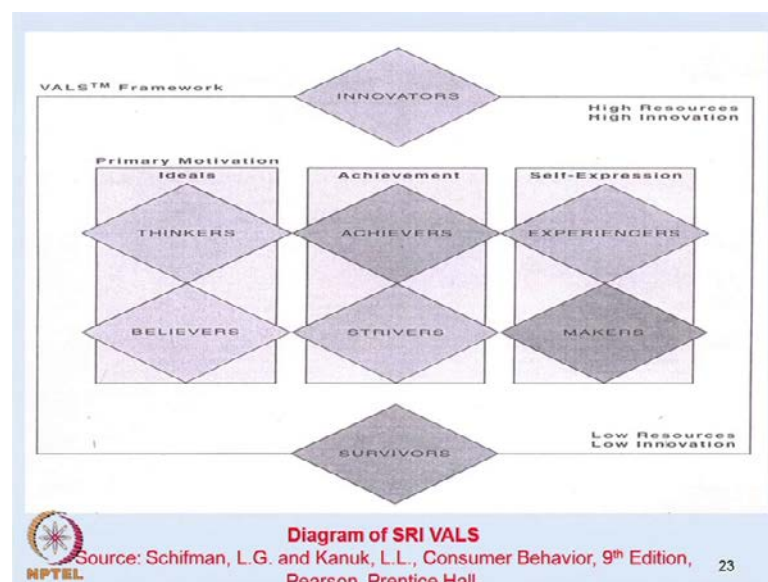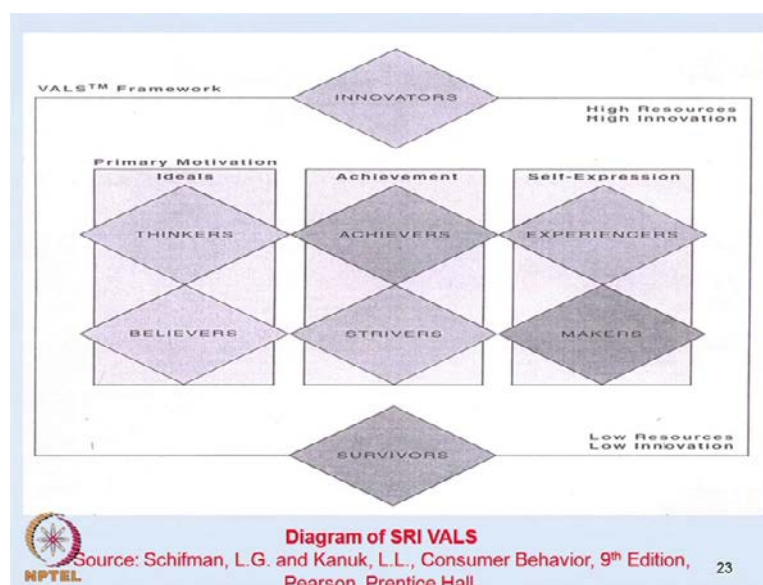

And if we see here, we can look at this this model, where you have a primary motivation which is the horizontal dimension and the resources which is the vertical dimension. So, you have primary motivation and then you have high innovation and low resources low innovation. So, these are the 2 major you know categories where of the SRI proposed by

the SRI the VALS. Now, according to them the US adult population could be classified into these into different categories need directed, outer directed and inner directed.

And then, further based on these 2 dimensions they would be, you can place them into these 8 categories. So, if you see the various 8 categories are thinkers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiences, makers, survivors and innovators. Now, the horizontal is symbolically of primary motivation in terms of self orientation which explains consumer attitudes and it is anticipate behavior. So, it includes 3 primary motivations and accordingly classified the consumer in 3 categories. Consumers are motivated by ideals such people are actually drawn when knowledge, believes, principles rather than by feelings and emotions so that the principle oriented includes groups that are thinkers and believers. Now, the thinkers and believers are motivated by ideals, they are driven by knowledge and believes and principles and such people are confirmed to the ideal or to knowledge believes and principles will be either thinkers or believers. Consumers are also motivated by achievement such people are driven by the demonstrating success to other and such people are called achievers and strivers. And there are consumers who are driven by self expression which where people have desired for a social or physical activity, variety risk taking and such groups would be known as experiences or makers. So, the people believe in the ideals in the form of thinkers and believers, people driven achievements in the form of achievements and strivers, people driven by self expression or desire for social and physical activity and they are included as experience's or makers. Now, the other two groups of people are the innovators and the strivers.

We can see in the top of the rectangle we have the innovators who have such high resources that they can have any of the 3 primary motivations. And at the bottom of rectangle are those who referred to as survivors they leave satisfy the content and they are very low with all of these primary motivation. So, innovators are going to be very high on these primary motivations and survivors are very low on these resources, they are is going to be more self satisfied and contented. Now, if we go beyond we will see the vertical dimensions here classify the population on the basis of the extent to which they are innovative and have resources like income, education, self confidence, intelligence, leadership skills and energy.

Diagram of SRI VALS
Source: Schifman, L.G. and Kanuk, L.L., Consumer Behavior, 9th Edition, Pearson. Prentice Hall.

So, apart from demographics like age, income, education, consumer behavior is also impacted by the psychological traits and traits like energy self confident intellectualism novelty seeking innovativeness impulsiveness leadership and vanity will all have role to play in consumption behavior. So, the demographic traits as well as the psychological traits determine individual resources. So, the resource here implies the demographic as well as psychological traits. The various levels of resources which enhance or it constrain his or her primary motivation. Thus, the vertical dimension reflects the ability of the individual to pursue a dominant self orientation. So, here we have the resources or the innovation which is going to actually have an impact on the primary motivation whether it is going to be ideal or whether it is going to be achievement or whether it is going to be self expression.

So, resources here will be demographic and psycho graphic traits where in case a person is high or low on them will have the impact on the primary motivation and whether he is driven with ideals or achievement or self expression. Now, based on this individuals are placed at we seen on 8 psycho segments- innovators, thinkers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiences, makers and survivors. So, innovators are those who are highest on resources innovation because of these they can exhibit all the 3 a degrees of a primary motivation and in varying degrees. So, they have located at the top of the triangle, they are the highest income, highest self esteem, creativity and can choose on any of 3 self orientations. So, they are successful, they are sophisticated, they are very active

consumer who often from a niche as they choices are aims towards taste for upscale and final things in life. Then you have the thinker, they are who consumer groups that constitute a high resources group that is motivated by ideals. Very principles oriented mature and responsible well informed professional, they are opened to new ideas and change, they value order responsibility, they actively seek out information, they look for functionality and value and the value in the products that they buy a people with high income and a practical and rational when it comes to decision making a consumption decision making.

Then, we have believers. There are consumers who are also motivated by ideals but, they are low on resources. They are traditional conservative and convection, they do not prefer to basically do experiment so, they try to go with the existing with the familiar. But, nevertheless they also driven by ideals, they also have modest incomes and they basically they are ultimately generally tend to become brand loyal and buy a product which are established brand. The achievers again they are high resources group driven by achievement, successful work oriented people, goal a oriented lifestyle, they were made committed to both work and home, they are conservative in nature yet they are active in market place, they make purchases and also show up their purchases of prestige brands to people around them, they prefer to establish the prestige brand and product and services. We have striver they are again who are again driven by achievement but, they are low resources group they are value similar to achievers but, they have fewer resources in terms of economic, physic or sociological resources.

So, they have less money and they give a lot of emphasis to it. Style is important, they also very concerned about what people have to say about them or what people have to think about them, they are concerned about the approval and opinion of others and they active consumer and use shopping as a opportunity to show off their ability to buy and they also fun loving and lack of skills and they focus on moving ahead in their job and in their carrier. We have the experiencers who are the high resources group again they are motivated by self expression age wise they are regarded as a youngest of all consumer segment and very energetic, enthusiastic, impulsive and they being high on resources they spend heavily on shopping, fast food, entertainment, clothes, hobbies and they like to take risk and they become very excited about purchase of new products or service offerings. And then there are makers, who again driven by self expression but, they are

low on resources and they remain confined to work and family. They values self sufficiency and as consumers and they are not impressed by the articles of material position. They are very practical in nature they appreciate a product that as only functional and practical value, they also skeptical about new products.

And then we have the survivors, who are located at the bottom of the triangle. They are group that follow lowest in terms of resources, they have very few resources and they located below the rectangle. Age wise they are oldest they believe in the that world would changed too rapidly and they are very conservative very narrow minded and as they are low on resources they are very conscious as consumer they prefer to familiar they prefer to be remain brand loyal and they move comfortable with the familiar. So, if we see we have these different classes, this different segment, customer group or customer segment. And based on the 2 dimension which is the primary motivation and the resources or the innovation we can classify based on this vertical and horizontal dimension based on this classify consumer segment into these 8 categories.

(Refer Slide Time: 38:02)

-The VALS was modified by the Stanford Research Institute in the 1980's, and proposed as VALS 2 in the 1990's.

-The basic objective of the VALS 2 was to identify specific relationships between consumer attitudes and purchase behavior, and thereby measure consumer buying patters.

-VALS 2 is being successfully used by companies to understand the consumer lifestyles and interests, which in turn is useful for developing marketing strategies, primarily promotional strategies.

Now, if you go little beyond this particular module was modified by the Stanford research institute SRI again in the 1980s and it was proposed as VALS 2 in 1990s. So, basically, objective of VALS 2 was to identify relationship between consumer attitude and purchase and there by measure buying patterns. So, while the major motivation of VALS 1 was to identify segment, the second was the VALS 2 the basic objective of

VALS 2 which was another improvised version it basically to measure the consumption pattern and consumption behavior. So, it is being successfully used by the companies all over the world to understand the lifestyle patterns, interests through measurements of you know such lifestyle and measurements of such consumption pattern and consumption behavior marketer are able to design strategies primarily promotion strategies.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:03)

VALS 2 which was modified which was adopted in the 1990s and brought about such changes. It basically, you know attempts to group profile the consumer by grouping them into 3 orientations the principles oriented, the status oriented and the action oriented. And each of these groups is based on 2 dimensions: the self orientation and resources. So, here the self orientation refers to the attitudes that affect the consumer buying approaches and resources prefer to the financial, psychological and the material resources. So, instead of primary motivation the word was changed to self orientation, which is actually the attitude that affects the consumer buying approaches and resources including income, education, confidence, self confidence, eagerness to purchase and energy levels.

(Refer Slide Time: 39:48)

- *Based on the self orientation and the amount of resources available with them, consumers could be classified into any of the three kinds.*

- These three categories are further split on the basis of resources that the people have with them.

- Similar to VALS, the newer version also classifies the US market segments on the basis of demographic and lifestyle factors into eight segments, viz., actualizers, fulfillers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiencers, makers, and strugglers.

- VALS 2 has proved itself as an extremely useful classification system for segmenting consumers.

So, based on the self orientation and the amount of resources consumer classified into any of these kinds be at principle oriented, status oriented or the action oriented. And similar to VALS the newer version again classifies the US adult population based on the demographic and lifestyle pattern into 8 segments. But, some of these terms are changed we have actualizes fulfillers, some of these terms are changed actualizes, fulfillers, believers, achievers, strivers, experiences, makers and strugglers. So, it is again proved to be very successful classification scheme. Now, this brings us to a conclusion on lifestyle. But, let us move further and see how do we measure social class, how do we measure lifestyle.

(Refer Slide Time: 40:36)

7.4.6 The Measurement of Social Class:

-The measurement of social class as also the techniques to be used, have been a subject of debate.

-*Researchers have not been able to agree on the methodology that needs to be used for measuring social class.*

-This is because
i) varied classifications in form and number have been proposed;
ii) there is lack of clarity with respect to the underlying dynamics and dimensions of social class.

-A wide variety of tools and techniques have been used to measure social class.

-Broadly speaking, **the various techniques that are used are subjective measures, reputational measures, and objective measures of social class.**

40

So, this particular subject of debate among researchers. Researchers have not being able to agree with methodology because one because varied classifications have been proposed, there are large number of classification then form a number and there is a lack of clarity with respect to the underlined dynamics. So, various techniques are been used to measure a social class. And these techniques are subjective reputational and objective measures.

(Refer Slide Time: 41:03)

A   Subjective Measures:

-The subjective approach to measure social class requires a self-assessment on the part of the individual who is asked to specify the class to which he belongs.

-In other words, the individual self-perceives his social class in response to a question like, "*Which one of the following best describes your social class: the lower class, the middle class, or the upper class?*"

-Thus, the person is asked to estimate and specify his own social-class position.

-However, the problem with this approach is that it leads to a lot of responses that fall in the mid-range (or the middle class).

-People are often conscious or shy or may even refrain from giving the true response and have a safe say by opting for the *middle class*, when they should have been correctly classified as belonging to either the *lower* or *upper class.*

41

Talking about the subjective measures it requires the self assessment on the part of the individual who ask to specify which class does he belong you know. The question could be like which of the following best describes the social class low, middle or upper. So, if the question like this is asked to consumer and he is asked to self assess himself. He would given a answer this would be regarded as a subjective measures. So, the person is asked to estimate here his own standing and specify to measure a social class position. Problem with this particular approach is that it leads to lot of responsibilities are been fall to mid range. So, lot of people will play safe and say, Oh! We belong to the middle class. So, we belongs range. So, this is the problem you know when asking somebody which is the social class to which you belongs low, upper or middle. People who generally say feel safe and say oh! We are in the middle class or we belong to the middle range. So, the problem a lot of responses lot of consumer getting concentrated on the mid range when people are asked to self assess themselves.

(Refer Slide Time: 42:12)

The second approach is the reputational approach which requires independent informants in the society to identify in may commands related to social class membership of people in the community. So, some you know they select informal in the society and they ask them to make judgment about certain kind of people may be you know it could be farmer or it could be sign or it could be a artesian or it could be shopkeeper or it could be a you know teacher or it could be he also be a business man or a expert or you know even a

very successful and famous person like you know well established, you know politician or a doctor or anybody.

So, some respondents are chosen they are act they are called as informants. And these informants are asked to talk about certain subjects be at as said farmer or artesian or business man or doctor or teachers or anybody and key informants help in providing another answer to what standing this people have in the society. So, the social researchers make use of informants within the community and ask them to make judgments about class membership of the other people. The problem with these that is it lacks reliability proves to be impractical as a method unlike sociological the consumption behavior present may not always have been assessed correctly by observer. So, these are the problems.

(Refer Slide Time: 43:51)

The third measure which we use is objective measures where we make use of demographic and socio economic variables to assess social class of people. So, you know people become questionnaires, questionnaires administrate the people in the community and they ask directly or indirectly certain question which help them assess their social class and their standing.

So, this could relate to something to the name of the person, his community, his caste or his you know his profession or his you know place of residence. So, if you ask the person place of residence it will directly or indirectly tell you what kind of area does he reside

in, is it to area where you know we are were generally middle class and certain area which is a very posh area upper class are decide. So, by asking a question we decide place of residence or by asking a question based on the profession, well again profession will again give you answer as to what kind of income was the person earning and depending upon the income what will be the social standing. So, objective measure basically involve the questionnaires administers to respond them and ask to fill it up and send it to with questions which directly or indirectly measure a person social class and his standing. Question could include as we said related to caste, community, occupation, income, education or place of residence. So, such demographic and socio economic indicators will help to determine the social class membership. Now, when we use objective measure we can use 2 kinds of indexes, the single variable index and composite variable index.

Single variable index as the name suggests it happens when people use one socio economic variables to assess the social class of a person. So, for the consumer behavior the commonly used index would be education, income, occupation. Certain kind of product, certain kinds of services or brands are related to once occupation and marketer defines target market on the basis of occupation. For example, for publishers, professors, or teachers it happens by machinery selling they act the as viable target. So, the education and occupation are also determines the income level of a person. So, all of these will basically help to determine the social standing of a person, the place of residence, the place of the address or the neighborhood one part is also determined. So, these are all single variable indexes.

So, you also have composite variable index which is combination of demographic and socioeconomic factors to assess the measure. So, as indexes they are more reliable for example, education, income and occupations are used together in composite variable index. So, single variable index when you are using just either income or education or occupation or place of residence. So, the answers you get may not always reliable and the true measure. On the other hand if we use a composite variable index where all the 3 income, education, occupation are being used or residence is used or caste community is used asked for them is used that is be put together and used as a determinate of social class. In that particular case the reliability of finding are coming up to generalization could be much easier and much stronger. So, this how we measure social class.

(Refer Slide Time: 47:05)

Now, let us come to the relevance of a social class for a marketer. So, the demographic and psychographic traits that are bearing on the lifestyle and on the social class have a great relevance. The social class could be treated as a segment and they could be out of the market here would decide on which of the segment could target and he would position his products or service offerings accordingly, he would desire divide his marketing at with respect to the 4 p's according to such analysis of social class and of lifestyle.

So, while designing while creating or while identifying segments targeting them, positioning them, while you know designing on your 4 p's, all of these will basically be impacted by learning's drawn from social class. So, a marketer needs to cater to each of the segments in different manner he as to design his 4 p's in a manner that leads to maximum benefits. Each these segment have different set of attitudes, values, likes, dislikes, consumption pattern and they could vary even in terms of priorities, in terms of activities, in terms of interest and opinions, while people in particular class confirm to others in their own class they also tend to emulate the people in the upper class or in the just above class. So, those act as aspirational groups and they all are very important for a marketer.

(Refer Slide Time: 48:32)

Now, let us come and talk a little bit about the real life applications of a social class. We will talk about in terms of product and services, hobbies and interest, and orientation towards saving and spending patterns. So, product and services: the choice of certain products and services and brand again depends usually upon once lifestyle, upon the social class. People belonging in a particular class will tend to use product and services and brand which are people used by the own class these will primarily used for social acceptance social approval and you know trying to confirm what other people in their group are doing, people you know in the above class act as a aspirational group, act as a reference group and you have upper class consumer who favour style, sophistication and this reflects in their purchase of product and services or brand or the kind of product that they or the kind of brand that they will buy. These all be very premium will be exquisite, will illustrate some kind of sophistication and style.

On the other hand middle class consumer will primarily think about money, they will think about value for money, they prefer going for economic deals barging and they look for moderately priced goods and services rather than the branded. In fact, they would they would go for moderately priced products rather than going for the highly branded and the premium priced product and services. And of course, we have the lower class we have the primarily shops for necessity. So, they are once to buy the basic necessities absolutely unbranded, absolutely cheap you know substitutes which are available in the market. And the people in the upper class act as aspirational model for the middle and

the middle acts as a aspirational model for the lower class. So, this is earlier as we said creates a market for me too products. Coming to hobbies and interest: people you know also as a social class as a bearing on kind of hobbies and interest people develop, on a kind of recreational activities that they pursue. People in the upper class have a large number of resources in hand they prefer for fashion, style.

They go for clubs and they play in door games like bridge, rulers and they outdoor games like golf, tennis and scotch. They read books, they go to the theater, they go the consents, they go the musicals, they go to malls, they avoid places which are crowded. On the other hand, we have middle class prefer spend a time watching a television, they watch television serials, they may also watch cricket on t v. And the middle class here pursue hobbies like needle craft and they also perform small gathering in the form of small neighborhood kitty parties. So, their primary interest revolved around cooking or gardening or looking after home or looking after home. Men also involved himself into basically earning of money. So, they do not have much time for these leisure activities like you know, like going to clubs or owning membership to premium clubs and playing golf and you know bridge there. So, they do not have a time,

And of course, you have the lower class which totally and totally relies on the television if at all if not owned by self one which is owned by the community. Coming to orientation towards spending and saving. Social class membership affects the consumer attitude towards the saving and spending with the upper class consumer with better off in terms of finances saving and spending patterns are futuristic in approach, they invest in stocks, real estate as well as in very prestige goods and very luxurious good. On the other hand we have also while making a payments, they prefer payments through cards through credit cards not as you know not because of they do not have money but, because of they do not want to carry money so, they want to keep the wallet very light they want convince all the very around. So, they use the credit cards for the pure substitute for cash. So, middle class on the other looks for more rational benefits or more functional benefits and they enter into purchase activity out of need out of and they make decision very rationally and they buy only and only when they have enough money to spare and to buy.

They are generally conservative they prefer for taking lesser risk. And the today of course, the things are changing and we finding the large number of customers middle

class customers who are also you know buying right now kind of an attitude. Earlier it was they used to buy they have enough money to spare and save but, now the trend as changed were they are preferring to buy and thanks to the credit card, thanks to the easy availability of the finances, they buying on EMI's. So, we find the large numbers of consumer today are the middle class consumer who also uses the credit cards as a means to buy now and pay later on.

And then we have the lower classes which do not which have very meager resources they do not have much to spear and they spend money on the basic necessity. If they save money they save money for any day. For most cases they do not have money but, in case they do they keep money for further any day. So, while if you see while the rich or the upper class uses the credit card as the substitute for cash out of convince. The middle class uses credit cards as a necessity. And while the upper classes clear the credit card bills every month middle class looks for EMI or for installments. So, this is respect to the orientations towards the market place how the social class has an impact towards purchase of products or services, spending patterns, savings, investments, hobbies and interest and so forth. This brings to us to a conclusion of a section social class mobility and lifestyle analysis.

(Refer Slide Time: 54:41)

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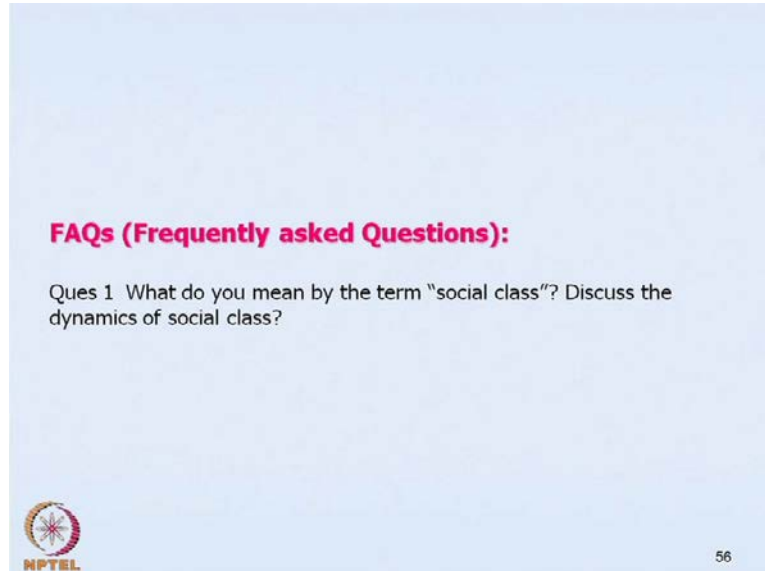
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55

So, let come to the references. We have Loudon and D. L. and Bitta consumer behavior fourth edition Tata McGraw Hill. Peter and Olson consumer behavior and marketing

strategy McGraw hill. Shiffman and Kanuk consumer behavior prentice hall and wells and Prensky consumer behavior john Wiley and sons.

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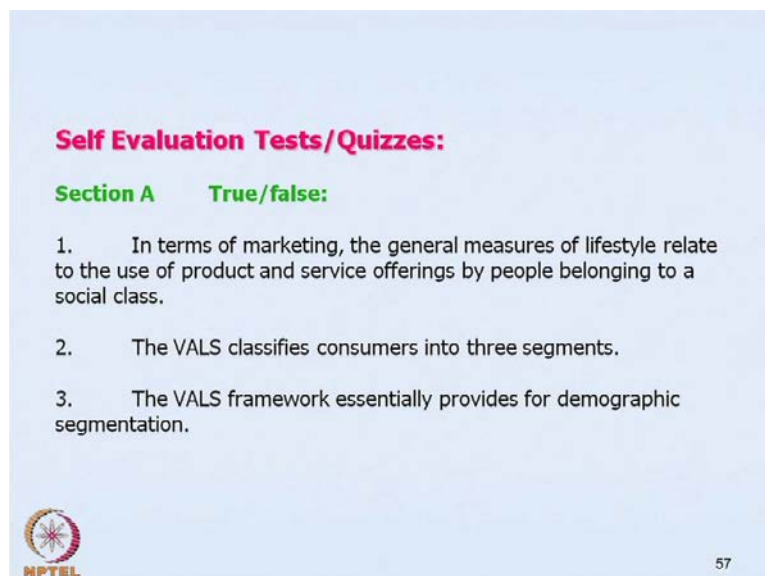Frequently asked questions: what do you mean by a social class? Discuss the dynamics of social class?

(Refer Slide Time: 55:01)

Coming to a quiz. Section A true or false. 1: In terms of marketing, the general measures of lifestyle relate to the use of product and service offering by people belonging to a social class. So, this is a true or a false statement? This is a true statement. 2: The VALS

classifies consumers into 3 segments. True or false? This is a false statement. 3: The VALS framework essentially provides for demographic segmentation. True or false? This is again a false statement.

(Refer Slide Time: 55:29)

Fill in the blanks. 1: Social class is measured in terms of dash. Status. 2: Lifestyles can be assessed in terms of activities, dash and dash? So, activities interests and opinions. 3: According to VALS, consumers could be classified into 3 kinds, 1 dash, 2 outer directed 3 inner directed. The answer is need directed. 4: The VALS 2 attempts to profile consumers by grouping them into 3 orientation categories, principle oriented status oriented and dash oriented. The answer is action oriented.

Multiple choice questions.

1. Which of the following statement about the list of values scales is false?

A: The goal of the scale is to assess the dominant values of a consumer.

B: it measures a total of 9 values.

C: it is based on the premise that personal values are linked to consumption.

D: none of the above.

So, the answer is none of the above. All the answers or all the statements are true. So, the answer is D none of the above, none of the above is false.

2. The VALS is based on 2 dimensions, viz,

A: primary motivation and secondary motivation.

B: primary motivation and resources.

C: self orientation and resources.

D: none of the above.

So, answer is B, primary motivation and resources.

(Refer Slide Time: 56:42)

Coming to short answers.

1. Write a short note on social class mobility lifestyle analysis.

2. Consumer researchers define status in terms of 3 demographical variables, name them? So, it is income, education and occupation.

3. Discuss the relevance of the hierarchical structure in social class for a marketer?

4. Mention the few commonly used lifestyle analysis tools? So, you have VALS, VALS 2, list of values prizm and encalovaches monitor mind base.

5. The VALS include 3 primary motivations and accordingly, classifies the consumer population into 3 distinct types. Name the motivations? So, motivations are ideal achievement and self expression.

6. Name a few measures used to measure social class? So, subjective measures, reputational measures and objective measures. And,

7. The objective measures of social class may be divided into 2 categories. Name them? So, single variable indexes and composite variable indexes.

This brings us to a conclusion of our session. We shall continue with the remaining portion of the module on sociological influences in consumer decision making in the next session.

Thank you.