

Research Based on Secondary Data into the Influence of Colours on the Online Consumer's Behaviour

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Abstract

The current article presents the importance of colours in day-by-day life of online marketing. With the accelerating progress in science as well as information and technology, marketing is always changing. The neuroscience of colour in relation to customer conviction is one of the numerous topics studied in marketing. As a starting point, the paper opens with a brief theoretical presentation of the consumer behaviour as the central element of marketing, while in the second part, a study of colours is clarifying the link between them and the perception of the customers. A good reason for everything that follows is represented by the fact that colour is pervasive and a source of knowledge. The paper presents the level of importance that colours represents in everyday online marketing. Marketing is permanently changing with rapid advances in science, information and technology.

Key words: colours, consumer, online, marketing

J.E.L. classification: M31

1. Introduction

Philip Kotler defines marketing in its work "Marketing Principles", published for the first time in 1980 as "a social and managerial process by which individuals or groups of individuals get what they need and want by creating, offering and exchanging products and services of certain value". (Kotler, Armstrong, 2011) In other words, we can say that marketing is a mix of science and art to sell. The current concept of marketing assumes that every economic activity must be guided in the direction of meeting the consumer's needs in an efficient and effective manner. Any individual intending to order or purchase, use or procure products or services for purposes not related to professional needs shall be referred to as a consumer.

2. Theoretical background

This paper is a research based on secondary data. It begins with a theoretical presentation of the concept of consumer behavior. The main theoretical aspects being taken from the book of Professor Cătoi.

2.1. Importance of knowing consumer behaviour

Guiding marketing toward the development of market requirements requires learning and knowledge, monitoring them in the evolving field and even preventing and influencing them on a scientific basis. To this end, complex mechanisms are being sought to turn needs into wishes for goods and services that are a self-standing component of the makeup, i.e. consumer behaviour. It goes without saying that there are several influencing factors that play a very important role. These include income, education, membership groups, reference groups, and not least the perception of each individual. Before defining what consumer behaviour is, the difference between the concept of

"consumer" and "customer" must be stated. To this end, Dan Manaila mentioned in an Article posted in September 2017 that "consumer" refers to "a natural person consuming for private and non-professional purposes products and services offered on the market by producers, distributors and suppliers." The concept of 'buyer` as is also the morphology of the word is that economic operator that is directly involved in the purchase process. According to the Romanian language's explanatory Dictionary, the concept of "customer" symbolizes both the person buying from a shop and the individual enjoying the consumption of a good or service. A first condensed definition as a result of the concerns of the various professionals is as follows: "Consumer behavior can be defined, as an overall approach as all decision-making acts carried out at individual or group level, directly related to the procurement and use of goods and services, with a view to meeting current and future needs, including the decision-making processes preceding and determining these acts."(Balaure, 2002) Another very explanatory and elaborated definition is that of Professor Iacob Cătoiu together with Professor Nicolae Teodorescu, and that is: "the behaviour of the consumer can be defined as a concept by multidimensional excellence, as the specific result of a system of dynamic relationships between the processes of perception, information, attitude, effective motivation and manifestation, which characterizes the integration of the individual or group into the open area by all consumer goods and services existing in society at a given time, by individual or group decision-making acts relating thereto.

2.2. Basic processes in addressing consumer behaviour

Although it is a notion with which the majority of market research specialists operate, consumer behaviour does not have a universally accepted definition. The sum of the definitions proposed by the various authors shows some elementary processes, the combination of which is the definition of consumer behaviour. (Martin, 1976) The processes mentioned above are: Perception, attitude, actual behaviour, information and motivation. Perception is a broad process that, among many others, consists of mental activity to observe, connect and make decisions.

After the '50, the attitude was approved as a multidimensional concept, being "a syndrome of constant reactions to social objects" in W.'s Campbell vision.. Motivation is defined as 'an inner state which mobilizes an organism to fulfil a particular purpose. (I. Cătoiu 2003)

Information is an assembly of elements by which individuals get to know the product. Actual behaviour is the process that distinguishes the 4 processes mentioned above. This is the only process that can be examined directly and directly.

Fundamental theories and global models of consumer behaviour

Over time, scientists have been concerned about studying and knowing the processes and mechanisms that take place at the level of the "black box" in their attempt to explain consumer behaviour.

This has led to the emergence of various fundamental theories and global models, including:

- Marshall's model
- Pavlov's model
- Freud's model
- Veblen's model
- Hobbes's model (Solomon, 2007)

Marshall's model accredits the theory that assumes that people make the decisions to purchase goods and services following rational calculations.

Pavlov's model is based on the theory of learning and operates with the following four basic concepts: Impulse, suggestion, reaction and repeat. (Schiffman, Kanuk, Hansen, 2012)

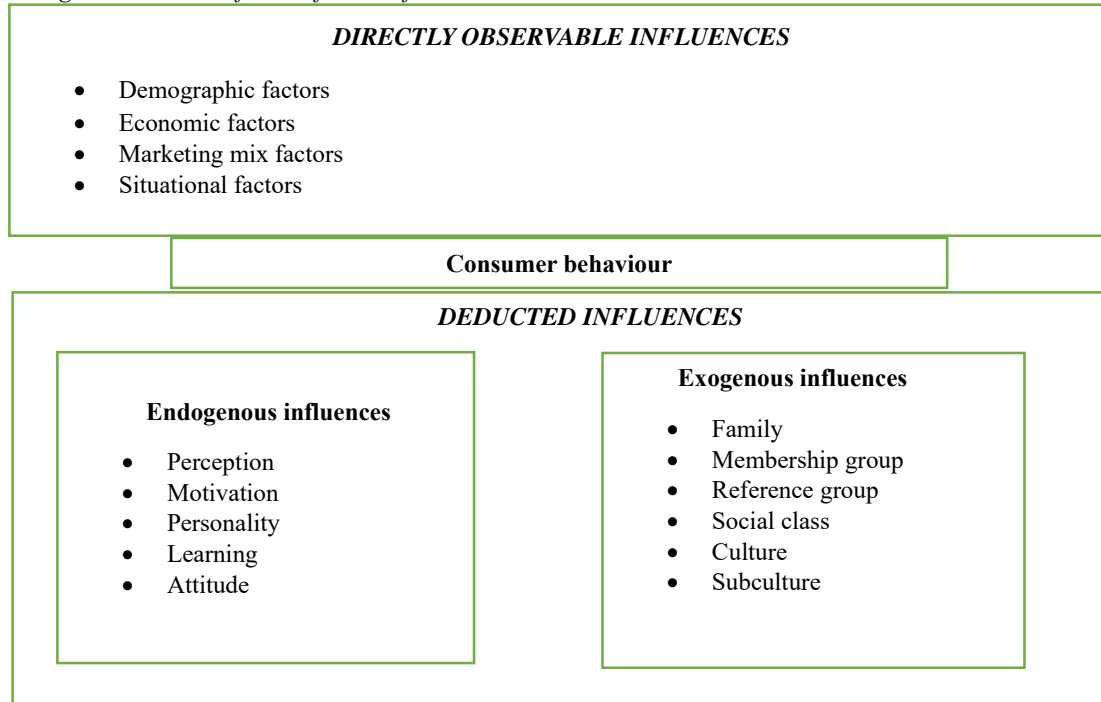
Freud's model is formed from the psychoanalytical theory of S. Freud that refers to the human being. This model requires a motivational research based on the study of consumer attitudes.

Veblen's model, a social-psychological model that requires the development of motivational research. It is based on the theory of ostentatious consumption and involves studying social influences. (Catoiu, 2003).

Hobbes's model is also called the organizational factor model. It presents the problem of "consumer behaviour associated with people representing organizations". (Cătoiu, 2003)

2.3. Influence factors of consumer behaviour

Figure no. 1. The Influence factors of consumer behaviour



Source: Authors' contribution

Directly observable influences. A wide variety of variables are included in the demographic factor category for which they have been shown to have a high degree of influence on consumer behaviour. This category includes many variables including: Occupation, age group, employment status, consumer distribution by sex and geographical area. Economic factors are a category that operates in any market, affecting any category of consumers. When examining consumer behaviour, the persons concerned take into account economic factors such as consumer income, inflation rate, minimum wage, public expenditure and product prices. (Catoiu, 2003)

Starting from the "4Ps", we can see the four factors specific to the marketing mix, namely product, price, placement and promotion. Together with the other categories of factors, we also find situational factors. Specialist Russell Belk claims that situational influences are generated by "all factors specific to well-defined observation (situation) in time and space, which do not result from knowledge of the personal (intra-individual) and stimuli (variant chosen) attributes, but which have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behaviour." (Belk, 2004)

Deducted influences. The deducted influences are also divided into two categories: Endogenous influences and exogenous influences. Among the endogenous variables, specialists in this field consider the most relevant are: Perception, information/learning/personality, motivation and attitude. (Catoiu, 2003)

The perception process is a process by which the individual selects, organizes and understands stimuli coming from the environment, giving them a certain meaning. The most important features of the sensory input are colour, contrast, size, position, intensity and motion.

Learning, a process that takes place throughout the life of the individual, represents a series of observable or unobservable changes in consumer behaviour. The three theories that best explain the learning process are: The theory of learning through classic Pavlov conditioning, the theory of

instrumental learning and the cognitive learning theory.

Personality is defined as a series of summed traits resulting in the factor that determines the uniqueness of the consumption behaviour of each individual. The rationale assumes that the manner in which the consumer is reacting in behavioural terms is due to a state of voltage due to an unmet need. The reasons were classified by specialists for primary or biological and secondary or psycho-friendly reasons. (Catoiu, 2003)

Attitude is a particularly important variable for understanding the mechanism of consumer behaviour. In G.W.'s vision Allport, attitudes are a series of, predispositions learned to react consistently to an object or class of objects in a favourable or unfavourable manner. (Allport, 1935)

Actual behaviour is the only variable that can be observed directly and directly.

In explaining consumer behaviour, the inferred influence of the social factors of an endogenous nature must be taken into account, as they are an important component of the marketing macro medium. Specialists say that a key role is played by the family, social groups, social class, culture and subculture. The family is considered to be the variable that has the greatest influence on consumer behaviour. Social groups are divided into 2 categories: Reference groups and membership groups. The groups of membership are a form of social structure in which people feel they belong to a group, which is due to common objectives and norms. The reference groups are current or imaginary clues of the kind used by different people, who take into account the opinions, attitudes and rules of certain individuals in the process of buying a good or service.

Social classes are understood as "relatively homogeneous and lasting subdivisions in a society, which is hierarchically ordered and whose members have the same values, interests and behaviour". (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders, Wong, 1999)

A series of research conducted since the 19th century by Edward Burnett Tylor laid the foundation for a first definition of culture, which is still valid. It defined culture as "a complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, traditions and any other productions and ways of life created by the man living in society".

In marketing, a very important role is the influence of subculture, which is a distinct cultural group, based on geographical, ethnic, religious and age. In general, four sub-crop groups are distinguished which define the individual and influence his consumption behaviour:

- Nationality groups, living in broad communities, with specific ethnic tastes and traditions
 - Religion groups, with their own preferences and needs
 - Racial groups, with distinct cultural styles and attitudes
 - Geographic group, with distinct cultural styles and attitudes;
- the feature is geographical groups with territorial lifestyles.

4. Findings

English has a number of well-known idioms that pair words with colours. For instance, "purple with fury" or "green with jealousy." To be clear, the study asked participants to select the colour they connected to a group of phrases that are not part of a well-known proverb. The findings are as follows: Most people associate the word "trust" with the colour blue, on the second place is situated the shade white. The word "security" is mostly represented also by the blue colour. When it comes about "speed", almost 80% of people think of red. "High quality" is associated mostly with black. (Mederrick, 2022)

According to QuickSprout, individuals choose a particular product 85% because of its color, brand recognition being enhanced by 80% by colours. In an A/B test, Hubspot just changed the call to action button's color from red to green, and the results showed a remarkable 21% difference. Green is likely believed to have a greater conversion rate. Contrary to what was actually true, red received a 21% higher conversion response.

Joe Hollock tested a wide range of individuals from various ages, ethnic origins, and genders by asking them a series of questions centered on ten colors (including the shade black and the shade white).

Red was selected as the color most closely associated with speed by 76% of the participants. (Hallock, 2003)

Judicious use of colour can influence attitudes toward particular products by positively or negatively impacting moods and feelings as well as differentiating them from those of competitors. It's critical that managers comprehend the significance of colours in marketing given the erratic nature of our emotions and how colours shape attitudes. The study aims to advance the discussion. (Singh, 2006)

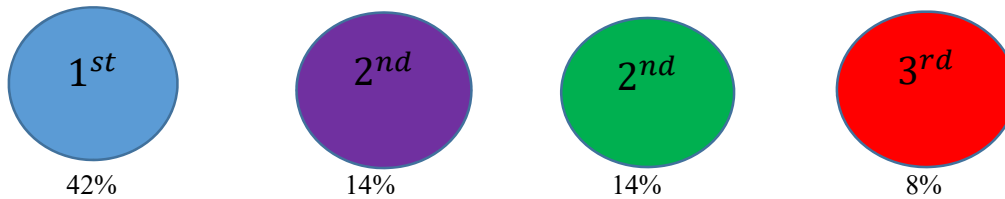
The psychological effects of colour should be taken into consideration before launching the next social media campaign or designing the next landing page, website, or brand.

It's no joke how much power colour has. It directs the user's gaze in various directions, advises what to do, and enables them to comprehend the relative value of various elements. According to a research titled *The Influence of Colour in Marketing*, 90% of consumer product judgments are made solely based on color. Colours, according to Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, aid in information processing and storage more successfully than black and white:

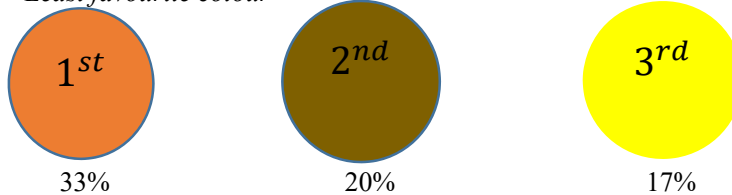
"Colours are the subconscious' native tongue." Using surveys, Joe Hallock, Principal Design Manager of Microsoft Azure, carried out a thorough investigation on two important color-related subjects: word associations and gender-based preferences.

The group under investigation's favorite and least favorite colors were:

Favourite colour



Least favourite colour



As previously discussed, gender might have some influence on one's affinity for certain colours.

Table no. 1. Colour preferences based on gender

	Favourites			Least Favourites		
	First	Second	Third	First	Second	Third
Female preferences	Blue	Purple	Green	Orange	Brown	Gray
Male preferences	Blue	Green	Red	Brown	Orange Purple	Yellow

Source: (Hallock, 2003)

Consumers frequently link colours to the things they buy. In the survey, questions about consumer behaviour were asked.

Table no. 2. The type of product linked to colour

	First	Second	Third
Cheap/Inexpensive	Orange	Yellow	Brown
High Quality	Black	Blue	Gray
High Technology	Black	Blue, Gray	White
Dependability/Reliability	Blue	Black	White

Source: (Hallock, 2003)

The study also investigated whether the following feelings were associated with specific colours.

Table no. 3. Feelings associated with colours

	First	Second	Third
Fear/Terror	Red	Black	Gray
Fun	Orange	Yellow	Purple
Trust	Blue	White	Green
Security	Blue	Black	Green
Speed	Red	Yellow	White

Source: (Hallock, 2003)

In English there are a few correlations between colors and feelings, such as blue denoting sadness or green signifying jealousy. The following phrases are important to remember if a logo is established even if they don't normally have color implications. (Hallock, 2003)

The following represent a part of Hallock's study key conclusions:

Every company has the option to use complementary and analogous colors, which can be used in marketing a product for a variety of reasons in addition to the primary and conspicuous colors.

If the brand already has a clearly defined identity plus a logo that serves as the foundation, that will have a big impact on the colors used. The target market for the products is another element that is frequently advised. But, more and more of these clichés are beginning to lose their effectiveness (like the colour blue for males, and the colour pink for females). These traditional meanings may have more or less influence, depending on the target age group, on how the product is perceived and how a digital catalog is designed.

Above all, keep in mind the purchasing experience. Instead than overcrowding the user with textual or graphic information, the objective is to make the user's search and purchasing process easier. Much may be learned from a well-balanced e-commerce design that considers both what customers often look for and how they typically search the site.

White

Figure no. 2. White Background



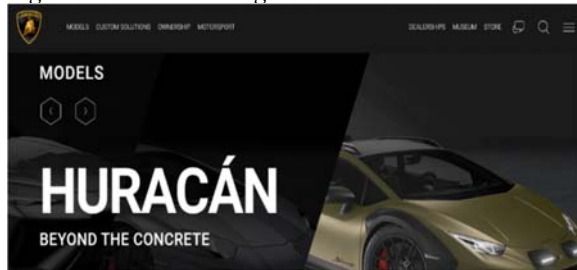
Source: (Apple, 2023)

In all online retailers, this background is advised. Images and informational blocks are easier to read and distinguish when they are white. It conveys a sense of clarity and cleanliness, making it a great background for e-commerce sites' design and catalogs.

When is talked about projecting their brand online, Apple goods have without a doubt become the most recognizable. White backdrops draw attention to the merchandise and draw attention to more overtly appealing messages.

Black

Figure no. 3. Black background

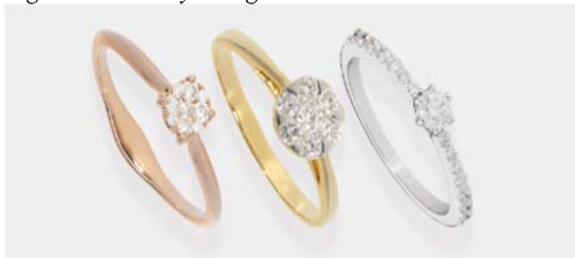


Source: (Lamborghini, 2023)

This color exudes power and authoritarianism. A demanding or luxury- and high-quality-loving audience will appreciate the professional and serious impression that the internet trends based primarily in black convey.

Gray

Figure no. 4. Gray background



Source: (Splendor, 2023)

Gray is the ideal hue for text and items that should be reading-friendly or inspire balance since it promotes disinterest. Due to its elegance and ability to make the brilliance and colors of the items and diamonds stand out, it has also been a color that is frequently employed in jewelry e-commerce website design.

Red

Figure no. 5. Red buttons



Source: (Kaufland, 2023)

The hue that, in e-commerce, evokes vitality, urgency, and attention. Since it can cause both a bad feeling (panic and worry) and a favorable one for the sale, it must be used carefully and at the proper times.

It can undoubtedly serve as a brand's primary hue. It is advised more for important buttons or places on the website where it is desired to swiftly draw the eye in accordance with color psychology for websites.

Green

Figure no. 6. Green website



Source: (Dr.Max, 2023)

It promotes trust and is currently the dominant color associated with sustainability themes in online goods sales. Not only in health and wellness brands like pharmacies, but in any area of e-commerce devoted to telling customers about a company's dedication to the environment during the development, manufacture, and sale of its products.

Brown, Yellow and Orange

Figure no. 7. Orange website

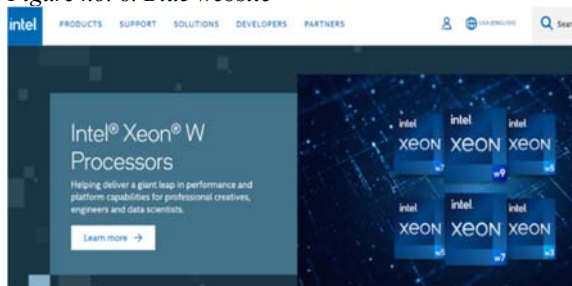


Source: (HalibOrange, 2023)

These are hues that evoke warmth, joy, and curiosity; as a result, they are frequently utilized with in baby and children's product industries as well as in sports and animal products. They should only be used for very specific purposes and shouldn't be overused because they can irritate the eyes or cause stress.

Blue

Figure no. 8. Blue website



Source: (Intel, 2023)

The hue symbolizes harmony and peace. These color schemes are typically linked to the technology industry and sales of electronics, computers, and gadgets.

Pink and violet

Figure no. 9. Pink website



Source: (Kylie Cosmetics, 2023)

Certain colours seem to be reserved for the cosmetics business, and pinks in particular have a long history of being used to appeal to youngsters. Yet, these are tones that inspire creativity, elegance, and care, and they are able to convey a professionalism and great taste in the display of e-commerce products, especially in backdrops and much more pastel or assertive tones, according to the intended market for the company. (Gasco, 2022)

5. Conclusions

Using colour effectively may be quite beneficial in marketing and any form of business. Colour psychology can significantly help traders and consumers alike make the best choices. When choosing what to buy, it also applies to the customer. On the other hand, blunders can be made the colour cognition if it is not understood of both parties. In contrast to the influence of the product itself, colour has a significant impact on a product's success. Whether we embrace it or not, we are indeed a product of the culture, and a significant part of that culture is associated with colour. Understanding how to decipher the appeal of hidden hues not only saves money but also enables us to logically purchase goods based only on quality rather than design (Singh, 2006). Colour has the ability to convey the feelings and spirit of a product's interior.

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