Sub-Conscious Decision Mapping and Network Framework for Retail Market Consumption

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Abstract

Today's world of marketing is a highly dynamic and volatile place due to high competitive clutter, and hence, every industry needs to accept the understanding of impulsive change as a new standard. This article focused on understanding brand awareness of consumers from an embedded cognitive state. Consumer's decision making for a brand mainly results from both conscious and non-conscious experiences that a consumer has been exposed to. Consumers preserve this brand knowledge in a non-conscious level of their mind. Marketers depend upon the use of multi-sensory metaphors to bring out that digged-in knowledge. This paper introduced ZMET as a method to elicitate hidden understanding about a consumer's decision making process by stimulating human senses and understanding about the attributes that ultimately contribute in consumer decision making. The research threw light on a qualitative example considering the wellness industry by identifying the hidden metaphors that contributed in understanding the consumer's satisfaction.

Keywords : consumer loyalty, wellness industry, ZMET, relationship patterns, attribute mapping

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The gamut of marketing today is completely different from what the marketers used to do a decade back. Today's marketers deal with other associated cues available with a primary product. This has given rise to a whole new paradigm of experiential marketing, which is considered to be equally important as the main product. Today's marketers are expected to understand their customers more precisely which would eventually give way to better business ventures. It has become significant to understand the cognitive associations or the mental models that pave way for decision making for consumers. It is these hidden and untold feelings that need to be dug out from within in order to satisfy the customers in a treasured manner.

It is these mental models that guide consumers to make a decision regarding a probable and possible purchase for a product or service. Hence, most marketers today are trying to map these mental models to better understand brand beliefs, brand attitude, and brand personality and the driving force for a product to be sold in the market.

This research demonstrates a relatively new approach in the world of marketing to better understand consumers and their unconscious decision making. Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) is usually used to dig out consumers' meanings about a given topic or situation and then to map those understandings as mental models. These models do allow consumers to express their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and feelings and the associated actions, symbols, images, and also the sensory experiences like touch, taste, and smell.

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Literature Review

(1) Consumer Buying Behavior : Schiffman and Kanuk (1994) defined consumer behavior as the attitude consumers display while searching for purchasing a product, using it, evaluating and disposing of the products and services which they think they would collectively satisfy their immediate needs and wants.

Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell (1968) spoke about behaviors directly involved in the process of obtaining, consuming, and spending on products and services along with the decision making process following these actions. Solomon (2017) discussed consumer behavior to be that field which studies the processes involving individuals' purchase intentions and usage of products to primarily satisfy their concerned needs and desires.

The understanding of consumer behavior is of utmost importance to marketers since proper skills in understanding consumer thinking paves the way for better understanding of how they think, feel, and make decisions from alternatives from both product and service categories. Incidentally, two prime factors play a major role in making a decision - risk involved and innovativeness. Risk hostility is the degree of certainty a consumer is having in terms of taking a decision.

The theory of planned behavior says that behavioral intention is a path for future buying that would happen for a concerned consumer (Ajzen, 1991). Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) divided these intentions into five specific categories namely loyalty, switch, pay more, external responses, and internal responses. Bush, Martin, and Bush (2004) on the other hand designed behavioral intentions consisting of brand loyalty, positive word of mouth (WOM), and complaining behavior. Ruyter and Bloemer (1999) segregated behavioral intentions again into WOM, purchase intentions, price sensitivity, and complaint behavior.

Engel et al. (1968) spoke about how the consumer buying decision making process evolves from a five stage consumer purchasing process namely : Problem Recognition → Information Search → Evaluation of Alternatives → Purchase Decisions → Post Purchase Behavior.

Kotler (2001) suggested that those demographic factors that generally influence consumers' buying decisions are nothing but the internal factors namely age, income profile, gender, occupation, education, family orientation, etc. Flynn and Giraldez (1995) discussed that age is one of the most important considering factors for consumers' decision making process as individuals of different ages cater to different kinds of needs and wants and seek a variety of goods and services over their entire span of life. Jain, Gautam, and Pasricha (2018) discussed how their study tried to understand the impact of internal (gender, price consciousness, & shopping gratification) & external factors' (sales promotion) impact on impulse buying decision for young Indian consumers. Acton (2005) further stated that it is the consumers' purchase behavior which is further defined as the buying behavior of the consumers. Engel et al. (1968) discussed that consumers' buying behaviors are generally triggered by the decision making process. Bagdare and Bansal (2014) spoke about how music creates a positive differential effect in building brand effectiveness in the telecom sector.

(2) Customer Satisfaction : East et al. (2008) believed that a customer's satisfaction is nothing more than a combined response of product expectation, performance, and quality. Chavadi, Hiremath, and Raju (2014) spoke about how a store characteristic, especially in the form of merchandize, ambience, proximity, and quality of sales staff had all the potential to build store loyalty.

(3) Consumer Psychology : Consumer psychology is basically the study of buying behavior of consumers and the logic behind such a choice. It is nothing more than an individual's life rotating constantly around the consumption of goods and services. Individuals constantly on the go are directly or indirectly related to consumer behavior. Consumer psychology tries to focus on a particular way individuals or groups try to think logically.

Consumers' decision making is highly influenced by the way the marketers showcase their products and

services. Callwood (2010) discussed how psychological factors namely motivation, learning, perceptions, attitude, and beliefs play a major role in consumers' decision making process. Trehan and Trehan (2009) discussed motivation as a state of mind which sincerely activates stimuli within an individual for directing towards a specific goal to achieve. The starting point for any buying process is creation of need. Hence, if marketers could rightly understand the gap area for a specific consumer in terms of need generation, they could be easily motivated to buy (Smoke, Keeton, Wenzel, & Boyd, 2010). Khan (2006) discussed how consumers could be brought to a chain of habits where they try to seek different levels of motivations in the form of convenience, style, prestige, etc. In this context, Maslow's need hierarchy theory plays a significant role for understanding the pattern of thinking for a consumer's buying decisions. The Need Hierarchy Model starts with identifying the basic needs and gradually moves upwards to the higher-level needs which an individual needs to achieve for further growth and development in his/her life.

Perception on the other hand also plays a significant role in buying decisions. It is no more than what the consumers feel about their surroundings based on inputs received through their sensory organs. Consumers subconsciously evaluate their needs, values, etc. and then consequently use that to evaluate, organize, and interpret stimuli (Connolly as cited in Durmaz, 2014). Sastry and Rao (2017) identified two primary independent attributes in the form of gender and income group of respondents related to payment processing in online retailing and found that pay on delivery is an effective tool for buyers in evaluating the online retail purchase options for their purchases.

Learning denotes changes within an individual's behavior arising from experience. Blythe (2007) discussed how consumers learn from previous experience and try to achieve a balance by introducing new stimuli keeping in mind of the past or learned stimuli.

The marketers could often receive huge insights on the fact that they could work on demands often derived from strong drives and often with that of similar attributes as consumers are more loyal towards similar brands than dissimilar brands (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2011).

Kotler discussed about beliefs to be a set of concrete thoughts that an individual holds about something and defined attitude to be an individual's favorable or unfavorable cognitive evaluation and feelings and consequent actions towards any object. Consumers could develop specific attitude and beliefs towards specific products or services (Sarangapani, 2009).

Marketers are keener to understand the kind of beliefs people frame about products and services as they make up the brand image, thus affecting consumer buying behavior. The beliefs are mainly based on knowledge. Consumers with the understanding of beliefs for a particular product form a brand image (Lee, 2007).

Attitude also does play an important role in consumers' buying decisions. Consumers tend to have a positive feeling about a product or service if they have a favorable opinion about a product or service. According to Hoyer, MacInnis, and Pieters (2017), marketers always look for finding attitude of consumers towards their products and always give a lot of effort to make it positive, and if the attitude is already positive, they simply try to maintain it. Dubey, Bajpai, and Guha (2016) discussed how a model for customer delight anticipating key surprise elements such as humor, schema discrepancy, and perceived firm expertise could actually contribute in building customer delight.

Target Market Selection and Segmentation

This research aims to support the industry as well as the future researchers with a knowledge base about the developing nation's consumer buying behavior pattern by determining the sub-conscious factors associated with the behavioral pattern and defining the multitude of complex relationships among the observed attributes. The consumer behavioral pattern changes with market dynamics. Henceforth, selection and segmentation of target market is one of the objectives for this research.

India has long being held up as a fast growing economy with an approximated average of 7% GDP growth between 2000 and 2015 (The World Bank, 2017). This figure of GDP growth is still continuing with optimistic forecasts in the years to come. Furthermore, it has always been a commercial marketplace for foreign goods and services.

Despite of macroeconomic slowdown in 2012, the wellness industry of India registered a growth of 18% – 20% to touch a market size of 261.36 million USD approximately, and was expected to reach 15.37 billion USD by 2015 (FICCI & PwC, 2013). In 2016, the personal care industry (which is a sub-unit of total wellness industry) itself reached 6.5 billion USD with an estimated growth up to 20 billion USD by 2025 ("Personal care market to touch US$ 20 billion in India by 2025, " 2016). This clearly indicates a relatively high and consistent demand in this industry in India, irrespective of the macroeconomic movements in the global economy.

The wellness industry is comprised of 40 – 45% of services of which the majority is comprised of 'salons and beauty services' and 'alternate therapy services' and 55 – 60% of products (FICCI & PwC, 2013). The 'beauty care' and the 'rejuvenation' sector under 'salons and beauty services' have a CAGR of 11% and 20%, respectively, which in fact are the highest in the wellness industry in India (FICCI & EY, 2016).

The predominant section of the workforce in the beauty and wellness segment are involved in technical roles such as beauty therapists, hairstylists, spa therapists, slimming therapists, physical trainers, etc. and the managerial positions include store managers and corporate office roles such as marketing, HR, sales, etc. (NSDC, 2011). In this segment itself, workforce requirement is expected to grow from 34 lakhs in 2013 to 121 lakhs in 2022, with the sector CAGR of 20%, averaging 23% in organized sector and 15% in the unorganized sector (NSDC, 2011).

The beauty and wellness segment, which has showed a consistent demand towards the higher side, in a developing market like India, irrespective of the global macro-economic turmoil, which subsequently also leads to provisioning of a higher employment opportunity in the sector for both skilled and unskilled manpower, instigated to further study this section to understand the consumer buying behavioral pattern for such consistency.

Objectives of the Research

The research has been conducted primarily to understand the sub - conscious behavioral thinking of human consumers in a defined geospatial market and framed demographics. The extraction of raw attributes has been conducted that influence the behavioral as well as psychological buying pattern. Subsequently, these extracted raw attributes are clustered qualitatively by preserving its multi-vector dimensional form, thereby trying to determine the underlying binding factors. It also mines for important patterns and rules of relationship these attributes have among themselves.

Methodology

The human consumer behavior does not follow any distinctive quantitative linearity. The buying patterns of individuals are dictated by a collection of interlinked behavioral attributes having unique and distinct characteristics of varied intensity.

Human beings are governed by attitude, thoughts, needs, and desires, which ultimately shape the consumer behavior which is, in fact, a field of interest for multi-disciplinary studies. Complex emotional responses can be easily studied through qualitative methods, which is otherwise impossible or difficult to reveal through the rigid constructs of quantitative studies. In a broader sense, it is the objective of a qualitative research to understand the reason behind people's reaction against a stimulus or experience (Maxwell, 2012), which in turn adds the consumer's voice in the product or service design, improvement, and development process. Qualitative studies are not only open ended, but also elucidate new ideas beyond the rigid framework of quantitative studies, which also bring a higher degree of depth and detail to the research.

Since it is one of the objectives of this research to understand and extract the raw behavioral and psychological attributes of human consumers ; henceforth, there is a dire need of a qualitative attribute extraction mechanism or study process. Tools like interviews and focus groups are most widely used for qualitative data extraction, but their biasness towards conscious decision assimilation makes them not totally appropriate for our research purpose, which brought us to the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique or ZMET, which taps into unconscious thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and attitudes by identifying the deep metaphors associated with the subject individual.

(1) Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique or ZMET : Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (Zaltman, 1997 ; Zaltman & Coulter, 1995) is a tested method discovered in the early 1990s basically to comprehend and understand consumers by evoking metaphors that disclose prominent aspects of the unexpressed mental models. The laddering interview technique, which is a qualitative research tool, is highly successful in understanding what and why people buy and use products and services, is pitched in ZMET interviews. By using the power of eliciting metaphor, it could further move to illustrate in the respondent's tune the concepts and ideas that are there in the mental model.

The usage of metaphor as a research tool also helps consumers reveal and form a concrete mental structure of both their thoughts and feelings revolving around the object of enquiry ; thus, creating a deeper understanding of knowledge by probing out the concepts found through laddering channels. This, in a way, allows researchers to study the data thus retrieved in a deeper context than is possible through a traditional laddering research study. In this context, two theoretical assumptions are pertinently relevant to showcase the strength of ZMET as a tool to elicit and map consumers' mental models.
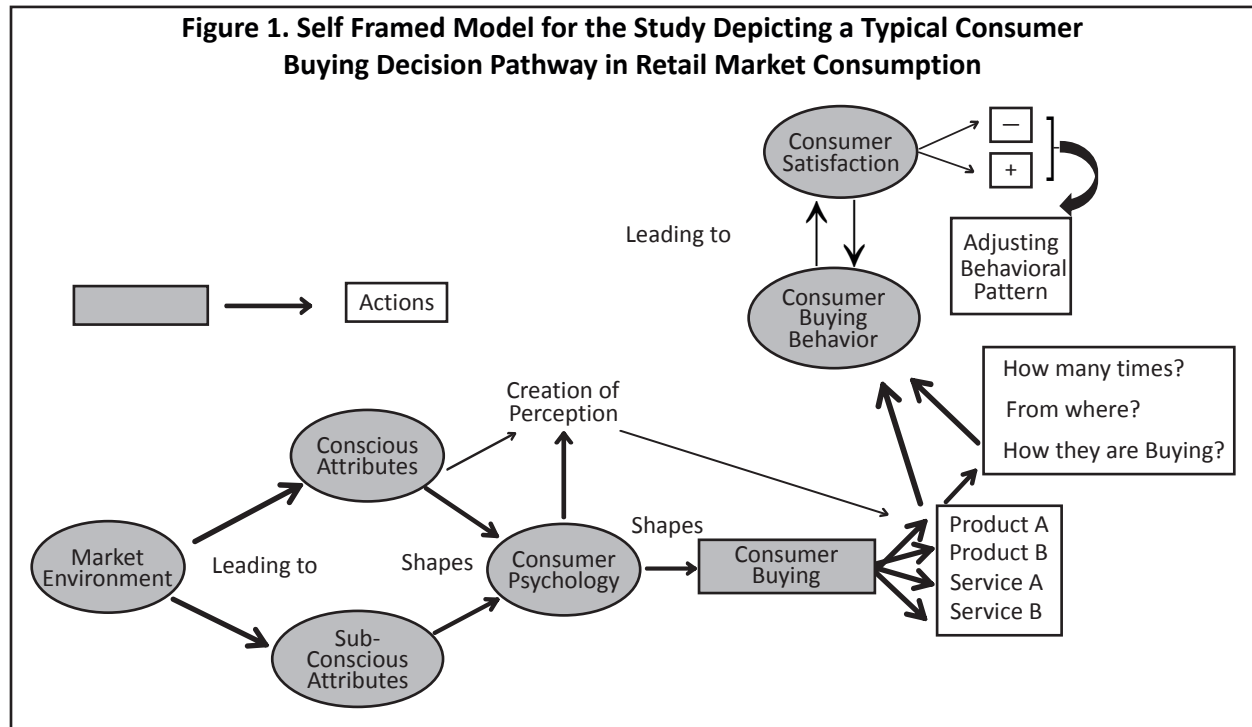
(i) Unawake Implicit Content : The contents dug out from the consumers' mental structures are usually unconscious that stay below the surface level thinking of an individual. Hence, finding those meanings are really hard and direct access is often restricted. Hence, ways need to be found out to bring that knowledge to the surface for further interpretation. Zaltman (1997) found out that ZMET is very prominent as a research tool to probe into deeper meaning.

(ii) Representation in the Cognitive Model : Most of the current literature is of the belief that thoughts are mainly image based and language is just a medium to showcase those thoughts to the outer world (Damasio, 1989 ; Pinker, 1995 ; Pinker, 2009 ; Zaltman, 1997). Hence, the contents of the mental structure must necessarily be image based. This is precisely the reason ZMET studies demand respondents to select pictures which precisely express their thoughts and feelings which later on assist the researchers to frame connections within their mental model.

Thus, ZMET is very successful in demonstrating the usefulness of successfully searching rich mental models identifying deeper and more unconscious hidden aspects. Finally, ZMET's study, when clubbed further with laddering probe, proves to be highly successful in finding out structural associations between different components, thus providing a way to elicit and map both the content and the structure of the consumer's mental model. The ZMET Model works on how the object of a specific research (e.g. a product or a service) fits into a consumer's life. Thus, the main purpose of ZMET study is to focus on consumers' thoughts and feelings considering both beliefs and emotions.

(2) A Proposed Model for Consumer Buying Decision Making Process : It is our understanding that humans never buy logically, they are driven by perception. Once perceived a certain notion, they then try to find logic in it to substantiate their decision. It is the market environment that creates and leads to the specific conscious and sub-conscious attributes within the human mind, which ultimately are the basic ingredients of the consumer psychology.

Figure 1. Self Framed Model for the Study Depicting a Typical Consumer Buying Decision Pathway in Retail Market Consumption

The act of buying or purchasing a commodity or service is merely not a random logical act, but is intensively driven by the attributes of the sub-conscious behaviour, which in conjunction to the experiential logic leads to the action. Thereafter, the subsequent act of buying ultimately leads to form a buying pattern, which can be termed as consumer buying behaviour.

Following that, it is the post-purchase satisfaction that ultimately leads to justify their perception and henceforth validate the logic. But it is also true that the post-purchase satisfaction also helps the consumer to adjust his/her buying behavioral pattern by adjusting the effective intensity of the sub-conscious factors.

✎ **Model for the Study :** A model (Figure 1) has been constructed to understand how consumer buying decision happens in retail market consumption.

Based on the laddering interviews done on the various heterogeneous respondents, it was observed that the consumers' buying behavioral pattern follows a specific path. It all starts from scanning the market which leads to a series of conscious and sub - conscious attributes, which further lead to shaping the consumers' psychology about that specific product or service. Further, based on this psychological frame of mind (which is either positive or negative), the customer is driven to make a decision with a product or a service.

Consumer psychology many a times also helps a consumer further develop a concrete perception about that particular product/service, which in turn influences consumer buying behaviour, further leading to consumer satisfaction which could again be positive or negative.

Data Collection and Analysis

Purposive sampling was conducted keeping in mind the vast geographical and demographic diversity of the target market. For the purpose of subject selection, an invitation was sent out both formally and informally to 150 randomly selected individuals from the purposively sampled subject database. A positive response for

Table 1. Contents of the Research Instruction Kit

Topic	A topic given to a subject for ZMET refers to the stated situation of the research on which the interviewee has to elaborate his/her feelings during the interview.
Subject Demographic Information Form	A form containing socioeconomic characteristics of a population expressed statistically such as age, sex, educational level, income level, marital status, occupation, religion, average size of a family, etc.
Document of Confidentiality	A document outlining the subject confidentiality details and the voluntary information disclosure agreement.
Thanking Note	A personalized thanking note for their voluntary participation in the research.

participation of nearly 85% was registered within a couple of weeks of formal invitation dispatch. Subsequently, the initial screening of individuals was conducted based on their habits, lifestyle, and daily routine. After proper screening, a total of 40 human subjects were selected to participate in the next section of the research.

The respondents selected belonged to an age group between 18 – 40 years and were mostly young individuals having an exposure to the concepts and understanding of experiential marketing. We made sure that the respondents chosen had at least prior experience of visiting a wellness centre in order to dig out the right metaphors for the concerned study. The tentative time frame for the study was approximately 8 months starting from November 2017 till June 2018. The study was conducted in Kolkata. After the selection of the subjects, they were assigned with a subject identification id and were given a hard copy and a softcopy of the Research Instruction Kit. The kit consisted of the elements as depicted in the Table 1.

This research strictly maintains the subject information confidentiality on ethical grounds and ,therefore, no identifying information was recorded anytime during the interview process. All the interviewees were supplied with a subject identification id at the time of selection, which could have been solely accessed by us for this research purpose only. The subject identification ids were linked to the research data extracted from the respective subjects, which has been stored by professional standard encryption software. Later, at the end of the research, the subject identification ids were destroyed from the database.

Table 2. Summarized Custom Steps of ZMET Designed and Used for the Interview

Step 1	Storytelling (all the pictures)	Asking the participants to describe how each picture they selected for the interview represented their thoughts and feelings. Using special probing techniques to dig deep into the insights.
Step 2	Missing pictures	Finding out the pictures that the participants wanted to take but couldn't take for some reason and digging deep for insights.
Step 3	The Triad Task (3 sets)	Asking the participants to examine three pictures selected at random and to indicate how any two pictures were similar but different from the third with regard to the topic. Probing with "laddering" technique to find the reasons these distinctions were relevant to the participants.
Step 4	Metaphor Probe / Expand the Frame (3 pictures)	Asking the participants to widen the frame of one or more selected pictures and describe what else might enter the picture that reinforced the original idea.
		Asking to imagine themselves in the picture and to discuss what might be taking place and what they are thinking and feeling.
		Asking to invite someone or something into the picture that will help them with a paradox or dilemma, and describe who or what it would be.
		Asking other follow-up questions to help them reveal the significance of this person or thing.

Step 5	Sensory (Non-visual) Metaphors	Asking the participants to express their ideas using various sensory images. For instance, participants were asked what is (and what is not) the color, taste, smell, touch, sound, and emotion of "the topic." Each answer is explored to uncover further dimensions of the person's thinking.
Step 6	Vignette	Asking the participants to create a movie or one act play that expressed important ideas about the topic.
		Asking the participants to describe the location, time of day, and season; who, if anyone, was present; what else was happening; and so on.
Step 7	Digital Imaging	Asking the participants to create a summary collage with the pictures they had taken for the interview.

Source : Adapted from Christensen and Olson (2002)

The subjects were then instructed to take photographs using their camera or to download some photographs from the Internet, which they thought were relevant and related to the feelings they observed once placed inside the given topic or situation. They were strictly notified not to select the photographs that explicitly illustrated the situation or the topic, but to bring the photographs that represented the metaphors associated with the topic. Each subject was given one week of time to collect, select, and mail the digital copy of the photographs to us. The photographs from each subject were numbered and printed for the interview process. Subsequently, an interview date was notified to each of the subjects as per the convenience.

For the purpose of the personal interaction session or the interview, a room was selected with the amenities like air-conditioning, comfortable sitting arrangements, drinking water, and beverages. The room was also retrofitted with cameras from different angles, which the subjects were not aware of.

✤ **Personal Interviews :** The research recorded an average time of 2 hours and 5 minutes with a minimum of 1 hour 50 minutes to a maximum of 2 hours 15 minutes for the interview of each individual subjects. The interview process of the subjects is divided into seven steps (refer to Table 2).

Results and Discussion

The transcribed laddering interviews and the metaphor elicitation study resulted in a multitude of interlinked sub-conscious attributes, which are further structured and classified through consensus methodology. Due to the

Table 3. Core Elements and Their Respective Network Clusters

Core Elements	Cluster
Location	Network Cluster I
Time	Network Cluster II
Interior Ambience	Network Cluster III
Pricing	Network Cluster IV
Service Personnel	Network Cluster V
Professionalism	Network Cluster VI
Service Norms	Network Cluster VII
Emotions and Feelings (Satisfaction)	Network Cluster VIII
Sensory Cues	Network Cluster IX
Security and Privacy	Network Cluster X

high network density of the attribute map, it has been broken down to simpler and smaller clusters and are reported in the research (refer to Table 3).The attributes are classified into two hierarchical elements :

(i) Core Elements : These are primary attributes and form the structural sub - conscious framework.

(ii) Network Elements : These attributes are related to the core elements and form the network cluster.

The attribute of the network clusters was found to be highly correlated during the process of the laddering interviews.

Ϫ **Network Cluster I :** The nucleus of the first network cluster is location for the wellness centre which is presented through Figure 2. The connected network elements defined are frequency and socioeconomic neighborhood. The sub - conscious elements that came out from the respondents for consideration of location is the number of outlets located in that particular locality and also the strategic location of the outlets considering the purchasing power of the customers.

Ϫ **Network Cluster II :** The second core element that came out of the ZMET test is time, which is depicted through Figure 3. The surrounding network elements that customers considered are deliver time, that is, the time taken to

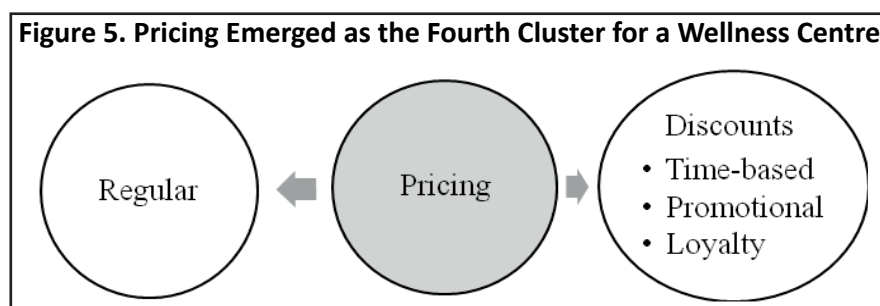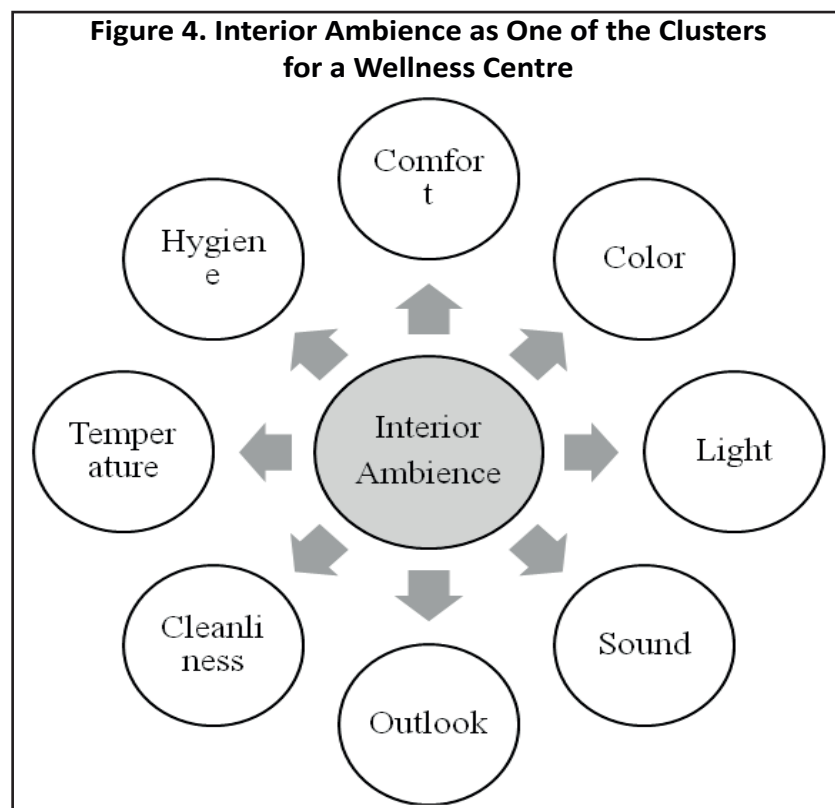**Figure 2. Location as One of the Clusters for a Wellness Centre**
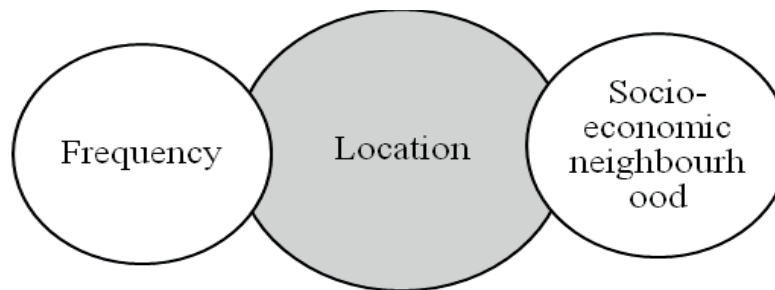
Figure 3. Time as the Second Cluster for a Wellness Centre
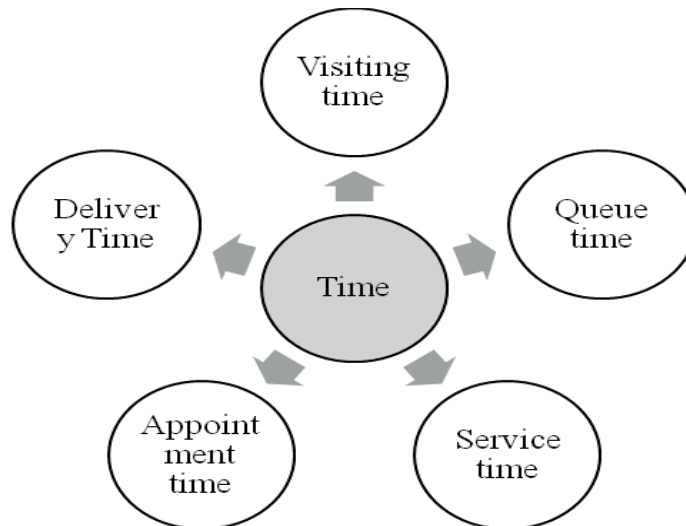
deliver/finish the service to a customer, visiting time or the time taken for visiting the concerned outlet, most importantly, the queuing time/waiting time inside the outlet, service time or the promptness in receiving the service, and the appointment time or the smoothness in booking or appointment received for a particular service.
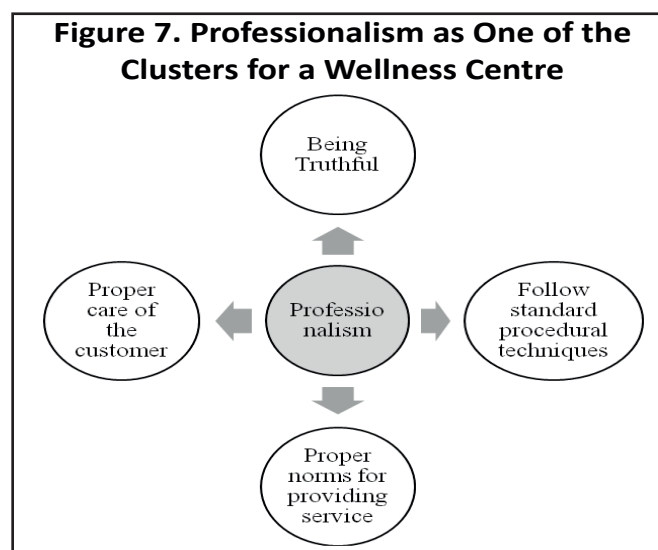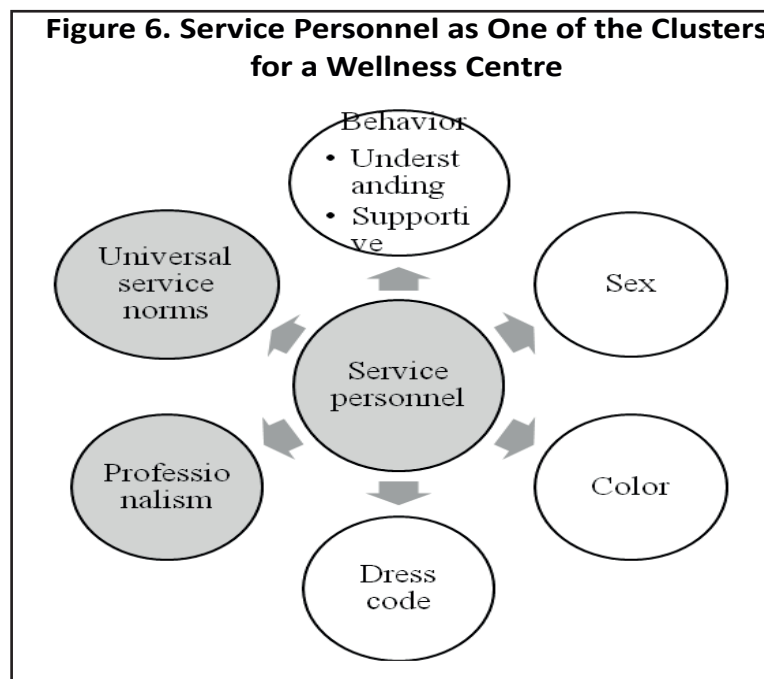
✤ **Network Cluster III :** Interior ambience is the next important cluster depicted through Figure 4. The considerable network elements that came out from the ZMET interviews are comfort, inside - coloring, lighting arrangements, inside sound surroundings, the overall outlook of the store, the associated cleanliness within the store, controlled temperature, and hygiene issues.

✤ **Network Cluster IV :** The laddering interviews gave rise to the next core element in the form of pricing constituting the two network elements of regular pricing and discounted pricing (based on time, promotional events, and loyalty discounts) which is showcased through Figure 5.

Figure 4. Interior Ambience as One of the Clusters for a Wellness Centre

Figure 5. Pricing Emerged as the Fourth Cluster for a Wellness Centre

✤ **Network Cluster V :** The fifth core cluster gave rise to the influence of service personnel projected through Figure 6 and the associated network elements that shaped the behavior of the immediate service providers (in terms of understanding and supportiveness), their sexual orientation, the color of their skin, their professionalism, which includes their dress code and whether they were following the universal service norms or not.

✤ **Network Cluster VI :** Professionalism, as projected in Figure 7, forms one of the most significant core attributes with the associated internal network elements to be truthful (with regard to the service delivery factors) following standard procedural techniques along with proper care for customers and adhering to the norms for providing a service.
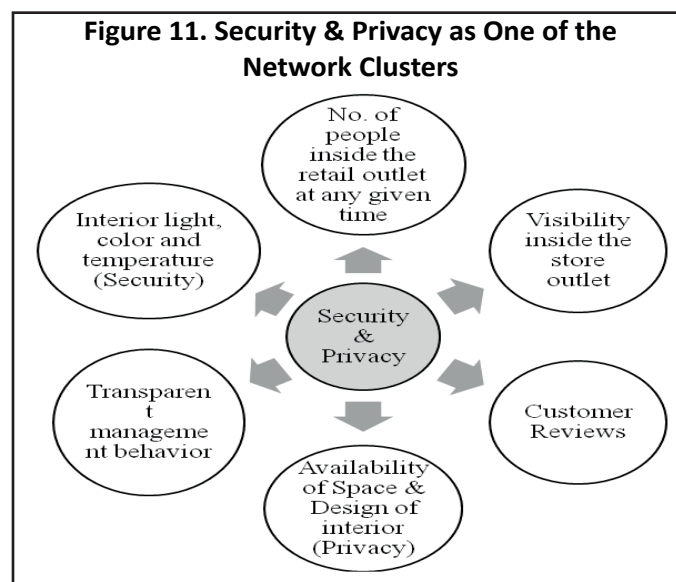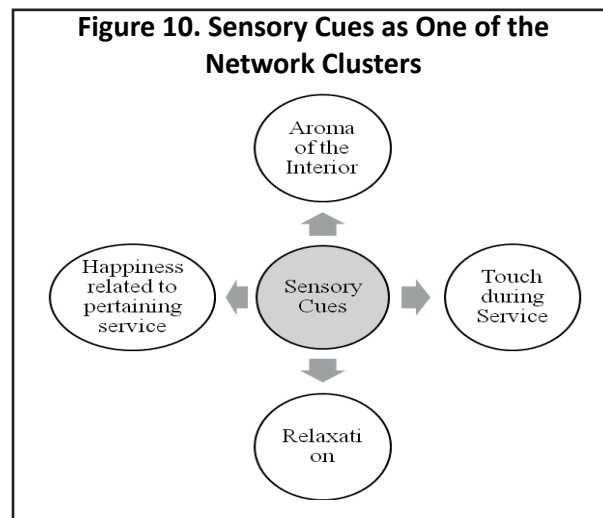

Figure 6. Service Personnel as One of the Clusters for a Wellness Centre

Figure 7. Professionalism as One of the Clusters for a Wellness Centre

✤ **Network Cluster VII :** Universal service norms, as depicted in Figure 8, shape out to be an important input from the ZMET interviews along with the network elements comprising problem solving attitude of the service personnel, consultative nature of the service providers, and maintenance of the standard arrangements for the equipment used.

✤ **Network Cluster VIII :** Emotions and feelings derived from Figure 9 evolved as one of the most significant contributors for making the overall experience to be nice and enriching, having a considerable associated network factors like premium feeling among the customers out of the service received, the pleasure associated with the service, the attraction they had towards opposite-sex service providers, love and passionate feeling on being a part of the store, and the overall "feel-good" factor pertaining to the service received.

Figure 8. Service Norms as a Cluster for Network

Figure 9. Emotions & Feelings as a Network Cluster
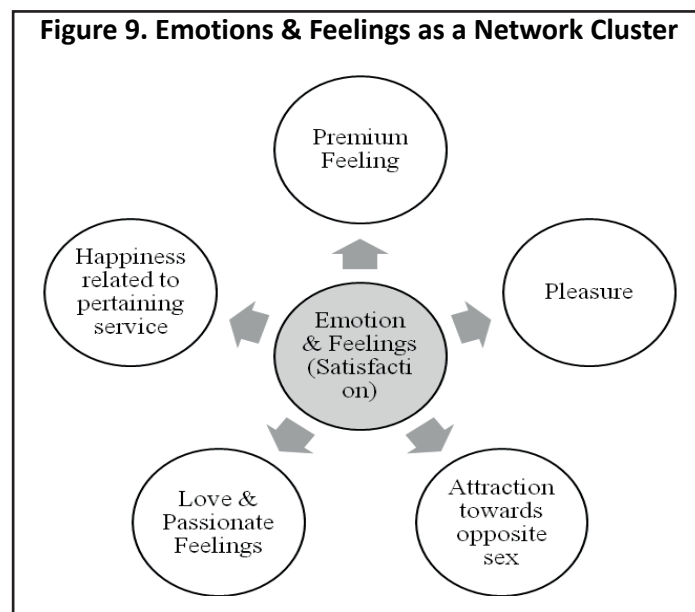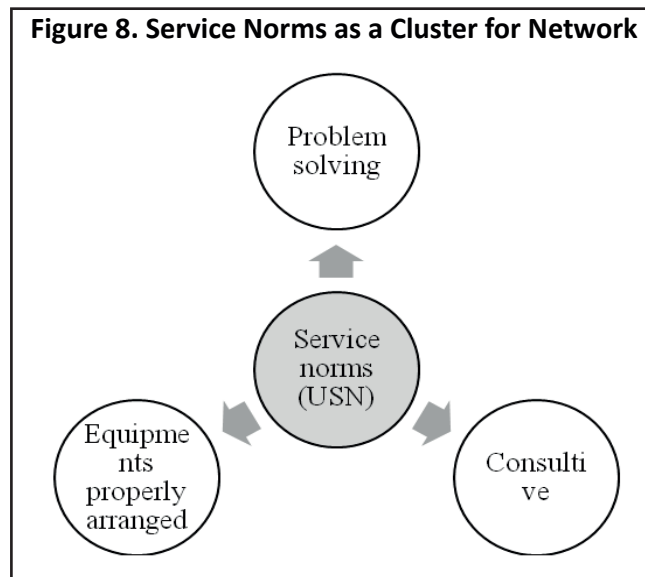
✤ **Network Cluster IX :** Sensory cues structured in Figure 10 are considered to be one of the most important contributors towards the overall experiential marketing of a store, as was suggested by the consumers which came out from the laddering interviews conducted. The associated network cues pin pointed towards aroma within the store, the touch cue during the service time, the visual cue considering the aesthetics around, and the hearing cue like music within the store.

✤ **Network Cluster X :** One of the most important considerations for any wellness industry would be security and safety of the customers as portrayed in Figure 11 in maintaining privacy of the individual. It is observed that customers did refer to that element of privacy and security while they were exposed to the laddering interviews. The consequent network elements developed are the total number of people inside the store at a given point of time ; visibility inside the store ; the related customer reviews available ; availability of comfortable space & design of the interiors ; transparency of behavior from the management of the store ; and the internal ambience with regard to light, inside color, and optimum temperature prevailing within the store.

Figure 10. Sensory Cues as One of the Network Clusters

Figure 11. Security & Privacy as One of the Network Clusters

Conclusion and Managerial Implications

Understanding the deep psychological behavior in behavioral science has always been a central point of concern. The analogy between human behavioral acts and their understanding of the subject matter has always been questioned and examined for clarity. It is now clear to us that the sub - conscious mind has a strong control over our conscious behavior ; only the intensity varies in different conditions.

A pattern workflow for the concept has been given, which shaped the design of this research. The imperial factors like location, pricing et al. contribute towards the collective decision making process of the human conscience. The probing techniques helped the research to mine deeper inside human mind to understand the frugal components of behavior which is yet so complex and difficult to measure for combined affinity in the decision making process. The hierarchical elements of the research not only define the subconscious behavior, but can also help to identify the diaspora of the population by emulation.

It is both the core elements and the network elements that collectively form the neural structure of human sub-conscious thinking which ultimately directs their individual desires and actions. Symbolically, the core elements form the skeleton structure of the network and further link with the network elements to form the distinct pattern of the behavior. In addition, this mental design can be found in almost all humans with a distinct intensity.

This research aims to provide several attributes of human sub-conscious mind in a certain market condition, which is believed to pave the way for further studies to identify their intensity and dynamics of inter-linked relationships. The findings of distinct sub-conscious attributes will help the industry to identify specific factors that determine their consumers' buying behavior and further helps them in psychographic segmentation.

The study conducted would assist marketers identify the core elements hidden in the sub - conscious state of mind of service receivers and also the hidden metaphors which would ultimately contribute in enhanced customer satisfaction.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The major limitation for this study is its geographical constraint. The study reflects results solely from the Eastern part of the country, more precisely Kolkata. Hence, the overall network clusters contributing towards the core elements reflecting variations across India is yet to be understand. Hence, we plan to conduct a more detailed study keeping in mind a much broader population encompassing a broader radius.

Authors' Contribution

Aritra Kundu framed the conceptual framework along with inputs from Shuvam Chatterjee. Both the authors collected the data through ZMET laddering interviews, performed the qualitative analysis, and wrote the manuscript. Shuvam Chatterjee was involved in planning and supervised the work.

Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest, or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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