

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This chapter reviews the literature in six main areas along with a summary:

- 2.1 Definition of whitening cream
- 2.2 Definition of perception
- 2.3 The concepts of perception
- 2.4 The concepts of needs
- 2.5 Relevant studies

#### **2.1 DEFINITION OF WHITENING CREAM**

According to Oxford Dictionary (2005), “Whiten” means to become white or whiter and “Cream” means a soft substance or thick liquid used on your skin to protect it or make it feel soft. When Whitening and Cream are put together, it can be construed as a soft substance used on your skin that can make it whiter.

#### **2.2 DEFINITION OF PERCEPTION**

Perception means the way you notice things, especially with the senses or the ability to understand the true nature of something or an idea, a belief or an image you have as a result of how you see or understand something (Oxford Dictionary, 2005).

Rookes and Willson (2000) provided the definition of perception as “a process which involves the recognition and interpretation of stimuli which register on our senses.

Blake and Sekuler (2006) said that perception is the acquisition and processing of sensory information in order to see, hear, taste, smell, or feel objects in the world, and which also guides an organism’s actions with respect to those objects. Perceptions may involve conscious awareness of objects and events; this awareness is termed a percept.

Murch (1976) stated that perception is something more than the introduction of stimuli into a sensory system. In perception, the individual is aware of the incoming stimuli; he is able to rely on past experience to draw inferences about the nature of the incoming stimuli, to develop response patterns to particular stimuli, and to establish relationships between stimuli.

Dember and Warm (1979) explained that perception is one of those words that serves better as the title of a book, or book chapter, or a unit of an academic curriculum, than it does as a precise functional term with an exact scientific meaning. We get closer to the latter with the word “perceiving.” That is, perceiving connotes activity, or process; by contrast “perception” seems to connote a thing or state. It is the process of perceiving, not some static entity, with which we are primarily concerned.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) pointed out perception as the process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. It can be described as “how we see the world around us.” Two individuals may be exposed to the same stimuli under the same apparent conditions, but how each person recognizes, selects, organizes, and interprets these stimuli is a highly individual process based on each person’s own needs, values, and expectations.

### **2.3 THE CONCEPTS OF PERCEPTION**

Kotler and Keller (2006) explained perception as a process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets information input to create a meaningful picture of the world. A perception depends not only on the physical stimuli but also on the stimuli’s relation to the surrounding field and on conditions within the individual. The key point is that perceptions can vary widely among individuals exposed to the same reality. One person might perceive a fast-talking salesperson as aggressive and insincere another as intelligent and helpful. Each will respond differently to the salesperson. In marketing, perceptions are more important than the reality, as it is perception that will affect consumers’ actual behavior. People can emerge with different perceptions of the same object because of three perceptual

processes: **selective attention, selective distortion, and selective retention**. Here are the meanings:

**Selective attention** means that marketers have to work hard to attract consumers' notice. This is because a person cannot possibly attend to 1,500 ads a day; most stimuli will be screened out. It means that marketers have to work hard to attract consumers' notice. The real challenge is to explain which stimuli people will notice. Here are some findings:

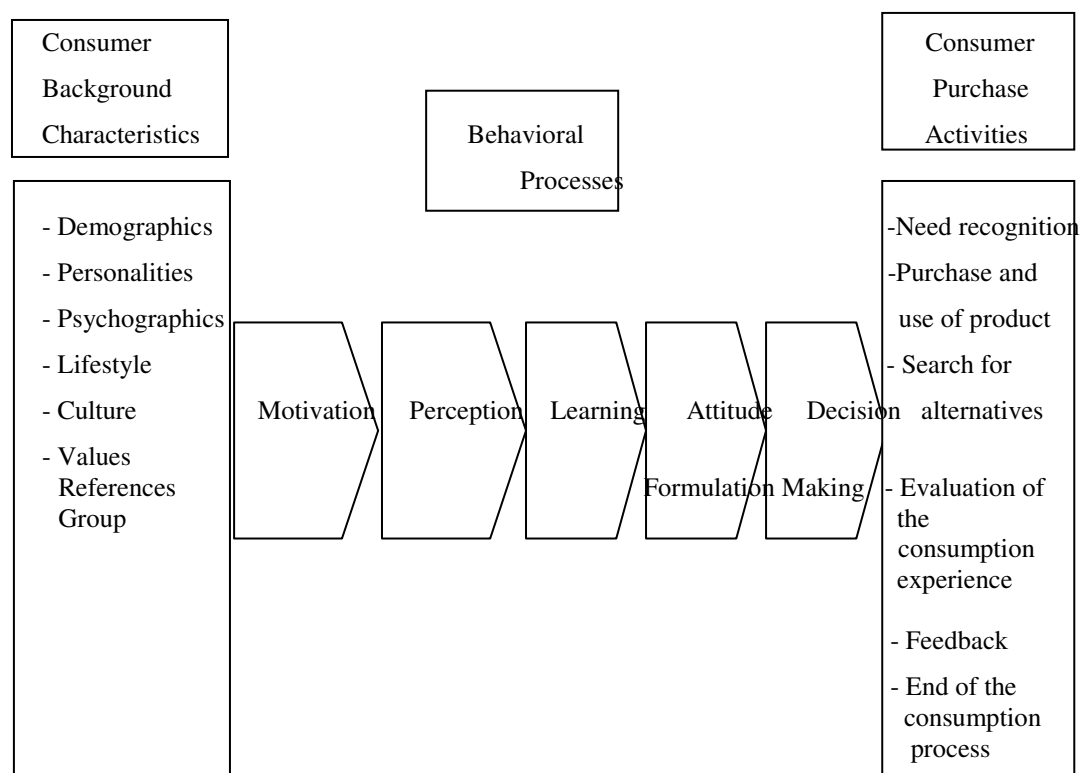
1. People are more likely to notice stimuli that relate to a current need.  
A person who is motivated to buy a computer will notice computer ads; he or she will be less likely to notice DVD ads.
2. People are more likely to notice stimuli that they anticipate. You are more likely to notice computers than radios in a computer store because you do not expect the store to carry radios.
3. People are more likely to notice stimuli whose deviations are large in relation to the normal size of the stimuli. You are more likely to notice an ad offering \$100 off the list price of a computer than one offering \$5 off.

**Selective distortion** is the tendency to interpret information in a way that will fit our preconceptions. Consumers will often distort information to be consistent with prior brand and product beliefs. For example, in "blind" tests, one group of consumers samples a product without knowing which brand it is, whereas another group of consumers samples the product knowing which brand it is. Invariably, differences arise in the opinions of the two groups despite the fact that the two groups are literally consuming exactly the same product. This might be the cause of the brand and product beliefs, created by whatever means (e.g., past experiences, marketing activity for the brand, etc.). Examples of branded differences can be found with virtually every type of product. For instance, one study found that consumers were equally split in their preference for Diet Coke versus Diet Pepsi when tasting both on a blind basis. When tasting the branded versions, however, consumers preferred Diet Coke by 65 percent and Diet Pepsi by only 23 percent (with the remainder seeing no difference).

**Selective Retention**, people will fail to register much information to which they are exposed in memory, but will tend to retain information that supports their attitudes and beliefs. Because of selective retention, we are likely to remember good points about a product we like and forget good points about competing products. Selective retention again works to the advantage of strong brands. It also explains why marketers need to use repetition in sending messages to their target market to make sure their message is not overlooked.

Wells and Prensky's study (as cited in Kanittha Sawatdirak, 2007, p. 7) explained how consumer background characteristics (demographics, personality, psychographics, lifestyle, culture, values references group) and behavioral processes affect consumer purchasing activities as shown in the figure below:

**Figure 1.** How consumer background characteristics and behavioral processes affect consumer purchasing activities.



## **2.4 THE CONCEPTS OF NEEDS**

According to Maslow's theory, social needs are the third level of hierarchy which includes such needs as love, affection, belonging, and acceptance. People seek warm and satisfying human relationships with other people and are motivated by love for their families. Because of the importance of social motives in our society, advertisers of many product categories emphasize this appeal in their advertisements (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007, p. 99).

According to Dana Dickman (2007), the consumer must first have a perceived need or want, and then actively experiences an advertisement in the product category where the need or want exists. It is a catalyst for the model if this advertisement occurs at strategic timing in the process. After exposure, the consumer forms an opinion about the product. This perception becomes the reality of that product to the consumer. It is possible that this truth could change with exposure to competitive messages from a wide variety of sources (other media, friends, advice columns etc). If, however, the product is perceived, and therefore assigned the truth, of being positive it is then evaluated as to whether or not it fills the need or want. If it does indeed fit the need, it is likely that the consumer will proceed to the purchase stage of the model. In the purchase stage the consumer decides to purchase or not to purchase the product. Again, there are a number of variables surrounding this decision (Ciadvertising, 2007). For example, the prices of a product are very high, so the consumer who has a limited budget decides not to buy it, whereas a richer consumer decides to buy it.

## **2.5 RELEVANT STUDIES**

Kanittha Sawatdirak (2007) stated in her research on "The Use of cosmetics among Female Teenagers: A Case Study at Samutprakarn Technical College" that most importance of using cosmetic products is to improve appearance and to cover and correct. They also used cosmetic products in order to increase their confidence while suggestions from friends and family played a less important role on their decision to use. Here are her key findings:

1. Female teenagers are not concerned much about whether cosmetic products are made for teenagers only, or if it is a well-known product, or how attractive the packaging is, but the most important factor for female teenagers of choosing cosmetic products is the quality of the product. Behind the reasons are that the majority of respondents are seventeen years old and have not much income (less than 3,000 Baht per month) so reasonable price is the most important factor for them to consider. Therefore, her study has recommended that cosmetics companies should concentrate on the price factor. They should always maintain the same price and make it affordable for teenagers to buy.
2. Female teenagers mostly do not have much time to shop. They think of convenient place to buy cosmetic products.
3. Female teenagers prefer a special discount and appealing premiums through attractive advertising. And demonstrating make up techniques of skin care by experts at supermarkets might help female teenagers to be more interested in the products.

Even though the most important factor for female teenagers to use cosmetics products is to improve their appearance, there are other important factors for them to consider whenever they buy it. The quality of products, reasonable price, and convenience of the place to purchase are those supporting factors. It is very interesting to find out that attractive packaging or attractive advertising were not main factors for them to buy cosmetic products. This may be because they did not earn much money per month so they realized the value of money and use it only for something definitely necessary for them.

According to Ajzen and Fishbein's study (as cited in Phong-ampai Thongpob, 2006, p. 9), Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior are composed of three major components:

1. Cognitive Component (belief, knowledge, and perception) concerns individuals' belief and knowledge toward a particular object, or manner in which the object is perceived;

2. Effective Component (favor and disfavor) is an individual's feeling toward a particular object, place, or person establishes the affective component of an attitude; and

3. Behavioral Component is an attitude which reflects the action taken or expressed and intends to act with respect to particular object, place, or person relating to action taken or expressed.

Although these components of attitude can be used to describe manner practiced by individuals toward a certain object, the components of attitude are presumably unpredictable since a number of factors also involve an attitude accelerator to draw an outcome of behavioral action (Phong-ampai Thongpob, 2006, p. 10), which means, sometimes, attitude does not interpret behavior.

Since the study involves attitude of people toward a particular object and event, the effective attitude measurement scales is required in order to measure the attitude or the degree of which people prefer. L.L. Thurstone (1967) suggested that in order to measure attitude, it is necessary that an opinion symbolizing an attitude has to be taken into consideration. Although the attitude scale is counted as the needed attitude, it is assumed that people's attitude can change and the subject may be consciously hiding their true attitude while the social pressure of the situation may make a person believe what he/she expresses (cited in Phong-ampai, 2006). This can be adapted for a perception survey. According to Wells and Prensky's study (Kanittha Sawatdirak, 2007, p.7) in the behavioral process, perception comes before attitude, so when conducting a survey or summarizing results, respondents sometimes may hide their true perceptions.

(Wannee Rojanaolarnrat , 2004) said in her study about Brand Awareness of IT Products among Users in Bangkok that a brand which has a high awareness level will have more users.

(Wongwarit Thanikhotanan, 2006) in Perception and Attitudes of Consumer for Spirulina stated that television is the most popular medium for telling about Spirulina. This relates to Selective Retention Method that a person chooses to remember what he/she likes or believes which then leads to buying behavior.

Perception plays a vital role in marketing. This is because it can lead to behavior of consumers. Many companies try to create good advertisements in order to make good perceptions of customers on their products. Theories of needs and attitudes also need to be taken into account because they affect their decision to buy or not to buy.