

# From Consumption to Hyperconsumption: A Reflective Attitude on Consumer Behavior in the Age of Personalization and Digital Marketing

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**Abstract:** This article presents a reflective literature review on contemporary consumer behavior, emphasizing the shift from a consumer society to a hyperconsumption society. The study analyzes cultural, social, psychological, and technological factors that influence purchasing decisions, especially considering the impact of the digital context and new forms of interaction between consumers and brands. The review integrates contributions from classic and contemporary authors, such as Kotler and Keller, Lipovetsky, Schiffman, and Wisenblit, as well as recent research on personalization, digital engagement, and the role of social media. The final reflections systematize that consumption goes beyond the act of buying, incorporating symbolic, emotional, and identity dimensions. The consumer has become a co-author of brands, participating in the construction of meaning through online reviews, sharing experiences, and constant interaction on social networks. Therefore, personalization emerges as a central strategy for loyalty, while the consumer experience gains relevance in generating emotional value and creating lasting relationships. The theoretical reflection also highlights ethical and environmental challenges of the hyper-consumption era, such as planned obsolescence, pressure for status, and the acceleration of purchasing cycles. In conclusion, understanding the current consumer requires integrating psychology, culture, technology, and ethics, allowing for the development of strategies that are both sustainable and focused on the end consumer.

**Keywords:** *Consumer Behavior; Hyperconsumption; Consumer Experience; Digital Marketing; Consumer Psychology.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is a multidisciplinary field that seeks to understand how individuals and groups choose, acquire, and use products and services. With globalization and the advancement of digital technologies, this behavior has become more complex, influenced by psychological, cultural, social, and symbolic factors (Kumar & Reinartz, 2018; Verhoef et al., 2017).

In the current era of hyperconsumption, the act of consuming has ceased to represent merely the satisfaction of basic needs, and has come to reflect identities, lifestyles, and personal values (Lipovetsky, 2006). Thus, understanding the evolution of consumption and its symbolic implications is fundamental to interpreting the relationship between consumer and brand.

This article aims to review and discuss the main theories and approaches to consumer behavior, highlighting the role of personalization, consumer psychology, and the transformations brought about by digital marketing.

## II. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

### ➤ *Evolution of Consumer Behavior*

The study of consumer behavior has evolved significantly over the last few decades, keeping pace with the economic, social, technological, and cultural transformations that have redefined the relationships between producers, markets, and consumers. Initially, consumption theories were centered on economic rationality, emphasizing the idea that individuals make purchasing decisions based on complete and objective information, seeking to maximize utility and minimize costs (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). This

paradigm, derived from classical economics, considered the consumer a predictable and homogeneous agent, guided by purely rational motivations.

However, from the second half of the 20th century onwards, with the advancement of behavioral sciences and psychology applied to marketing, a new understanding emerged: consumption is also a symbolic, social, and emotional phenomenon. Authors such as Solomon (2017) and Kotler and Keller (2016) demonstrate that consumers acquire not only products, but also meanings, status, lifestyles, and experiences. Thus, the act of consuming has become a form of expression and identity construction, transcending the economic domain to situate itself within the cultural and psychological realm.

During the 1980s, globalization and advances in communications intensified competition between brands and expanded access to new markets. During this period, marketing adopted a more customer-centric approach, promoting segmentation and differentiation strategies aimed at meeting the specific needs of distinct social groups (Assael, 2018). Also during this period, the first integrated models of consumer behavior emerged, combining cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors as determinants in the decision-making process (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2019).

With the arrival of the digital age in the last two decades, the evolution of consumer behavior has become even more dynamic. The internet, e-commerce, and social networks have profoundly transformed the ways consumers and companies interact. Thus, consumers now have access to a vast amount of unlimited information, allowing them to compare products, prices, and reputations in real time (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). This informational autonomy has contributed to the emergence of the "consumer 4.0," described by Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan (2017), characterized by connectivity, empowerment, and the pursuit of personalized experiences.

In the age of digitalization and big data, brands are no longer just sources of products, but platforms for relationships and dialogue. All consumer behavior has become shaped by algorithms and data-driven recommendations, a fact that introduces new ethical and psychological dimensions to consumer studies (Kumar & Reinatz, 2018). The purchase decision has become more emotional, impulsive, and dependent on visual and social stimuli, a phenomenon amplified by the use of digital influencers and the culture of visibility (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019).

Furthermore, the concept of value has undergone a significant transformation. The modern consumer values not only the functional utility of a product, but also its authenticity, social purpose, and environmental impact (Jackson, 2019). This shift indicates that consumer behavior is intrinsically linked to the search for meaning, as well as belonging and emotional and social well-being, reflecting trends such as conscious consumption (Hoyer, MacInnis & Pieters, 2021).

In short, the evolution of consumer behavior reveals a transition from a rational model to an experiential and symbolic model, in which consumption is mediated by emotions, values, and cultural contexts. The contemporary consumer is, therefore, a hybrid subject—rational and emotional, individual and collective, physical and digital. This complexity challenges organizations to understand the consumer holistically, recognizing that their decisions are shaped by a network of interconnected influences that go beyond the traditional logic of the market.

#### ➤ *Factors that Influence Consumer Behavior*

Consumer behavior is determined by a complex interaction of cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that influence how individuals perceive, choose, and consume products and services. Understanding these factors is essential for developing effective marketing strategies and building lasting relationships between companies and consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Each of these dimensions acts interdependently, shaping consumption patterns and decision-making.

Cultural factors constitute the deepest basis of consumer behavior, encompassing values, beliefs, traditions, and norms that guide purchasing preferences and attitudes (Solomon, 2017). Culture functions as a "mental map" that defines what is considered necessary, desirable, or prestigious in a given society. Within this context, **subcultures such as ethnic, religious, regional**, or professional groups confer identity and differentiate consumption habits. For example, the consumption of ecological products reflects a subculture of sustainability and social responsibility. The advancement of globalization and digital communication, however, has produced a "cultural hybridization" (Lipovetsky, 2006), in which consumers blend local and global references in their choices.

Social factors exert influence through interpersonal relationships and the social context in which an individual is embedded. Reference groups, family, status, and social roles affect purchasing decisions and perceptions of value (Hawkins & Mothersbaugh, 2019).

Behavior is often driven by the search for approval or differentiation within a group. On social media, this influence has become more visible, with the phenomenon of digital influencers and online consumer communities, which shape tastes and trends (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Social pressure to consume certain brands symbolizes belonging and prestige, transforming the act of buying into a form of symbolic communication (Bauman, 2019).

Personal factors relate to individual characteristics such as age, occupation, income, lifestyle, personality, and stage of the life cycle (Hanaysha, 2017). Age directly influences consumption needs and priorities; while young people tend to seek innovation and status, adults prioritize stability and quality. Lifestyle, defined by activities, interests, and opinions, is also an important indicator of purchasing behavior (Assael, 2018). Increased income and access to credit, for example, have expanded consumption possibilities but have also

promoted debt and compulsive consumption behaviors, typical of a hyper-consumer society (Lipovetsky, 2006).

Finally, psychological factors constitute the most internal and subjective dimension of consumer behavior.

These four factors—cultural, social, personal, and psychological—do not act in isolation, but in constant interaction. In the digital environment, this interdependence has become even more evident. Continuous exposure to personalized advertising, the influence of algorithms, and immediate feedback from other consumers on online platforms alter perceptions and purchasing decisions (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Thus, understanding contemporary consumer behavior requires analyzing not only their internal motivations, but also the technological and social context that redefines consumption as a collective, symbolic, and emotional experience.

#### ➤ *Personalization and the Customer Experience*

With digital transformation, experience has become central to marketing strategy, becoming an essential competitive differentiator for companies seeking to build customer loyalty and stand out in saturated markets. In this context, personalization emerges as one of the most strategic elements, understood as the adaptation of products, services, and communications to the individual preferences of the consumer, with the goal of creating relevance, engagement, and emotional connection with the brand (Hanaysha, 2017). By understanding the specific interests, habits, and needs of each customer, organizations can offer targeted offers and unique experiences that transcend the functionality of the product, promoting symbolic and emotional value.

Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize that personalization adds symbolic value to consumer interactions, reinforcing the feeling of exclusivity, recognition, and individual attention. This type of approach goes beyond simply meeting basic needs, providing experiences that make the customer feel understood and valued. Assael (2018) observes that consumers exposed to personalized experiences develop greater loyalty, engagement, and a propensity to generate positive word-of-mouth recommendations, which expands brand reach and strengthens its reputation. This effect is particularly evident in the contexts of digital consumer markets, financial services, tourism, and entertainment, where the personalization of interactions can be achieved through technology and data analysis.

Customer experience, in turn, is understood as a psychological and emotional construct, in which perceptions of authenticity, relevance, and satisfaction shape loyalty and purchasing behavior (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Unlike a traditional transaction, which focuses only on the product or service, customer experience involves all the interactions that an individual establishes with the brand throughout their journey, from the first contact to after-sales. In this sense, each point of contact, whether digital, in-person, or through communication channels, has the potential to generate emotional impact, reinforce the perception of value, and contribute to building lasting relationships.

The advancement of digital technology has expanded the possibilities for personalization and enriched the consumer experience. E-commerce platforms, mobile applications, social networks, and data analysis systems allow companies to collect detailed information about browsing behavior, purchase history, and stated preferences, enabling the offering of highly segmented products, services, and communications. Pine and Gilmore (2013) argue that experiencing memorable experiences has become as important as the consumption of the product itself, and that companies capable of providing differentiated experiences can create emotional value and sustainable competitiveness. Personalization, therefore, is not limited to product recommendations; it encompasses aspects such as individualized service, targeted communication, adapted layout, and even the anticipation of consumer needs, generating a feeling of care and continuous attention.

Furthermore, the integration between personalization and customer experience contributes to building deeper emotional bonds. When a consumer perceives that their preferences and expectations are considered, they tend to experience greater satisfaction, trust, and brand loyalty. This emotional connection is reinforced by the concept of co-creation, according to Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004), which suggests that consumers want to actively participate in the development of products and services. By allowing the customer to personalize features, choose options, or influence the offering according to their tastes, the brand promotes a sense of belonging and engagement, transforming the shopping experience into an interactive and participatory process.

Managing customer experience also involves sensory, cognitive, and affective aspects. Elements such as point-of-sale design, intuitive digital interface, speed of service, visual aesthetics, soundtrack, and overall atmosphere contribute to shaping perceptions and emotions. Schmitt (2010) proposes that positive experiences are not only functional but also emotional and memorable, and that these elements directly influence the consumer's perception of value. When combined with personalization strategies, these factors significantly increase the likelihood of continuous engagement and loyalty, as well as creating brand advocates who promote spontaneous recommendations.

Despite the benefits, personalization and customer experience present significant challenges. The collection and use of personal data require ethical care and transparency, in order to respect consumer privacy and trust. Invasive or overly targeted strategies can generate discomfort, a feeling of manipulation, or rejection, compromising the relationship with the brand. Furthermore, the implementation of personalization processes requires technological integration, precise data analysis, and operational capacity to consistently meet diverse expectations. Companies that master these elements can transform personalization into a sustainable competitive advantage, differentiating themselves in highly competitive markets.

In short, personalization and customer experience are central pillars of modern marketing, articulating emotional,

psychological, and technological aspects to generate individualized and memorable value. By adapting products, services, and interactions to the specific needs of the consumer while creating meaningful experiences, organizations promote not only satisfaction and loyalty, but also engagement, recommendations, and a stronger market image. With the continuous advancement of digital technologies and the growing consumer desire for authentic and personalized experiences, companies that master the integration of these elements are better positioned to thrive in a dynamic, competitive, and emotionally driven consumer environment.

#### ➤ *Consumer Psychology and Decision-Making Processes*

Consumer psychology is a field that seeks to understand the psychological, emotional, and social factors that influence purchasing behavior, offering a detailed view of how individuals perceive, evaluate, and respond to products, services, and brands (Solomon, 2017; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). It investigates the underlying motivations, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and symbolic values that guide consumer choices, contributing to the development of more effective marketing strategies aligned with the needs of the target audience.

The consumer decision-making process is generally structured in interconnected stages that describe the purchase journey, from need recognition to post-purchase evaluation. According to Carvalho and Matos (2016), these stages include: (i) need recognition, when the consumer perceives a gap between their current and desired state; (ii) information search, which involves collecting data on products, services, or brands that may satisfy the identified need; (iii) evaluation of alternatives, in which the consumer compares options based on rational and emotional criteria; (iv) purchase decision, in which the product or service is chosen; and (v) post-purchase evaluation, a critical stage in which the consumer evaluates the satisfaction and suitability of the decision made, influencing future behavior and brand loyalty.

In each of these stages, psychological factors play significant roles. Emotions, sensory perceptions, and symbolic values often determine the preference for a particular brand or product, even when rational alternatives seem equivalent. Classic models of psychology, such as Pavlov's conditioning, help explain how repeated associations between stimuli and responses can shape consumer attitudes and behaviors. Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego offers perspective on the role of the unconscious in purchasing decisions, highlighting how desires, impulses, and internalized norms influence consumer choice, often in irrational or unconscious ways.

In the digital age, the consumer decision-making process has become more complex and non-linear. The interactivity of digital platforms, the constant presence of social networks, and the possibility of co-creating experiences and meanings have transformed the purchase journey into a dynamic and bidirectional process (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Today, consumers can research, compare, evaluate, and share information in real time, influencing and being influenced by online communities, reviews from other users, and personalized recommendations. This scenario reinforces the

importance of marketing strategies that consider not only observable behavior but also the emotional, social, and cognitive aspects that shape consumer decisions.

Furthermore, consumer psychology highlights the relevance of emotional engagement and the perception of symbolic value in building loyalty. The shopping experience ceases to be a purely functional act and begins to incorporate affective and cognitive dimensions that generate lasting bonds with the brand. Companies that understand the role of internal motivations, emotional expectations, and the perception of relevance are able to create messages and offers that resonate deeply with their consumers, increasing the propensity for repurchase and recommendation (Solomon, 2017).

In summary, consumer psychology and decision-making processes provide a theoretical framework for understanding the complexities of purchasing behavior. By integrating knowledge about motivation, emotion, perception, and social influence, companies can develop more precise strategies for personalization and consumer experiences, strengthening customer relationships and promoting a sustainable competitive advantage in increasingly interactive and digitally connected markets.

#### ➤ *From Consumer Society to Hyperconsumption Society*

The evolution of consumer behavior over the last few decades reflects profound social, cultural, and economic transformations. While the consumer society, which emerged in the context of industrial modernity, focused on satisfying objective and utilitarian needs, the transition to a hyperconsumption society is characterized by the predominance of symbolic desires, the ephemerality of trends, and the centrality of individual pleasure in the logic of consumption.

Lipovetsky (1983, 2004, 2006) describes this transformation as a passage from modernity to hypermodernity, marked by hedonism, the incessant search for novelty, and the personalization of consumption choices. From this perspective, consuming has ceased to be merely a functional act and has come to integrate emotional, social, and identity dimensions.

In traditional consumer society, products and services were designed primarily to meet the concrete needs of individuals, such as food, clothing, and shelter. Consumption had a utilitarian, rational, and relatively predictable character, reflecting stable cultural patterns and well-defined social norms. With the intensification of mass production and the expansion of markets, access to consumer goods became broader, but still limited by objective functionality. However, with the advent of hypermodernity, consumption becomes driven by symbolic, aesthetic, and affective factors, transforming the acquisition of products into an emotional and identity-based experience, in which "having" progressively replaces "being" as a reference for social value (Lipovetsky, 2006; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019).

One of the central elements of hyperconsumption society is planned obsolescence, a strategy adopted by manufacturers

to reduce the lifespan of products and encourage continuous consumption. This practice, associated with increasing individualism and social pressure for status, creates an accelerated buying cycle in which individuals constantly seek updates, novelties, and social differentiation through the possession of material goods (Bauman, 2019; Jackson, 2019). Advertising, digital marketing, and social networks play a crucial role in this process, amplifying desires, shaping perceptions of need, and reinforcing the culture of visibility, in which the display of consumption becomes a form of recognition and belonging.

In a hyper-consumer society, consumption therefore transcends the logic of practical utility and takes on symbolic and emotional functions. Products and services cease to be merely tools for satisfying basic needs and begin to act as means of expressing identity, lifestyle, and social status. The phenomenon of "aspirational consumption" reflects this dynamic, in which individuals buy not only for the object itself, but for the meaning associated with its possession, the experience provided, and the projection of social image it confers. In this context, the personalization of consumption, previously discussed, emerges as a strategic element, allowing each individual to construct a unique experience aligned with their values, desires, and identity (Hanaysha, 2017; Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Despite the exponential growth and centrality of symbolic consumption, contemporary society also witnesses the emergence of critical movements that question the excesses of hyperconsumerism. Trends such as conscious consumption, minimalism, and the circular economy are examples. and sustainability They are looking for Balancing the pleasure derived from consumption with social and environmental responsibility (Hoyer et al., 2021). These movements emphasize reflection on the impact of consumption choices, promoting waste reduction, product reuse, and the valuing of experiences over the accumulation of material goods. Thus, the hyper-consumer society is not homogeneous; practices driven by hedonism and status coexist with practices based on ethical awareness, sustainability, and collective well-being.

The intersection between symbolic consumption, digital technology, and social networks further intensifies the patterns of hyperconsumerism. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have transformed consumption into a spectacle, where visibility and social recognition are fundamental to the construction of identity.

Influencer marketing and targeted advertising amplify desires, shape trends, and create new needs, reinforcing the idea that consumption is simultaneously a social, emotional, and cultural practice. Within this framework, consumers not only buy products but also actively participate in the creation and circulation of meaning, strengthening the interaction between identity, experience, and symbolic value.

In short, the transition from a consumer society to a hyper-consumer society reflects profound changes in consumer motivations, values, and decision-making

processes. Consumption ceases to be merely functional and becomes a vehicle for pleasure, an expression of identity and social recognition, marked by ephemerality, personalization, and media exposure. At the same time, responsible and sustainable consumption practices emerge, indicating a tension between immediate gratification, status building, and ethical awareness.

### III. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article aimed to establish a reflective attitude towards the problem of consumer behavior in the era of personalization and digital marketing. Thus, the reflection carried out showed that consumer behavior has undergone profound transformations in recent decades, evolving from a functional and rational model, centered on the satisfaction of objective needs, to a complex, emotional, and symbolic approach, in which experiences, identity, and perceived value become central. While traditional consumer society prioritized the practical utility of products, today's hyper-consumption society values ephemerality, hedonism, and personalization, emphasizing the consumer's role as a co-author of the experience and meaning of brands (Lipovetsky, 2006; Bauman, 2019). This change redefines the nature of interactions between individuals and companies, placing the consumer experience at the center of contemporary marketing strategies.

The modern consumer is no longer a passive recipient of products and advertising messages. They actively participate in the meaning-making process, influenced by personalized experiences, social networks, and digital platforms that allow for interactivity, evaluation, and co-creation (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Personalization, understood as the adaptation of products, services, and communications to individual preferences, strengthens the emotional bond between consumer and brand, promoting engagement, loyalty, and the spread of positive recommendations (Hanaysha, 2017; Kotler & Keller, 2016). At the same time, this dynamic imposes significant challenges, mainly related to privacy and ethics in data use, requiring organizations to balance targeted marketing strategies with transparency and respect for consumer trust.

The consumer decision-making process has also become more complex and non-linear. Classic steps such as need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase are still valid, but contemporary behavior shows that emotions, symbolic values, and social influences act simultaneously and interactively in all phases (Carvalho and Matos, 2016; Solomon, 2017). Digital technology intensifies this complexity, offering multiple points of contact and channels of influence that transform each decision into a dynamic process, often mediated by peer recommendations, digital influencers, and user-generated content. Thus, understanding the contemporary consumer requires integrating cognitive, affective, and social dimensions, recognizing the interdependence between motivation, perception, emotion, and behavior.

While hyperconsumer society expands access, variety, and freedom of choice, it also accentuates ethical and

environmental dilemmas. Planned obsolescence, social pressure for status, and the valorization of consumption as an expression of identity create accelerated purchasing cycles, often dissociated from objective needs (Bauman, 2019; Jackson, 2019). On the other hand, movements of conscious consumption, minimalism, and circular economy are emerging, seeking to balance pleasure and responsibility, encouraging sustainable practices, product reuse, and the valorization of experiences over the accumulation of material goods, as Hoyer et al. (2021) state. This tension between hyperconsumerism and responsible consumption constitutes a central challenge for organizations, which need to reconcile desire, experience, and purpose in their strategies.

The implications for marketing are multiple. Firstly, companies must invest in creating meaningful, emotionally connected, and individualized experiences that consider not only the functional performance of products but also symbolic values, emotional expectations, and the cultural context of the consumer. Secondly, it is necessary to balance personalization with respect for privacy and ethics, using data transparently and responsibly. Finally, the integration of sustainability and social responsibility strategies into product design, communication, and consumer experience is essential to strengthen trust, loyalty, and corporate reputation in increasingly conscious markets.

Understanding consumer behavior in the digital age, in this context, requires an integrated approach that articulates psychology, culture, and technology. The consumer experience is not merely a reflection of the product or service acquired, but a complex construction of perceptions, emotions, identity, and social meaning. The contemporary consumer, as a co-creator of the brand, interacts continuously with technology, with other consumers, and with the consumption environment, shaping business practices and influencing market trends. Therefore, the study of consumer behavior is not limited to understanding individual decisions, but involves analyzing the interactions between the individual, society, technology, and culture, offering support for more humane, ethical, and sustainable marketing strategies.

In short, adopting a reflective attitude towards current consumer behavior implies recognizing the multiplicity of factors that influence purchasing decisions and the centrality of experience in value creation. Personalization, emotional experience, the influence of social networks, decision-making processes, and ethical and environmental dilemmas are interconnected in a dynamic and constantly transforming system. Organizations that manage to balance desire and responsibility, pleasure and purpose, technology and ethics will be better positioned to promote lasting value, strengthen relationships, and contribute to marketing that is not only efficient but also conscious, human, and sustainable.

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