

## **Consumer Behavior and Well-Being (CWB, CCT, TCR)**

### **Definition (short):**

Consumer Behavior & Well-Being studies how individuals, groups, and organizations choose, use, and dispose of goods and services, and how these processes are shaped by psychological, social, cultural, and contextual factors. It integrates insights from psychology, sociology, behavioral economics, and neuroscience to explain and predict how consumers adapt to dynamic, contested, and evolving marketplaces, informing more effective and responsible marketing strategies.

### **Definition (long):**

Consumer Behavior & Well-Being in marketing research refers to the interdisciplinary study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, purchase, use, and dispose of goods, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and desires, and how these processes are influenced by psychological, social, cultural, and contextual factors.

This domain integrates insights from psychology, sociology, behavioral economics, and neuroscience to explain and predict consumer decision-making, attitudes, motivations, perceptions, and emotions. In contemporary marketplaces, these processes are increasingly influenced by artificial intelligence, digital platforms, data infrastructures, and shifting regulatory and sociopolitical environments. This track emphasizes how consumers interact with evolving market systems. It also explores how firms can develop adaptive and responsible marketing strategies that foster engagement, trust, and well-being.

### **Sub-Research Track #1.1:**

#### **Consumer Well-being (CWB)**

### **Definition (short):**

Consumer Well-Being studies how consumption, marketing practices, and marketplace systems affect individuals' and communities' quality of life, happiness, and overall psychological, physical, financial, and social health. It explores how marketing influences subjective well-being, material security, fairness, sustainability, and long-term human flourishing beyond satisfaction and loyalty.

### **Definition (long):**

Consumer Well-Being in marketing research refers to the study of how consumption, marketplace interactions, and marketing practices influence the quality of life, happiness, and overall psychological, physical, financial and social health of individuals and communities. It extends beyond traditional outcome measures of satisfaction and loyalty to consider whether consumption experiences and marketing systems enhance or undermine human flourishing.

The domain integrates theories from psychology, sociology, public policy, and economics to examine the impact of marketing on subjective well-being (e.g., life satisfaction,

positive affect), material well-being (e.g., financial security), and societal well-being (e.g., fairness, sustainability). Research in this area investigates how marketing strategies, consumer choices, and changing marketplace contexts contribute to or detract from long-term well-being, equity, and collective welfare, while informing more adaptive, responsible, and resilient approaches to marketing in a world in flux.

### **Sub-Research Track #1.2:**

#### **Consumer Culture Theory (CCT)**

##### **Definition (short):**

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) examines how consumer practices, marketplace systems, and cultural meanings interact, focusing on how people use consumption to build identities, relationships, and ideologies. It emphasizes the sociocultural and symbolic dimensions of consumption, using qualitative and interpretive methods to reveal how culture shapes marketplace behaviors and experiences.

##### **Definition (long):**

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) is a theoretical tradition and research domain in marketing that examines the dynamic relationships between consumer actions, marketplace systems, and cultural meanings. Coined by Arnould & Thompson (2005), CCT encompasses a family of research perspectives that explore how consumption practices are shaped by cultural contexts and, in turn, how consumers use marketplace resources to construct identities, forge social relations, and negotiate ideologies.

Unlike purely psychological approaches, CCT emphasizes the sociocultural and symbolic dimensions of consumption, drawing from anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and critical theory. Methodologically, it often relies on qualitative and interpretive methods (ethnography, depth interviews, netnography), though increasingly integrated with mixed methods. Its primary aim is to illuminate the role of culture in shaping consumption practices, experiences, and marketplace dynamics in increasingly complex and contested environments.

### **Sub-Research Track #1.3:**

#### **Transformative Consumer Research (TCR)**

##### **Definition (short):**

Transformative Consumer Research (TCR) focuses on understanding and improving consumer and societal well-being by generating actionable insights to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. It applies consumer research to issues such as poverty, health, sustainability, and inclusion, aiming to advance human welfare beyond traditional marketplace behavior prediction.

**Definition (long):**

Transformative Consumer Research (TCR) is a research movement and domain within marketing and consumer research dedicated to understanding and improving consumer and societal well-being. Emerging from the mid-2000s (notably spearheaded by the Association for Consumer Research), TCR emphasizes the generation of insights that go beyond theoretical advancement to produce actionable knowledge for addressing pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges.

As a domain, TCR applies consumer research theories and methods to issues such as poverty, health, sustainability, inclusion, and marketplace justice. It is inherently interdisciplinary (drawing on psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, and public policy) and impact-oriented (seeking relevance for policymakers, nonprofits, and businesses). Unlike traditional consumer research, which often focuses on predicting consumer choice or explaining marketplace behavior, TCR explicitly frames its mission as advancing human well-being and alleviating suffering through research in an increasingly dynamic and contested world.