

CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS: A MARKETING APPROACH

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Abstract. *By innovativeness we mean the predisposition of a consumer to adopt a product earlier than most others. Various studies have shown that across product categories, innovators tend to be: opinion leaders, risk takers, more likely to obtain information from mass media than through word of mouth, open to new ideas and change, relatively young etc. Marketers want to identify the segment of the market that is most likely to adopt a new product when it is the first introduced. This article describes we ask some key questions about the nature of innovativeness and try to make a correlation between characteristics of the innovators and innovativeness.*

Keywords: innovativeness, new product, opinion leaders, risk takers.

1. Introduction

Launching new products and services on the market represents an important source of increasing the size of a business and the profits of a company. The success of introducing new products on the market is a critical issue of the current marketing programs. Most of the launched products become failure before they grow old (Crawford, 1977; Booz, Allen et al, 1982). According to some research studies (Booz, Allen et al, 1982), only one out of five new launched products are successful on the market, resulting an 80% failure rate. A different survey has revealed that, yearly, out of 5.000 products in supermarkets, only 80% of them proved to be successful on the market (Engel, Blackwell et al, 1990).

There are two research approaches concerning market penetration. The first one refers to the way the new products or ideas are spread on the market, which is called diffusion. Diffusion has become a research issue within the literature dedicated to consumer behavior in the second half of 1960s, the 20th century. There are mentioned studies drawn up by King, Robertson, Frank, Massy and Morisson, Silk (Gatignon, Robertson, 1985). As a result of studies concerning the dissemination of new technologies, products and services, the research studies on diffusion process have extended. Researchers have focused both on explaining the diffusion process and drawing up some models of the diffusion process. The second approach refers to adoption or to the decisional process which determines the consumer to accept or reject a new product or idea.

One can divide the academic interest and marketing practice concerning the market penetration of innovation into two separate levels: macroeconomic level and

microeconomic level. On the macroeconomic level the interest is focused on the fact that important resources allocated to manufacturing new products are wasted if consumers do not accept the new products. They may not be accepted because they are either inferior to the existing products, or marketing strategies were ineffective.

Regarding the macroeconomic level, the studies focused on market penetration of innovation underline the fact that companies have to influence the acceptance of the new products so that they should survive on the market and be profitable. The two concepts, *diffusion* and *adoption*, are connected to the two levels: microeconomic and macroeconomic. *Diffusion* is a macroeconomic concept and it refers to the spread of an innovation on the market by communication (mass media, sales assistants, opinion leaders or other members of a market segment) within a certain time. *Adoption* is a microeconomic concept and it refers to the stages the consumers go through before accepting the new products. This paper presents the innovation penetrating the market on the microeconomic level.

The literature about the adoption of innovation comprises two research directions. The first one, the dominant and traditional one, refers to the way the process of adoption takes place according to the features of the products, (Zaltman, 1973; Srivastava, Mahajan et al, 1985), specific features of the consumers, (Robertson, Zielinski et al, 1984; Bass, 1969) and the risks perceived by them (Ostlund, 1974; Roselius, 1984). The second research direction focuses on the consumers' opposition towards innovation (Gatignon, Robertson, 1991).

Innovation has different definitions. The most common one states that: „*innovation may be any idea or product, seen as new by the prospective consumers*” (Engel, Blackwell, Miniard, 1990).

The idea of novelty is relative and subjective. In the USA the Federal Commission of Commerce does not allow using the word “new” in advertising for products on the market in the first six months. New may be considered any product or idea perceived by the consumers as being new. Thus, a product that is new to a manufacturing or supplying company is not a novelty for the consumers. The research studies consider a product new taking into consideration the length of time the consumers have been familiarized with that certain product. Thus, a product is regarded as new if it has been purchased only by a small part of the prospective market, about 5% of the potential purchasers. Also, a product is regarded as new if it is on the market from a short period of time, that is, from three to six months.

2. Innovativeness wins in the marketing literature

2. 1. The concept of innovativeness in the marketing literature

Speaking about innovativeness, Hirschman (1980) underlined that: „*innovativeness is one of the few concepts that is so important to the consumer behavior. The consumer's tendency to adopt new products, ideas, goods or services,*

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plays an important role of the theories concerning brand loyalty, decision making, preferences and communication. From the personal point of view, each consumer is, generally speaking, an innovator, each of us adopting some goods or ideas regarded as new by us through our lives."

Two theories have been formulated regarding innovativeness. The first one, belonging to Rogers and Shoemaker (1971, p. 27) underlines the fact that *innovativeness* represents „*the degree a person may be the first one who adopts innovation compared to the other members of the social system they belong to.*” The substantial contribution to the clarifying of the innovativeness concept is that it depends on the notion of *innovation* regarded as „*an idea, a practice or an object, seen as new by the each person.*” Although each consumer has different perceptions of novelty, the authors claim that the diversity of novelty perception is connected to the cognitive origins of innovativeness.

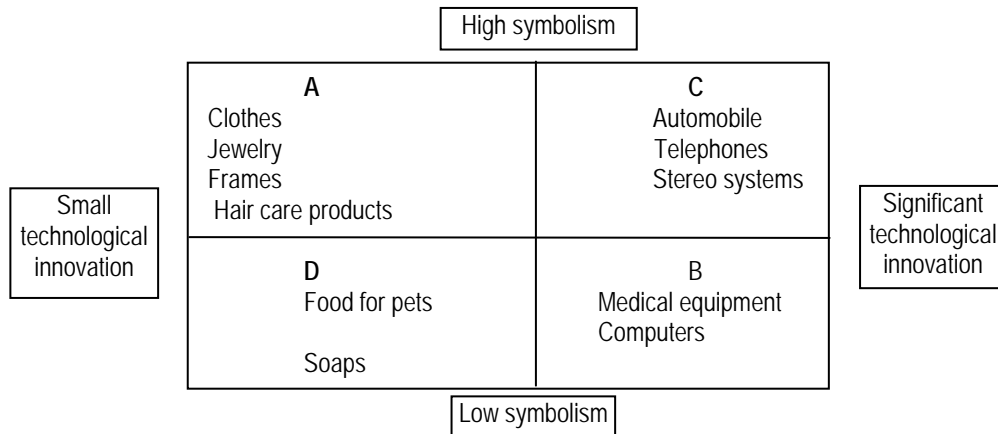
The second theory shows that innovativeness represents: „*the degree a person is receptive to new ideas and decides to adopt them regardless the other persons' experiences*” (Midgley, Dowling, 1978). Regarded from this point of view, innovativeness is a set of personality traits owned, more or less, by all consumers.

The purpose of many studies concerning this topic is to use innovativeness in market segmentation, to divide the market into innovators and non-innovators. The purpose of these studies is their applicability in marketing, emphasizing the following aspects:

- It is important to identify the innovators, because they influence the success or failure of new products and their diffusion rate;
- Allow to identify the target of marketing actions;
- Allow to set up marketing actions aimed to different targets according to their innovativeness level:
 - adopting decisions concerning advertising-advertising means, themes of messages, argumentation used, messages styles;
 - adopting decisions concerning prices, promotional actions according to prices, risk acceptance (instalments sales);
 - adopting decisions concerning distribution–choosing stores to first sell the products and the future evolution of market coverage.

Hirschman (1981) shows that encouraging innovativeness depends on two dimensions of innovation: *symbolic dimension* and *technological dimension*. The symbolic innovation refers to social meanings that have not previously existed. The technological innovation has tangible characteristics, which have not been previously identified. Trying to classify the dimensions of innovation, Hirschman divides products into four categories (figure 1). As mentioned in the above figure, the technological innovation has a high financial cost, whereas the social cost is quite low. The relative advantage of symbolic innovation depends on the consumers' desire to spread a new image within their social environment. Hirschman shows that the technological innovation is, mostly, a discontinuous innovation, and it is highly unlikely to meet consumer's customs and experiences. The symbolic innovation is,

generally speaking, a continuous innovation, dynamic or continuous. The technological innovation is less understood by consumers than the symbolic one because of its discontinuous character. Having low costs, the symbolic innovation is more accessible to consumers. Due to their social function, they are also easier to be noticed by consumers.



Source: Dickerson, Gentry, 1983, p. 226.

Figure 1. Classification of innovation by Elisabeth Hirschman (1981)

Innovativeness is a latent feature materialized in consumer's preference for novelty and uncommon experiences (Venkatraman, 1991). At the basic level, this preference motivates consumers to look for new, intellectually or emotionally challenges. Thus, the author identifies two types of innovativeness: *cognitive* and *sensorial*. *Cognitive innovativeness* refers to consumer's tendency to think, to rationalize, and to solve problems or other mental exercises. The consumer is looking for new experiences that may stimulate these mental activities. *Sensorial innovativeness* refers to consumer's preferences for experiences that may stimulate their senses. Some consumers prefer cognitive stimulation, others sensorial one, whereas other consumers are looking for both. Considering this statement, innovators may be divided into cognitive innovators, having strong preferences for new mental activities, and sensorial innovators, having strong preferences for new sensorial experiences. It is thought that there is a positive significant ratio between both cognitive and sensorial innovativeness and the purchase of new products. Hirschman (1984), quoted by Venkatraman (1991), shows that *cognitive innovators are drawn by the functional and practical characteristics of the new products, which may solve their consumption problems*, whereas *sensorial innovators are drawn by the products hedonistic function*. As opposed to the previous statement, Venkatraman and Mc Innis (1985) state that the *cognitive and sensorial innovators are not that different regarding their tendency to purchase new products for their functional or hedonistic characteristic*. Still, they have found a positive significant ratio between the type of innovativeness

and the purchasing motivation. These authors state that the two kinds of innovators adopt their purchasing decision differently.

Thus, sensorial innovators prefer new things, are tolerant towards risk and satisfy their needs without a rational evaluation. Venkatraman and Price (1990) underline that sensorial innovators prefer visual processing over a verbal processing. To sensorial innovators it is of importance the relative advantage of innovation. Due to the fact that they are tolerant towards risk, the hedonistic risk does not interfere with adopting the innovation.

To cognitive innovators the novelty of innovation is also important. They prefer processing the information verbally, establishing ratios between causes and effects. That is why, it is important to this type of innovators the relative advantage of the product, which is utterly evaluated. Unlike the sensorial innovators, they have a low tolerance towards risk, and that is why the hedonistic risk has a negative impact on adopting the innovation. Being used to evaluate the products utterly, the financial risk, functional risk and complexity degree do not influence adopting decisions.

2.2. Approaches concerning correlation between behavioral variables and innovativeness

2.2.1. Innovativeness and consumer personality

Research studies on innovation adoption process and innovativeness have developed various profiles of innovators. Most of these studies have emphasized a similar conclusion, i.e.; there is a general portrait of the innovator, if we refer to discontinuous innovation. The persons adopting the first discontinuous innovations-personal computers, video recorders, electronic payments-have the following features:

- they are opinion leaders;
- they are tolerant toward risks;
- they are oriented from inside and independent from the norms of the belonging group;
- they prefer getting informed by mass media and are less interested in non-commercial sources such as oral communication or interpersonal relationships of the belonging group;
- they are open to new ideas and changes;
- they are cosmopolites;
- they have a higher socio-economic standard (high income, higher education).

Since the middle of the 20th century there have been interests in identifying the innovator's profile and finding out reasons why consumers are receptive to innovation. Mainly, the first research studies have focused on consumer's personality traits; that is they have identified the internal factors as being essential to

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innovativeness. For instance, Barnett has shown, since 1941 that innovators were inadaptable, frustrated and unappreciated (Dickerson, Gentry, 1983).

Later studies have also identified other influencing factors, divided into three categories:

- personal factors-demographic, social characteristics and personality traits;
- factors concerning social and cultural environment;
- situational factors.

Marketing literature and the empirical studies have established correlations between innovativeness and various personality traits and consumer behavior. Thus, we can underline the following correlations:

1. Innovativeness is correlated with consumer's attitudes and consumption acts based on internal norms and standards or on the standards/norms of the belonging social environment. That is, consumers may or may not depend on the social environment they belong to (Assael, 1992);
2. Innovativeness is negatively correlated with dogmatism;
3. Innovativeness is correlated with behaviors such as looking for novelty and creativity, the need for knowledge and need for change (Wood and Swait, 2002);
4. Innovators when referring to symbolic innovations (men's clothing) are more impulsive, narcissistic, exhibitionist than the non-innovators (Baumgarten, 1975).

From the empirical studies one can draw the conclusion that innovators are most likely consumers who are purchasing according to their own standards. Consumers influenced in their purchasing and consumption process by the consumption patterns adopted by other persons are considered innovators to a lesser extent. Innovators are also less dogmatic than non innovators. The dogmatism refers to perception of emotions such as fear or anxiety. Dogmatic consumers are considered narrow-minded; they are not tolerant toward risks and reluctant to changes. Narrow-minded are those consumers with a low tolerance toward risk, consider only a few purchasing alternatives, by using this decisional pattern trying to minimize the probability of adopting an unsatisfying decision. The personality trait which enables identifying this segment is known as „*class horizon*”.

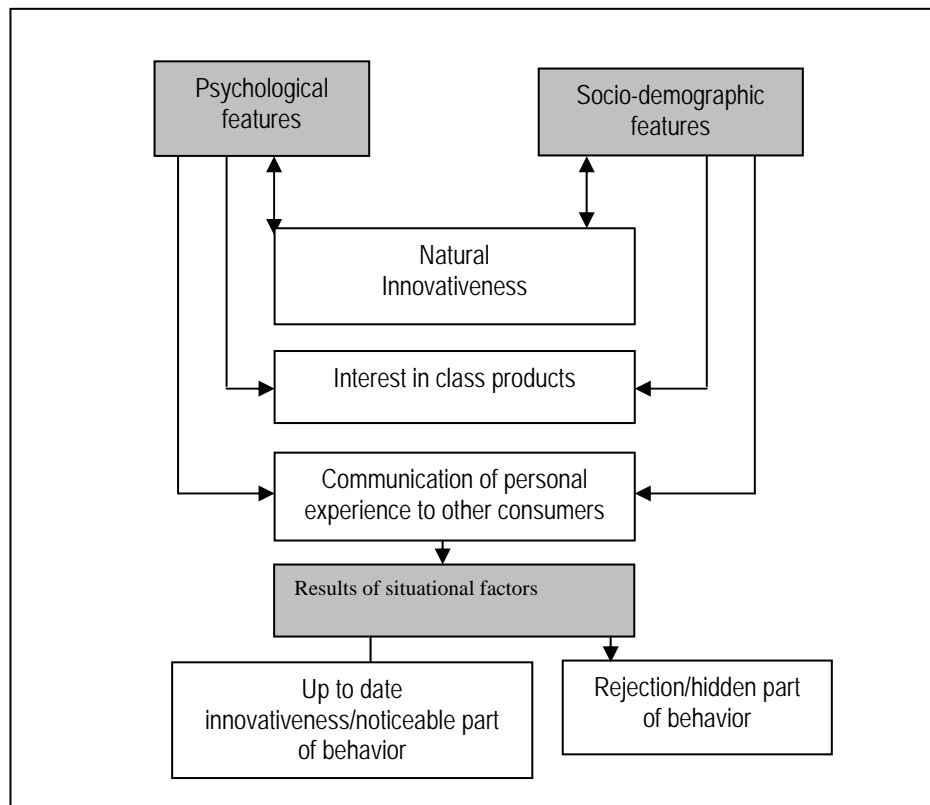
Searching for novelty is associated with an inner motivation which makes the consumer look for new information (Cattel, 1975; Hirschman, 1980). Searching for novelty means considering two correlated aspects. The first one, which is prevalent in physiological studies, refers to searching for new and divergent information compared to the information already acquired in one's memory. The second one refers to choosing different alternatives from the already known stimuli, by changing for instance the purchased brands. This aspect is known as searching for variety. By stimuli alternation, consumers avoid becoming tired or bored, but it does not influence data collection. Flavell (1977) has underlined that each consumer is engaged, since childhood, in searching for novelty. According to the carried out experiments, having

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to choose out of two equal stimuli, a familiar and an unknown one, a child will choose the new stimulus. Thus, the search for novelty is a natural tendency to finding out new information. A possible explanation might be the fact that this is a way of preservation, consumer setting up a useful „data base”. Another explanation might be the fact that it is a function that enables the development of the ability to solve the consumption issues. Consumers are looking for appropriate information translated into products and consumption state in their attempt to get performances and expected advantages. The search for novelty is positively correlated with innovativeness; the consumers willing to look for novelty are very open to innovativeness.

Hirschman defines the concept of creativity and establishes connections between creativity and innovativeness. According to the author, *creativity* is „*the ability of an individual to solve problems, in this case, referring to creativity used in solving consumption problems. Creativity is an important factor for the consumer to understand his environment.*” Consumer’s creativity is the result of the process of cognitive, hierarchical development, defined by Piaget (1972), and extended by Flavell (1977; Dasen, 1974). Consumer is taught to understand two main concepts: products and consumption acts. The more complex the consumer’s role is nowadays, the more important creativity becomes to reach the targeted performances. The importance of consumer’s role lies in the increasing number of products and brands on the market, the excessive information one obtains. Consumer’s creativity is developed due to two sources: (1) the powerful inter conceptual product networks and (2) the set of consumption acts stored in their memory as scenarios. Inter conceptual networks refer to the stored correlations between data regarding products and their characteristics. *Scenarios* are procedures stored in the memory by consumers in order to resume and use them later. According to this author, the higher the creativity level is, the more innovative a consumer become. The author focuses on the following assumptions:

- It is most likely an innovation to be adopted if the cognitive effort of understanding the concept is not very intense;
- Understanding the new product concept predates its adoption;
- If the new product is very different to the current one, then it takes a greater cognitive effort in understanding the new one;
- The more creative the consumer is, the more capable of identifying the common characteristics one becomes;
- The more creative the consumer is, the less cognitive effort is taken to understand the new concept;
- If the consumer is more capable of discerning the similarities and differences between the current products and the new ones, then he will become more able to evaluate the alternatives and choose the best variant. Thus, the consumer is able to appreciate if the innovation is better than the already existing products and the chance of adopting innovation is higher.



Source: adapted by Midgley, Dowling, 1978, p. 230

Figure 2. Consumer innovativeness model

It has been set a different correlation between innovativeness and cognitive style. The cognitive style reflects consumer's intellectual ability, their perceptual and behavioral characteristics (Citrin, Sprott et al, 2000). The authors distinguish general innovativeness, which is a consequence of consumer's cognitive style of his personality traits, from specific innovativeness, which might be different according to the product. The cognitive style influences the way a consumer could react toward new products and experiences and his desire to communicate within the reference group. Consumers open to innovations are also open to new experiences, in fact, they are looking for them. They use the received information positively and have the ability to admit the purpose of them.

Foxall and Haskins have studied the relation between innovativeness and cognitive style differently according to innovation continuity or discontinuity. The research study has focused on Kirton scale (*Kirton Adaptation-Innovation Inventory*),

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taking into consideration 13 food product brands. Summarizing the findings of 20 surveys on cognitive style, the two authors have stated: „*what is emerging then is a fuller picture of the personality characteristics of the adaptor-innovator styles of cognitive process. The innovator tend to be more extrovert, less dogmatic, more tolerant of the ambiguity, more radical, more flexible, more creatively motivate, more creatively, self-perceptive, more assertive, expedient, self-assured, undisciplined, independent and sensation-seeking than adaptor; with more self-esteem, liable to risk – taking, needing (and liking) less structure, and is more spontaneous. The adaptor is more controlled, less stimulating, more steady, reliable, prudent and probably more often seen as right and dependable, better able to fit into teams, get on with authority, be sensitive to policy and mores; be more realistic, efficient and orderly. Neither type (extreme) is likely to be any more or less neurotic, more or less likely to reach high position (except in conditions unfavourable to type) be more less intelligent, resourceful, original, creative and generally regarded in wordly terms as succesfull*” (Foxall, Haskins, 2001, p. 67).

The cognitive style is associated with various patterns of solving consumption issues and adopting decisions (Goldsmith, 1984). The authors drew the conclusion that the cognitive style explains consumer’s tendency to adopt innovations. According to Goldsmith, starting from the cognitive style one can distinguish two classes of consumers. The first class is made up of consumers who solve consumption issues by choosing the best solution out of the existing ones. They solve the new problems and consumption issues using already known solutions or methods. The second class comprises consumers searching for new, unknown solutions in order to solve consumption problems. The author defines these consumers as innovators.

Personality traits and innovativeness can be noticed in table no. 1.

Table 1

Correlations between personality traits and innovativeness

Personality trait	Correlation direction	Percentage of correlation research %
Dogmatism	Negative	47
Rationality	Positive	79
Intelligence	Positive	100
Positive attitude toward changes	Positive	75
Ability to face uncertainty	Positive	73
Fatalism	Negative	82
Motivation for achievement	Positive	61
Strong aspiration to education, higher professional position	Positive	74

Source: Engel, Blackwell et al., 1990, p. 710.

2.2.2. Innovativeness and consumer's demographic, social and economic characteristics

The empirical studies have identified correlations between innovativeness and consumer's demographic, social and economic characteristics. Consumers who adopt innovation have graduated from university, they have good jobs, a higher living standard and higher income (Plummer, 1981; Robertson, 1971; LaBay and Kinnear, 1981). The higher income is linked to the consciousness of low financial risks because the innovation price represents a low percentage of the consumer's available income. Higher education is linked to a better understanding of the innovation performances and to the understanding of its low complexity. The empirical studies have also shown that innovators are young people, underling examples of innovations such as bank cards, answering machines, communication and IT. These findings contradict the results of Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) who have stated that older consumers tend to adopt first the innovation. This disagreement may be explained by the type of the product: complex innovations, implying a higher financial risk, are adopted by consumers with higher income and a better social status. All these are reached at an older age. On the contrary, technological innovations, which are not implying a high financial risk, are more likely to be adopted by younger consumers.

2.2.3. Innovativeness and cultural values

The correlation between innovativeness and cultural values of a market has been the topic of many research studies. Thus, culture is seen a diffusion factor of the Internet and IT (Maitland, 1998; Goodman, 1984; Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Herbig, 1997). In some surveys, the characteristics of national cultures are seen as consequences of technological development and economic success. Other surveys focus on the effects technological communication is having on culture: changing the social structure, communication standards or establishing new standards. Maitland (1998) states that, although culture is a social variable, it surely influences personal behavior. Culture is seen as a mediator between human nature, which is universal, and personality, particular to each person. It is personality that shows us how consumer is receptive to cultural standards. The survey carried out by Maitland uses cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede: individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, long/short term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance.

Maitland draws two opposite conclusions based on Hofstede's description of individualism-collectivism dimension. Maitland's theories refer to the influence individualism-collectivism cultural value is having on diffusion of communication technologies and innovativeness. Firstly, individualism is connected to the size of gross domestic product particular to each country. This cause-effect relationship indicates a positive correlation between individualism and innovation diffusion, respectively innovativeness. Secondly, collectivism indicates a higher tendency to interpersonal communication and sustains the development of communication skills.

Table 2

Correlations between innovativeness and consumer’s demographic, economic and social characteristics

	Correlation direction	Percentage of correlation research %
Education	Positive	74
Superior social status	Positive	68
Social mobility	Positive	100
Size of consumption unit	Positive	67
Economic commercial direction, rather than subsistence	Positive	71
Positive attitude towards credit	Positive	76

Source: *Engel, Blackwel et al., p. 710.*

Masculine cultures are characterized by clearly delineating the role of two genders within society. In feminine cultures these roles are overlapping. Although it can hardly be established any connection between this cultural dimension and innovativeness, Maitland has developed two theses. The first thesis underlines the fact that in feminine cultures innovation is spread more rapidly because these cultures tend to give people access to information. The second thesis states that competition, one feature of masculine cultures, leads to an earlier adoption of innovation.

The relationship between term orientation and innovativeness is quite ambiguous. Markets dominated by long-term orientation are made up of individuals who obey their duties and social status. They are characterized by their tendency of saving. The tendency to save money is, hypothetically, linked to acquiring greater resources which can be invested in communication technology development. The short-term orientation cultures are characterized by obeying the norms and social responsibilities and lower tendency of saving. Thus, one can claim that within this cultures people tend to invest their money in communication technology.

Uncertainty avoidance is the cultural dimension which is greatly connected to innovation and innovativeness diffusion. Uncertainty avoidance is associated with fear towards risky, uncertain situations. In cultures with a low degree of uncertainty avoidance, consumers are tolerant with different situations and also with innovations. Markets dominated by strong uncertainty avoidance, consumers fear new, unusual situations. In conclusion, markets with low uncertainty avoidance are characterized by a higher innovativeness than strong uncertainty avoidance markets where the sense of security is more important.

Another cultural dimension correlated with innovativeness and innovation diffusion rate is ethnocentrism (Maitland, 1998). Markets with a low degree of ethnocentrism tend to accept ideas and practices specific to a different culture, leading to higher degree of innovativeness. This means that on these markets the rate of innovation diffusion is higher.

Dwyer, Mesak et al, (1999) have a different approach of correlation between cultural values and innovation diffusion. They claim that cultural values particular to each national market may explain to a certain extent the changes recorded for new products rate of diffusion. The national culture, a common mental programming, is one of the main factors that can make the difference between consumers of one country from consumers of another one. The values taken into consideration by the authors of this research are: risk-security, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, power distance, long-term orientation. The research has been focused on the diffusion of seven technological innovations from 13 European countries. It is important to specify the type of innovations because we tend to believe that taking into consideration the symbolic innovations would have changed the research conclusions.

Risk-security dimension or uncertainty avoidance refers to the degree members of a certain culture fear uncertain, unknown situations. High uncertainty avoidance cultures have a low tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, consumers of these cultures wish for variety in their life. The functional features of technological innovation are new and they can hardly be compared to the products consumers have used. Thus, prospective adopters, especially those of high uncertainty avoidance cultures, are not certain about the benefits of new products and consequently delay their purchasing decision. Hofstede has shown that, consumers of high uncertainty avoidance markets, who take greater risks, adopt easier technological innovation such as the Internet compared to consumers who have lower tolerance for risks. In cultures with high tolerance for risk, new launched products are adopted sooner. A high degree of uncertainty avoidance also refers to resistance to innovation. Consumers having a high tolerance for risk are more receptive to innovations than those with a low tolerance for risk.

Individualism-collectivism focuses on the interests of the individual versus those of the group. Collectivist cultures facilitate communication, because they encourage strong group relationships, loyalty, trust and conformism. A greater communication efficacy leads to a higher diffusion rate of innovation in collectivist cultures compared to individualist ones. The respect granted to the opinions of the other members of the group leads to an easier acceptance of innovation in collectivist cultures. Once the new product has been accepted by the group, then the component members obey the general opinion. On the other hand, in individualist cultures consumers cannot be influenced by the other members' behavior. Although we accept the above statements, we have to underline the following. Diffusion rate is different by innovativeness. If diffusion rate refers to the rate of innovation spread within a market segment, then innovativeness refers to the ability of an individual to adopt first an innovation. Starting from this conceptual distinction, we can say that individualism is positively correlated with innovativeness, whereas collectivism is positively correlated with the rate of innovation diffusion. Consumers of individualist markets have their own standards, judging the products according to the advantages which they offer compared to already existing products, compatibility with their own life style, values

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and attitudes. They are those consumers ready to take the risk when purchasing new products.

Masculinity-femininity focuses on the stereotypes concerning the traditional gender roles. In masculine cultures the gender roles are clearly separated, whereas in feminine cultures the distinction is not that clear. Masculine cultures value competitiveness, ambition, professional career, accumulation of material possessions translated into success, rewards are based on performances. Feminine cultures place more value on equality, modesty, relationships and quality of life. The materialistic nature of masculine cultures suggests that material possessions, especially new products, are highly appreciated. In conclusion, according to the three authors, there is a positive correlation between masculinity and the diffusion rate of innovation.

Power distance refers to the extent to which less powerful members of organizations accept that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 2001). It measures the social inequality degree accepted by a society. Low power distance cultures see inequality as hardly desirable. That is why people do not tend to show the symbols of power, including those regarding consumption and purchasing behavior. In high power distance cultures the state's visible symbols, including purchasing of goods and services, give authority to those who own them. That is the reason why consumers are tempted to purchase new goods and services trying to show off their power and social status. In these cultures, less influential consumers depend on the powerful ones, and opinion leaders influence the innovation diffusion. Consumers of high power distance cultures trust mass media more and that is why they take more into consideration advertising messages providing information about new products. The conclusion of this research is that power distance is positively correlated with the diffusion rate of technological innovation.

Time orientation is the cultural dimension describing a consumer's time horizon he/she expects to get results. Short-term oriented cultures value traditions and obtaining results rapidly. Consumers are oriented to past and present, are sensitive to normative statements, and personal steadiness and stability, material possessions. Long-term oriented consumers tend to save more; expect to obtain results within a longer period of time. The conclusion is that this cultural dimension is negatively correlated with the diffusion rate of technological innovation.

Finding correlations between cultural dimensions and innovation receptiveness involves also setting of organizational marketing strategies and techniques. The first application is a strategic one, the conclusions of the survey establishing the place and order of launching technological innovation. Thus, to the companies planning to launch their goods on several markets it is recommended to choose first collectivist markets (Indonesia, South Korea), short-term oriented markets (the Philippines, Great Britain, USA), masculine cultures (Austria, Italy, Japan) and also high-power distance markets (Malaysia, France, Mexico). The problem is that none of these countries have all cultural dimensions facilitating an easier market penetration of technological innovation, but some of them rank two or three researched cultural dimensions.

The survey also has tactical applications on organization's marketing practice, mainly on marketing communication. Thus, on collectivist markets communication efforts are focused on opinion leaders. Targeting opinion leaders gives organizations the chance to benefit of a quick verbal communication, of reactions determined by group influence and their tendency to imitate certain behavior. Advertising messages include topics about the advantages of goods connected to groups. On the other hand, the advertising messages of individualist markets focus on the idea of individual consumption, underline competition and rewards are got by work and ambition.

On masculine markets advertising messages emphasize the products' material advantages and their status. On feminine markets advertising messages emphasize the power of interpersonal relationships, goods are associated with the idea of social responsibility. On high power distance markets, advertising campaigns target mainly higher social classes, supposing that they are opinion leaders and their behavior will be imitated by the other consumers. The second campaign target consumers with lower financial power in order to increase their need of being similar to those of the first group. Low power distance cultures value the concept of equality and community, the status of those who own goods is being reduced. On the short-term oriented markets, advertising emphasize ostentatious consumption, underlines the social status thorough consumption, and immediate satisfaction. On the other hand, long-term oriented markets value moderation, the quality of goods, and advertising messages underline the warranty the companies grant to the consumer when purchasing goods and services.

3. Conclusions and future research directions

The conclusions drawn from the synthesis of marketing literature on consumer innovativeness provide the ideas for a future empiric study. The main findings of this literature magazine on the subject of the present article are that:

- There is a general profile of innovators in discontinuous innovations.
- No general portrait of innovators in continuous innovation and dynamic continuous innovations could be identified.
- There are two dimensions to innovations: a technological and a symbolic one and they have effects on innovativeness.
- The education level influences the innovativeness.
- The income levels affect consumer receptivity to innovation.
- Age has different influences on innovativeness depending on the selling price of the new product.
- There is a correlation between personality traits and consumer innovativeness. The main personality traits that have been identified as causes of innovativeness are: dogmatism, risk tolerance, autonomy, cognitive style, the inclination to seek novelty/variety.

- The private or public nature of consumption is correlated with innovativeness.
- Innovativeness correlates positively or negatively with certain cultural values.

Our future efforts will be focused on other aspects concerning the process of new products adoption and innovativeness, such as: measuring consumer innovativeness; the influence of reference groups, opinion leaders and oral communication on new products diffusion; the connection between the elements of innovativeness the practice of marketing communication, with focus on advertising and sales promotion; carrying out empirical studies concerning adoption of new goods and services, e-banking, IT, payments made with bank cards, education etc.

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