Unit II Journal & Case Study

[Name of the Writer]

[Name of the Institution]

**Journal Entry**

Cultural and social values profoundly impact the buying behavior of an individual. Culture is the amalgamation of values, beliefs, attitudes, religion, role, hierarchies and many other things. Thinking of my buying behavior, many cultural and social factors influence it. For instance, my community and gathering influence me to look good and presentable, like all other American girls, I invest in makeup and beauty products which make me feel good about myself. In addition, I also invest in skin care products and fashion products such as shoes, clothes, etc. I also believe that looking is essential to build one's self-esteem and positive body image. We live in a society where appearance matters highly and therefore it influences me in all the ways. I also shop from high-end brands and also seek to take advantage of many sales such as Christmas and Thanksgiving.

I generally do not like to take everyone’s opinion and I always buy as per my own choice. It is very common for all the Americans to buy online and free themselves from the hassle of going shopping. I also prefer shopping online because I do not get ample time to do this stuff. I have also observed that my friends and peers also impact my shopping choices and behavior. I take an interest in the products and shopping choices of my friends and peers. I also prefer to buy from the brands I trust and love, however, I also like giving a try to the new brands and products, but this happens seldom. Social media influencers and advertisements also make me buy some products which I do not really need. Overall, my close friends, peers, social media influencers, somehow family, eating habits and cultural norms influence by purchasing behavior.

**Case Study**

One of the recent purchases that I made, the most expensive one is my phone upgrade to iPhone XS from my iPhone 8 plus. I have been thinking of upgrading my device for quite a long time and iPhone X was a great phone to switch to. I have always been a fan of Apple's products and stick to this brand when it comes to getting a tech-based product whether it's a laptop, tablet, accessories and mobile phone. Apple is the most trusted brand in the US and I never regret buying it.

The consumer buying decision process begins with a problem or needs recognition when the consumer realizes that there is a need which has to be satisfied or there is a problem which seeks a solution. To satisfy the need, consumers' starts looking for information that what products or services can really satisfy the need. After that, the next step is to identify the alternatives available. A comparison and analysis are made to weigh benefits and costs attached to those alternatives. The next step is making the choice from those alternatives and the last step in the consumer buying process is the post-purchase behavior which involves the decision if the product was good or not. It is also possible that a consumer may skip a step from the decision-making process (Panwar, Anand, Ali, & Singal, 2019).

My decision of upgrading my mobile model was not really the outcome of a need. My previous mobile was working perfectly fine however Apple's launch of iPhone X was a stimulus which made me realize that I must upgrade to make use of new features, a better camera, and a faster processor. Apple's iPhone X was the new craze and it got immense popularity. I had to upgrade to the new model. I searched for information about it on online sources and got in love with the new design and features. I did not need to evaluate between the alternatives because I made my choice of the product earlier, however, if I would have just decided to upgrade, I might have evaluated different alternatives to choose the best option. After I made the decision of getting an iPhone XS, I went online and made a purchase. My post purchase behavior is my satisfaction towards the product.

Values and norms of culture have a high impact on buying decisions and behaviors. Americans having less long-term orientation does not make a high comparison of product and price, which is also a factor towards the preference of online shopping in the US. In addition, Americans being an individualistic society, the decision and buying choices are not highly influenced by the opinions of others. The US holds a low score in uncertainty avoidance and there is more acceptance towards new products, technologies, and ideas. Uncertainty avoidance is, therefore, one of the most influential cultural value in online-shopping in America (Wu, 2013).

These values and norms within American culture influenced by purchase behavior. I did not take the opinion of others in making the buying decision and it was entirely my own choice to buy the latest upgrade of the iPhone. In addition, being an American and from a culture having low long-term orientation I did make a high price and product comparison and therefore I was also not very price conscious as opposed to the cultures having a high long-term orientation (Meng. 2011). I wanted to try this new product introduced by Apple, which is always a craze not only in America but also in most of the countries, but the American society is high into technological adoption (Stafford, Turan, & Raisinghani, 2004). There is a common culture of trying products in America and not making the purchase decision solely on need factor. All these cultural influences also made me purchase iPhone online to experience technological advancement.

Apple is one of the socially responsible companies and its products and services have developed trust among its users. Apple's users are very loyal to the brand due to the prestige associated with its brand name and the quality of its products. Apple took several initiatives to ensure it fulfills the corporate social responsibilities the company has towards its environment, community, and people. While buying a technology product consideration of social responsibility was not the primary aspect but the value brand and product offers. Apple has always been loved by me and since the company has not yet accused of any unethical activity or behavior. However, if any such incident occurs in the future, it may impact my buying choice and make me consider other options available in the market. Until that Apple will remain my best choice and I will remain loyal to the brand.

I am a loyal customer of Apple and have been using the iPhone ever since I started keeping a smartphone. Though Apple charges high value for their products since it offers value for money, the price has never the consideration made by me. As soon as I am able to update my device and I have enough budget I go for it. Cultural and social influences also make me buy an iPhone. I want to keep the latest edition to depict myself as up to date and contemporary. However, if the brand starts to charge insane, the price may have supersede cultural influences and the aspect of environmental advocacy. Overall, Apple is one of the top brands, having high goodwill and reputation for offering the latest technology and features in their device, offering value for money and at the same time it is a socially responsible company which will make me keep purchasing its upgrades.

**References**

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