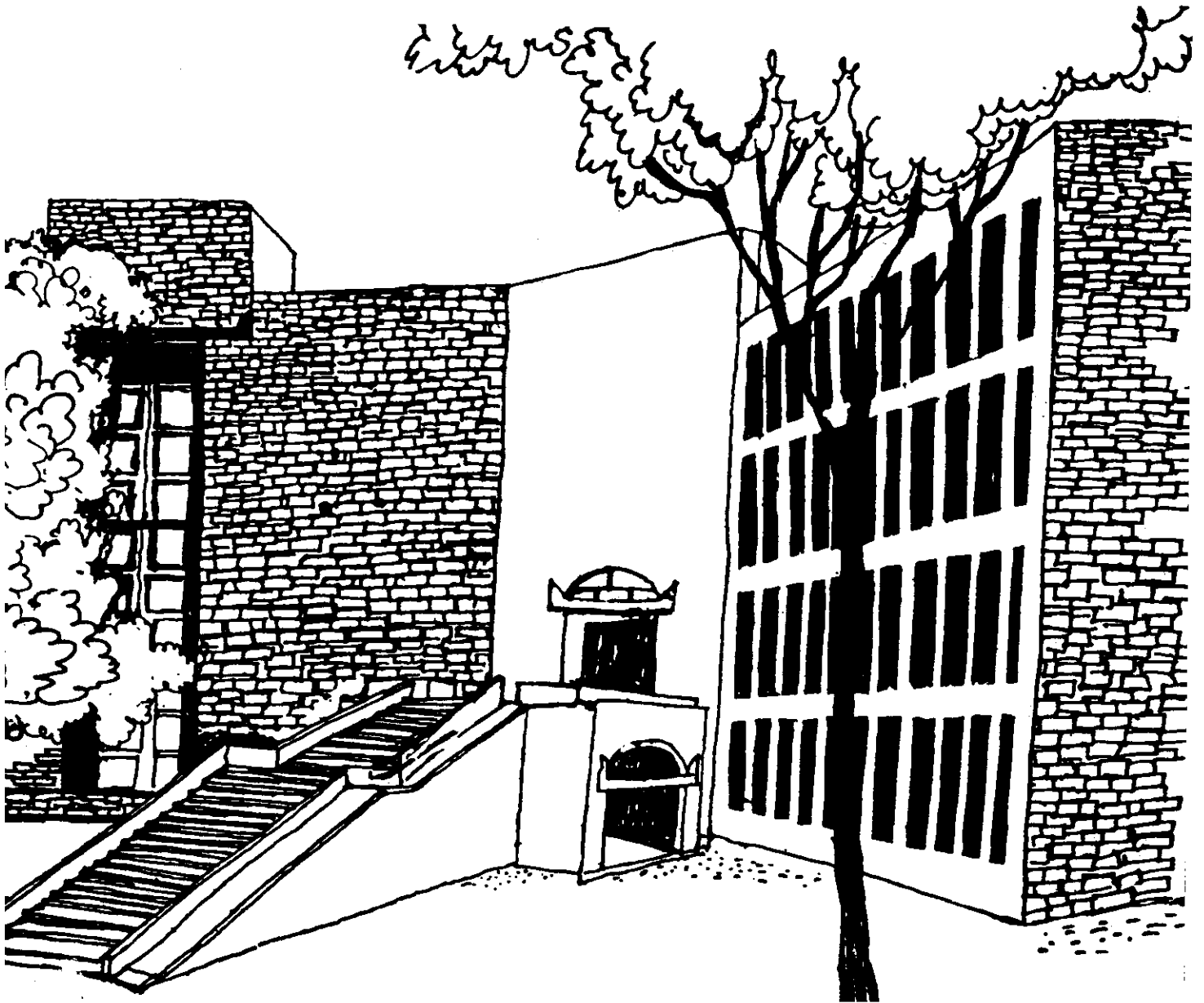




Working Paper



INFLUENCING SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:
SEGMENT SPECIFICATION AND
FORMULATION OF AD STRATEGY

By

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Influencing Social Behaviour: Segment Specification and Formulation of Ad Strategy

The concepts of 'universal product' and 'average consumer' rarely work in marketing unless the market is perfectly homogeneous. The primary consideration in segment identification is getting the desired response to marketing inputs at the firm's disposal uniformly across all individuals within the segment. This requires understanding of the segment on certain parameters termed as descriptors, predictors, or more familiarly bases. The bases should be discriminating, highlighting various market patterns and consumer needs.

Segments should neither be too broad to render decision on marketing-mix difficult (actionability) nor be too narrow to be rejected on account of substantiality and thereby lead to loss of market opportunities. Thus, segments derived from demographic base would be too broad for a product trying to satisfy relaxation or leisure. The segments need to be further specified on the basis of life style and profession. Hence, sharpening of segments becomes essential. Any segment would, therefore, contain subsegments. Again for products such as securities, psychographics may yield too narrow segments and designing a product satisfying the generic need of security will be difficult.

Bases vary with decisions. Some of the commonly used bases are indicated in the literature (Wind, 1978; Kotler 1987). While the bases for product, price and place, can be objectively

measured, those for promotion are often inferred. Thus if attributes provide base for product, price-sensitivity for price, and location, store size or store loyalty for distribution, all measurable, lifestyle, attitude and perception, which often provide bases for promotion, have to be inferred.

To overcome the complexities arising from various alternative decisions and bases, the marketer evolves for himself criteria spelt out in terms of reach, cost of reach, size, etc., to select from the possible segment options. The other influencing factors are availability of information, the firm's objectives, and the criticality of decision (where cost of wrong decision is very high). Many other characteristics such as stability, amenability, and actionability have been used to screen the segments.

Two broad approaches, apriori and post hoc (Wind 1978), have been used for segmentation. The apriori approach is based on apriori chosen dimensions or bases such as brand loyalty, usership pattern, customer characteristics, etc. The post hoc approach uses clustering on relevant attributes, such as prompt service and delivery, and identifies the important bases on the basis of clusters. Benefit and psychographic segmentation are examples of post hoc segmentation.

To a marketer, identification of homogeneous groups or segments alone is not sufficient. The marketing inputs planned by him should evoke the desired response or behaviour from the selected segment. The chances of success of marketing inputs, however,

Factors that influence attitude and bring about social change are reference groups, change agents, or innovative segments. Identification of the initial or the most amenable segment is a critical decision, for this segment may influence others. The thought processes of this innovative segment are also expected to be different from other segments. In such a context the following marketing problems arise: by (i) How to segment? (ii) How to sharpen the segment for targeting? (iii) What should be emphasized in communication to influence attitude and induce behaviour? In other words, how to make the message acceptable to the consumer?

Purpose of the Study

The present study addresses itself to the above problems and attempts to develop an advertising strategy suggesting message elements and an execution framework with reference to conservation and cleanliness.

The importance of conservation in view of scarce and depleted resources, specifically fuel, food, and forests, needs hardly any emphasis. Developing consciousness for cleanliness or clean habits should logically result in less health hazards and hence avoid unnecessary expenses at both individual and national level.

Related Work

Kotler and Zaltman (1971) have examined some of the decision problems in their study on social changes. The product, an idea, is intangible. Price must take into account the money cost, the energy cost, the opportunity cost, and the psychic cost. Like

any commercial product, social marketing requires an integrated marketing approach. Family planning has been used as an illustration.

Sheth and Frazier (1982) address the problems of segment selection as well as strategy formulation. Based on the concept of attitude-behaviour consistency/discrepancy the segments are obtained on the basis of attitude (positive and negative) and behaviour (engaged and not engaged) to yield (2x2) broad segments. Strategies are developed for each cell. The strategy of reinforcement (reward, recognition) is recommended for the positively oriented segment, i.e. positive attitude and behaviour, and confrontation (mandatory rules, clinical counselling) for the negatively oriented segment, i.e. negative attitude and behaviour. For those engaged in behaviour but with negative attitude, rationalization (reinforcing appeals "doing the right things") and attitude change (education, propaganda) have been suggested. An inducement strategy (incentives, effective delivery system) has been suggested for those who are not engaged but have positive attitude. In an extended classification, they consider positive, neutral and negative attitude crossed with regular user, infrequent user, and non-user, yielding nine segments. In the neutral segment for regular user, education has been suggested. For infrequent users in the same segment, social controls, such as, ban on smoking in certain places were recommended. Finally for non-users, economic incentives have been suggested. Despite suggesting several strategies, the best possible options are not indicated.

This would be expected for want of sharper specification of the segment, notwithstanding the fact that the decision relates to overall promotional strategy. The present case deals with a much more specific decision, viz., advertising. Hence sharpening of segments becomes indispensable.

The most frequently used bases continue to be demographic, psychographic, behavioural traits, and life-cycle stage. The above have been used for developing social or growth organizations (Berkowitz, 1990) and marketing of political candidates (Claywood and Laczniak, 1990, who also classify voters as 'highly partisan', 'non-partisan' and 'independent').

Gutman (1984) has used means-end-chain analysis or laddering to examine consumer orientation towards beverages, and develop advertising strategy. Gutman and Renoylds (1984) have used the same technique for identifying attributes and value hierarchies.

Methodology

As mentioned earlier the influence of social learning and cultural effect is significant on social practices as well as on attitude toward social behaviour. Hence the 'attribute - benefit - value' construct becomes relevant as it connects the various descriptors of the segment. Laddering can capture these dimensions. It can link up the product to goals to construct the 'attribute - consequence - value' hierarchies. This method has been used for segment specification.

What is Laddering

A means-end chain or laddering is a model that seeks to explain how products or services as means are linked to ends that a person wants to attain and which are influenced by his values. It illustrates how values, (which are general in nature) relate to consumer choice (which is specific) through the 'attribute-consequences/benefit-goal' hierarchy (Gutman 1982, 1984; Gutman and Reynolds, 1984). Thus milk with calcium (attribute) leads to better health (benefit/consequence) and enables one to enjoy life (goal). The goal reflects attitude and values.

Initially the respondent is probed on his understanding of the product. The respondent would describe attributes s/he thinks the product has. * S/he is then asked to indicate why s/he thinks that certain attributes are important. The replies can be used for higher level distinction. The procedure can be repeated until the respondent can no longer answer why. Respondents often reach a level where they are responding at the value level (Rokeach, 1973).

The laddering technique refers to indepth probing directed toward uncovering higher level meanings. The meanings at benefit and value levels provide the domain of information that the respondent relies on for information processing and decision making. Laddering thus helps to reveal the key descriptors at all levels as also the linkages and structural aspects of the consumer's knowledge. In other words, it reveals how

* An initial categorization/dichotomy of similar product category (say health beverages, Bournvita, Horlicks, etc.) may be done through a repertory grid. Respondents are then asked which category they prefer and why (see Reynolds and Gutman, 1984).

consumers process and organize information for taking decisions. (Olson and Reynolds, 1983; Gutman 1982).

To analyse a large number of laddering responses, a thorough content analysis of the responses is carried out. Each response or thought is assigned a category code and expressed in a standard concept. The aggregated valued structure represents the consumers' knowledge structure. Each branch of a ladder represents a perceptual point of view, an orientation, identifying a segment of the market.

Sample Selection

State of infrastructural facilities (non-availability, etc.), education, and income can inhibit attitude. Lack of facilities could result in non-participation, despite positive attitude. Besides, poor education and income could result in indifferent attitude or neutral segment, either engaged or not engaged in behaviour.

The above factors were taken into account in selecting the sample. Care was taken to have representations from various ethnic and regional groups of India. The subjects were educated, and belonged to upper income groups to control for inhibiting factors. Thus the sample was expected to reflect attitude largely influenced by ethnic background.

A quota sample of 100 was drawn from the residents on the campus of an educational institution and neighbouring areas, representing different ethnic groups. The socio-economic profile was similar: educated, 35-40 years old men and women from

upper-middle-income groups. Use of mean-end chain analysis was made to identify the various orientations. The respondents were initially examined on their understanding of conservation and cleanliness. This was followed by a question as to why they thought they should advocate or practise them. This led to laddering. Probing was generally in the upward direction from attributes to values. A total of 40 ladders were obtained. Coding was done in discussion with respondents.

The advertising strategy was developed by using the Mecca Model (Gutman and Reynolds, 1984). In the Mecca model, five components have been suggested for advertising strategy: 1) driving force defined as the end level/ goal to be focused on in advertising; 2) leverage point, the manner by which advertising leads to end level focus; 3) executional framework, the overall scenario, the tone and style of the ad; 4) consumer benefit, the major positive consequences to be communicated verbally or visually in the ad; and 5) message elements, the product attributes to be communicated verbally or visually. The suggested ad strategies are based on this framework since the ~~objective(s)~~ in social communication would be to achieve comprehension or affective conditioning or both. For comprehension the following alternatives were considered to test for the efficacy of the advertising strategy.

* Affective conditioning results in a mental state which could be described as being cheerful/receptive (positive conditioning) or hostile/alienated (negative conditioning). Positive conditioning can be achieved by rousing compassion and sympathy.

- (1) Select some of the available ads using similar themes. Evaluate effectiveness and relate the findings to the Mecca model.
- (2) Design ads as above (Mecca model) and compare them with existing ads.
- (3) Test for identification of the inherent theme through a questionnaire. A number of scenarios to be presented and the respondent would be asked to associate the concept or theme that seemed closest to the scenario created by the five elements of the ads.

Given the constraints of time and cost, the last alternative was chosen. This basically tested the comprehension aspect. For testing conservation, no changes were made in the format. For cleanliness the message element was modified from "foster the habit of cleanliness" to "foster this habit" (see Exhibits A and B) This was done to keep other options open and examine the strength of other elements in the ad. In all 15 judges were used for the purpose.

Findings

The summary of the attributes, consequences, and values as obtained from laddering are provided in Table 1. The resulting hierarchical maps are shown in Figures 1 and 2 and the orientations in Table 2. For cleanliness two broad segments emerge. Orientations 1 and 4 are more 'inward directed' while 2 and 5 are 'outward directed' and 3 is a mixed one. For conservation the orientation is basically of one kind, i.e. outward directed with orientation 3 being mixed in nature. A

suggested advertising strategy is described in Table 3. For cleanliness, the strategy is targeted at the inward directed segment responding to self-goal fulfilling message. For conservation, the message is targeted at the outward directed segment responding to social and global concerns.

Ad Strategy

For cleanliness, the perceptual orientation stems from mental peace/good health to the ultimate goal, achieving more efficiency and sense of well being. Hence at the value level the driving force seems to be anchored at getting most out of life and taking pride in oneself. Connecting links or means appear to be through achieving efficiency by being methodical. This can provide a leverage point for advertising. Execution should communicate the message and bring out the means and end. This could be through a contrast message or visual as depicted in the executional framework. The benefits should state explicitly the attributes such as mental peace, etc. and the message could be an explicitly concluding type. The respondent having gone through the various steps may accept the conclusion. The message could also end with a question where the respondent can clearly make his own judgement (implicit conclusion). The strategy is based on inward directed orientation, hence the emphasis is on self-achievement.

For conservation the orientation is outward directed. The starting point is eco-balance leading to the value/goal of preservation of life and mental harmony. The linking chain of value to specific features seems to be through 'saving now t

enjoy later'. The execution of the framework again should bring out the contrast effect, consequences of following or not following conservation. The benefits could be explicit such as realization of pollution control and less inequality. The message could be conclusive or left to the respondent to draw his conclusion. The other alternative could be conditional avoidance approach. This can act as a leverage point guiding the executional framework and bringing out the message and benefits with much more emphasis.

The efficiency of communication in achieving comprehension was nearly perfect for conservation. For cleanliness, modification resulted in multiple choice (Table 4). However, the message element indicated in the design (Table 3) should shift the number from a multiple choice category to a single choice category.

Discussion

The findings of the study are encouraging in that that the results were as expected. The success of such an approach theoretically should rest on the congruity principle. Use of laddering helps in tracking the thinking process of the respondents. Using the cues from these process advertising can achieve comprehension and acceptance.

Laddering not only highlights personal values and goals, but identifies the linkages between attributes, consequences, and goals - a major gap in any social marketing. The exercise involves subjects and elicits spontaneous responses and reflects the inner feelings of the subjects. This is evident in testing

the effectiveness of the advertising.

Even with bare framework of statements we could achieve a fairly accurate comprehension level. The strategy mix model (Sheth and Frazier, 1982) suggests various approaches, but fails to identify the linkages. Laddering can uncover the key descriptors at all levels as well as the linkages that serve to provide the structure components of the cognitive response. This helps an advertiser to tap into the consumer's mind through linkages and achieve ready acceptability of the message. Emphasis should be on structure components and linkages as both goals, along with attributes, reflect beliefs and values, contributing to the affective component.

In testing the efficiency of the advertising design a quick method of association has been suggested. This basically tests the comprehension aspect. It can indicate that the given approach could be effective but does not establish the supremacy of this approach over others. However, this is a cheap and quick procedure and could be tested over time with others to prove its utility.

Implications

Currently government is using both channel and message as instruments in family planning, prohibition, and conservation. Emphasis is more on comprehension especially in the message. Use

* Cognitive structure relates to beliefs held by an individual and evaluations of these beliefs (good or bad). Evaluation reflects values, eg. Medicine is bitter (belief). Bitterness is good (evaluation).

of fear appeals has also been made. Conditional avoidance (reinforcing "prevention is better than cure") also features to encourage early cancer detection and road safety measures by the Loss Prevention Association, India. These instruments have been applied across all groups without proper segmentation. Laddering could be used to indicate both segments as well as specific communication objectives and developing advertising strategy. Initially, broad segments can be defined through the use of attitude and behaviour (Sheth and Frazier, 1982). Sub-segments can then be obtained through laddering for developing the advertising strategy.

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Table 1: Summary of Attributes, Consequences, and Values obtained from laddering

<u>Attributes</u>		<u>Consequences</u>		<u>Values</u>
<u>Concrete</u>	<u>Abstract</u>	<u>Functional</u>	<u>Psycho-Socio</u>	
<p>Good appearance, less sickness, free from germs and dirt, no health hazards, orderliness, physical cleanliness.</p>	<p>Good feeling, Mental peace, satisfaction, feels good, self concept, reflection of personality, pleasant mood, cleanliness of mind, aesthetics & beauty.</p>	<p>Better health, methodical, better efficiency, more work, congenial working atmosphere, cost saving (reducing loss of man hours and waste of time, less disturbances) affects one-self and others, drives away pests.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Conservation</u></p> <p><u>Consequences</u></p>	<p>Feeling of freshness, good appearance, develops favourable attitudes, reduce tension, happiness, acceptable to the society</p>	<p>Reflects upbringing, enhance self and image of the country Part and parcel of the civilisation, sense of aesthetics, care and concern for others.</p>
<u>Attributes</u>		<u>Functional</u>	<u>Psycho-Socio</u>	<u>Values</u>
<p>Limited resource, mostly resources, deprived segments, food for nations, urban pleasant surroundings.</p>	<p>Peace and harmony, preservation of life, energy, heritage and tradition, human welfare, judicious use of resources.</p>	<p>Eco-balance, stopping environmental degradation, less health hazards, saving of money, better result, avoids turmoil unrest in society, avoids drought, famine and other chain reaction, achieve better supply, price control, depletion of resources, halts climatic changes, avoids imbalance in economy, pollution control, political economic system stability, ensures future of current and coming generation, helps optimum utilization of resources, prevent dust, dirt and health hazards, without preservation precious things are lost for ever.</p>	<p>Mental peace, living made more meaningful, good for humanity.</p>	<p>Good for humanity, duty of responsible citizens. Man is not master but part of nature and would perish if he distances himself from nature.</p>

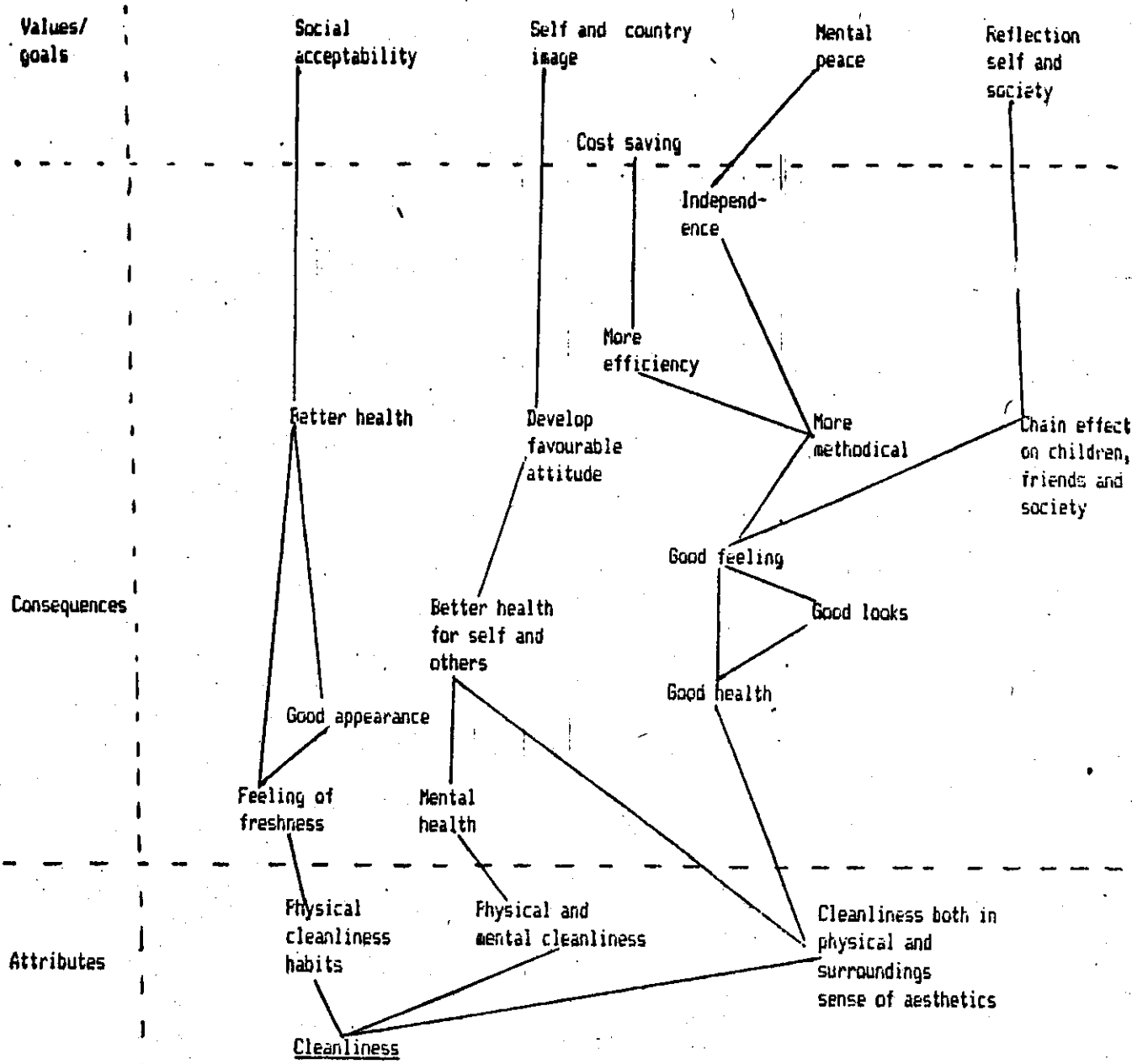


Figure 1: Summary map of ladders for Cleanliness

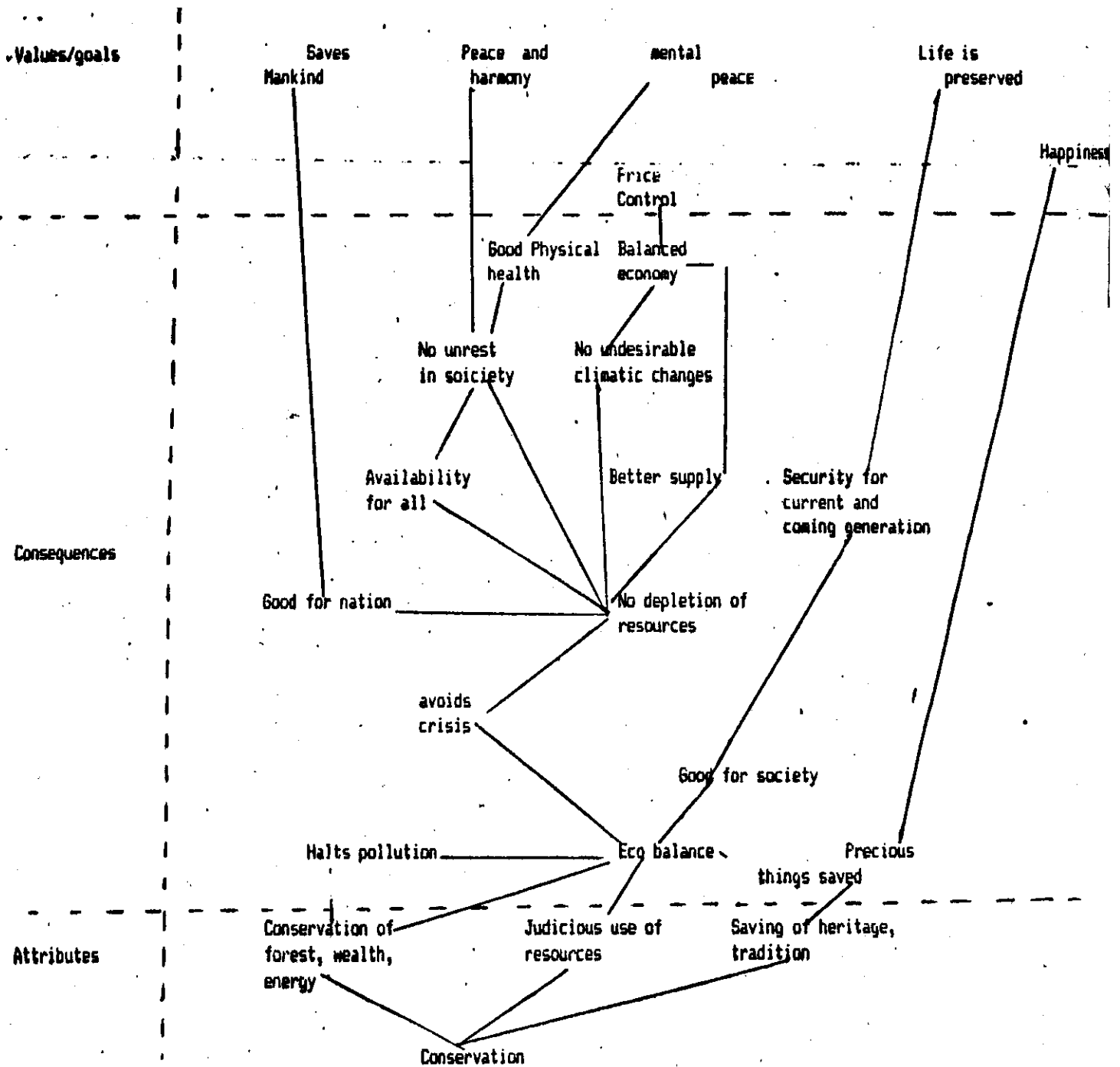


Figure 2: Summary map of ladders for conservation

Table:2 Perceptual Orientation

a) Cleanliness

1. Cleanliness -- Feeling of freshness -- Good appearance -- Better health -- Social acceptability
2. --do-- Mental health -- better health for self and others -- Develops favourable attitude -- Self and country image
3. --do-- Good health -- Good looks -- Good feeling -- Methodical -- More efficiency -- Cost saving.
4. --do-- Good health -- Good looks -- Good feeling -- More methodical -- Independence -- Mental peace
5. --do-- Good health -- Good looks -- Good feeling -- Multiplier effect/chain effects -- Reflects on self and society.

b) Conservation

1. Conservation -- Eco balance -- Avoids crisis -- No depletion of resources -- Good for nation -- Saves mankind
2. --do-- -- Eco balance -- Avoids crisis -- No depletion -- Availability for all -- No unrest -- Peace and harmony
3. --do-- -- Eco balance -- Avoids crisis -- No depletion -- No unrest -- Good physical health -- Mental peace
4. --do-- -- Eco balance -- Avoids crisis -- No depletion -- No undesirable climatic changes -- Balanced economy -- Price control
5. --do-- -- Eco balance -- Good for Society -- Security for current and coming generation -- Life is preserved
6. --do-- -- Eco balance -- Precious things preserved -- Happiness
7. --do-- -- Eco balance -- halts pollution

Table 3: Likely Choices of Advertising Strategy Emerging from the Experiment

<u>Strategy Elements</u>	<u>Cleanliness</u>	<u>Conservation</u>
1. Driving Force	Make the best of your life, Achieve efficiency	Preserve life and resources
2. Leverage Point	Prevention is better than cure. Make life exciting and enjoyable by being efficient.	Save for a rainy day, learn to relax, look forward to a secure future.
3. Executional Framework	Clear attractive surroundings indicating freshness, calm; contrast it with scene of chaos, wasted time and energy.	Use conditional avoidance technique, show rich background of nature (nature's bounty) against visual of barren land.
4. Consumer benefits	Gaining social acceptance, esteem; saving (money, time, energy), achieving efficiency and mental peace.	Less pollution and filth controls inequality, achieve balance in ecology, provides a secure future.
5. Message elements	Foster the habit of cleanliness, enjoy life.	Preserve gifts of nature, learn to relax by building a secure future. Leave a better world for the coming generation. Look forward to leisure and security, having provided for them.

Exhibit A

Read the set of sentences which creates a scenario that should evolve from practising certain behaviour or adopting certain measures. List of words are provided below. Please tick/circle the word you think closest to the above scenario that would result from the word you have chosen.

Preserve life and resources.

Save for a rainy day, learn to relax, look forward to a secure future.

Less pollution and filth, controls inequality, achieve balance in ecology, provides a secure future.

Preserve gifts of nature, learn to relax by building a secure future. Leave a better world for the coming generation. Look forward to leisure and security.

Visual: Rich background of nature contrasted with visual of barren land.

Conservation, Aids and Grants, Developmental Activities of Government, Small Saving Scheme, Cleanliness, Welfare Schemes, Family Planning, Health Insurance, Other Insurance (life, fire, property), Purchase of Securities.

Exhibit B

Read the set of sentences which creates a scenario that should evolve from practising certain behaviour or adopting certain measures. List of words are provided below. Please tick/circle the word you think closest to the above scenario that would result from the word you have chosen.

Make the best of your life. Achieve efficiency.

Prevention is better than cure.

Make life exciting and enjoyable by being efficient.

Gaining social acceptance, esteem; saving (money, time, energy), achieving efficiency and mental peace.

Foster this habit, keep good health, enjoy life.

Visual: Clean attractive surroundings indicating freshness and calm environment with contrasting scene of chaos, wasted time and energy.

Welfare Schemes, Cleanliness, Small Saving Schemes, Developmental Activities of Government, Aids and Grants, Conservation, Family Planning, Health Insurance, Other Insurance (life, fire, property), Purchase of Securities.

Table 4: Frequency of Right Identification
(Total number of responses =15)

Themes	Single Choice	Multiple choice	Total identified	Ratio to total.	
				Single choice	Multiple choice
Conservation	8	7	15	53.3	46.
Cleanliness	2	6	8	13.3	40.0

*These were chosen along with others in the list.