

PSYCHOGRAPHIC AND LIFE STYLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN  
THE FRENCH AND THE ENGLISH CANADIANS

Jagdish N. Sheth  
University of Illinois

and

D. Anthony Schellinck  
Bell Canada

ROUGH DRAFT, NOT TO BE QUOTED

Paper to be presented at the AIB Annual Conference, Allied Social Sciences  
Meeting, San Francisco, December 29, 1974.

---

PSYCHOGRAPHIC AND LIFE STYLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN  
THE FRENCH AND THE ENGLISH CANADIANS

Jagdish N. Sheth  
University of Illinois

and

D. Anthony Schellinck  
Bell Canada

There is considerable evidence which strongly suggests that the life style and consumption differences between the French and the English Canadians are real (Lafavre, 1974). For example, different studies have demonstrated that the French are more home or family oriented, are more fashion conscious, buy more premium priced products and brands, and spend more on high priced liquor and accessories for automobile and other appliances (Brisebois, 1966; Gelfand, 1964; Dhall, 1965). Surprisingly, the French-English Canadian differences are strikingly similar to the Black-White differences in life style and especially consumption behaviors in the U.S. The French seem to resemble the Blacks in several aspects of their behavior.

Just as the Blacks have been identified as an ethnic segment big enough to selectively market products and services which best satisfy their needs, wants and desires, the same segmentation strategy seems highly applicable to the French segment in the Canadian market if one is able to demonstrate real differences in perceptions, preferences and behaviors with respect to a product or service between the French and the English Canadians. The segmentation strategy of selective communication and promotion to the French Canadians is further made easier by their geographical concentration unlike the Black population in the U.S. This implies that even if the size of the ethnic segment may not be as large it is still economical to appeal to the segment on a selective basis.

There are two necessary ingredients in selective communication to

different ethnic segments in any market. First, the selective appeals both in the product design and packaging, as well as, in mass communication must be distinctly different. Second, the selective appeals must be compatible with the background setting necessary in communication. For example, if one is appealing the safety-security needs to a segment of older people, the appeal must be set in the relevant context of the old people in that country. Thus it seems vital that there are at least two types of information which must be researched in order to develop strategies of selective communication: (1) information about the differences in needs, wants and desires which can be assessed by a psychographic profile of the product or service; and (2) information about the background setting which can be provided by the life style differences between segments. It should be also kept in mind that the preconditions for selective communications to different ethnic segments is the feasibility of marketing each segment selectively. This requires some knowledge about either the actual levels of consumption of a product or service or at least some knowledge about the economic ability of the segment to afford the product or service.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences between the French and the English Canadians with respect to Long Distance (LD) telephone calls in terms of the benefits and the barriers they provide to each ethnic segment. In addition, the life styles of the French and the English Canadians were also measured to assess cultural differences which may also provide insights into the compatible background settings for selective communication to each subculture.

#### DESCRIPTION OF STUDY

Based on probability sampling procedures, a longitudinal panel of

telephone customers was established for the three provinces of Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. The size of the panel was determined on two criteria: the panel information should be representative of the province LD telephone behavior and expected rate of cooperation for a lengthy telephone interview. The panel member's LD telephone behavior was recorded based on the monthly billing records. Hence, the actual behavior of the panel members was measured extremely accurately and in a nonobstrusive way. In order to take into account the seasonality effects which are real in the residential Long Distance calls, the telephone behavior was recorded for a period of twelve consecutive months.

A questionnaire was developed which consisted of five major sections. The first section related to number and type of telephones in the possession of panel members. The second section related to their perception of frequency with which they make LD calls, whom to call often, who is the prime user of the telephone in the household and their perception of prices for certain calls. The third section consisted of a number of psychographic statements related to perceived benefits and barriers of Long Distance service.

A total of 33 statements were prepared based on a large scale focused group interview as well as analysis of past studies. These statements represented ten different types of benefits and barriers people are likely to perceive in making Long Distance calls. The fourth section consisted of 20 life style statements which attempted to measure activities, interests and opinions (AIOs) of the people as they manifest in their daily life. The statements were selected from the AIO scale developed by Wells and Tigert (1971). Due to the impossibility of administering the total AIO Scale which consists of more than 200 statements, the statements were carefully selected based on factor analytic structure which underlies the life style

scale (Wells, 1974). The fifth section consisted of the demographic information including family composition, employment, education, occupation and income of the household and the respondent.

The questionnaire was pretested two times with samples of about a hundred customers each time in order to assess the cooperation rate, the telephone interview procedures and the scale construction problems. The final revised questionnaire was administered to the main panel sample over the telephone. The final sample retained for analysis based on successful completion rate consisted of 964 respondents in Ontario, 1029 in Quebec and 1098 in Nova Scotia. In the Ontario and Nova Scotia provinces, if the respondent spoke in French, or in the Quebec province if he spoke English, the interview was terminated. This assures us that the English Canadians are in the two provinces of Ontario and Nova Scotia, and the French Canadians are in Quebec. The loss of respondents due to this procedure was negligible because of ethnic concentrations in Canada.

The Nova Scotia sample was utilized in the data analysis more as a check on the cultural and ethnic differences between the French Canadians of Quebec and the English Canadians of Ontario. Our hypothesis was that the differences between two English Canadians despite living in different regions of the country and with a considerable different socioeconomic base will be less significant than the differences between the French and the English Canadians.

#### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In order to contrast similarities and differences among the three provinces, a multiple-group discriminant analysis was performed in which respondents from Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia became the three groups and the profile of 33 psychographic statements became the discriminating

variables. The results of the differences in attitudes toward Long Distance are summarized in Table 1. A total of two significant discriminant functions were obtained. The first discriminant function summarized 86.6 percent and the second function 13.4 of total discrimination among the three groups. The RAO's approximate F ratio of 15.57 with 66 and .6112 degrees of freedom is highly significant indicating real differences between the three groups.

Examination of the discriminating statements in Table 1 suggests that most of the differences are with respect to the first nine statements all of which have high coefficients on the first discriminant axis. On these nine statements, the French Canadians are significantly different from the other two groups of English Canadians and the differences between the Ontario and Nova Scotia Canadians are relatively small and often not significant.

However, it is interesting to note that there are several benefits and barriers pertaining to Long Distance service on which the Nova Scotia Canadians and the French Canadians are more similar in their attitudes. These include positive image of Long Distance as a pleasant experience or calling back home when away on business.

Based on the mean profiles of the significant psychographic statements, it is possible to make the following conclusions about the French and the English Canadians attitude toward Long Distance.

1. The French Canadians have a more positive attitude toward the benefits derived from Long Distance calls in general.
2. The French Canadians consider Long Distance a very useful service to maintain interpersonal relationships including maintaining family ties, parental relationships, and social interaction with friends.

TABLE 1  
Psychographic Differences Between the  
French and English Canadians

LD Psychographic Statements	Quebec	Ontario	Nova Scotia
	(964)	(1029)	(1098)
	Average Ratings		
1. LD should be used to maintain ties among family members who are scattered in different regions.	6.25	5.55	5.69
2. Married children should call LD to their parents.	6.16	5.18	5.38
3. Parents can continue to share in their children's lives by calling LD.	5.97	5.71	5.89
4. If you can't visit, you should make a LD call to maintain friendship.	5.92	4.82	4.90
5. It is a good idea to exchange birthday or anniversary greetings by calling LD.	5.90	5.05	5.01
6. It is nice to call LD just to let them know what you are doing.	5.79	4.52	4.69
7. People should make LD calls when they forget to write.	5.53	4.39	4.73
8. L.D. calls from home should be left to women.	1.98	2.18	2.33
9. It is no good to call some people on LD because all they do is to criticize.	3.39	2.69	2.75
10. I really don't enjoy talking on the phone.	3.56	3.24	3.19
11. You don't need important reasons to phone someone LD.	5.31	5.03	5.32
12. My family expects me to call LD when I am away from home for awhile.	5.19	4.79	5.09
13. Feelings of love and affection can be better expressed by phone than in a letter.	5.11	5.24	4.93
14. LD conversation is a pleasant experience comparable to eating out, seeing a movie or watching television.	4.70	4.65	5.10
15. Money manager should get upset when the phone bill is exceeded by family.	4.11	4.32	4.29
16. I often worry that people I want to call on LD will think the reason for the call is because I am in trouble.	3.04	2.58	2.85

3. The French Canadians need less functional reasons to make Long Distance calls. It would appear, that the French Canadians are more emotionally involved with the Long Distance service and, therefore, more likely to make calls on an impulsive basis. This has been verified by other studies on the Long Distance behavior of the French Canadians.

4. The Long Distance call is more acceptable as a substitute for personal visits for the French Canadians. This may be partly due to the less opportunity for travel in the country compared to the English Canadians.

5. However, the French Canadians also have several emotional barriers in telephone conversations. These include fear of being criticized on the phone, not enjoying telephone conversations as much as personal conversations, and fear of imposing on the receiver of the call.

In summary, the French Canadians consider Long Distance essential to maintain family ties and friendship, need less functional reasons such as information or visiting for making Long Distance calls, and have somewhat greater concerns and fears in making them. This profile to a large extent matches the French-English Canadian differences found in other studies.

In order to correlate the psychographic differences between the French and the English Canadians with their cultural differences, we also performed a second three-group discriminant analysis with respect to the life style differences. It produced a highly significant discriminant function which summarized more than 90 percent of the differences between the three groups. The RAO's approximate F ratio of 23.49 with 40 and 6138 degrees of freedom was highly significant. The averages of the discriminating life style



statements are summarized in Table 2. As can be seen from the Table, the differences in life style between the French and the English are much sharper than the differences between Ontario and Nova Scotia respondents. Based on the significant differences, we can conclude the following:

1. The French Canadians are more traditional in their values and more home oriented. This dominant life style is presumably related to their high involvement in Long Distance as a means of maintaining interpersonal relationships especially with the family.
2. Even though the French Canadians desire for more money, they are less price conscious in their shopping behavior. Perhaps this lack of concern in their spending behavior which is reflected in the impulsive nature of their Long Distance usage and attitude as discussed before.
3. The French Canadians are more fashion-conscious than the English Canadians. While this has no direct implications for Long Distance service, it is extremely relevant to their telephone equipment behavior. Fashion consciousness has been often associated with conspicuous consumption behavior. Other studies have shown that the French Canadians spend more money on decorative telephones than do the English Canadians as part of the conspicuous consumption syndrome. The high fashion consciousness is also often related to lack of concern for discount buying as found in this study.

It is somewhat obvious from the above life style differences that the French Canadians are likely to travel less and even if they do travel, it is likely to be family related travel. This strong difference in the family orientation between the French and the English Canadians implies that the use of Long Distance will vary considerably between the two subcultures with respect to the needs it can satisfy.

Life Style Differences Between the French  
and the English Canadians

Life Style Statements	Quebec	Ontario	Nova Scotia
	(964)	(1029)	(1098)Q
	Average Ratings		
1. I wish I had more money.	5.88	5.23	5.49
2. I am not one of those who goes around comparing prices.	5.60	4.68	4.64
3. I would rather spend a quiet evening home than go to a party.	4.91	4.41	4.47
4. I usually have one or more outfits that are of the very latest style.	4.78	4.09	4.33
5. I am more self confident than most people.	4.65	4.40	4.30
6. I like to go camping, boating and the like.	4.60	4.83	5.06
7. A woman's place is in the home.	4.34	3.74	4.10
8. I enjoy going through an art gallery.	4.20	4.53	4.27
9. I like danger and adventure.	3.41	3.71	3.72
10. I shop a lot for specials.	3.07	4.40	4.81

RAO's Approximate F = 28.49 with 40 and 6138; p < .0001

$\chi^2 = 1049.71$  with 40 df p < .0001

IMPLICATIONS

Since Long Distance is a service, it is not possible to create product differences by design or packaging to cater to different segments. The only exception is the differential pricing for different times of the day and different days of the week which, however, is highly regulated. It seems that what is needed is a segmentation strategy in the promotion and communication of benefits of Long Distance via mass media.

The above study clearly indicated that both life style and psychographic differences between the French and the English Canadians make it imperative that the company promote Long Distance selectively to each subculture. Since the French Canadians tend to be more home oriented and traditional in their values, it will be advantageous to continue promoting the usefulness of Long Distance as a means for maintaining family ties and other inter-personal behavior. However, in the English Canadian segment, it seems the Long Distance is more useful as a functional service in those situations which requires telecommunication such as travel arrangements, business calls, and a compliment to personal visits.