

**THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL FACTORS ON CONSUMER BUYING
BEHAVIOUR (A CASE STUDY OF PORK)**

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ABSTRACT: *Cultural factors are examined to see how they affect the purchase of pork in Nigeria. Data for the study are obtained through structured questionnaire administered by the researcher and some research assistants. A total of 82 questionnaires are administered out of which 70 are duly filled and returned. Tools used for statistical analysis include Statistical Package for Social Sciences. SPSS 17, Microsoft Excel (2015), Multiple Regression Analysis and Relative Important Index (RII). Findings reveal that cultural variables exert significant influences on the purchase and consumption of pork. The study also found that aside from the cultural factors, age and income also affect the quantity of pork purchased and consumed. Based on these findings the study concludes that cultural factors, age and income influence the quantity of pork purchased and consumed. The study then recommends that these factors should not be taken for granted; rather they should be identified and studied since purchase and consumption of pork are based on them.*

KEYWORDS: Cultural Factors, Buying Behaviour, Pork, Age, Income.

INTRODUCTION

Culture and consumption have had an unprecedented relationship in modern world (HemaPatil and Bblakkapa, 2012). They further argue that given this relationship and the fact that the world economy is becoming increasingly cross-cultural, an understanding of how culture influences consumer behaviour by marketers will be crucial, more so that culture is a powerful force in regulating human behaviour. Booth and Shepherd in Koutroulou and Tsourgiannis (2011) observed that cultural and economic factors, consumer's personality, attitudes, values and emotions affect consumers' decision making process regarding food selection. Similarly, Speiers, Gundala and Singh (2014), noted that consumer behaviour is influenced and motivated by factors such as culture, personality, lifestyle, income, attitudes, motivators, feelings, knowledge, ethnicity, family, values, available resources, opinions, experiences, peer groups and other groups.

Speaking in the same vein, Sethi and Chawla (2014) added that certain factors- the buyers characteristics, psychological factors as well as social and cultural factors influence the buying process of consumers.

Culture, subculture and social class are known to have profound influences on people behaviour because they are powerful drivers in the formation of attitudes, beliefs and values (Blythe, 2008).

Similarly, Kotler and Armstrong (2013) observed that people in a particular society hold certain beliefs and values which tend to resist change. This explains why certain consumption behaviour is hard to change once developed. Pork is regarded as a sacred product in many cultures and religions. Sacred consumption according to Solomon (2011), occurs when certain objects and events are “set apart” from normal activities and treated with respect are consumed. This status of pork impinges on its marketing and consumption. Anyanwu (1993) observes that Muslims community does not eat pork meat on religious ground, adding that any company attempting to change this attitude will fail. He however, advises companies wishing to succeed in this community to bear this in mind and to direct the production and sale of other goods which will appeal to them.

Other factors likely to impact on the marketing and consumption of pork are income, age and stage in life-cycle of the consumer. Kotler and Armstrong (2013) noted that people change the goods and services they buy over their lifetimes, adding that taste in food, clothes, furniture and recreation are often age-related. The implication of this is that as people grow older, their demand and consumption of meat decline.

Statement of the Problem

Culture, subculture and social class are known to have very important influence on buying behaviour. In supporting this view, Kotler (2001), argues that culture is the most fundamental determinant of a person’s wants and behaviour. He further contends that culture exerts the broadest and deepest influence on buying behaviour. The purpose of this study therefore is to evaluate these assertions on the purchase and consumption of pork in Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Cultural Concept

The concept of culture can be viewed as that which guides and directs human behaviour in a given context. Kotler, Bowen and Makens (2010) view culture as the most basic determinant of a person wants and behaviour. They outline the composition of culture to include values, perceptions, wants and behaviours that a person learns continuously in a society.

Consumer Buying Behaviour

Cochran (2006) cited in Durmaz (2014) argues that the customer is the sole reason for organization existence. His/her buying decision depicts how well a company’s marketing strategy fits market demand. Thus, marketing begins and ends with them (Furayi, Latusyriska and Wawrzyniak, 2012). Font-i-furnols and Guerrero (2014), believe that since consumers are the last step in the production chain, meeting their expectations is an important part of their satisfaction and shopping behaviour.

Khaniwale (2015), on his part views consumer buying behaviour as involving the study of individuals and the method they employ to choose, utilize and set out products and services to fulfill their wants and the effect these methods have on the consumer and society as a whole. It includes all the thoughts, feelings and actions that an individual has or takes before or while

buying a product, service or idea as well as answers such questions as what, why, how, when and where an individual makes purchase. He is also of the opinion that since culture encompasses every aspect of life including the thought, behaviour, practices, technology, rituals, norms, language, beliefs, ethics, lifestyle, institution, and art of any group of individuals. Individuals differing in cultural background may have different views about a particular product or service, though they may have preference for products or services which suite their culture.

Cultural Factors and Buying Behaviour

Solomon (2011) sees consumer behaviour as the study of processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs or desires. Firms and organizations rely on consumer behaviour knowledge to forecast consumer needs and desires. Rani (2014), identifies cultural, social, personal and psychological factors as the four major influences on consumer's buying behaviour, adding that these factors cause consumers to develop product and brand preferences. Although he notes that these factors are not directly controlled by marketers, he advises them to have a better understanding of them as this will help them to develop marketing mix strategies that can appeal to the preferences of their target markets.

Durmaz, Celik and Oruc (2011) identify success in international market to include ability to overcome the large cultural and economic boundaries to improve not only the worldwide competition in the market but also the different traditional beliefs, preferences, habits and customs that are needed to be understood. They also advise that learning cultural properties in the analysis of consumer behaviour is an important variable in marketing particularly in market segmentation, target market and product positioning. Contributing further on the importance of culture, Ijewere and Odia (2012), observe that culture as one of the influences on consumer behaviour exists to satisfy the need of people within a society by providing standards and rules about what we wear at different occasions. Culture, they further stated, conditions our attitudes to things and issues like how a married woman should dress, our attitudes to foreign product as well as woman drinking alcohol secretly or in public and time consciousness.

Religion and Pork Consumption

Pork consumption in both Christianity and Islamic is forbidden by both Christians and Muslims. The Jews and Christians are forbidden from eating pork in the Old Testament by the quoting of Deuteronomy 14:8 which says "And the Swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet Cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcase".

Muslims are forbidden by God to eat meat of pig. This can be found in the Quar'an verses 2:173, 5:3, 6:145 and 16:115.

Apart from Christians and Muslims many far Eastern traditions also discourage the eating of pork. According to the 3,000 year old Cofucian Book of Rites, Agentieman does not eat the flesh of pigs and dogs. Also, physicians of ancient China see pork eating as the root of many human ailments even though many Chinese are avid eaters of pork today.

Apart from religious reasons, pork consumption also suffers because of its bad effect. It is reported in literature that pigs bodies contain many toxins, worms and latent diseases in larger

proportions than are found in other animals. One reason attributed to this is the fact that pigs like to scavenge and will eat any kind of food, including dead insects, worms, rotting carcasses, excreta, garbage, and other pigs. Also humans are said to contract influenza (flu) from pigs. The illness is said to develop in the lungs of pigs during the summer months and contracted when consumed by humans.

Religion as a key component of culture has the strongest influence on people lives and behaviour. Mbiti (1970), cited in Chudi (2013), observes that religion is the strongest element in traditional background and exerts the greatest influence upon the thinking and the living of the people concerned. Substantiating further, Essoo and Dibb (2004) in Lawan and Zanna (2013) also assert that studies in marketing literature suggest that religion is a key element of culture influencing both behaviour and purchasing decisions. It is this aspect of culture that marketers utilize to gain acceptance of their products. When a firm markets a product that the culture approves of, such a product sells itself, but when a firm markets a product that the culture does not approve of (Pork) such a product will not find buyers. This is because culture is uncontrollable in that no organization can change the culture of a given set of people at a profit (Anyanwu, 1993).

Empirical Review

The influence of cultural factors on consumer buying behaviour has been widely debated and studies at different points in time. McCarthy, O'Reilly and De-Boer (2004), while studying the factors influencing consumption of pork and poultry in the Irish market, found that for poultry, health, eating, enjoyment, safety and price were most important determinants of attitude with environment and animal welfare less so. For pork, they found that health, eating enjoyment, safety and animal welfare were most important determinants to consume.

In the same vein, Antwi-Boateng, Owusu-Prempeh and Asuamah (2013), while assessing the factors influencing the consumption of pork and poultry meat in Ghana, found that consumers preferred poultry meat to pork and consumed more poultry than pork. They also identified taste, health and price of meat as the three most important factors considered by consumers when purchasing meat. Demographic variables of age, gender, family income levels and religion were found to have significant influence on attitude towards meat purchase.

In another development, Nkang and Effiong (2014) studied the influence of consumer's perception on pork and poultry meat consumption in Calabar South Local Government in Cross River State, Nigeria using multi-stage sampling procedure to select 50 pork and poultry meat consumers as well as descriptive and inferential statistics of Probit Regression for the study. The study found that educational level of consumers had a negative coefficient and was statistically significant at 5%. They also showed that the sign of the coefficient of age, marital status, source of market and occupation of the consumers were positive but were not statistically significant at 5%. Gender and quantity demanded per household had a negative coefficient and were significant at 10% while sign of the determinant factor and price of pork and poultry meat did not comply with a prior expectation.

Also, De Silva, Atapattu and Sandika (2010), conducted a study in Southern Province of Sri Lanka to determine the socio-cultural parameters associated with meat purchasing and consumption pattern. The study found that the most preferred meat types were chicken, beef and pork respectively. Findings also showed a significant correlation between the type of meat consumed and sex, religion, family size but not with type of market (rural or urban), education level and occupation. The study further found that there exist an inverse relationship between age and meat consumption while financial capabilities, religions concerns and preference of children were the major determinants influencing purchasing behaviour of meat and meat products.

Also, Alimi (2013) conducted a study to ascertain meat demand in Akungba-Akoko township in Ondo State of Nigeria. In the study, beef (60.14%) was most preferred. This was followed by chicken (29.72%), turkey (26.92%) while 18% each went for fish and ponmo (cow skin). The reasons advanced by the study for this degree of preference are largely taste and habits, while individual taste was found to be the key factor for the preference of chicken/mutton/fish. The study equally revealed that only 3.5% respondents went for pork. This low preference was attributed to religious belief which influence meat consumption behaviour in the area. It further establishes that religious belief forbids Muslims and some Christian sects from eating pork.

From the literature reviewed, it could be deduced that culture exerts much pressure on buying behaviour of pork. However, a closer examination of the reviewed literature reveals that most of the concepts used were not extensively discussed. Also non of the previous studies has actually sought to know which of the cultural factors exerts more pressure on buying behaviour. What is more, non of the studies reviewed utilized Relative Importance Index in its analysis. This study therefore differs from previous studies in terms of indepth study, method of data analysis as well as attempting to identify which of the variables actually exert the greatest influence on buying behaviour and these create the gaps that this study wants to fill.

METHOD OF STUDY

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were collected via questionnaire administration. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the opinions of the respondents on pork consumption. Secondary data were obtained from textbooks, journals and internet.

A total of 82 questionnaires were accidentally distributed among the respondents out of which 70 were duly completed and returned. Multiple Regression Analysis was used in analyzing continuous data like income, age and quantity while Relative Important Index (RII) was used on categorical variables itemized in the questionnaire.

Weights of 4,3,2 and 1 were assigned on Likert scales designated as strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree respectively. The analysis was also aided by the use of Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS 17 and Microsoft Excel (2013). The scores assigned to each factor by the respondents were entered and consequently, the responses from the 70 questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis for further insight. The contribution of each factor to the buying behaviour of respondents to pork was examined and the ranking of the

attributes in terms of their criticality as perceived by the respondents was done using Relative Important Index (RII).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Model Specification

In examining the influence of cultural factors on buying behaviour of pork, Multiple Regression Analysis is used

$$RII = \frac{\sum fx}{\sum f} = \frac{1}{k} \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

Where $\sum fx$ = Total weight given to each attribute by respondents
 $\sum f$ = Is the total number of respondents in the sample
 K = Is the highest weight on the Likert scale here $k = 4$.

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \beta_2 x_{2i} + \dots + \beta_k x_{ki} + \varepsilon_i, \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, n. \dots\dots\dots(2)$$

Where: k is the number of explanatory variables,

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \dots, \beta_k$ are the parameters of the model,
 ε_i is a random error term

In this case the response variable is quantity bought per time while the explanatory variables are age and income.

The model becomes:

$$Quantity = \beta_0 + \beta_1 age + \beta_2 income + error \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Multiple Linear Regression Model relates a response variable Y to more than one explanatory variables. Its main purpose is to find which explanatory variables contribute to the variation of the response variable.

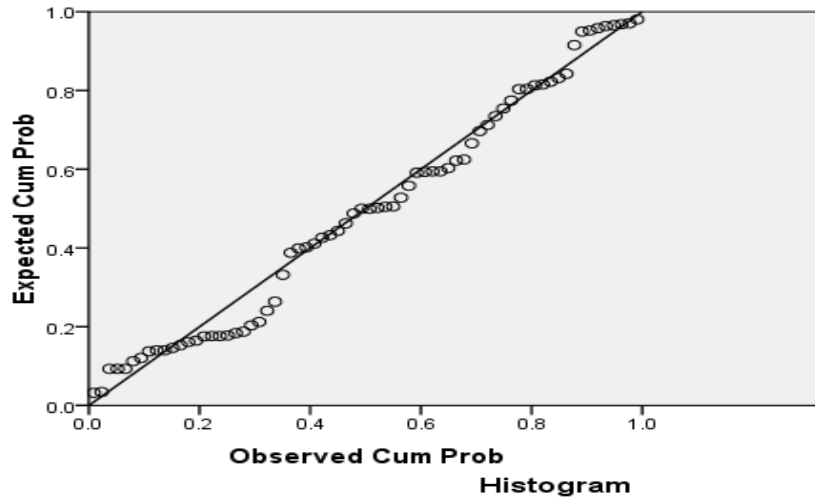
Its adoption is based on the fulfillment of the normality assumptions below:

Normality Test

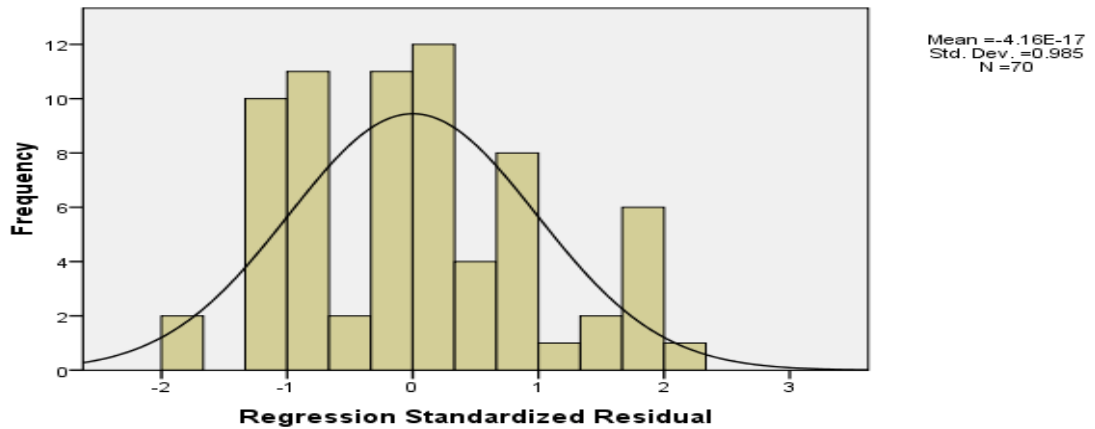
One of the assumptions of using Least Square Regression is that errors of the residuals must be normally distributed. This is shown in the plotted p-p plot and histogram. If the points on the p-p plot approximately form a straight line, it indicates normality. Also if the histogram exhibits symmetrical shape then the data is normally distributed.

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: Approximate quantity bought per time



Dependent Variable: Approximate quantity bought per time



Normal

probability plot looks like a straight line. Therefore Normality assumption looks valid. The histogram looks relatively symmetric about zero and bell shaped, hence the Normality assumption is valid.

The results of the analysis are presented in tables 1 to 6.

Table1: Contribution of Cultural Norms to Buying Behaviour

Cultural Norms									
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING
Cultural norms specify certain behaviours in specific situation.	0	1	35	34	70	243	3.471	0.868	1st
Cultural norms prohibit certain behaviours in specific situation.	0	9	48	13	70	214	3.057	0.764	4th
Violation of cultural norms results in sanctions or penalties	2	13	32	23	70	216	3.086	0.771	3rd
My cultural norms shape my buying behaviour	2	10	37	21	70	217	3.100	0.775	2nd

Table2: Contribution of Cultural Beliefs to Buying Behaviour

Cultural Beliefs									
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING
Culture influences belief systems	0	7	32	31	70	234	3.343	0.836	1st
Belief systems influence consumption behaviour	0	6	40	24	70	228	3.257	0.814	2nd
Belief systems affect buying behaviour	4	7	32	27	70	222	3.171	0.793	3rd

Table 3: Contribution of Cultural Values to Buying Behaviour

Cultural Values									
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING
Cultural values affirm what is desirable	0	10	38	22	70	222	3.171	0.793	1st
Cultural values give rise to norms & associated sanctions which in turn influence buying behaviour.	1	12	33	24	70	220	3.143	0.786	2 nd

Table 4: Contribution of Cultural Symbols to Buying Behaviour

Cultural Symbols										
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING	
Different cultures attach different meanings to colours, animals, shapes, numbers and music	0	5	27	38	70	243	3.471	0.868	1 st	
Inability to recognize the meaning assigned to a symbol can affect the marketing of such product.	1	3	41	25	70	230	3.286	0.821	2 nd	
Our cultural symbols affect my buying behaviour	3	9	39	19	70	214	3.057	0.764	3 rd	

Table 5: Contribution of Customs to Buying Behaviour

Customs										
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING	
The customs of a people affect the way things are done	1	5	32	32	70	235	3.357	0.839	3 rd	
Traditional worshippers are fully influenced by their customs	0	3	34	33	70	240	3.429	0.857	2 nd	
Christians/Muslims are more influenced by their religious beliefs than their customs	0	1	30	39	70	248	3.543	0.886	1 st	

Table 6: Contribution of Cultural Languages to Buying Behaviour

Cultural Language										
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING	
There is a direct positive relationship between culture and language.	1	3	38	28	70	233	3.329	0.832	3 rd	
Persuasive marketing communications can influence consumer buying behaviour	0	5	33	32	70	237	3.386	0.846	2 nd	
Language barrier is one obvious problem that marketers who wish to go into foreign markets must contend with.	1	5	25	39	70	242	3.457	0.864	1 st	

Table 7: Contribution of Ritual to Buying Behaviour

Rituals										
ITEMS	1	2	3	4	SUM	ΣFX	MEAN	RII	RANKING	
A ritual is a set of symbolic behaviours which occur in fixed sequence	1	3	40	26	70	231	3.3	0.825	3 rd	
Gift - giving is an example of ritual	2	4	34	30	70	232	3.314	0.829	2 nd	
The rituals of my culture affect my buying and use of certain products	1	7	22	40	70	241	3.443	0.861	1 st	

Effect of Age and Income on Buying Behavior

With P-value of 0.051 and 0.059, the hypothesis of no relationship will not be rejected, it means respondents’ age and income respectively do not have a significant linear relationship with buying behavior at 5 percent level of significance. Although with regression estimates of -0.016 for age and 0.004 for income, it is obvious that age has an inverse relationship while income has a positive relationship (though low) with buying behavior of pork meat. In the model a unit increase in age and income will produce a change in the quality of pork purchased.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.300	.234		5.567	.000
	Age of respondent	-.016	.008	-.277	-1.986	.051
	Income	.004	.002	.268	1.925	.059

| The predicting model or regression equation is now
 $Quantity = 1.3 - 0.016age + 0.004income$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cultural factors: norms, values, customs, beliefs, symbols, language and rituals exert great influences on the purchase of pork meat. the influence of cultural norms on purchase of pork was measured using four positive statements. The attendant results give the means that range from 3.057 to 3.471 and relative. Important index values of 0.764 – 0.868 showing that “cultural norms specify certain behaviours in specific situations” makes the greatest contribution to buying behaviour of pork while “cultural norms prohibit certain behaviours in specific situations” makes the least contribution.

Cultural Beliefs and Pork

Similarly, the contribution of cultural beliefs to buying behaviour of pork was measured using three positive statements. The results again show the means as ranging from 3.171 to 3.343 and Relative Important Index Values between 0.793 to 0.836 implying that culture influences belief systems making the greatest contribution to buying behaviour of pork meat while belief systems affect buying behaviour makes the least contribution to the buying behaviour of pork meat.

Cultural values and Pork

The contribution of cultural values to buying behaviour of pork was measured using two positive statements. Results indicate that the item “cultural values affirm what is desirable” with a mean of 3.171 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.793 contributes more while “cultural values give rise to norms and associated sanctions” with a mean of 3.143 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.786 contributes less.

Cultural Symbols and Pork

The contribution of cultural symbols to buying behaviour of pork was measured using three positive statements. Results reveal that the item “different cultures attach different meanings to colours, animals, shapes, numbers and music” having a mean of 3.471 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.868 comes first while “Our cultural symbols affect my buying behaviour” with a mean of 3.057 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.839 comes last in contributing to buying behaviour of pork.

Cultural Customs and Buying Behaviour

The contribution of customs to buying behaviour was measured using three positive statements. Results reveal that the item “Christians/Muslims are more influenced by their religious beliefs than their customs with a mean of 3.543 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.886 was ranked first, while the item “the customs of a people affect, the way things are done came last with a mean of 3.357 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.839.

Cultural Language and Buying Behaviour

The influence of cultural languages on buying behaviour of pork was measured using three positive statements. Results reveal that the highest contribution to buying behaviour of pork comes from item, three which says that “language barrier is one obvious problem that marketers wishing to go into foreign markets must contend with”. This has a mean of 3.457 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.864 while “there is a direct positive relationship between culture and language came last with a mean of 3.329 and Relative Important Index Value of 0.832.

Cultural Rituals and Buying Behaviour

The contribution of rituals to buying behaviour of pork was measured using three positive statements. Results give means ranging from 3.3 to 3.443 and Relative Important Index Values of 0.825 to 0.861. The implication of the above result is that the item “the rituals of my culture affect my buying and use of certain products” makes the highest contribution to buying behaviour of pork, while “a ritual is a set of symbolic behaviours which occur in fixed sequence” makes the least contribution.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The findings of the study suggest that cultural factors exert great influences on buying behaviour of pork in Nigeria. The study equally establishes that aside from cultural factors, factors like age and income also influence the quantity of pork bought and consumed.

Recommendations

1. Cultural factors should not be taken for granted rather, they should be identified and studied since customers purchase and consumption of pork are based on them.
2. Given the prohibition placed on consumption of pork by some religious sects, pork producers are advised to take into account the religious factor when planning their marketing strategies.

3. Since age and income have great consequences on purchase and consumption of pork, producers and marketers of pork are enjoined to segment their markets along the lines of age and income in order to be guarded on which subset to serve profitably.

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