# Chapter 11 Social Class Influences in Food and Drink

## **Multiple Choice Questions**

1. What are the 6 main characteristics of social class, according to Della Bitta & Loudon (1993) *Consumer behaviour: concepts and applications. 4th edn*. Mc Graw Hill?
2. Status, Contrasting, Multidimensional, Hierarchical, Restrict Behaviour, Homogeneous
3. Rank, Hierarchical, Restrict Behaviour, Differentiated, Dynamic, Multidimensional
4. Status, Multidimensional, Hierarchical, Restrict Behaviour, Homogeneous, Dynamic
5. Encourage Different Behaviour, Multidimensional, Hierarchical, Homogeneous, Dynamic, Class
6. What happens at the ‘Post Purchase Evaluation’ stage of the Consumer Decision-Making Process model (Clow & Baack, 2013)?
7. Recognition of need
8. Reviewing purchases
9. Making a decision for product or service
10. Seeking alternative products or services
11. What are the 4 types of capital identified in Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of Class Identity?

{Bourdieu, P. (1986) The forms of capital. In: Richardson, J.G. (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Greenwood, New York}?

1. Economic, Cultural, Social, Symbolic
2. Economic, Language, Groups, Symbolic
3. Economic, Cultural, Preferences, Status
4. Social, Monetary, Reputation, Cultural
5. What is the meaning of ‘Discretionary Income’?
6. Money earned by an individual
7. Money available to a household, over what it requires to have a comfortable standard of living
8. Total income for a period of one year
9. A comparison of each social class’ income
10. Wallop in 2013 stated that determines your social class. Fill in the missing blank.
11. Shoes
12. Technology
13. Gardens
14. Shopping bags
15. Who are seen to be the Emergent Service workers?
16. Elderly
17. Middle class
18. Younger generation
19. Men aged between 30 and 40

**Revision questions**

1. Define, explain and give examples to theories as to what Social Class is.
2. Identify at least one model which explains the internal and external factors that influence consumer behaviour and how it affects consumers buying habits.
3. Relate a business case to how companies identify their target market through their means of advertisement.

**Additional discussion questions**

1. ‘Everyone is classed as middle class’. Discuss this statement and include in your answer theories and examples relating to the food and drink industry.
2. ‘There are only two social classes - upper class and lower class’. Discuss this statement and in your answer reference at least three theories of social class.
3. ‘The social class rankings and statuses have not changed over time’. Discuss this statement and include in your answer theories and the critique of these.
4. Discuss the impact social class has on consumer spending and economic behaviour, in relation to the food and drink industry.

**Answers**

### Multiple choice questions

1. C
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. D
6. C

### **Revision questions**

1. *Define, explain and give examples to theories as to what Social Class is.*

According to the Psychology definition, social class can be defined as ‘a division in society where people share a common level of income, status, power and prestige as well as common values’. The six main characteristics that describe social class are status, multidimensional, hierarchical, restrict behaviour, homogeneous and dynamic. There are essentially many aspects of social class and the ideologies have changed and developed over time.

Karl Marx based his ideas on capitalism and identified two fundamental classes; the Bourgeoisie (upper class) and the Proletariat (working class). The Bourgeoisie owned the means of production and could afford luxury, such as expensive wine. This is in contrast to the Proletariat who provided the means of production and were considerably less wealthy. They could buy less goods and rye bread was eaten, instead of white bread. Marx saw society as being dichotomous, which is now seen as being very simplistic, in today’s society.

Weber later presented social class as stratification of class, status and power. This is in relation to an individual’s economic position, popularity and ability to achieve an outcome, respectively. This however is seen to be a subjective approach. Bourdieu arguably developed a wider range of categories that social class is based on and believed lifestyle choices influence class. The four main forms of capital are economic (wealth), cultural (lifestyle), social (contacts) and symbolic (status and education).

The most recent study undertaken by the BBC in 2013, identified seven main categories of the Elite, Established Middle Class, Technical, New Affluent Workers, Traditional Working Class, Emergent Service Workers and the Precariat. This was based also on economic, social and cultural capital, which gives a broader classification of the population. Some of the categories are similar, but each are different, allowing for a more accurate classification.

1. *Identify at least one model which explains the internal and external factors that influence consumer behaviour and how it affects consumers buying habits.*

The decision-making model developed by Patidar outlines the internal and external influences on consumer behaviour and how it affects consumers buying habits and decision-making processes. Some examples of internal influences would be; age, income, occupation, life style, with occupation and lifestyle interlinking, the amount of disposable income a person has, can reflect on how they choose to live or whether their way of living is based on not having a choice. This can alter a person’s perceptions as to how they shop, when they shop for a product and how often they do so. Other factors influencing internally are, personality, motivation,

perception, learning and beliefs and attitudes. Factors can be situational, as if one is to be in a hurry, for example, they may not care what brand they end up buying.

Factors that influence externally are; culture, sub-culture, social class, family, reference groups and role and status. A person’s culture can have a strong influence on some consumers buying habits, as some things may not be deemed as culturally appropriate. Many religions don’t allow their followers to indulge in alcohol, it is either condemned or frowned upon to do so and therefore will have a strong influence as to whether they purchase something or not. Other influences such as reference groups or family can have a strong implication as to whether a person will purchase something. When an individual compares their decisions to that of someone in their reference group, they are likely to change their mind to continue to fit in with that group and change their shopping habits to adhere to this. This can relate to when a person chooses to shop or purchase things to demonstrate their class and status. This shows their ability to buy goods that others may deem to be of luxury.

1. *Relate a business case to how companies identify their target market through their means of advertisement.*

Typically, one can identify with a company by their means of advertising, where they advertise and how. Where a company advertises is possibly the most fundamental way to identify with their target market. Iceland tend to advertise before and after such shows as “I’m a celebrity” as their established target market is most likely to watch reality TV shows, a huge 36% of this ‘lower’ class has been recorded as being a customer who shops with Iceland and watches such shows. Therefore, companies popular with these classes advertise around other shows such as, “I’m a celebrity, get me out of here”. Iceland has sponsored the show for 9 years, showing that they successfully market their products to the right audience. Social class can influence the type of media a customer is going to look at and have an active interest in, stereotypically those of a lower class or status are less likely to indulge in such things as newspaper subscriptions or read the paper at all, in some cases. A company like Iceland will find that using such a method to advertise will be a waste of precious time and money as they will be willing in a customer that has no interest in shopping with them.

In a 2016 advertisement, Iceland tried to appeal to the working-class family; within the advertisement they demonstrated the ease of their home delivery option and were forthcoming with how cheaply you can produce a hearty meal for the family even when on a budget. They are trying to broaden their market to prove that they aren’t only a cheaper alternative but that they provide quality food that can be trusted by families.