

# The Sri Lankan Post-modern Consumer

Uditha Liyanage

## Abstract

*The seemingly opposing socio-cultural forces of traditionalization and modernization have to be closely recognized in our attempt to profile the emerging Sri Lankan-consumer. The force of traditionalization gathered momentum in the post-1956 period, while the impetus of modernization was felt particularly in the post-1977 period. Escaping the attention of many, the two forces of traditionalization and modernization have been converging, over the recent past, giving rise to the post-modern consumer.*

*The chief implication for marketers in this regard is to find focal areas of fusion, and avoid an attempt to either hark back to the past for its own sake, or become overly modernist, and thus address only a small and alienated group of consumers, at best.*

*Discerning the fine line of fusion between the traditional and the modern impulses of the consumer is the challenge that the Sri Lankan marketer encounters. He also needs to identify the disparate socio-cultural and urban-rural groups that are variously impacted by post-modernist tendencies, which the marketer can ignore at his peril. Indeed, postmodernism appears to be a megatrend that has begun to unfold across the Sri Lankan market place at varying levels of intensity.*

**Key Words** : Socio-cultural forces, Traditionalization, Modernization, Sri Lankan consumer, Post-modern consumer, Socio-cultural and urban-rural groups, Post-modernist tendencies, Post modernism, Sri Lankan market play.

---

**Dr. Uditha Liyanage** is Director, Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM). He is also a leading consultant and developer of managers, and sits on the boards of a number of leading companies. He was the Chairman of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, Sri Lanka Region, and a member of the International board of CIM.