



Consumer Culture in Tourism: Understanding Consumers' Hedonic and Utilitarian Needs

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Abstract: *Consumer behavior in tourism is one of the most important aspects of marketing and promotion of products as well as it is the way of learning and investigating consumer decision making process when they purchase something. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze the consumer needs including hedonic and utilitarian needs which are considered most crucial needs of consumers.*

The present study aims to investigate to understand consumer behavior in tourism and consumer needs. The study uses questionnaire survey from domestic and international consumers (tourists) in the supermarket Korzinka.uz. The questions in the questionnaire are divided into two dimensions. Gathered data is analyzed according to the participants perceptions and related literature reviews.

Keywords: *Tourism, Consumer, Needs, Products, Promotion.*

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Significance of the topic

The study of consumer behavior serves as the foundation for all marketing initiatives used to create, advertise, and sell tourism-related goods. It goes without saying that if we want to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of marketing efforts, we must work to comprehend how consumers choose to buy or utilize tourism-related items. Understanding their behavior patterns will help us choose when to step in and change the course of events in order to get the desired outcomes. We'll be able to target the right people at the right time with the right tourism offering. More crucially, we will be able to influence people to select specific products that we will have better customized to fit their unique requirements and desires. Therefore, in order to increase the effectiveness of marketing initiatives, of consumer behavior is essential.

When it comes to the types of tourism and understand tourist behavior, it should be noted that they vary according to the activities which tourists can take. It includes individual business travel, participation in conferences, meetings, and training sessions; attending and planning trade shows and exhibitions; conducting product launches; and incentive travel (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2007).

Although many needs of consumer behavior have been established, there hasn't been much empirical study to compare these types of needs to actual behavioral patterns, which is the difficulty with the academic field of consumer behavior. This is especially true in the tourism sector, where research on consumer behavior is very much in the early stages of development. It is important that, in this research study, it is considered that these needs should be investigated in order to understand consumer behavior and their needs including hedonic and utilitarian needs. This will enable us to pinpoint other research areas and to understand current Uzbek marketing areas as well as to understand its consumer's needs. Specifically, it should be noted that the significance of the research is to analyze tourist behavior needs like hedonic. Because it is one of the most valuable types of needs. Furthermore, the tourist engages in hedonistic tourism by looking for enjoyable experiences. The physical enjoyment and social life are the foundation of the tourism experience. In hedonistic tourism the tourist is frequently younger and goes on excursions with others who share their interests.

1.2 Research aims and questions

The aim of the thesis is to conduct research in order to investigate the consumer behaviour purchase decision making process and to understand consumer needs including hedonic and utilitarian needs by travelers and local communities of Uzbekistan. Furthermore, to investigate basic needs of consumer needs in local markets is intended to know primary products which consumers purchase in local markets including Korzinka.uz hypermarket.

In order to develop effective and efficient advertising campaigns, it is required to comprehend consumer behavior. Segmentation is used to design advertising campaigns based on the market segment's particular demands. Based on the segmentation and consumer needs, an understanding of customers' needs can be achieved by answering the following questions:

- Who is important in the buying decision?
- What are the criteria their choice is based on?
- What are their basic needs to purchase the product?
- What are the main products chosen by the consumers?

1.3 Research methods

Different types of methods have been used in this research including questionnaire survey and face to face interview. Questionnaire is distributed to the consumers and face to face interview is taken from the staff of the object of the research. Furthermore, literature review and personal observation of consumer behavior needs in local supermarkets and hypermarkets.

Literature Review

2.1 Investigating consumer (tourist) behavior

First of all, it should be mentioned that defining consumer behavior is crucial point to understand further literature review in the research. Horner and Swarbrooke (2007) have defined consumer behavior in tourism: 'Consumer behavior is the study of why people buy the product they do, and how they make their decision'. Before considering definitions and models that have been adapted for the tourism sector, it is important to consider the general definitions developed by researchers when considering consumer behavior as a general topic.

The process by which a consumer chooses to purchase or use a product or service is defined as the consumer behavior process. Consumer behavior has been defined by Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (2001) as 'those activities directly involved in obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services including the decision processes that precedes and follows these actions. This definition emphasizes the importance of the psychological process which the consumer goes through during the pre-purchase and post-purchase stages.

Solomon (2018) incorporates the concept of consumer needs and wants into his definition as follows: 'Consumer behavior is the process involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and wants'. This definition introduces the idea that consumers may make purchase decisions in groups, not simply as individuals. The processes that are highlighted in these definitions are very complex, and for this reason it has been more common to illustrate the consumer behavior process with reference to models rather than definitions. These are reviewed in the following section. Before we consider consumer behavior models in more depth, however, it is important to consider the role of consumer behavior in the marketing process. An understanding of consumer behavior is vital if the marketing activity carried out by organizations is to be effective. Marketing is concerned with the relationship between consumer or buyer and seller. Marketing relies on the idea that organizations should have the consumer as the central focus for all their activities.

The ability to persuade consumers to purchase products may not necessitate a detailed understanding of their behavior patterns and motives. It may be enough just to have the ability to persuade them to purchase. Despite this view, the authors suggest that a deeper understanding of the consumer behavior process will help with the marketing of products and services. Juvan et al. (2017) outlines the value of consumer behavior for the marketing management process in tourism. An understanding of consumer needs, attitudes and decision processes will allow marketing managers to improve their decision-making process. It will allow marketing managers to forecast behavior in the future and therefore avoid being overoptimistic or underestimating consumer demand. An understanding of consumer behavior is also important for the product development of new tourism products and facilities. It will allow the marketing manager to have a clearer view of the types of benefits that consumers are looking for, and enable these to be reflected in the development process.

2.2 Consumer needs

Consumer behaviour (CB) involves certain decisions, activities, ideas or experiences that satisfy consumer needs and wants (Solomon, 1996). It is 'concerned with all activities directly involved in obtaining, consuming and disposing of products and services, including the decision processes that precede and follow these actions' (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995, p. 4).

The concept of consumers' need for uniqueness derives from Snyder and Fromkin's (1977) theory of uniqueness. According to this theory, the need to see oneself as being different from other persons is aroused and competes with other motives in situations that threaten the self-perception of uniqueness (i.e., situations in which individuals see themselves as highly similar to others in their social environment). Individuals attempt to reclaim their self-esteem and reduce negative affect through self-distinguishing

behaviors. These expressions of uniqueness are sought in different forms and outlets where the social penalties for being different are not severe. Material expressions of one's differentness from others are particularly valued because they satisfy the need for uniqueness without risking severe social penalties (Snyder 1992). Snyder and Fromkin (1977) recognize that different individuals evidence varying degrees of uniqueness motivation. Because individuals may fulfill their desire to be unique in a variety of ways (e.g., through possession displays [see Belk 1988], style of interpersonal interaction [see Maslach], or the domains of knowledge in which they establish expertise [see Holt 1995]), they are likely to vary in their tendency to satisfy their uniqueness motivation through consumer behaviors and possessions.

2.3 Influence of consumer needs on decision making process

Although studies have concluded that consumer needs are the priority in apparel purchases (Perry & Chung, 2016), consumer needs for choosing specific products have lagged behind market demands (Bergmann & McGregor, 2011). Consumer perceptions of needs may be very different when they see the physical product or after using the product (Perry, 2016a). Previous studies have indicated consumers changed their needs expectations of a product after using it (Perry & Lee, 2017). Therefore, it is important to empirically investigate consumer needs for choosing specific products.

So, when it come to the definition of consumer needs, it can be said that it is a cause for all the activities of human being and each activity is backed by a particular need or motive. Needs is a feeling or desire for something, which is lacking and through performing various activities to get the feeling of lacking removal and thus become satisfied. Thus, any human behavior is caused by motives or needs. Hence to make it clearer, motivation is concerned with:

Needs-the most basic human requirement

Drives-tell show these needs translate into behavior

Goals-what these behaviors aim to achieve

It can be summarized that all these determinators of needs and wants in the following Table 1 as the impact of need and want determinants.

Table 1. influence of need and want determinants.

Source: “Consumer behavior” Rai Technology University, 2010.

Personal Characteristics		Environment Characteristics	
		Physical	Contextual
	Physical	1. Needs-driven markets (e.g., medicine for cold and cough)	3. Personal needs and environmental wants (e.g., microwavable foods)
	Contextual	2. Personal wants and environmental needs (e.g., Pashmina Shawl)	4. Wants driven markets (e.g., Theatre attendance)

We can take a few more examples to explain this further:

1. Needs-driven markets

–
E.g., summer clothing

2. Personal wants and environmental needs
–E.g., name-brand summer clothing
3. Personal needs and environmental wants
–E.g., ready to eat meals
4. Wants-driven markets
–E.g., designer clothing

Needs may also be classified even more basically - utilitarian or hedonic (Dutta, 2008). A consumer's utilitarian needs focus on some practical benefits and are identified with product attributes that define product performance such as economy or durability etc. Hedonic needs relate to achieving pleasure from the consumption of a product or service and are often associated with emotions or fantasies (Dutta, 2008). Hedonic needs are more experiential as they are closely identified with the consumption process (Dutta, 2008). For example, a hedonic need might be the desire to be attractive to the opposite gender. The evaluative criteria for brands are usually emotional rather than rational (utilitarian) (Dutta, 2008).

Methods, Results and Discussion

This chapter includes the selection of research method, sampling method, data collection and data analysis. To make the research approach format clear, Research methods in Tourism, Hospitality and Events management by Paul Brunt, Susan Horner and Natalie Semley and Social research methods 4th edition (Bryman, 2012) published in the United States by Oxford University Press Inc., New York have been used as a guideline for the style and form.

3.1 Research design

Since the survey was taken into action under the title of “Understanding the hedonic and utilitarian needs of the customers”, it was conducted in one of the most visited retail stores of Samarkand Korzinka.uz by the researcher and some students of Silk Road International University of Tourism and Cultural Heritage. The main mission that must have been achieved was to understand what products are preferred and bought by the clients of Korzinka.uz by categorizing them into two groups Hedonic and Utilitarian products. The main data that was required to gain was to know the prime purpose of visiting to this store understanding if they come here to satisfy their hedonic needs or utilitarian ones.

The survey was divided into two steps: the first step covered gathering data about the demographic characteristics of the consumers in order to make a report on their age, gender, marital status, financial status, educational levels and about the motivation and client satisfaction. While the second step included observing the baskets of the clients during the check out at the cashier desk and categorizing their products into 2 groups hedonic and second utilitarian. After conducting survey for 4 hours in the Korzinka.uz and analyzing almost 70 to 80 baskets of the visitors we gathered sufficient amount of data and made some interpretations about the whole clients of Korzinka.uz based on our results.

Demographic Data of the current Clients of Korzinka.uz

During this survey the researcher and her team was able to have some oral Q&A sessions with volunteer customers of the Korzinka.uz who were open to questions and gave full answers and within these four hours around 50 people were asked questions which were prepared beforehand (the list of questions is attached) and based on their answers we made a small conclusion about the general demographic data of the Korzinka.uz consumers. The table below clearly demonstrates the results of the survey in a detailed manner. In this table you can find the variable according to what the questions were asked and options the customers were offered to choose from. According to their answers which were shown in numbers in a Frequency line the percentages calculated in order to define at what proportions will they conclude if we look at the whole consumers share as a population and those 50 surveyed candidates as a sample. A quantitative data is used since the main purpose of this very survey was to gain general information in numbers just for statistics about the demography of the clients visiting this retail store.

Table 2. Demographic Data of the current Clients of Korzinka.uz

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percentages
Age	• Under 18	8	16%
	• 18-24	9	18%
	• 25-35	12	24%
	• 36-45	11	22%
	• 46-55	5	10%
	• Above 56	5	10%
Gender	• Male	32	64%
	• Female	18	36%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer not to say 	0	0%
Marital Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single • Married • Divorced • Widowed • Prefer not to say 	8 30 4 5 3	16% 60% 8% 10% 6%
Educational Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No degree • Less than high school diploma • Bachelor's degree • Master's degree 	2 15 25 8	4% 30% 50% 16%
Employment Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Part-time employed • Full-time employed • Self-employed • Unemployed • Retired 	8 5 27 4 2 4	16% 10% 54% 8% 4% 8%
Monthly income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than \$200 • \$250-\$350 • \$360-\$450 • \$460-\$550 • \$560-\$650 • More than \$650 	5 18 24 3 0 0	10% 36% 48% 6% 0% 0%
Parental Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent • Not a Parent • Expecting a baby • Prefer not to say 	32 13 2 3	64% 26% 4% 6%
Number of Children in a family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No child • One child • Two children • Three children • More than 3 children 	12 11 15 9 3	24% 22% 30% 18% 6%
Nationality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uzbek • Tajik • Russian • Kazakh • Iranian 	21 15 7 1 4	42% 30% 14% 2% 8%

	• Tatar	2	4%
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Source: own elaboration.

3.2 Data analysis and report

The second stage of the survey was to find out about the satisfaction of the clients visiting Korzinka.uz. This stage of the survey was also conducted as a Q&A session by asking some oral questions from the guests to know more about their motivation of coming here and about the quality of the service that they receive.

Motivation

The main motivation that triggers the guests visit this place as follows

- Affordable price
- Loyalty programs
- High quality products
- Satisfying service
- Service recovery system
- Location
- Brand
- Other minor factors (which were difficult to categorize)

Service Satisfaction

After Q&A sessions with the clients it was clear that most proportion of the guests were satisfied with service that Korzinka.uz show to its clients. But still there were some opposing opinions about it as well. The main reason behind such dissatisfaction were:

- long queues
- language barriers of the sales assistants
- less frequent refreshment of the several types of the products
- no availability of some rare products

Basic Demands of the Clients

The main needs and demands of the customers visiting Korzinka.uz are mostly food and beverage. The biggest proportion of product variety also goes for this type of products in this store. The kitchen tools and hygienic products placed as a second most demanded products in this market. The last place goes for clothes.

There are actually seasonal demands for certain products. They may differ from season to season and from holiday to holiday. For example, during the New Year the demands of the clients will shift from fruits and vegetables to conserved products because of the difference in prices and most of the product share will be occupied by different types of chocolate during these high seasons for sweets. Based on our research we found out that the demands for the products of this store shift from one to another with the influence of the seasonal, pricing and other factors.

Categorizing the hedonic and utilitarian needs of the clients

The last stage of the very survey was to analyze the hedonic and utilitarian needs of the clients by observing their baskets at the check-out desk. The total amount of the baskets was between 70/80. After the survey we the whole team with some argumentative discussions categorized those products into two categories like hedonic and utilitarian.

Hedonic Products

Hedonic needs are mostly connected with the emotional status of the individual and they make decision based on their feelings while choosing such products. The products which mostly serve for the enjoyment, pleasure and satisfaction of the guest were listed under the category of hedonic needs. The list was too long to list here that's why will be giving just several examples of those products

- Nutella
- Cake
- Toys
- Flower shaped bread
- MM&S
- Flowers
- Pringles
- Sparkling Drinks
- Ice cream
- Many more

Utilitarian Needs

The needs which are the basic and must have essentials of households. These products are the basic products which we usually buy without any motivation or emotional condition. They are really necessary and that is the reason why costumers buy them on a daily basis. During the research it was listed tons of utilitarian products that the clients buy from Korzinka.uz here it is given as an example just a few of them

- Bread
- Water
- Noodles
- Grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Dairy products
- Many more

With the help of all the date at the hand which were gathered from almost 80 clients' baskets and groceries we made this pay chary clearly demonstrating maybe comparing the share of the Hedonic and Utilitarian needs of the consumers in Korzinka.uz. According to our research the share of utilitarian products that the clients purchase is almost triple bigger than hedonic ones.

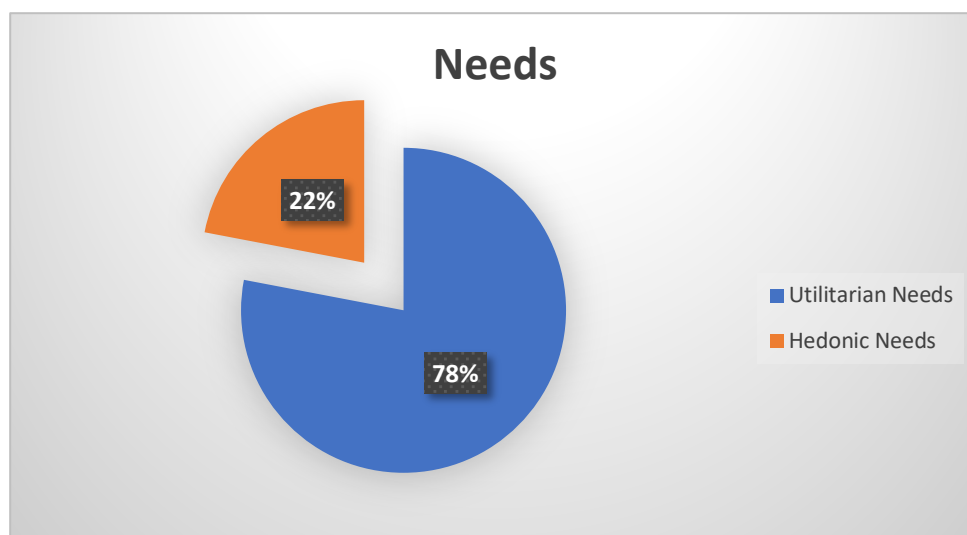
Figure 1. Proportion of consumer needs

Source: own elaboration

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was an in-depth investigation of consumer needs and behavior purposes of choosing specific products based on their hedonic and utilitarian needs from perspectives of supermarkets and hypermarkets. Four themes were identified concerning types of consumer needs, main basket of consumers, consumers' demographic profile, and the proportion of consumers' hedonic and utilitarian needs.

The survey which was conducted in Korzinka.uz gives understanding of consumer behavior needs and their main products which they prefer during their presence in the supermarket. The researcher was



able to gather general data about the clients of Korzinka.uz, their motivation which makes them come and purchase products from this shop and the level of service from the perspectives of the customers and the proportion of utilitarian and hedonic products that the very store's clients buy on a daily basis.

According to the gathered data from the participants and literature review it has been revealed that consumer behavior and consumer needs are crucial points to make a decision when they want to purchase something. Therefore, it is highly suggested that understanding consumer needs is fruitful to make a marketing research and campaign to attract and offer better service and product to more and more clients and consumers.

Based on the investigation and consumer needs, the following recommendations will be considered to understand the consumer behavior and needs.

To understand pre and post purchase process of consumers.

To understand the leading role of consumer behavior decision making process.

To learn and investigate the basic needs of consumers when they are on the purchase.

To investigate regularly the basket of the consumers.

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