

STUDY REGARDING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BEHAVIOR OF TOURIST SERVICE CONSUMERS

MARIN DIANA*¹, CIOLAC RAMONA¹, VADUVA LOREDANA¹,
PETROMAN I.¹, PETROMAN CORNELIA¹

¹*Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of
Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: diana_rachiciu@yahoo.com

Abstract. In order to carry out successful activities in the field of tourism, it is necessary to understand in detail both the attitude and the behavior of consumers of tourism products and services, meaning determining the reasons (factors influencing consumer behavior, meaning environment, culture and psychological profile) rational, emotional and sometimes subconscious, which causes people to do what they do. The category of consumer in general, and the one of consumer of tourism products and services in particular is determined by the relationship between our needs and desires, and products and brands of products try to meet the different levels of the pyramid of human needs.

Key words: tourism, brand, tourist product

INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is the study of motif -more precisely, rational, emotional, and often subconscious reasons-why people do what they do [4,5,6,9].

Marketers need to follow step by step the following process of studying consumer behavior:

- to study and analyze what consumers actually do (what brands they buy, when, how and where they buy these brands, etc.), putting the researcher and consumers face to face in what is called a "study of market":

- the person doing the research or the people doing the research depends on the type of research - primary or secondary:

- in primary research, the company's marketer designs and conducts the research and interprets the research results;

- in secondary research, the research was done by a third party;

- the number of respondents (consumers) involved in a market study depends on the type of research - quantitative or qualitative:

- in quantitative research, the number of respondents must be large enough for the research to be statistically valid and for the results to be able to be extrapolated to a larger population;

- in qualitative research, the number of respondents is smaller, but the questions asked are more detailed

- to analyze why consumers do what they do (because of a strong rational reason, because of an emotional reason or because of the desire to display a certain status?) [1,12];

- to decide what needs to be done to get consumers to do what the company wants them to do.

Market research should ideally include three key elements [2,7,13]:

- defining the research objectives (what the marketer wants to know);

- study of secondary research (national statistics, professional associations, annual reports of the company, press releases, technical reports, product registration forms), a fast, convenient and valid quantitative research that can answer questions about the brand, at product category and competing companies - which gives rise to questions whose answer can only be found through the primary study [3,8,15];

- designing the primary study, which can be done in several ways:
- asking consumers to try it and then answer questions such as:
 - Do you like it?
 - How is it compared to other similar products?
 - What would you do to improve it?
- tracking consumers:
 - at shopping;
 - using the product or service in question;
 - making shopping by comparison;
 - how to buy in a supermarket compared to a general store;
- organizing discussion groups of 7 people, dialogues with a single consumer or a combination of them in which consumers tell their experiences and express their opinions;
- based on research projects (based on collages, photos, games) developed by anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists, etc., to find out what consumers really think who might otherwise be tempted to say what they think that they would like the investigator to hear [16];
- based on surveys (by mail, email, telephone, etc.) and test markets within market research campaigns.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

In order to identify the characteristics of the behavior of consumers of tourist services, we undertook studies analyzing the works of authors from abroad and from the country, but we also determined the ways of market segmentation, and proposed some questions to determine the behavior of tourism consumers in the future.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Understanding why consumers do what they do - that is, the factors that influence their behavior - helps us predict their behavior (that is, what they will buy, so what sales we will make).

Traditionally, it is considered that the factors that influence consumer behavior are three - environment, culture and psychological profile.

Environment. Everything around us determines everything we do, including the purchases we make and how we make those purchases:

- celebrities (we buy the same things as our favorite actor or singer out of a desire to identify, even if only in this way, with him);
- past experiences (we always buy the same product because we were satisfied with it and avoid buying a product that disappointed us);
- the family (the purchasing power of the family or the tradition established in the family make us buy one product or another);
- prices (a low price is hunted by any buyer, but a good quality ratio- price would be ideal);
- friends (sometimes we buy a product only because it was recommended to us by a friend or because our friend always buys it);
- advertising (if it is attractive and convincing - with incomprehensible scientific and/or technical details - advertising can determine the purchase of a certain product or service);
- status (we buy Levi's jeans if we identify with any category except the category of manual workers, and Wrangler jeans if we belong to the latter);
- trends (the desire to comply with the trends - with the trend - makes them, especially young people, to buy certain products).

Culture is the one which defines a certain group of people at a certain time and in a certain place. It is a sum of knowledge, values and beliefs that those people have in common and, as such, is constantly evolving and changing.

Each country has its own cultures and subcultures. Ethnic cultures, demographic cultures and societal cultures have a considerable impact on who we are, on the things we believe in and on the way we act or react.

Culture directly influences consumer behavior. For example, Western North American culture values only what is new - so products should not "last" too long.

The psychological profile (attitudes, personality, psychographic profile - interests and opinions) and lifestyle of the individual determines the profile of the consumer. People were segmented according to their behavior into eight categories of consumers:

- innovative;
- experienced;
- fighter;
- successful;
- faithful;
- active;
- thinker;
- survivor.

The consumer category is determined by the relationship between our needs and desires, and products and product brands try to satisfy the different levels of the pyramid of needs developed by Abraham Maslow since 1943 [17].

Market segmentation is done in a variety of ways:

- opinion leaders (idols in show business, politicians, athletes) are, in general, the first to try new products, which contribute to shaping trends and which can prove useful to the brands they are trying to impose;

- geographical, demographic or psychological subcultures:

- ethnic cultures, which, according to sociological surveys, seem to value, above all, respect for themselves and their culture, despite the fact that:

- speak different languages (for example, in Romania, Romanian, Hungarian, German, Serbian, Roma, etc.) or different languages (in Romania, Wallachian, Moldovan, Transylvanian, etc.);
- have different culinary preferences (in Romania, Moldovans prefer borscht and Transylvanians soup);
- they have different traditions (in Romania, Moldavians respect their godparents more than their parents, once they have been officially married at church);
- they have different cultures (in Romania, the exaggerated hospitality of the Moldavians and the exaggerated rigor of the ethnic Germans from Banat).

- social classes, difficult to define in Romania, especially in the conditions of today's economic crisis, can be classified as:

- an upper layer of the rich class, belonging to at least the second generation of wealthy people, buys relatively little because they already have what they need: in terms of holidays, they opt for traditional, exclusive destinations;
- a lower layer of the rich class, in the first generation of able-bodied people, buys everything that is new: in terms of holidays, they opt for exclusive exotic destinations;
- a upper layer of middle class, made up of middle-level managers or business owners, tend to reflect, in what they buy, their professional success: in terms of holidays, they opt for frequented destinations but in higher-level hotels;

- a lower layer of middle class, made up of small entrepreneurs and well-paid highly skilled workers, tend to be conservative and save for their children's future: when it comes to holidays, they opt for frequented destinations but in mid-range hotels;
- an upper layer of the lower class, made up of medium-skilled workers and trade workers, tend to follow the fashion created by opinion leaders: in terms of holidays, they opt for budget-type destinations (low-cost);
- a lower layer of the lower class, made up of unskilled workers, unassimilated ethnic groups and those sporadically employed, buys almost exclusively on impulse and on credit, when they can: in terms of holidays, they have no money for such a thing;
- other demographic criteria:
 - gender: as women are more numerous than men (including in Romania), most advertisements are focused on women;
 - age: as older people are less willing than young people to accept new brands, most advertisements are aimed at young people;
 - sexual orientation and in this population sample preferences were identified for a certain car brand or for a certain place to spend the holidays: in Romania, Vama Veche seems to be the preferred place of gay communities, for example a religion: neo-Protestant churches forbid their followers to eat pork, alcohol or coffee, which makes them well-defined consumer groups: when it comes to tourism, it seems pointless to offer them a tour of the monasteries in Bucovina, for example, to a church that refuses to represent the religious spirit in any way;
 - political views: probably left-wing political supporters, with lower incomes, prefer to spend their holidays in accessible resorts, in conditions of medium comfort;
 - lifestyle: in this case, it is clear that non-conformists always choose the tent and camping to the detriment of the hotel.

It is interesting to imagine how the tourism consumer will behave in the future, when the pressure of daily stress will be even higher than it is now and answer questions such as:

- What will the increase in stress mean for the tourism business?
- What kind of vacation will we prefer in 10 years?
- Will the vacation of more than 10 years include the trip?
- Will the vacation be shorter or longer?
- Do we want to be with new friends, to be anonymous in a sea of strangers or to be completely alone?

The tourism marketer should try to find answers to all these questions so that he can plan his business tomorrow and also know that there are four reasons why a new product or service may fail:



Figure 1. Reasons why a new product or service may fail

Source: our own research

- because it was a bad idea from the very beginning (for example, the idea of turning your farm into an agritourism farm for Romanian tourists, although in Romania this type of tourism does not catch on for easy reasons:
 - most of those who would like to spend their vacation I know very well what the Romanian rural environment means, or they go to the countryside frequently to help their relatives to work in the fields or because they simply want to escape anywhere else than in the rural area);
- because something is not going well in the marketing mix (for example, the promotion of agritourism activities in Romania);
- because someone misunderstood the market study (not always a market study 100% reflects the reality);
- because the trends have changed (this is also the case in Romania, where a holiday at sea cannot equal the holiday on the Bulgarian coast - more civilized, cheaper and superior in quality - or Turkish, for example, where studios or apartments with kitchenettes can make the holiday much cheaper).

CONCLUSIONS

Even if marketers do not always succeed in getting people to do what they want (that is, persuade them to buy their company's product or service), they can put the product or service in the best possible light as long as they understand what consumers want, how they make the decisions, why they choose the brands they choose and how and where to talk to them.

In recent decades, globalization has brought with it the globalization of the buying public, and the globalization of a large number of products and services. The tourism industry is also facing the phenomenon of globalization. Proof: the growing interest in any form of agritourism, even in countries like Romania, where agritourism could attract especially foreign tourists.

REFERENCES

- [1]. **BLYTHE J.**, 1998), Comportamentul consumatorului, Editura Teora, București
- [2]. **CĂTOIU I., TEODORESCU N.**, 2004, Comportamentul Consumatorului, Ediția a -2- revizuită, Editura Uranus, București
- [3]. **DOBRE C.**, 2000, Comportamentul consumatorului, Editura Orizonturi Universitare, Timișoara
- [4]. **DUSSART CH.**, 1993, Comportement du consommateur et strategie de marketing, MC, Graw Hill
- [5]. **ENGEL J.K., BLACKWELL R.D., MINIARD P.W.**, 1990, Consumer Behaviour, Sixth Edition, The Dryden Press
- [6]. **HORNER S., SWARBROOKE J.**, 2007, Consumer Behaviour in Tourism, Amsterdam: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann
- [7]. **MARIN DIANA**, 2015, Research Regarding the Purchase Decision Process of Consumer of Food Products, Scientific Papers: Animal Science and Biotechnologies, vol. 48 (1), pp. 328-332, 2015
- [8]. **MARIN DIANA, PETROMAN I., POPESCU M., PETROMAN CORNELIA, IOSIM IASMINA, CIOLAC RAMONA, DUMITRESCU CARMEN, LOZICI ANA**, 2013, Factors that influence consumer of rural and farm tourism behavior, *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, 15(4), 81
- [9]. **MAXIM E., TOADER G.**, 2000, Marketing. Comportamentul cumpărătorilor, Editura Economică, București
- [10]. **MIHUȚ I., POP M.**, 1996, Consumatorul și managementul ofertei, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1996
- [11]. **MARIN DIANA, STEFANOVIC MILAN, CSAHOLCZI AURELIAN, IENOVAN, DANIELA, PETROMAN, CORNELIA**, 2016, Study regarding the consumers of agroturist products according to social criteria, SGEM, Book 2: Political Sciences, Law, Finance, Economics And Tourism Conference Proceedings, Vol. V, pp. 635-641,
- [12]. **MARIN DIANA , CIOLAC RAMONA, VADUVA LOREDANA, PETROMAN I., PETROMAN CORNELIA**, 2019, Study Regarding the tendencies of consumer behavior at national and local level, *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, vol XX (3)
- [13]. **PETROMAN CORNELIA, PETROMAN I., MARIN DIANA, GABRIS DELIA RAMONA, CIOLAC RAMONA, VĂDUVA LOREDANA**, 2013, Consumption of Food in Quantitative Terms on Average of Origin, *Lucrări Științifice Zootehnie și Biotehnologii (Scientific Papers: Animal Science and Biotechnologies)*, ISSN 1221-5287, vol.46 (1)
- [14]. **PETROMAN I., MARIN DIANA, PETROMAN CORNELIA**, 2015, Bazele turismului, Editura Eurostampa, Timișoara
- [15]. **SCHIFFMANN L.G., KANUK L.L.**, 1991, Consumer Behaviour, Prentice Hall, NJ., New York
- [16]. **SOLOMON M.**, 2004, Consumer Behavior, Prentice Hall
- [17]. **MASLOW A.**, 1943, A Theory of Human Motivation