

*K.Kantayeva**

*Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University
Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan*

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN THE MODERN DIGITAL SOCIETY: TRENDS, PROBLEMS AND WAYS TO OVERCOME

Annotation

The past year has changed consumer behavior and accelerated the transition of society into a «digital» context. Forced to stay at home, consumers are increasingly resorting to online solutions, including online banking, food delivery apps, online shopping, telemedicine and more. This work is the starting point of a broader research path on this topic. Thus, at this level of analysis, the main results are as follows:

- identification, through the analysis of reference literature, of the main research approaches to consumer behavior in general and the main criteria characterizing its theoretical aspects;
- identification of specific literature on the topic of consumer behavior in a digital society;
- a brief overview of consumer behavior research, first highlighting the main stages from a chronological point of view, and then providing a brief picture of the current situation in the digital world.

Keywords: consumer society, consumer behavior, digital society, digitalization.

*Қ.А.Кантаева**

*Абай атындағы Қазақ ұлттық педагогикалық университеті
Алматы, Қазақстан Республикасы*

ҚАЗІРГІ ЦИФРЛЫҚ ҚОҒАМДАҒЫ ТҰТЫНУШЫЛЫҚ МІНЕЗ-ҚҰЛЫҚ: ТЕНДЕНЦИЯЛАР, МӘСЕЛЕЛЕР ЖӘНЕ КҮРЕС ЖОЛДАРЫ

Аңдатпа

Өткен жыл тұтынушылық мінез-құлықты өзгертті және қоғамның «цифрлық» контекстке көшуін жеделдетті. Үйде болуға мәжбүр болған тұтынушылар онлайн-шешімдерге, соның ішінде онлайн-банкингке, азық-түлік жеткізуге арналған қосымшаларға, онлайн-дүкендерге, телемедицинаға және басқаларға көбірек жүгінеді. Бұл жұмыс осы тақырып бойынша кеңірек зерттеу жолының бастапқы нүктесі болып табылады. Осылайша, талдаудың осы деңгейінде негізгі нәтижелер келесідей:

- анықтамалық әдебиеттерді, жалпы тұтынушылық мінез-құлыққа негізгі зерттеу тәсілдерін және оның теориялық аспектілерін сипаттайтын негізгі критерийлерді талдау;
- цифрлық қоғамдағы тұтынушылық мінез-құлық тақырыбы бойынша нақты әдебиеттерді анықтау;
- тұтынушылардың мінез-құлқын зерттеуге қысқаша шолу, алдымен негізгі кезеңдерді хронологиялық тұрғыдан бөліп көрсету, содан кейін цифрлық әлемдегі қазіргі жағдайдың қысқаша көрінісін беру.

Түйін сөздер: тұтынушылық қоғам, тұтынушылық мінез-құлық, цифрлық қоғам, цифрландыру.

*Казахский национальный Педагогический университет имени Абая
Алматы, Республика Казахстан*

ПОТРЕБИТЕЛЬСКОЕ ПОВЕДЕНИЕ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ЦИФРОВОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ: ТЕНДЕНЦИИ, ПРОБЛЕМЫ И ПУТИ ПРЕОДОЛЕНИЯ

Аннотация

Прошедший год изменил потребительское поведение и ускорил переход общества в «цифровой» контекст. Вынужденные оставаться дома, потребители все чаще прибегают к онлайн-решениям, включая онлайн-банкинг, приложения для доставки продуктов питания, онлайн-магазины, телемедицину и многое другое. Эта работа является отправной точкой более широкого исследовательского пути по этой теме. Таким образом, на этом уровне анализа основные результаты заключаются в следующем:

- выявление, посредством анализа справочной литературы, основных исследовательских подходов к потребительскому поведению в целом и основных критериев, характеризующих его теоретические аспекты;
- выявление конкретной литературы по теме потребительского поведения в цифровом обществе;
- краткий обзор исследований потребительского поведения, сначала выделяя основные этапы с хронологической точки зрения, а затем предоставляя краткую картину текущей ситуации в цифровом мире.

Ключевые слова: потребительское общество, потребительское поведение, цифровое общество, цифровизация.

Introduction

The past year has just changed consumer behavior and accelerated the transition of society to a «digital» context. Forced to stay at home, consumers are increasingly resorting to online solutions, including online banking, food and grocery delivery apps, online shopping, telemedicine and more.

Companies had to raise the bar. The ability to offer a flexible and personalized digital customer experience has become more important than ever. According to Zendesk's Customer Service Trends (CX) report for 2021, 65% of customers want to make purchases from companies offering fast and easy online transactions, and 75% are willing to spend more money on purchases from companies that can provide a satisfactory quality of customer service [1].

Messaging has been key to strong customer support during the pandemic. It has also grown faster than any other support channel, with Social messaging popularity increasing by 110% year-over-year. This is likely because messaging is convenient and personalized, where an interaction can easily be handled while working from home or even walking the dog.

Many of the drinking habits developed during the pandemic have long-term potential. The shift of wholesale online has encouraged consumers to try new products and experiences. In 2020, most financial services companies had to look for new ways to interact with customers. In 2021, the solution is clear: increase customer convenience with conversational messaging. Among financial services companies that added a new channel for customer experience in the past year, 40% pointed to social messaging apps like WhatsApp. Use messaging to handle large inflows of requests while providing personalized customer support, wherever they are. Whether it's integrating a live chat or social messaging solution on your site and or mobile app, adding messaging to your customer experience is simple. With the progressive adoption of remote working modes, you put agents in a position to provide customers with excellent service, providing them with the complete customer context in a unified space. Context allows agents to manage conversations more effectively based

on past interactions, while also helping to build stronger relationships with customers. Retailing New Trends Despite facing the ups and downs of the market for some time now, in the past year retailers have been forced to literally jump through hoops almost overnight. During the pandemic, sales in the e-commerce sector increased by 30%, and most customers plan to continue shopping online. Among the new consumption habits, more customers chose to buy online and pick up items in store (BOPIS, Buy Online, Pick up In-Store) or use apps and delivery services. In fact, BOPIS options grew by 28%, while grocery deliveries increased by 57%.

Research methodology

The topic of consumer behavior is of significant interest to many Sciences. This is not accidental, because the life of each person is directly related to this process. Representatives of economic and cultural groups were the first to study the phenomenon of consumption. In economic discourse, the consumption of marginalism, neoclassical economic theory, was considered as a necessary condition for the formation, affirmation and maintenance of a social situation or as a means of social control. In this case, one can point to the famous work of the American sociologist and economist Thorstein Veblen «Theory of the Empty Class» [2], which appeared in 1899, in which T. Veblen considers two behavioral strategies characteristic of the dominant class: demonstrative laziness and demonstrative consumption. An indicative consumption strategy is the amount of consumption that goes beyond the needs and needs of a person. The meaning of the whole life of these consumers is a wide and comprehensive demonstration of material goods. Owning a large property means an increase in prestige, status, and social status. Therefore, it is necessary to constantly demonstrate their wealth in order to form and maintain public opinion [3].

Aspects related to marketing make up the predominant part of the scientific production of scientists who in recent decades have been engaged in the management of cultural and artistic organizations. In this extensive cultural marketing literature, this work pays special attention to the topic of consumer behavior of art. The objectives of this research contribution are mainly as follows:

- Firstly, to define some parameters in order to provide the first display of the most recent contributions of the discipline, the study of consumer behavior, which, as it turns out, is constantly changing;

- secondly, to identify and describe a specific field of application, which, despite the general fermentation from a theoretical point of view, still remains relatively little studied: consumer art, which seems to be constantly evolving;

- finally, identify a possible key to reading in order to describe and interpret the evolution of the entire discipline, based precisely on the specifics found in the case of art consumption. As emphasized in relation to other aspects of organization and management studies (Solima, 1998, 2004; Moretti, 1999; Zan, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003; Sicca, 2000; Sicca, Zan, 2004; Grandinetti, Moretti, 2004), even in the case of consumer behavior research, the study of such a phenomenon in relation to The art department seems to be an interesting laboratory for “testing” the theories of the entire discipline. This work is the starting point of a broader research path on this topic.

Thus, at this level of analysis, the main results are as follows:

- identification, through the analysis of reference literature, of the main research approaches to consumer behavior in general and the main criteria characterizing its theoretical aspects;

- identification of specific literature on the topic of consumer behavior in a digital society;

- description and, consequently, application to the case of consumption of theoretical concepts related to each theoretical approach identified in the digital world;

- identification of certain elements of analysis, epistemological and methodological order, which may provide a basis for thinking about the evolution of the discipline and be insufficient for verification in subsequent research. It also offers a brief overview of consumer behavior research,

first highlighting the main stages from a chronological point of view, and then providing a brief picture of the current situation in the digital world.

It aims to provide a basis for the synthesis of literature on consumer behavior of society:

- At the end of the article, starting with some general reflections on the evolution of consumer behavior, hypotheses are put forward about possible developments in consumer behavior research in society;

- Analytical approaches to the study of consumer behavior why offer in the introductory paragraph another contribution to the «current state» in consumer behavior research? Many scientists have already felt the need to clean up the increasingly extensive and well-defined literature, trying to determine some way of classifying the contributions of the subject (Hoffman, Holbrook, 1993; Belk, 1995; Solomon, 2002; Dalli, 2003).

Consequently, the research work, which has the consumer behavior of society as an object, could not avoid the proposal of an attempt to synthesize the discipline for at least three reasons:

- the topic of consumer behavior acquired significant (even quantitative) significance after a few years, and this led to the settling in time of the tradition of research, usually shared by the scientific community: the need for in order to resist, even dialectically, this “tradition”;

- related to the previous point, the level of reference frame sharing seems to be such that it limits the debate to what seems to have become, in fact, a “winning» paradigm in consumer behavior research, or a cognitive point of view;

- only recently there has been a need to switch attention to some elements that seemed alien or simply have not yet been considered by the cognitive approach, but this situation has made it necessary not only to correct the epistemological and, consequently, methodological orientations of the entire discipline, but also specific to the cognitive approach. The purpose of this article is to identify some of the most common features of various approaches to the study of consumer behavior in order to provide theoretical support for application in the case of consumer behavior.

At first, it is necessary to define the concept of consumer behavior and consumer society. The first scientists who rejected the economic approach of consumer behavior were marginalists (D.B. Clark, A. Marshall). They brought to the fore the concept of «sovereign consumer», which was interpreted as relatively independent of the structure of production and the interests of producers forced to obey the demands of demand. Within the framework of neoclassical economic theory (J. Schumpeter) [4] the consumer behavior of the «economic man» was considered through a system of postulates, including the following: his actions were subject to one dominant utilitarian motive - an egoistic desire for his own good, expressed in maximizing utility; the «economic person» acting as a consumer had clearly defined needs that were actually not limited to anything other than available resources; the consumer demonstrated a clear stability of preferences due to the rationality of his decisions; in every act of consumer choice, the «economic man» demonstrated his autonomy. He made the decision regardless of the choice of other consumers and of his past experience.

In the future, economists have developed some alternative views concerning the social elements of consumer behavior. Thus, J. Duzenberry [5] shows that consumers associate their opportunities with the consumption of other, more affluent groups, which thereby exert constant cultural pressure on them, forcing them to increase consumption volumes. H. Leibenstein [6] notes the scale and nature of consumption, not just reflecting the inequality in society in terms of the distribution of resources, but becoming a means of actively producing this social inequality. Veblen [7] indicates the fact that the consumer maintains or increases his status positions, endowed with a certain level of prestige, when making a decision. The «economic and sociological man» P. Bourdieu [8], based on his individual tastes expressing class positions, constructs a lifestyle that allows him to distance himself from other classes and maintain their subordination.

Results and discussion

In the postmodern theory of consumption, the most prominent role belongs to Jean Baudrillard, So, in his opinion, consumer behavior cannot be reduced only to the possession of a certain product

or service, it turns into a sphere of human self-expression based on the development of orientation skills in the modern consumer market, the ability to construct an image of one's self with its help. Proving his point, he writes: «Consumption is not a passive state of absorption and appropriation, which is opposed to the active state of production in order to balance, thus, two naive schemes of human behavior» [9]. The consumption of products and services, therefore, is not simply based on following the cultural patterns accepted in society, but turns into a creative process, into a sphere of cognitive, aesthetic reflexivity, in which a person is immersed in the process of interpreting the sign system and the intensive circulation of social preferences at all levels of society. According to J. Baudrillard, this does not lead to the complete elimination of class inequality, but passes into a more subtle form of «cultural segregation».

The analysis of consumer behavior, in fact, can be carried out on the basis of the logic of explaining the phenomenon and decomposing it into stages and elements that characterize it; or the logic of interpretation, which uses a holistic approach. Some authors, offering a comparative analysis of some consumer behavior manuals most popular at the academic level, confirmed what is noted in other studies, and how one can detect the evolution, chronological discipline:

- at the first stage (50s-second half of the 60s), the main contributions, mold, behavioral, or they focused on the stimulus-response paradigm or, with reference to higher-quality methods, they were aimed at studying the motivational system of an individual (Solomon, 2002);

- since the second half of the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, behavioral studies have been enriched with increasingly sophisticated conceptual categories, and the influence of a sociological nature and the role of social pressure on behavioral models are recognized; these paths will be accompanied and significantly developed by the contributions of psychological economics and cognitive psychology (learning process, perceived risk and the system of views personalities make up the most common logical categories in works with such a perspective).;

- also in the early 1970s and up to the early 1980s, the main trends were developing, which are characterized by an attempt to come to descriptive generalizations of the phenomenon: in general, consumer behavior is increasingly viewed as a complex decision-making process, and not as a result of decision-making, paving the way for attempts at a general understanding of the phenomenon of consumption (from purchase to purchase) (Solomon, 2002).;

- in the 1980s, the theoretical context of cognitive psychology focused on specific areas of research and, in particular, on the ways of perception, selection, interpretation, retention and use of advertising information (among other things, you can quote: Coulter, Zaltman, 1994; Coulter, Zaltman, Coulter, 2001; Zaltman, 1997, 2000; Zaltman, Moorman, 1988, 1989);

- but, again, around the 80s, until the second half of the 90s, a phase develops in which the most relevant aspect is related to the fact that within what remains essentially a cognitive thread, some consequences stand out that open the way for many areas of research⁵: some scientists focus on based on the analysis of the influence of “situational” factors on the decision-making processes about buying and, thus, on consumer behavior and consumption of products with high emotional involvement of the consumer (consumer as a person); others restore the role of social groups in decision-making processes about consumption and after consumption, analyzing their practices and languages (the consumer as part of the environment);

- the current landscape seems to be developing along three lines of the cognitive thread highlighted in the previous paragraph, with the addition of research more prominently related to emerging approaches in which it acquires relevance for the theoretical implications it highlights, the concept of “Consumer Experience” (for example, one of the research areas of this approach is called “experimental”). The behavioral approach analyzes behavior without referring to the cognitive processes of a person, which from this point of view are considered incomprehensible. The aim of the study is to predict and control behavior caused, the latter, exclusively by environmental stimuli external to humans [10]. These judgments can be schematized as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1 - Behavioral approach

Thus, consumer behavior hides the multifactorial essence of this phenomenon, which allows us to talk about its fulfillment of a wide range of social functions such as: socializing (through consumption, the actor is «included» in various social groups, joins the social world); adaptive (consumption contributes to a more efficient use of resources, helps to adapt to new realities; integrative (consumption reflects fashion, expresses public opinion, therefore, by consuming goods, the individual is integrated into society, into a particular social group); value support (consumption is based on maintaining norms, values, traditions adopted in society. Consumer goods and behavior must meet consumer expectations, influence the deep mechanisms of perception. In this regard, we can say that consumption contributes to the preservation and maintenance of the public system); goal setting (the economic system develops, with it consumption also develops, contributing to the achievement of profits and the attraction of new customers. The ability to set new goals, achieve them, perceive and create new values indicates that consumer behavior is inherent in the goal-setting function).

In sociology, society and its changes have transformed the process of consumption beyond recognition. From passive satisfaction of needs, it was changed to creative activities, including the motives of action in the choice of a certain product, the specificity of rational and irrational action in consumption, the manifestation of autonomy on the part of the consumer in interpersonal interaction, following cultural values in the process of taste formation.

Cultural factors have the strongest influence on consumer behavior. As a carrier of fundamental values, patterns of perception, needs and behavioral stereotypes, culture has a crucial influence on a person's demands and behavior. Each class or society has its own culture, and in different societies, it influences consumer behavior differently. Consumers belonging to different subcultures form important market segments.

Often consumption has a compatible character, but even in individual consumption, a person almost certainly relates his actions to those of representatives of certain social groups and local communities. The consumer becomes the object of close examination and social control by these groups and communities that regulate both the scale and forms of consumption of various goods and services. People exchange experiences and develop social assessments of consumer goods and their producers. This exchange of information takes place in small informal groups. It happens so often that we do not even realize when our views are reflected on the behavior of our loved ones and when we ourselves are influenced by their point of view.

Conclusions

Consumer behavior is influenced by the personal characteristics of the buyer such as gender, age and life cycle stages, education, employment and economic situation, lifestyle, character traits and self-esteem.

Particularly important in the group of personality factors is the problem of rationality and irrationality of consumption. In the concepts of rational action, not all consumer practices can be defined. There are many plausible reasons why consumer behavior was characterized by a lack of rationality. From their series fall, for example, impulse purchases, as well as consumption under the influence of addictions and habits that can harm health, but which, even knowing their harmful effects, cannot refuse. [9]. A second important source may be the casual conflict between instinct and satisfaction. Instinctive behavior is not always the greatest pleasure, and in that case, to achieve great satisfaction it is necessary to go against one's instincts, showing self-discipline and refinement in everyday affairs. For example, the simplest food is great fun if you are hungry. The third reason why a consumer behaves irrationally is that the good purchased by a particular consumer requires

skills that come for a reason. Discomfort in the development of skills cannot be avoided and occurs immediately, and the pleasure of skillful consumption is distant in time, it is doubtful, so it will be neglected, and the experience of rational consumption will not accumulate in the future.

Thus, consumer behavior is a multifactorial, multifunctional phenomenon that determines the structure and dynamics of an individual's inclusion in various social groups, familiarization with the social world, the use of resources by him; reflecting the degree of ability of economic entities to find optimal balance with the market environment; preserving the culture of society; characterizing the state, content and direction of the processes of economic and social development.

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