

CORRELATION ANALYSIS FOR TOURISM HEDONIC AND UTILITARIAN MOTIVATORS IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

VINEREAN Alexandra¹

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

Abstract

For centuries, the marketing concept claims that organizations must forecast and satisfy consumer needs if their goals are to make profit and develop a connection with their customers. The marketing concept plays a vital role because consumers have a variety of choices and lately, they are better educated, with eagerness in spending and they are capable to shop around much more in order to purchase everything that satisfy their needs and expectations. In this line of ideas, this study examines correlations between consumer motivators to buy a tourism package.

Keywords: *consumer behavior, motivators, hedonism, utilitarian, drive, analysis, determinants, consumer motivation, bivariate correlation.*

JEL Classification: *M31*

1. Introduction

The consumer behavior principles are strictly related to the marketing strategies. Lately, researchers have focused on the influence of the new media on consumer information inquiring, purchasing opportunities, and decision making, being aware that consumers now have fast access to information about any service or product they may want to buy. They have especially concentrated on consumers' online behavior, and the vital role of the Internet

¹ Student, e-mail: alexandra.vinerean@yahoo.com

and other digital technologies in simplifying consumer communications with their fellows and marketers, as well as their capacity to buy online.

Nevertheless, consumer behavior is fascinating but a difficult subject to research (Swarbroke and Horner, 2007). This affirmation is even more accurate because a consumer's decision to acquire has a strong emotional significance. Consumers are influenced in their decision-making process by many internal and external motivators and determinants when they choose to buy different products or services. It is very challenging to investigate how these motivators and determinants affect the clients when they are making their choices. They may be influenced in different ways, according to the type of product or service that they are buying.

2. Motivators

A motive is simply a reason for carrying out a particular behavior; it is not an automatic response to a stimulus. Motives should be distinguished from instincts. Instincts are pre-programmed responses which are involuntary and inborn in the individual (Blythe, 2004).

Blythe (2004) presented a classification of motives meant to help marketers to improve their activities, such as:

- primary motives: the reason that leads to the purchase of a product class (for example, a consumer may need to buy a car to replace an old one);
- secondary motives: they are the reasons behind buying a particular brand (for instance, the consumer may have reasons for purchasing a BMW rather than a Mercedes, or a Peugeot rather than a Ford);
- rational motives : based on reasoning, or logical assessment of the consumer's situation (for example, a client will buy a car for the main reason to be able to carry his four kids and a tent; his decision will be based strictly on this aim);
- emotional motives : these motives have to do with the consumer's feeling about the brand (a client may end up purchasing a sports car despite his need for a family car);
- conscious motives : motives of which the consumer is aware of (a consumer is aware of the need that he has to satisfy- this is a conscious motive);

- dormant motives: motives operating below the conscious level (the client who ends up buying a sports car may not realize that his desire for the sports car is linked to the fact that he is approaching middle age).

In conclusion, consumers are usually persuaded by a motive to satisfy their needs and wants. Marketers define need as a perceived lack. This perception means that simply lacking something does not develop a need, but the individual's realization that he or she lacks something means that the need has been established.

When talking about motives, we must make an observation regarding the definition of "want". One useful definition could be that a want is something unnecessary and unimportant. This definition is not acceptable because one person's extravagance could be another person's necessity. For example, for most people who live in metropolitan cities such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Paris or Tokyo, owning a car is a necessity, while in other areas having a car is a real luxury, for instance in underdeveloped countries. In order to vanish any doubt, marketers define a want as a specific form to satisfy a need. For instance, a person might feel the need to drink something, but want a natural juice. There are many methods in which certain needs can be satisfied. The need for learning a new language could be fulfilled by attending an online course or taking particular classes. Because of this reason, marketers focus all their effort in encouraging consumers to please their needs with a specific satisfier (Blythe, 2004).

3. Drive

Drive is the force that makes a person respond to a need. It is an internal stimulus, and is caused by the drift from the desired state to the actual state. Drive is usually associated with a tension or restlessness (Blythe, 2004).

The influence of the drive will be contingent on the size of the gap between the eagerness and the actual state. For instance, becoming hungry leads to a drive to search for something to eat; the hungrier one becomes, the higher the drive to have something to eat. Once the hungry feeling was satisfied, the tension disappears and the energy is channeled on something else, a different need or request. According to some marketers, the moment when a desire appears is when an individual is feeling dissatisfied with the actual state. In these conditions, if the drive state is at a high level, a person is

more open to listen to suggestions about how to satisfy his or hers needs and wants. In these particular cases, consumers are more vulnerable, and if their typical brand is not available, they will be willing to try other brands.

It is important to know that each individual has a level at which the state of stimulation is enjoyable and challenging, without being uncomfortable or upsetting. This is known as the OPTIMUM STIMULATION LEVEL or OSL. If external stimulation is situated over the optimum level, the individual will inquire to satisfy the need and decrease the drive; but if external stimulation drops below the OSL, the person will inquire to raise the stimulation in order to bring it up to the OSL (Blythe, 2004).

Thus, the OSL is a subjective factor because it varies from one person to another. Some research has revealed that individuals with high OSLs like novelty and risk taking, while those with low OSLs prefer the tried and tested, and tend to be younger people.

4. Hedonic and Utilitarian Value

Hedonism is the cult of pleasure. In terms of consumer behavior, it concerns those areas which attach to the fun of owning something. For example, car manufacturers design car doors to close with a satisfying ‘thunk’. The aim of these car doors is to make the driver and the passengers feel more secure while traveling (Blythe, 2004).

Some relevant aspects of hedonic attributes are intentionally added at the design stage, for example: Apple Mac software includes cartoon images to make work more fun; the turquoise color of the Heinz Beans label intensifies the orange color of the beans so that they look more appealing when opened. Also, these hedonic aspects often appeared unintended, as a by-product of the packaging design. It is important to take into consideration these hedonic attributes because of them people are stimulated to purchase different products. Thus, people are usually ready to pay a small price, in order to own products that are pleasant to use, or which might raise the enjoyable part of life (this usually happens in industrialized countries, and more among rich people).

When talking about advertising, many individuals who work in this particular area, use hedonic images to promote different products and services; for example: Cadbury’s Flake presents a woman losing herself in the pleasure

of eating the chocolate and Range Rover advertisements accentuate the comfort of the car by comparing it with a “womb” environment.

Also, it is important to remark that hedonic approaches are used recently to differentiate the brand by offering the consumer a little fun and an enjoyable experience while using the product. Emphasizing an experience that a consumer could have while owning a particular product is a key point in the promotional stage of a product. So, this is where advertisers have to take full advantage of the hedonic aspects.

In contrast, utilitarian value has led much of the research conducted in the field of consumer behavior (Bloch and Bruce, 1984). Utilitarian consumer behavior has been characterized as task-oriented and rational (Batra and Ahtola, 1990), more precisely, regarding the functional utility, clients count on whether their consumption needs were met successfully (Babin et al., 1994). Usually, this translates into simple acquisitions of products or services, but occasionally, utilitarian value might also be derived from activities performed by a motivated customer out of necessity (Bloch and Richins, 1983).

According to Lowry et al. (2008), hedonic systems are associated with intrinsically motivated intentions, such as to have fun, whereas utilitarian systems are used for extrinsic purposes such as to complete a work task. This definition is ambiguous because it combines the source of the motivation with the desired outcome of an activity. The ideal situation is to concentrate on the capability to achieve any task- regardless of either the motivation is intrinsic or extrinsic to the person- as a utilitarian element of system use, and the value added, experiential features of aesthetics interactivity, capability to induce positive emotions. Hedonic and utilitarian motivations are well acknowledged measurement instruments, which may be used to understand engagement and the purposeful and enjoyable motivations that bring people to the interface.

5. Determinants

According to Swarbrooke and Horner (2007) different individuals will perceive certain determinants to be more important than others, based on their attitudes, personalities, principles, fears and past experiences. Even for the same individual the weighting given to each determinant will vary over time because of the changes in age, family situation and different experiences. It is important to notice that most determinants can be either facilitators or constraints upon consumers who are eager to transform their motivations and

desires into reality. For example, high disposable income will be a facilitator while limited and low disposable income would be a constraint.

Many consumers usually make their purchasing decisions under the influence of determinants, or perceptions of determinants, which might be out-of-date. They might have perceptions of different products of a specific brand which are no longer accurate. This is where different studies and reviews interfere and play a crucial role for all consumers all over the world. Researchers must be aware of different problems that appears during the purchase process, but especially, after the consumption of the products or services was achieved.

To sum up, the determinants of consumers are complex and diverse. They include personal determinants, which vary for each individual, such as: health, disposable income available, the availability of different products, price of the product or service, perceptions and preferences of different brands, fear for trying something new, and discounts. There are also external determinants which might be interpreted in different ways by individual tourists; for instances: global political, economic, social and technological factors, the influences of the media, the marketing activity, and the influence of friends and relatives (Swarbrooke and Horner, 2005).

6. Researching consumer motivators and determinants for tourism decision making process

The preliminary phase of the research starts with the problem definition. For this study, the problem definition involves identifying the motivators and determinants that pursue a particular consumption behavior of tourism products and services. Also in this phase, the main purpose, the objectives and the hypotheses were established, as follows:

- The main purpose: To determine the consumer behavior dimensions in relation to tourism products and services, at an international level.
- Objective: Determining relevant correlations between influencing factors of buying behavior.
- Hypothesis: The majority of the correlations are relevant at a medium or high level.

In the design phase of the research, I defined the variables that were used for this particular study (Table 1).

Table 1: The conceptual and operational defining of the variables

Variable examined	Conceptual definition	Operational definition
Attitude	A propensity to act on the basis of strong beliefs regarding the importance of certain attributes of a travel package.	<input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Accommodation 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Things to do 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Customer Care 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Scenery 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Places to Eat 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Availability of tourist information 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Family friendly facilities 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Infrastructure 1 2 3 4 5 <input type="checkbox"/> -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 Price 1 2 3 4 5

A research design is a framework or a master plan for managing a marketing research project. It analysis the operations essential for procuring the information wanted to structure or resolve marketing research issues. A research design establishes the foundation for controlling the project. An excellent research design will ensure that the marketing research project is managed effectively and efficiently. In defining a research design, the researcher has to equilibrate the perspectives of marketing decision-makers and target respondents. Having experience in this field, marketing decision-makers have some techniques that they consider to be the most effective and in which they have more confidence. Maintaining the technique is the best way to measure or being aware of the problem under investigation, from the perspective of respondents (Malhotra and Birks, 2007).

The data collection process was achieved using a primary research, which involved obtaining original data by conducting a field research. Primary data are data introduced by a researcher for the particular reason of defining the problems that interfere in different process. They are independently tailor-made for the decision-makers of institutions that pay well-concentrated and privileged support. Correlated with easily available data from a range of sources, this exclusivity may mean higher costs and an extended framework in collecting and analyzing the data (Malhotra and Birks, 2007).

In this case, the information was collected directly from respondents via the internet, from February 22 to April 18, 2010, and the data analysis is

quantitative. Survey and quantitative observation techniques are crucial techniques in descriptive research designs. Survey techniques could be classified by mode of administration as classic telephone interviews, computer-assisted telephone interviews, postal surveys, mail panels, email and Internet surveys. Survey techniques are based upon the use of analytical questionnaires given to a sample of a population. Respondents may be asked a variety of questions regarding their behavior, intentions, attitudes, awareness, motivations, and demographic and lifestyle characteristics; this question are asked verbally, in writing or via a computer. Electronic surveys are conducted via email, or supervised on the Internet. They comprise around 11% of the worldwide total spend on research methods.

Also, this paper is based on an exploratory research that seeks to provide perspectives and understandings regarding the decision-making tourists when they consider buying a holiday package. The present research uses as a method the pilot survey, for which the sample is small (150 respondents), not statistically representative and not determined based on an established formula.

In this data analysis phase of the research, the data was collected via the Internet (FreeOnlineSurveys, Facebook, MySpace), and for the information's formation and processing we used the statistical analysis program SPSS, version 21.0, and especially by using the bivariate correlation method.

Regarding correlation, there are two types of this statistical technique: bivariate and partial. The bivariate correlation implies a correlation between two variables while a partial correlation looks at the relationship between two variables while "controlling" the effect of one or more further variables. However, this paper discusses the bivariate type. Relevant examples of bivariate correlation coefficients are: Pearson's correlation coefficient and Spearman's rho. Pearson's correlation requires only that data are interval for it to be an accurate measure of the linear relationship between two variables. Although, if we were to establish if the correlation coefficient is important, then more hypotheses are needed: for the test statistic to be valid data have to be normally distributed (Fields, 2005).

By definition, a correlation coefficient (symbol r) assumes a value between -1 and +1. Absolute values near 1 are considered strong correlations; that is, the two variables have a strong tendency to vary together. Absolute values near 0 are weak correlations, indicating very little relationship or

association between the two variables or the fact there no linear relationship between them (Carver and Nash, 2009).

- High correlation: .5 to 1.0 or -0.5 to 1.0
- Medium correlation: .3 to .5 or -0.3 to .5
- Low correlation: .1 to .3 or -0.1 to -0.3.

Table 2 presents the information regarding the application of the correlation method for motivators and determinants of tourist decision making process.

Table 2. Correlations for tourism motivators and determinants

Motivator	Variables	Pearson Correlation / Sig. level	Accommodation	Things to do	Customer care	Scenery	Places to eat	Availability of tourist information	Family friendly facilities	Infrastructure	Price
Utilitarian	Accommodation	Pearson Correlation	1								
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002								
Hedonic	Things to do	Pearson Correlation	.246**	1							
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002								
Hedonic	Customer care	Pearson Correlation	.507**	.213**	1						
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.009							
Hedonic	Scenery	Pearson Correlation	.216**	.408**	.220**	1					
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	.007						
Hedonic	Places to eat	Pearson Correlation	.186*	.283**	.397**	.141	1				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.000	.000	.085					
Utilitarian	Availability of tourist information	Pearson Correlation	-.071	.252**	.235**	.191*	.352**	1			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.387	.002	.004	.019	.000				
Hedonic	Family friendly facilities	Pearson Correlation	.240**	.575	.349**	.112	.302**	.311**	1		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.047	.000	.174	.000	.000			
Utilitarian	Infrastructure	Pearson Correlation	.444**	.155	.423**	.132	.328**	.254**	.574**	1	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.059	.000	.107	.000	.002	.000		
Utilitarian	Price	Pearson Correlation	.332**	.347**	.132	.206*	.085	.052	.151	.393**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.106	.011	.303	.531	.065	.000	

Regarding the utilitarian element- *accommodation*, there is a high correlation (0.507) between this factor and the hedonic factor -*customer care*, which could mean that clients even though they tend to focus on the simple things such as accommodation, they enjoy to be pampered during their vacation and demand special attention. Also, there is a direct correlation between accommodation and the utilitarian element, *infrastructure* (0.444); this might refer to the surroundings where the hotel is located or the way in which the room is decorated. Moreover, there is a notable relationship between customer care and infrastructure that score a point of 0.423.

Concerning the hedonic variable- *things to do*, there is a moderate correlation (0.408) between this element and the *scenery* hedonic element, this means that clients usually emphasize being in a place where they could have fun and enjoy themselves, while being in an attractive and beautiful place.

Additionally, there is a moderate relationship between *customer care* and *family friend facilities* (0.349) and *places to eat* (0.397). This means that these three hedonic aspects are directly related because usually customers focus on having all the utilities they require during their holidays and wish to take full advantage of these factors that play an important part in their trips. Furthermore, there is a strong relationship (0.397) between the factor *places to eat* and the other hedonic variable- *customer care*, which means that these elements are interdependent, and may strongly influence the trip and cuisine experience of the customers.

Also, a weak relationship is represented by the correlation between *scenery* and *family friend facilities* (0.112) and *infrastructure* (0.132). Apparently, customers who emphasize on scenery do not take into consideration different family friendly activities; nor the place they have the chance to visit because they plan their trip with the particular reason to enjoy some quality time with their friends or partner, while having full access to all facilities.

Regarding the hedonic aspect- *places to eat*, there is a strong correlation (0.352) between this factor and the utilitarian element- *availability of tourist information*, this could mean that tourists need and require total information concerning different fun activities and places they could visit or experience an amazing international and local cuisine.

Scores of -0.071 and 0.052 are remarked between one hedonic factor - *availability of tourist information* in relation to two other hedonic variables- *accommodation* and *price*. These weak correlations are due to the fact that, normally, customers who organize their trip based on an element such as availability of tourist information, this factor refers to the transparency of all the information regarding the holiday and which a tourist might require during his stay.

In regard to the hedonic aspect that studied *family friend facilities*, there is a strong relationship between this factor and two other variables: *one hedonic- things to do* (0.575) and *one utilitarian determinant- infrastructure* (0.574). More specifically, tourists who emphasize on family friend activities want to have the chance to choose from a wide range of activities suitable to their lifestyle. Moreover, in relation to the other powerful relationship between one hedonic and one utilitarian element, for customers who have children, it is important to spend their holidays in a place where the rooms have the

necessary facilities to provide them with an excellent family vacation and where the area is safe and proper for this kind of trip.

Concerning the utilitarian factor-*price*, there is an average relationship between this variable and another two determinants, one utilitarian-*infrastructure* (0.393) and other hedonic- *things to do* (0.347). This means that usually, clients who enjoy doing different sort of activities, do not want to spend that much money, and might enjoy doing simple things like visiting different areas around their hotel or just relax in their hotel and experience different types of cuisine. Furthermore, a medium connection is defined between things to do and the utilitarian factor, *price* (0.347), which represents the fact that usually individuals want to spend their vacation doing different activities that satisfy their expectations and needs, but all of these consumer wants should be provided at an acceptable price.

7. Conclusion

The subject of consumer behavior is the main key to the foundation of all marketing activities which is implemented to establish, promote and sell different products and services. In order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of marketing activities, companies have to understand how consumers make their decisions to buy different products. If they are conscious of the behavior patterns of the consumers, what motivates them or what determinates them to purchase, then they will know when to intervene in the process to obtain the results that they want and also who to target at a particular time with a specific product or service.

In this line of ideas, this paper examines a set of correlations between hedonic and utilitarian determinants and motivators that are highly influential for decision making process in tourism. This is particularly useful for companies, because they should be aware of how to influence their clients to choose different tourism products which will satisfy their needs and wants with higher efficiency and effectiveness. More exactly, companies can learn which motivators to enhance and emphasize in their marketing efforts.

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