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THE MOTIVATION OF TOURISM BEHAVIOR AND ITS IMPACT ON DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

According to UNWTO glossary tourism is defined as ‘‘a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, which imply tourism expenditure’’ [11].

Consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society [3, p. 110]. Consumer behavior is influenced by a range of factors such as demographics, lifestyle, personality, environment, motivation, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, feelings and prior experience. Consumer behavior can also be affected by external influences, such as culture, social class, reference groups, family and situational determinants.

In order to understand consumer behavior in tourism, it is crucial for marketers to understand what motivates consumers and also what effects it has on the consumer decision-making process. According to business dictionary, motivation is the set of internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal. Motivation results from the interaction of both conscious and unconscious factors such as the intensity of desire or need, incentive or reward value of the goal, and the expectations of the individual. These factors are the reasons one

has for behaving in a certain way [6]. Thus, motivation is the state of need that makes an individual take some actions that will lead to satisfaction, it is a driving force. When we have needs, we must make a decision on how to satisfy these needs in the best way and we have to select an action from several alternatives.

To understand consumer motivations, we should apply **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs** which is one of the most prominent theories of human motivation. Abraham Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Needs model in 1940-50s in the USA. The main needs according to him are as follows:

1. **Biological and Physiological needs** - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sleep, etc.
2. **Safety needs** - protection from elements, security, order, law, limits, stability, etc.
3. **Belongingness and Love needs** - work group, family, affection, relationships, etc.
4. **Esteem needs** - self-esteem, achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, managerial responsibility, etc.
5. **Self-Actualization needs** - realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs states that we must satisfy each need in turn, starting with the first level, which deals with the most obvious needs for survival itself. Only when the needs of physical and emotional well-being are satisfied we are concerned with the higher-level needs of influence and personal development [4].

Also, in tourism it is very important for marketers to analyze the different factors that motivate individuals and influence the decision-making process. These motivations have a significant effect on the type, duration and location of the holiday chosen by each individual, and can affect whether the individual will consider taking a holiday at all. Understanding these motivations will allow forecasting the spending patterns, length of stay, attractions, activities and destinations.

Of course, motivation has a significant role in decision-making process. The consumer buying process consists of 5 stages: *Problem recognition* stage, when the

consumer identifies a need, the difference between the consumer's current and desired states; *Information search*, when consumers scan both their internal memory and external sources for information about products or brands that will satisfy their needs; *Evaluations of alternatives*, when the consumer searches for the best value; The actual *product purchase stage*; *Post purchase evaluation*, when the consumer compares the actual experience with the expectations [2, p. 220].

A decision-making style is defined as a "mental orientation characterizing a consumer's approach to making choices" [8; pp. 421-438]. Sproles and Kendall developed a typology of eight distinct decision-making styles [9, pp. 267 -279]:

- **Quality conscious/Perfectionist:** when consumers search for the very best quality in products; they make more comparisons and shopping around.
- **Brand-conscious:** when consumers tend to buy expensive, well-known brands or designer labels. They believe that the higher prices are an indicator of quality.
- **Recreation-conscious/Hedonistic:** when consumers regard shopping as a form of enjoyment.
- **Price-conscious:** when consumers seek lower prices, sales or discounts and are motivated by obtaining the best value for money.
- **Novelty/fashion-conscious:** when consumers seek out new products or new experiences for the sake of excitement, they like to keep up-to-date with fashions and trends.
- **Impulsive:** when consumers buy on the spur of the moment and are not overly concerned with expenditure levels or obtaining value.
- **Confused (by over-choice):** when consumers are confused because of many product choices, too many stores or an overload of product information.
- **Habitual/brand loyal:** when consumers have favorite brands or stores and have formed habits in choosing, the purchase decision does not involve much evaluation or shopping around.

These styles may also be applied in tourism. Over the years, various theories and models have emerged to attempt to explain tourism specific motivations and decision

processes. One of them is **Vacation Tourist Behavior Model**. When considering why individuals choose to take a holiday, there are two sets of motivations that need to be considered. These are general motivations and specific motivations. The "general motivations imply that people travel for many reasons, many times not fully being aware of them", whilst "specific motivations are related to images based on personal experience, knowledge, reports and advice from friends, information gained directly or indirectly from mass media, advertisements and travel intermediaries" [7, pp. 17-18]. Consumer decision-making is also affected by conscious and unconscious memories [4, pp. 373-383]. The memory of past experiences is also an important motivating factor when consumers are considering holidays, which in turn means that historical consumer satisfaction will play a significant role in future purchases.

There are three separate stages in the tourism decision-making process; *the pre-decision stage and decision process; the post-purchase evaluation; and future decision-making*. These stages exist in a continuous loop and tourism purchase decisions are the combined result of motivation, cognition and learning behavioral concepts [10, p. 76].

The decision to purchase a tourism product is the result of a complex process and presents some unique aspects when compared with other types of purchase decisions, as "it is an investment with no tangible rate of return, and the purchase is often prepared and planned through savings made over a considerable period of time". Unlike other products and services, a tourist is making an investment with "no expectation of material and economic return on his or her purchase of an intangible satisfaction". The satisfaction associated with tourism products includes the "relaxation of tension, which is a strong underlying element to different desires and expectations concerning a vacation" [7, p. 17]. However, for marketers, this intangible satisfaction which consumers seek can be very different for each individual, and could be different for the same individual depending on the specific circumstances at the time. Another model is the **Leisure Motivation Scale (LMS)**, which was derived from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs by Beard and Ragheb to describe the motives that determine whether satisfaction is gained from leisure

pursuits. The LMS identifies four motives that determine satisfaction: intellectual - the extent to which individuals are motivated because of a need for learning or discovery; social - the extent to which individuals are motivated because of a need for friendship and interpersonal relationships; competence-mastery - the extent to which individuals are motivated because of a need to master, challenge or compete; avoidance - the extent to which individuals are motivated by activities because of needs to seek solitude or to unwind [1, p. 225].

These four motives are important during the pre-purchase stage and also when the consumer is evaluating the holiday after it is over. The sense of satisfaction will be one of the determining factors in future tourism purchases, thus, the need that initially motivated the consumer, should be satisfied.

The rapid rise of the internet has led to a significant change in consumer behavior (online purchasing, budget airlines, etc.). In the last decade, the "participative tourism" market has increased. This new type of tourists desire a holiday where they can establish new relationships with natives and experience what it is like to live in a certain location as opposed to simply visiting and seeing the sites as a tourist.

Concluding, it is worth mentioning that motivation lies on the basis of a particular activity. The motivation affects the decision-making process. Tourists choose the way of travelling, the destination, the type of rest, the length of holiday based on their specific needs. That is why marketers should analyze the variety of tourist needs and motivations and the tourism organizations should improve their services with this regard, develop new products, make novelties, change the existing products in order to fulfill the consumer needs the best way possible.

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