

MODERN TRENDS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN UZBEKISTAN BASED ON ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the behavior and needs of Uzbek consumers. The changing consumer culture in the context of the transition to a market economy and the need for businesses to deeply understand consumers determine the relevance of the topic. During the research, the demographic characteristics of consumers, shopping habits, attitudes towards brands, and consumption trends were studied based on questionnaires, interviews, statistical data analysis, and a review of the literature. According to the results of the study, it was found that online shopping is becoming increasingly popular among young people, and women are showing a high interest in local brands. It was also noted that consumers are paying more attention to the quality and reliability of products than to the price factor. In conclusion, the need to take into account the national mentality when developing marketing strategies, expand digital marketing opportunities, and support local brands is justified.

Keywords: Uzbek consumers, behavioral economics, consumer choice, rational and irrational choice, socio-economic factors, cultural values, demographic changes, shopping habits, online shopping, local brands, marketing strategies, consumer paradoxes (bait effect, anchor effect, alle paradox), price and quality, market dynamics, innovative approach

Introduction

Under the influence of globalization and the acceleration of the transition to a market economy in the countries of the world, the Republic of Uzbekistan is gradually adapting to market relations. As a result of these processes, the consumer market has expanded, and the variety of products consumed by the population has significantly increased. This directly affects the formation of consumer culture, the development of consumer approaches and changes in consumer behavior.

Globalization processes and the widespread introduction of digital technologies are one of the important factors affecting consumer culture. In particular, the expansion of the ability to purchase products through social networks and electronic trading platforms is leading to the transformation of traditional forms of trade. As a result, consumers' shopping habits in the markets are gradually being replaced by online shopping systems. Currently, a number of socio-economic factors influence the increase in demand for everyday and household products in Uzbekistan. In particular, high demographic growth rates, national cultural values and traditions, attitude to brands, price and quality factors are important determinants of consumer behavior. In particular, the rapid growth of the population directly affects the expansion of consumption and the increase in market demand. Also, cultural values and traditions formed in society have a significant impact on consumer purchasing choices. The preferences of the population for certain products are largely determined by historical and cultural factors. For example, the role of national traditions and aesthetic views in the process of choosing clothes for



women is important. However, as a result of globalization and the introduction of modern culture, traditional consumption models are gradually modernizing and becoming more compatible with modern products.

Main part

In current economic theories, the concept of rational choice implies that a person strives to choose the option that satisfies his needs to the maximum extent and brings the highest benefit in conditions of limited resources. Consumers limited by budget capabilities make a choice that provides the highest benefit for them, taking into account their available resources and needs. This process forms the theoretical basis of rational decision-making. According to the human paradigm developed by John Stuart Mill within the framework of this approach, economic man (homo economicus) performs his actions not on the basis of emotions or external influences, but on the basis of rational calculations and always strives to obtain the highest benefit. However, in modern socio-economic conditions, people do not always act in accordance with such a rational model. On the contrary, many decisions made in practical life deviate from the theory of correct choice.

In economics, “economic man” is mainly interpreted as a theoretical ideal model. In practice, however, a person's decisions are shaped by the social environment, cultural values, emotional state, and psychological factors, and are not always based solely on economic calculations.¹ Irrational behavior of a person, the influence of emotional and social factors on their choices, and the processes of irrational decision-making are studied within the framework of behavioral economics. This field of science combines the content of economics and psychology and analyzes the mechanisms of deviations from rationality in consumer choice.

This scientific direction is currently known as “behavioral economics” and is widely developing in many countries of the world. Especially in the United States of America, great attention is paid to this area, and special scientific and practical structures are operating that serve to improve state policy. In particular, organizations such as the “Social and Behavioral Sciences Team, (SBST)” are conducting research aimed at increasing the effectiveness of state programs.²

The field of behavioral economics is also developing in Uzbekistan from year to year. Currently, there are various psychological factors and contradictions that affect the process of consumer purchasing. In particular, phenomena such as the “Bay Effect”, “Angar Effect”, “Alle Effect” have a significant impact on consumer choice.

As part of this study, the impact of this effect on consumer purchasing needs was empirically studied. 80 respondents participated in the survey. Of these, 64 percent were men

¹ Princeton University, Daniel Kahneman: Department of Psychology // Wayback Machine. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20041120195720> (Дата обращения 29.04.2021).

² Ариели, Д. Поведенческая экономика. Почему люди ведут себя иррационально и как заработать на этом. – Москва: Манн; Иванов и Фербер, 2012. – С. 296.



and 36 percent were women. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 22, accounting for 73 percent of the total participants.

As part of the statistical survey, respondents were asked to develop their own consumer choice models. Based on the results obtained, the degree of manifestation of the “Bay Effect” in their behavior was analyzed, and it was found that this effect has a significant impact on consumer decisions.

In the first scenario, respondents were presented with the following situation: while buying popcorn at a movie theater, they were offered 100 grams of popcorn for 15,000 soums or 200 grams of popcorn for 25,000 soums. When asked “Which option would you choose?”, the majority of respondents (59 percent or 47 participants) chose the first option, which had the smallest volume and lowest price. In the next stage, a third option was added – the possibility of purchasing 300 grams of popcorn for 35,000 soums. Despite the fact that the price and volume of the first and second options did not change, the share of respondents who chose the second option increased by 4 percent as a result of the introduction of the third option. This situation demonstrates the tendency of consumers to “avoid separation”, indicating their tendency to choose the “most convenient” option with an average volume and price rather than their real needs.

In order to determine the “Anchor Effect”, respondents were asked the following question: “How great would you rate Uzbekistan’s contribution to the victory in World War II?” At the initial stage, 53 percent of respondents rated this contribution as average. Then the question was enriched with additional statistical data. In particular, information was provided that during the war years, Uzbekistan delivered millions of tons of cotton, grain, meat, vegetables and other products for state needs, as well as allocated a large amount of funds to the defense fund. After these figures were presented, the level of high assessment by respondents reached 77 percent. These results confirm the practical side of the “Anchor Effect”.³ That is, when the information is reinforced with specific statistical indicators, a stronger psychological impact is created on the consumer. The use of such quantitative data is actively used today by many marketing companies. For example, using the phrase "our services are 10 percent cheaper" instead of the general statement "the competitor's services are more expensive than ours" has a positive impact on consumers' decision-making process and increases the likelihood of purchase.⁴

The study empirically examined the impact of the “Alle paradox” on the decision-making process of modern consumers. This paradox was substantiated by Maurice Alle and shows that people do not always strive to maximize utility in risky situations.

Participants in the social survey were presented with the following lottery-based situation: “Imagine that you have 1,000,000 soums and you can choose one of two options. In the first option, you are guaranteed to receive 500,000 soums and exit the game. In the second option, there is a possibility of winning all the money or losing it completely.” According to the survey

³ Каримов Б. Как поведенческая экономика помогает принимать правильные решения?. CAAN. URL: <https://www.caa-network.org/archives/7870>

⁴ Hampton, S.; Adams, R. Behavioural economics vs social practice theory: Perspectives from inside the United Kingdom government // Energy Research & Social Science. 2018. Том 46. – pp. 214-224.



results, 51 participants (64 percent) chose the first option, and 29 (36 percent) chose the second option. These results are a practical confirmation of Alle's paradox, which shows that consumers strive to minimize potential losses rather than maximize profits. In the first option, part of the funds are guaranteed to remain, while in the second option there is a risk of losing them completely. Therefore, economic entities prefer stable and reliable profits to high-risk income. According to the results of mathematical and statistical analysis, it was observed that the majority of respondents chose the safe option, despite the fact that the second option is higher in terms of expected profits. This confirms that psychological factors play an important role in consumer decision-making.⁵

In addition, according to the results of the next survey conducted among representatives of different ages and genders, it was found that the majority of respondents are not sufficiently aware of their rights as consumers. This survey was mainly attended by representatives of the youth sector. The total number of participants was 50, of which 29 (58 percent) were men and 21 (42 percent) were women. To the question "What is your monthly income?", 31 (62 percent) of the respondents indicated that they have an income of less than 5 million soums, 9 (18 percent) up to 5 million soums, 6 (12 percent) up to 10 million soums, and 4 (8 percent) 15 million soums and above (Appendix 1). These results indicate a direct relationship between the average income level in the country and the employment and job status of the population. 43 respondents (86 percent) said they shop for groceries once a week and clothing once every three months (Appendix 2). When asked "What type of stores do you shop from most?" 15 (30 percent) said they shop at supermarkets, 12 (24 percent) at small stores, 15 (30 percent) at markets, and 8 (16 percent) at online stores (Appendix 3). The results show that consumers' shopping habits are being spread across different retail formats and that digital retail is gradually developing.

Conclusion

The behavior and needs of Uzbek consumers are formed under the complex influence of many factors. In particular, cultural traditions, socio-economic status, demographic changes, as well as digital technologies and globalization processes directly affect consumer decisions. The results of the study showed that consumers take into account not only the quality and price of the product, but also convenience, speed and personal relationships with the seller during the purchase process. In addition, family values and national culture play an important role in consumer choice mechanisms. This is especially evident when purchasing clothing, food and everyday consumer goods.

The empirical results also confirm that behavioral paradigms such as the "Bay Effect", the "Angar Effect" and the "Alle Paradox" significantly shape the consumer decision-making process. These influences reveal consumers' psychological strategies such as risk management, profit maximization and risk minimization. At the same time, the popularity of online shopping among young people and the growing interest in local brands are important factors in determining market segmentation and marketing strategies.

To achieve success in the Uzbek market, business entities need to deeply understand the local culture and adapt products and services to the real needs of consumers. This includes not only setting the right pricing policy and developing online trading platforms, but also introducing innovative approaches and providing individual attention to customers. Developing strategies

⁵ "YANGI O'ZBEKISTON IQTISODIYOTI" JURNALI (62-bet)



that are flexible to dynamic market changes, taking into account the psychological and cultural characteristics of consumers are also one of the main conditions for successful activity.

In general, in order to conduct competitive and effective business in the Uzbek consumer market, companies need to systematically study consumer behavior and develop marketing and product strategies adapted to them. This approach allows you to simultaneously increase economic profits and customer satisfaction, and ensures sustainable growth in the national market.

Applications

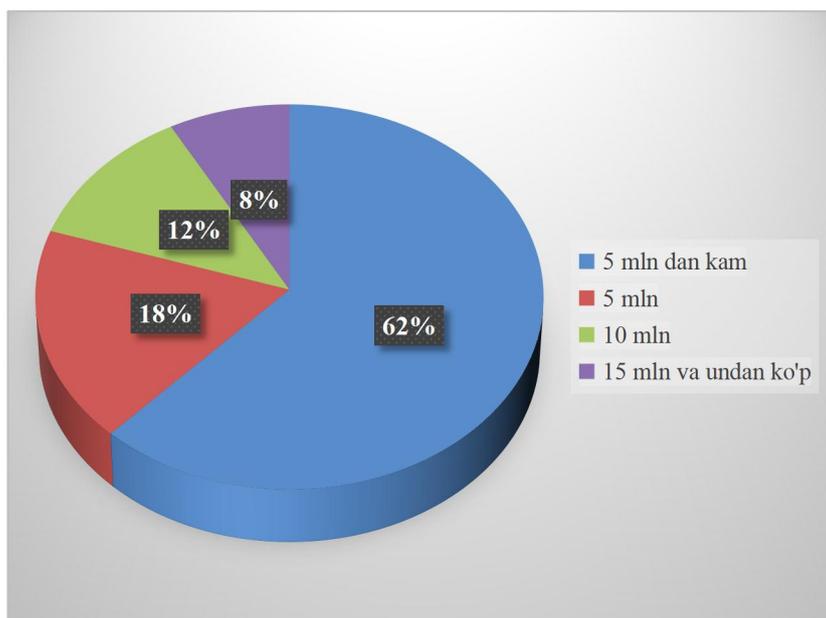


Figure 1. Results of a survey on the monthly income of young people in Uzbekistan, (results in percentages of 50 respondents)

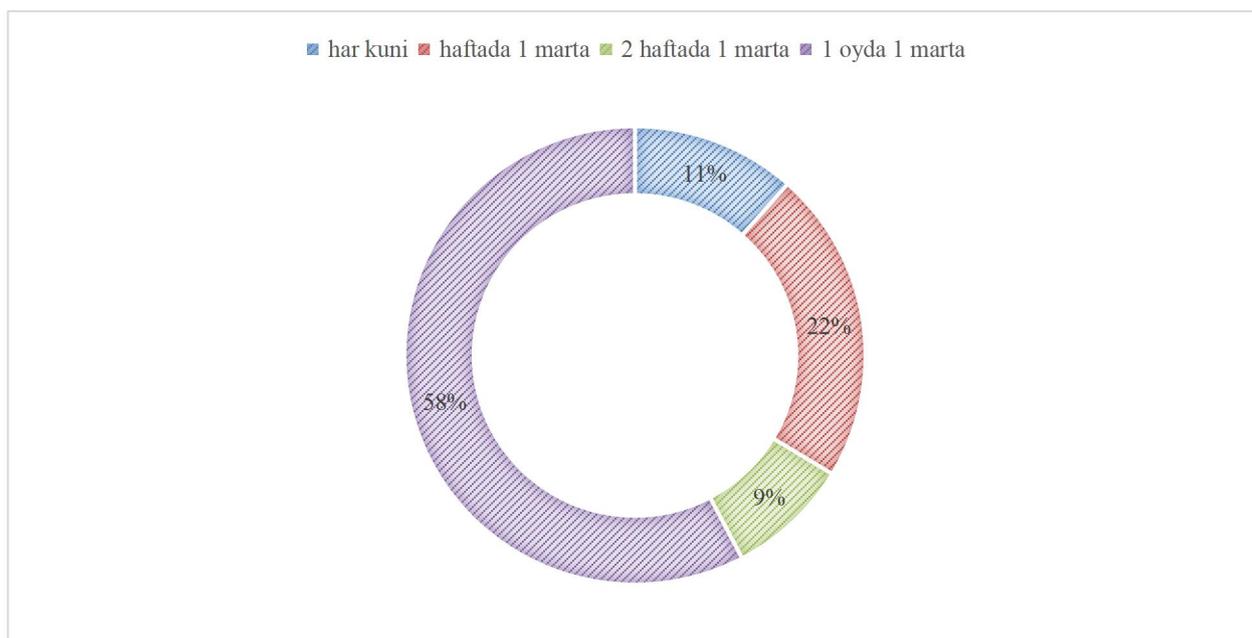


Figure 2. Results of a survey on how often Uzbek youth buy food products (results in percentages of 50 respondents)

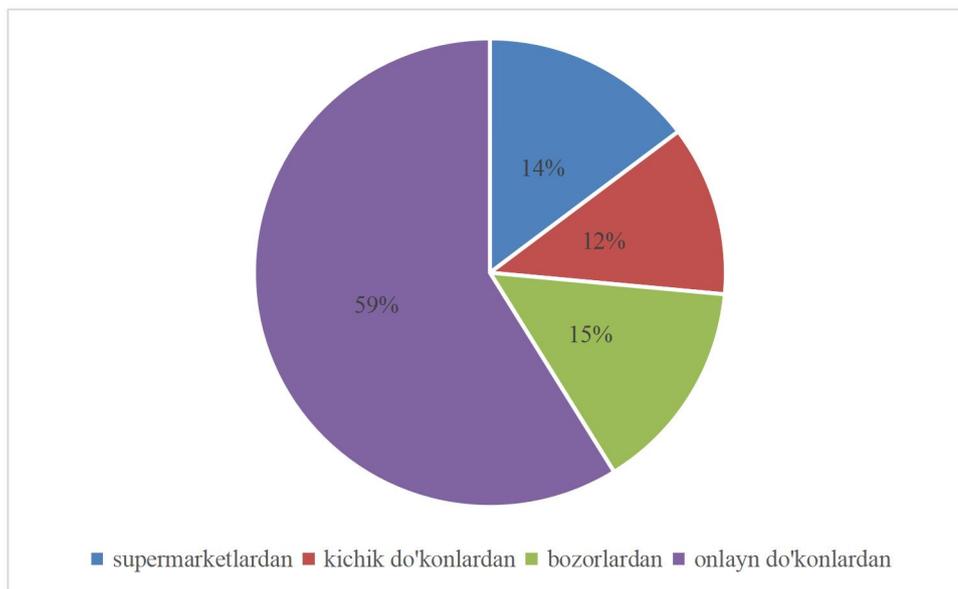


Figure 3. Results of a survey on the types of stores from which young people in Uzbekistan make the most purchases (results in percentages of 50 respondents)

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