

TRANSFORMATION OF CONSUMER MOTIVATIONS IN THE UKRAINIAN MARKET OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS

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Abstract: The study addresses the problem of the formation of consumer motivation in the Ukrainian market of high-tech products. The specific features of consumer motivation forming are analysed on the basis of a number of market researches undertaken by the author at different stages of socio-economic development of the Ukrainian society. The factors of actualisation and influence on the consumer motivation development were determined. The features of the formation of customer needs of high-tech products under the influence of its internal stimuli and environmental factors were defined. It has been compiled the classification of consumer motivations and hierarchy of the needs of Ukrainian consumers in the article. The basic directions of consumer behaviour transformation in the Ukrainian market of high-tech products were determined.

Keywords: High-tech products market; consumer motivation; buying behaviour; consumer needs.

1 Introduction

Ukraine's integration into the global scientific and technological expanse and its active involvement into the social intellectualization process are taking place under the conditions of economic entities' market activation. These processes are also influenced by intensifying competition, rapid changes in technology and life cycles of high technology (high-tech) products. The latest improving of Ukrainian consumers' technology proficiency, high dynamic change in their preferences, and structural change of qualitative component of demand are leading to significant market transformation of consumers' behavior and changes in their motivations. All these factors contribute to the need to look for the mechanisms to influence the development of high-tech products markets. This also actualizes for the manufacturers the issue of the development of innovative products and effective management of consumer behavior in the indicated markets. Fight for purchasing preference among the rapidly changing technologies, fierce competition and the inability of a consumer to immediately understand all the technological intricacies of a product appear to be extremely difficult. It subsequently requires balanced strategic decision-making involvement in the process. The investigation of the structure and dynamics of the motivational process of a consumer market behavior makes it possible to identify the causes of such behavior, to establish the reasons that crucially affect the consumer choice and form the basis for determining the direction of market behavior of a company.

2 Literature Review

A great number of scholars devoted their scientific researches to the problems of consumer motivation and the development of motivational sphere structure in the process of a human's market behavior. Among them it is necessary to distinguish Foxall, Goldsmith, Brown (2001), Blackwell et al. (2006), Schiffman, Kanuk (2006), Statt (1997), who explored practical approaches to consumer behavior using the basic principles of business and marketing. Researchers have focused on consumer decision-making, their behavior, motivation, factors that attract the attention of consumers and maintain their loyalty, turning ordinary customers into supporters of the product or company (Komal, 2021; Decker and Stummer, 2017). The scientists in the area of psychology, whose achievements have formed the theoretical basis for the study of human behavior as a consumer, should either be noted. Thus, a significant contribution to the development of motivational theories was made by Maslow (1987), Ilyin (2004), Floyd et al. (2022), and others.

Kolb (2020) examines how the use of social media affects consumer segmentation and also the factors that influence the purchasing decision-making process. The study proves the existence of unique situations in the process of deciding to buy a business, as well as the use of geographical, demographic and psychographic segmentation, which affects the positioning of competitors. Breitsohl, Jimenez & Roschk (2022) offer the results of a study on the reasons that motivate consumers to use the strategy of intimidation of other consumers about brands on social networks. Researchers are proposing the term "Consumer Brand-Cyberbullying" (CBC), which is becoming increasingly popular on social media, and argue that such consumer actions can lead to cyberbullying related to the brand. Wachning and Filieri (2022) suggest using an ethnocentric scale of consumers to study consumer motives to buy national and regional products, as well as a mixed approach to a deep understanding of consumer motivation. A study of German consumers identified three main factors in consumer decision-making: environmental friendliness, higher quality and territorial identity.

Some scientific works are dedicated to the functioning of high-tech products markets and to the research of market activity features of business entities in these markets. Moore (2014), Mohr, Sengupta, Slater (2010), Moriarty, Kosnik (1989) and others describe the basis of the methodology of bringing high-tech products to market and form an idea of the practical aspects of high-tech marketing. Researchers argue that in the life cycle of technology, which begins with innovation and ends with the transition of the product to the consumer, there is a huge gap between the early adopters and the early majority. Therefore, the challenge for marketers is to narrow this gap and ultimately accelerate implementation in each segment (Moore, 2014).

Sahadev (2019) in his study focuses on the behavioral aspects of consumers and the management of marketing channels for high-tech products. In unison, the following characteristics are decisive for high-tech products: the frequency of technological innovations, shorter product life cycle, high level of uncertainty of consumer behavior and interests, and so on. With regard to marketing strategies, the strategy of protectionism is traditionally used in technology-deficient industries. At the same time, McCrohan (2015) and Gronhaug, Möller (2007) believe that protectionism is effective in high-tech markets.

According to Truong et al. (2017), the choice of the appropriate branding strategy is a decisive factor in the success of a new product among consumers and will affect their behavior. The previous strategy for fast-growing products stipulates that new products must quickly attract the attention of consumers. However, for high-tech products, such a strategy does not always work, as such products often pose a much greater risk to consumer behavior. Accurate positioning of a high-tech product on the market ensures the goal of differentiated marketing. Dai and Li (2022) argue that the analysis of big data on consumer behavior can purposefully help to find customers and refine the highlights of the promotion of high-tech products on the market. Authors suggest paying attention to the defining characteristics of high-tech products, which allows to understand the features and directions of differentiated marketing, highlight differences between different groups of high-tech products, summarize the characteristics of certain consumer groups and identify marketing areas to track customer needs and weaknesses (Dai and Li, 2022).

Quite new is the approach proposed by the Horodnic et al. (2020) on the peculiarities of shopping in the informal economy, and the study of factors affecting consumers. At the same time, consumers are explained as rational subjects of the economy, because they are looking for a more convenient agreement that provides a lower price or better value for money, while consumers are seen as social entities seeking to help society.

However, despite the existence of a profound scientific interest in the issues mentioned, the features of the development of consumers' motivation when buying innovative products, as well as the structure and dynamics of the motivational process in the high-tech market are not fully disclosed.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the structure and peculiarities of the process of Ukraine's high-tech products consumer motivation development, to investigate the factors of actualization and influence on the consumer motivation development, to identify the areas of Ukrainian consumers' market behavior transformation in the target market.

3 Methodical basis of the research

Studying the market behavior of Ukrainian consumers, the author applied qualitative and quantitative methods of collecting primary data, namely, expert interviews, focus-group interviews of target customers, and selective observation. In our opinion, it is essential to use expert interviews and professional assessments to achieve the aim of the study and to implement the objectives. But these methods do not guarantee the obtaining of fully objective market information about the peculiarities of consumers' motivational sphere in the target market. It is possible to fully capture consumer preferences by using the opinions and estimates of consumers themselves. The specific feature of the focus-group interview is the group interaction of its participants, when the expression of respondents' opinions develops into a group discussion facilitating the expression of different standpoints, explanations and arguments. The basis for identifying the areas of consumer motivations' transformation is the result of a number of market researches undertaken by the author in 2006, 2012 and 2021. The processing of the received data makes it possible to identify certain behavioral peculiarities of high-tech products consumers on the Ukrainian market.

4 Results

The content and the succession of stages taken by a consumer in their purchasing behavior differ depending on the source of the stimulus that affects their awareness. Boosting of the incentives of a market actor can be affected by various external stimuli or motivators initiated both by a manufacturer (advertising through mass media or product demonstration), and by people around the consumer. External stimuli can influence the motivational process at its different stages. They either activate specific needs and motivational sphere of the consumer or affect the already started process of a motive development, thereby stimulating and increasing its strength. As an external stimulus a manufacturer uses a product and a complex of marketing communications, which is intended to influence the development of both the motive and consumer behavior. The most common variant of motivation development caused by external stimuli is the situation when certain products that cause human desire to possess them determine their behaviour. These products are able to activate the purchasing behavior even in the cases when the relevant need has not been actualized yet. The results of our study showed that for the majority of respondents the external stimulus plays a crucial role in actualization of a new product or a new model of high-tech products needs. Thus, 68% of respondents of focus-group interviews indicated that they mostly used old technology without significant discomfort and did not pay attention to any inconvenience. However, with the advent of a new technology and a new product they showed interest in it, evaluated its benefits and advantages, waited until it was tested by others, and then made a purchase. Herewith, they were fully aware of the old product's shortcomings in the process of obtaining information about the new one. The general succession of the respondents' actions in this case is the following:

I learned about a new product ⇒ I was interested ⇒ I gathered the information ⇒ I waited for the feedback from the first users of a new item ⇒ I formed my own attitude to it ⇒ I made the purchase ⇒ I estimated all the benefits from consumption. Consequently, a new

product with new features and new opportunities is the main external stimulus of needs activation.

During the research it was determined that the consumer reaction to the external influence and their acceptance / rejection of incentives mainly depend on four groups of factors:

- the first group of factors is associated with the personal characteristics of consumers: their interests, viewpoints, beliefs, innovation, attitudes, self-esteem, cognitive activity, previous purchasing experience;
- the second group of factors is modeled by the market characteristics of a manufacturer: experience in the market, market authority, the intensity of technological innovation, the presence of failed products, brand image;
- the third group of factors, situational ones, is determined by the degree of consumers' awareness of means/products, the number of options of a problem solving, the complexity of the decision made and the uncertainty about how to solve this problem, as well as trustiness or customer loyalty to the brand;
- the fourth and the last group includes 'social norms' of market behavior, which are followed by the consumer, who pays attention to the positive or negative attitude of the society to the manufacturer, to the response to a new technological product, that is to social approval of the solution of the problem in this way.

In addition to these factors, the essential role is played by the consumer awareness of the problem or the stage of a motive development. In the process of conveying the information to the consumer about products that are able to solve the current problem, the psychological stimulation and activation of a motive are taking place. Taking this into consideration, the manufacturer must take into account the level of activation of emerging needs while creating or choosing motivators. The remaining 32 % of respondents indicate the presence of internal needs to possess something new and claim that their being dissatisfied by using existing product stimulates their continuous search for new products and models. Because of this, consumers always buy specialized technical publications, attend trade shows, surf the Internet tracking new technologies and developments of technological leaders of certain product categories. This group of respondents is aware that they are satisfied with a newly purchased product only for a short period of time. After that they continue being interested in new products. The general succession of the respondents' actions in this case is the following:

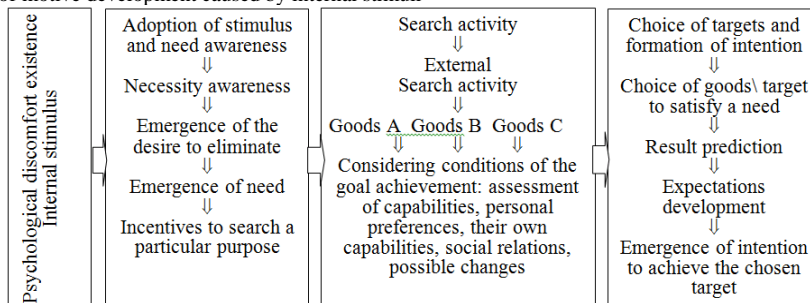
The internal dissatisfaction ⇒ Continuous search and gathering of information about new products ⇒ The interest in the newest technology / product ⇒ Gathering of information about definite technology / product ⇒ The development of attitudes to a new product ⇒ Purchase positive attitude ⇒ Its adoption or declining during a consumption process ⇒ Communication with the environment on the experience from the using of a new product.

The process of a motive development under the influence of internal stimuli is much more complicated compared to externally stimulated motivation. It is necessary to take into account the wide range of potential internal incentives and possible interconnections that occur between the internal and external factors in the process of needs activation and motivational process deployment. Figure 1 presents the main stages of internally organized consumer motivation.

By both internal psychological processes and characteristics of the individual who is the consumer of innovative products. In the study we also determined the following groups of factors which are taken into account by the consumer when considering different options to meet the needs and which also influence the choice of a specific goal:

- assessment of opportunities – the availability of the means to reach a goal (mostly financial ones), spending time and effort;
- consideration of personal preferences – the level of demands, habits, beliefs, values, internal adjustments;
- consideration of personal capabilities – the availability of knowledge, skills, peculiarities of cognitive processes;
- consideration of social relations – the analysis of social values, attitudes, norms, position in the social group, the impact of reference groups, a tendency to conformal behavior;
- consideration of possible changes – change of a lifestyle, subjective evaluation of succeeding and meeting needs.

Figure 1: The scheme of motive development caused by internal stimuli



Source: compiled by the author based on the approach proposed by Ilyin (2004)

Considering the researches of Ukrainian consumers' motivations we defined three motives (*self-fulfillment, recognition, social affiliation*) are classified as socio-emotional and reflect the consumer's desire for socialization, demonstration of their achievements, using elements of social prestige. These motives are caused by already developed social position of a product that is considered to be product status. The results of the study showed that the most important determinants of consumer behavior are those directly related to the status and role position of an individual. Thus, 76 % of respondents agreed with the statement that certain models of high-tech products are status articles and their appliance emphasizes affiliation to a particular

social group. Even a higher percentage of respondents (81 %) believe that the best way to express their individuality in modern society is to purchase technological innovations. However, the representatives of the segment aged 17 to 27 are willing to give up some everyday expenses to have a financial opportunity to purchase more up-to-date technological product (80 % of respondents provided this answer). Accordingly, we have investigated the importance of the impact of the individual (cognitive, emotional or volitional) components and external (social) factors in developing consumer demands for high-tech products (Table 1).

Table 1: The impact of individual and social factors on the consumer needs development

Group of needs	The essence and significance of factors			
	Individual / (character of mental process)	Consumers*, %	Social	Consumers, %
<i>Need for knowledge and intellectual development</i>	I want to know more / cognitive	–	I want to keep up with modern development, want to be aware of new technologies	59–71
<i>Need for self-fulfillment</i>	I want to realize my potential I have needs for achievements / volitional	64–76	impact is unknown	–
<i>Need for creativity</i>	I want to create / volitional, cognitive	4558	no impact	–
<i>Need for affiliation and social membership</i>	I feel psychological discomfort caused by loneliness / emotional	49–61	I want to be a part of the world around me	37–49
<i>Need for new experiences, pleasures</i>	I want to have good time, to get satisfaction from life / emotional	41 4	no impact	–
<i>Need for freedom and independence</i>	I want to live the way I want / volitional	29–41	no impact	–
<i>Need for individuality</i>	I want to be different / volitional	55–67	I want the people to notice my individuality	43–54
<i>Need for stability and safety</i>	I want to feel protected and to be confident in the future / volitional	41–54	My social position must be stable	64–76
<i>Need for recognition</i>	slight impact	–	I want to be noticed and recognized	24–36
<i>Need for comfort and easy living</i>	I want to live easy and carefree / emotional	22–34	slight impact	–

*Confidence intervals are given in the synthesis of the data on the general summation with confidence probability 0, 95

Source: compiled by the author.

As it can be seen, the activation of the vast majority of consumer needs in the target market occurs due to the internal movements of an individual. So, psychological factors and personality traits of the end user affect consumption patterns and behavioral models. These are:

- human desire to meet the needs for personal growth (need for recognition and intellectual development, self-fulfillment and creativity);
- desire for individualization of behavior, for emphasizing personal identity (as opposed to adjustment “be like everyone”);
- existence of needs for continuous getting of new experiences and pleasures, which is implemented through the active use of new technologies;
- consumer's desires to achieve a stable and secure life, their striving to make the world predictable, measured, organized and to have confidence that priority needs will also be met adequately in the future;
- high adaptability to the new lifestyle and new behavioral patterns that are developed as a result of active use and dissemination of the latest technologies;
- existence of the consumer's utilitarian desire to facilitate everyday life, to save the time to solve domestic problems;

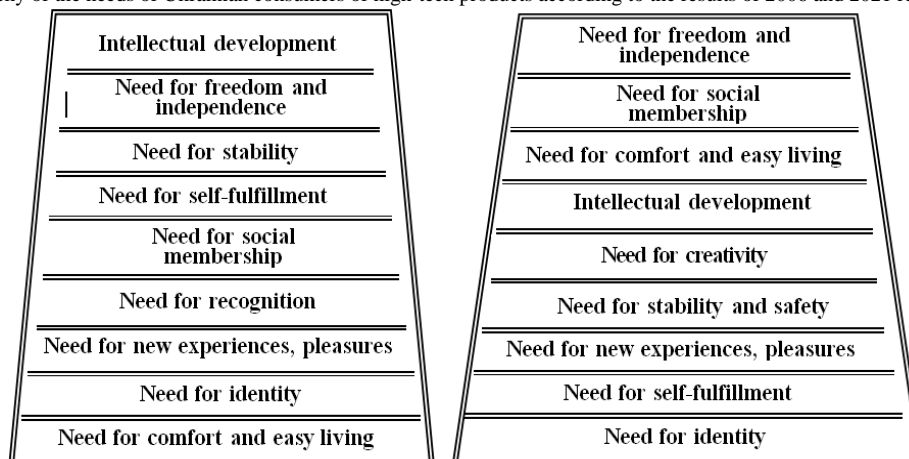
- desire of the individual to achieve and maintain a certain status and role position in the society that requires keeping to the established behavioral patterns, including the consumption;
- prevalence of needs of the individual for active communication, obtaining and disseminating of the information about their experience of using up-to-date products and derived benefits.

The investigation of consumer motivations in the Ukrainian market of high-tech products in different time periods made it possible to identify certain transformation of consumers' market behavior. At the initial stage of the development of the majority of high-tech products markets, there dominated social and rational motivation for purchasing goods. High-tech products were an inherent part of the person who wanted to demonstrate their financial and social status. With the stabilization of the economic and political situation in the country, increasing welfare, commodity saturation and, respectively, meeting of society's basic needs, there was a significant increase in the level of technological literacy of Ukrainian customers. There were also found both changes in consumer preferences and reorientation of qualitative component of demand. The research results of this period testified the transformation of motivational benefits from social and rational aspects toward emotional and social components. The main reasons for the predominance of the irrational motivation when purchasing the goods at this stage of development of the market are defined as predisposition of

Ukrainian consumers to conformal behavior and their desire to meet hedonistic needs. It should be noted that a significant social trend in consumption in those days became a demonstrative consumption by the middle and the low social classes, not just by the upper class. It resulted in the purchase of expensive goods, the need for which was overestimated and formed under the "social pressure". There was a high level of social mobility of consumers (despite the lack of a clear social stratification of country's population), allowing the consumer whether to highlight their social status or to keep up with modern trends and show that they are "not worse than others". Global mass media system, which contributed to the expansion of the elements of Western culture and consumption patterns, had a significant impact on the development of new social and cultural needs, new tastes and preferences of consumers.

The effects of the 2007–2008 global financial crisis negatively influenced the pace of the most commodity markets, led to a several times reduction in consumer demand for high-tech products. The experts note that the low solvency of the population that spends half of the aggregate income to purchase food and fast-moving consumer goods limits significantly the demand in the market, which may potentially grow and develop. The key transformational changes in consumer motivations are the desire of consumers to meet primarily the mental and physiological needs: the need for identity, safety and stability (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Hierarchy of the needs of Ukrainian consumers of high-tech products according to the results of 2006 and 2021 researches



Source: compiled by the authors.

It is necessary to point out that the significance and relevance for consumers to meet the needs for new experiences and pleasure of use a new technological device are not changed. This can be explained with the consumers' intention to improve emotional disposition and raise their own level of life satisfaction, despite the decline in the general welfare. It can be achieved through the consumption of technological innovations. This trend is especially observed among the youth who are getting or already have higher education and are professionally oriented.

5 Discussion

The study offers fresh insights into the formation of consumer motivation in the market of high-tech products. Our findings indicate that Ukrainian consumers' motivations can be defined into three motives: self-fulfillment, recognition, and social affiliation, which are characterized as socio-emotional and reflect the consumer's desire for socialization, demonstration of their achievements, using elements of social prestige. Waehning and Filieri (2022) on the basis of the German consumers study identified such main motives in consumer decision-making: environmental friendliness, higher quality and territorial identity. Rashel, Ahmed, Lee (2017) determined the impact of high-tech product attributes on consumer satisfaction with cluster research and simple random sampling methods. According to the results,

all factors, except for the physical benefits of the product, had a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction through perceived value. These results indicate the impact of the value of a high-tech product that is perceived by the customer, the relationship between product attributes and customer satisfaction.

It is advisable to pay attention to the suggestion of Breitsohl, Jimenez & Roschk (2022) that politicians and marketers should become socially responsible participants in the consumer market, such an approach can be a positive corporate contribution to the culture of consumption, social welfare and consumer sentiment. Kolb (2020) proves that the development of a marketing strategy implies the mission, vision and values of the company, as well as the need for in-depth analysis and research and only then decide which segment of consumers will be most interested in buying a particular product. Sahadev (2019) evidences the connection between the defining characteristics of high-tech products (frequency of technological innovations, shorter product life cycle, high level of uncertainty of consumer behavior and interests) and variables of marketing marketing channels in the context of high technology. The author proposes a model that includes important consumer behavioral variables related to marketing channel management. Research in experimental and field conditions shows that consumers of high-tech products

react more favorably to existing brands of innovative products, so the risk of the strategy of their promotion in the market is reduced (Truong et al., 2017).

The results of the research also showed that such individual consumer's characteristics as age, income, educational background, and professional activities are significantly important when forming consumer needs and have an impact on the nature of their motivation. In particular, the needs of the young are socially-oriented, although the research carried out in 2021 highlighted the importance of strengthening the emotional reasons for buying goods, namely, meeting the needs for creativity and for new experiences and pleasures. The motivation of middle age people is mostly linked to meeting the needs for self-fulfillment. Aged consumers are motivated by the need for stability and safety. As soon as the consumers' income increases, their motivation gets more social and emotional nature. As soon as the level of education increases, the proportion of consumers who are guided by emotional motives of purchasing goods is growing. These findings correlate with the Dai and Li (2022) study, which shows that the majority of people who use high-tech products are young people with at least secondary education who have sufficient skills to use high-tech products. But such consumers are quite complex in terms of marketing. In this regard, when formulating a strategy, we agree with the idea of sharing high-tech products focusing on people of different ages and explore their needs to increase customer satisfaction and trust in high-tech brand.

6 Conclusions

The formation of consumer's market behavior begins with the enhancement of motivational process. The disquisition of its structure makes it possible to identify the causes of such behavior and to define the determinants which have a decisive influence on consumer decision-making and direct the consumer's choice. The structure and dynamics of the motivational process depend on the type of incentives which impact the process of intent development as one of the stages of motivation and activate consumer's market activity. The components of a producer's marketing mix and consumer's social environment lead to the development of motivation caused by external stimuli – externally organized motivation. The internal psychological processes of an individual, activation of needs for cognition, creativity, freedom and independence generate internally organized motivation and also encourage people to market activity. The results of the research have shown that at present functioning of Ukrainian consumer market the Ukrainian consumer is more prone to individualization in making purchasing decisions, seeks to meet hedonistic needs, to self-fulfillment, personal development and spiritual growth. Consumer preferences are being transformed from the socio-rational aspects towards emotional and emotional and rational components. The authors believe that further researches should pay attention to the ascertainment of dependencies between external determinants of motivational process activation and the nature of activated consumer needs. This information will give companies the possibility to apply communication tools to influence the transformation of consumer motivations, therefore, control the behavior of consumers and determine the direction of these markets.

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