

RESEARCH OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Дослідження спрямоване на аналіз поведінки споживачів у кризовий час з метою виявлення впливу економічної кризи останніх років на купівельну потужність клієнтів. Розглянуто різні теорії споживчої поведінки. Проаналізовано реакції бізнесу на змінену споживчу поведінку у кризових умовах.

Ключові слова: поведінка споживачів, криза, економічна криза, маркетингові стратегії, кризова поведінка.

The study is aimed at analyzing the behaviour of consumers in times of crisis to identify the impact of the economic crisis of recent years on the purchasing power of customers. Various theories of consumer behaviour are considered. Business reactions to changed consumer behaviour in crisis conditions are analyzed.

Key words: consumer behaviour, crisis, economic crisis, marketing strategies, crisis behaviour.

Relevance of the topic. The study of consumer behaviour in crisis conditions is an urgent topic nowadays. Crises can be caused by various factors, such as economic instability, natural, man-made and anthropogenic disasters, military conflicts and global pandemics, which significantly impact consumer behaviour. Certainly, research on consumer behaviour in crisis is an essential theme for understanding how potential customers react to changes in the economic and social environment. This allows enterprises and businesses to adapt to shifts in supply and demand, and to ensure the proper level of service and quality of goods and services for consumers in atypical situations.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The problem of consumer behaviour in crisis has been studied by foreign and domestic scientists: Kovalenko O., Bazherina K., Chernenko O., Afanasieva K. [1], Gobela V., Zhyvko Z., Leskiv H., Melnyk S., Smith A., Muller E., Schulte H., Shevchenko I., Brown K. and others. Nowadays this topic requires a detailed disclosure.

The purpose of the study is to examine consumer behaviour in times of crisis, to identify the impact of the economic crisis of recent years on the purchasing power of customers, to analyse the cause and effect of the crisis in the country, the behaviour of Ukrainian consumers and the reaction of businesses to the changed consumer behaviour.

Presentation of the main material.

In economic science, the term "consumption" refers to the use of goods and services to satisfy the needs of consumers. One of the first scholars to coin this term was the English economist and philosopher Adam Smith in his book *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776). Subsequently, the term "consumption" was actively used in their research by Eugène Bozard (French economist) and John Maynard Keynes (English economist).

In the second half of the 20th century, the concept of "consumption" began to gain more and more popularity among scholars and researchers in economics, marketing, psychology and other related fields.

Everything seems trivially simple in the system of consumer needs until the client, buyer, or ordinary person finds themselves in a state of stress. At this time priorities are reassessed and the old dogmas of consumption theory cease to work properly. Modern theories of consumption are usually based on the concept of consumer value, which includes not only the material components of a product but also psychological, social and emotional factors.

Consumer behaviour in a typical, crises can be viewed from the perspective of the following approaches:

- Scarcity theory: theory states that consumers become more interested in products that become harder to come by in times of crisis. The human brain works in such a way that you start to value what is lacking. So, without having a certain product in sufficient quantities, customers may feel a greater need for this product;

- Theory of crisis behaviour: this theory suggests that consumers change their behaviour in times of crisis, moving to a more cautious and economical lifestyle. Consumers may pay more attention to prices, discounts and promotions, reduce the amount of goods they buy, and look for alternative ways to meet their needs;

- Psychological response theory: this theory suggests that crises can trigger a psychological response in consumers, such as stress or anxiety. It can lead to changes in consumer behaviour, including an increase or decrease in the number of purchases;

- Theory of the sense of control: this theory states that consumers may feel a control loss in a crisis, and both real and illusive control can be satisfied by increasing the number of purchases.

These theories help to describe the socio-psychological process of the consumer in a crisis to better understand needs and satisfy them [2].

One of the key components of consumer theory is the analysis of consumer behaviour. Studying and understanding consumer behaviour is important for business, as it allows you to develop effective marketing strategies and influence consumer choices.

The history of consumer behaviour dates back to ancient times when people first started bargaining and exchanging personal possessions and resources with each other. Of course, at that time consumers had limited choices, as few goods and services were on the market. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the growth of industry and technological change led to increasing production and, as a result, the availability of goods on the market. This gave consumers more choices and increased competition between producers. During this period, the first shops and supermarkets appeared, where people could find everything they needed in one place.

In the twentieth century, amid new technologies, the advent of radio and television gave rise to mass advertising, which gave manufacturers a way to promote their products to the general public and influence potential customers. Internet resources, which have improved the achievements of radio and television communications, have also started to operate in this way. Today, consumer behaviour continues to change and evolve under the influence of social, economic, cultural and environmental factors [3].

Thus, consumer behaviour is a set of actions and reactions that people show when choosing, purchasing, using and rejecting goods and services.

Consumer behaviour is theoretically based on the assumption that consumers maximise their satisfaction from shopping, i.e. maximise satisfaction at minimum cost. To formalise this assumption, two basic axioms are used: the axiom of comparison and the axiom of transitivity, which allow us to compare and determine preferences between different consumer baskets.

Combining two axioms based on assumptions about consumer behaviour allows us to formulate the preference theory, which states that all possible consumer baskets can be sorted in ascending or descending order of consumer preferences [4].

Given all of the above, we can conclude that consumer behaviour is a complex phenomenon that changes under the influence of exogenous and endogenous factors. It can be viewed through the prism of consumer behaviour theories or by basic economic assumptions. In any case, for economists, marketers, and managers, the study of consumer behaviour remains an urgent issue that requires detailed research and study to develop marketing strategies for enterprise management, which is the next step in maximising business profits.

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