

Hedonism and Adrenaline—Emotional Relation With Rafting

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The success of each enterprise is finding, working on it, promoting, and obviously offering what the consumers really love and enjoy. Albania is very useful if you have this mission: Reconciling all the nature components with favorable weather conditions, we can really offer an adventure business, where everyone can discover the beauty of Albania through an unforgettable trip. The key word that summarizes all the elements mentioned is without a doubt “Rafting”. Introducing rafting both as a sport and as a touristic outdoor activity, in that way we develop a new touristic market and a strong promoter of sustainable adventure tourism in Albania. When a person takes pleasure but in an unhealthy extent, how does this affect his personality? The adrenaline as happiness, meaning and pleasure...The topics that this study is about, are two key terms that will guarantee the success of this “adventure project”: The first is the satisfaction of consumers, which gives us a feedback about the product/service and the second part deals with the term adrenaline (pleasure supreme customer); hedonic consumer features, part of their character, the main approaches and a study conducted with customers who have attended at least once rafting, customers attending characteristic of emotions, adrenaline, and adventure to take the pleasure of life. A company should always try and please its consumers. Usually, pleased consumers will always come back for more; they will also spread the word and bring new potential consumers into your business that will pay a fair amount of money for a new upcoming product that set company offers. The measurement of consumer satisfaction is a pure indicator of the consumers repurchases intentions, an indicator of the actual performance and differentiation from the current competition. The consumers mind will always remember the name of the company that they had a bad experience rather than the one they have been satisfied with. Often when we receive a fixed service, our mind tends to create a very close emotional connection to set service. Often we find that the smallest things bring the greatest joy, regardless of the price. For the majority part, following the adrenaline passion is more than just a need. Lately, the traditional notion of purchasing is left behind and everyone is focusing on providing themselves with pleasure and emotions. The definition of the word “hedonic” comes from Ancient Greece, meaning “taking the maximal pleasure from life” being our primary goal.

Keywords: sport, adventures, adrenaline, hedonism, consumer, satisfaction, rafting, Albania

Consumers Satisfaction and Hedonism

For most of the businesses, keeping the same consumer base is a way that costs cheaper than the attraction of new ones. The companies can measure if the service that a client receives is of a high standard or not, using

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the methods mentioned below.

How Pleased Is the Consumer With the Service/Product?

By asking the consumer on how he/she is pleased with set product/service, we can begin to measure: the overall quality of the product/service; the consumer loyalty to set product/service; the fulfillment of consumer's needs.

The Measurement of Trust and Affection on the Make

By asking the consumer if he/she would refer this product/service to his/her friends, we can easily understand on how he/she is pleased and loyal towards the brand. Consumer satisfaction is the prime indicator of repurchasing which is affected by the performance of the product, its quality and the price. Often the loyalty is measured by combining the overall satisfaction, likelihood of repurchasing, and the likelihood of recommending this brand to a friend or family member.

Measuring Cognitive and Emotional Relation to the Brand

The satisfaction or dissatisfaction is well connected with the overall benefits that the consumer receives, if however what he receives fulfills his expectations.

Attitude Measurements (Repurchasing Intentions)

By asking a set consumer if he/she would use the same product over a short period of time, we can understand if he/she is satisfied with set product.

Nowadays, the consumer culture is spreading drastically and it's embraced by the upcoming generations. This trend has made possible that the consumer in today's society is an act led by the consumer's attitude. The consumer has created its own culture, having its own social and cultural importance. The consumers created by this process place themselves on the social order through products that they possess and consume. In contrast with the traditional notions of purchasing, the hedonic consumer purchases products not only for their usefulness but also for the emotional relation they have with the brand.

According to Holbrook which basically motivated the concept of hedonism, the hedonic consume may very well be expressed as an act of consumer behavior where the product/service is selected by the coordination of dreams, feelings, and emotions. The hedonic way of consuming provides a way of consumer behavior which includes the emotional as well as fantasies and multiple sensory connections determined by the consumer's side on the experimentation of the product.

If the choice on the practically side of a product reflects its focus on functionality, then the hedonic values reflect over the individual satisfactions. Furthermore, a small part of the consumer personality is reflected upon their purchase. The fact that the interaction between the expectations that a consumer has over a product that they plan to purchase and the experimental preferences, leads to the consumer falling a victim of emotion. That is the exact reason why the marketing departments all over try to study the latest trend over consuming: which is the number one reason that affects the purchasing ability of set consumer: the satisfaction or the practically and usefulness.

Dhar and Wertenbroch (2000, p. 60) differ two different aspects over this matter. The first one being the ability to decide a purchasing act is: will we be affected over the factor that may cause a change over our preference from something useful and favorable to a more attractive option? This kind of alternatives includes the use of the product as a mean to achieve selective goals devoured by emotion. Secondly, they make a choice

over late profit or simply being persuaded by the product's characteristics. Simply seen, this divides the preferences of the consumer on two groups: luxury and needs or hedonic and practicality; to guarantee enjoyment and satisfaction.

On the everyday terminology, the hedonic consumer is that person that only focuses on the luxury side of consuming. According to Hirschman, these are some of the activities that define a hedonic consumer:

- Set activities that define me intellectually and allow me to reflect upon the world;
- Set activities that please the sense of taste and the sense of touch;
- Set activities that allow interaction among others;
- Set activities that allow the sense of satisfaction and the contribution on the wellbeing of others;
- Set activities that allow life on the edge, emotion, and mirth.

To achieve the study of the hedonic trend on the consumer behavior on the selection of clients leads us to focus on the activities that are defined by adrenaline and adventure: Rafting.

Albanian relive possesses a lot of rafting possibilities: The canyons of Skrapar, the long story of 2,400 years of the city of Berat, traditional food, the hospitality that characterizes us as Albanians, are the main elements of creating that emotional connection between the consumer and set service. The study mentioned below reflects over an example as to how their choices affect the emotional side of them. Which are the main reasons why they are affected by this kind of sport and what makes them unique? The purpose of this study is to understand the consumer features and their feelings associated with rafting. The process of gathering data was conducted by three major mechanisms: literature review, survey guide and observations which lasted for a month.

Outdoor Participant Segments

For many people, it is a mystery why anyone would put his or her live into danger by doing extreme sports. Whether it is water rafting down the steepest waterfalls, climbing up the highest mountains, or bungee jumping into a canyon, all these activities go hand in hand with an extreme risk. It is hard to understand what drives these thrills seeking sportspeople. According to Ewert (1989, p. 857), "that is probably the reason for describing adventure tourism in terms of motivation". The classification of adventure tourism is a complex concept. A study was undertaken by Sung, Morrison, and O'Leary (2000, p. 632), "activity should be one of the primary bases used to analyze adventure tourism".

Also the Adventure Travel Society (2000) is of the opinion that adventure tourism must be classified according to activity. They divide the different types of extreme and adventurous sports in to either "soft" or "hard". The "soft" types are camping, hiking, biking, animal watching, horseback riding, canoeing, and water skiing, and the "hard" types of sports are mountaineering, white water rafting, scuba diving, and mountain biking (Adventure Travel Society, 2000). According to Gyimóthy and Mykletunb (2004), these people are looking for an escape from everyday life and seeking experiences that only very few others have experienced before¹.

According to "Demography, Motivation, Participation and Provision in Outdoor Sport and Recreation" study², there were defined five main segments of outdoor participants:

¹ Motivators for Going on Holiday, With Principle Focus on Extreme Sport, Modul Vienna Univeristy, 15th June 2012.

² Getting Active Outdoors: A study of Demography, Motivation, Participation and Provision in Outdoor Sport and Recreation in England, June 2015. URL: OutdoorIndustriesAssociation.co.uk.

- The Explorer Profile: Sense of being part of and exploring the natural world. Physical activity is driven by emotional purposes and revolves around exploring and learning.
- Fitness in Nature Profile: Chooses to keep fit outdoors for the fresh air and freedom. Prefers to be exercising outdoors and generally doesn't like the gym or indoor sports. Sense of physical and mental wellbeing and challenging self is important. Competing is not important.
- The Tribe Member Profile: Committed to their sport or activity and take it very seriously. Training and skill improvement is important to them, as is competing and winning. Likely to be part of a specific club.
- The Adventurer Profile: Lives life to the full. Enjoys the sense of adventure and pushing themselves physically.
- The Thrill Seeker Profile: Enjoys taking part in extreme sports and other activities involving physical risk. The experience is all about the adrenaline rush. They enjoy being out of control but are willing for someone/thing else to manage the risk.

Findings and Interpretations

This analyze is conducted by a group of 89 consumers belonging to the Albanian Rafting Group.

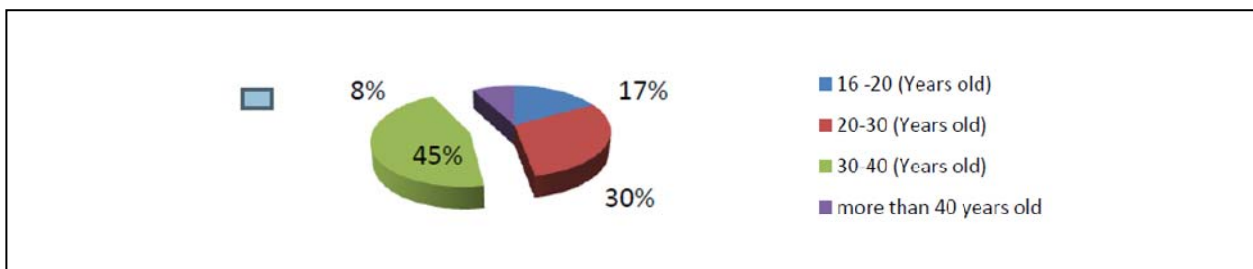


Figure 1. Age distribution of the surveyed.

The overall results conduct that the major part of the participants earns 75,000 all monthly and only 25% of them don't live in Tirana. It can easily be said that the participants come from the top layer living in Tirana. The common social and cultural values that these people share are combined with their demographic characteristics. This is reflected on the meaning of their life philosophy and the way how they consider different events and phenomenon.

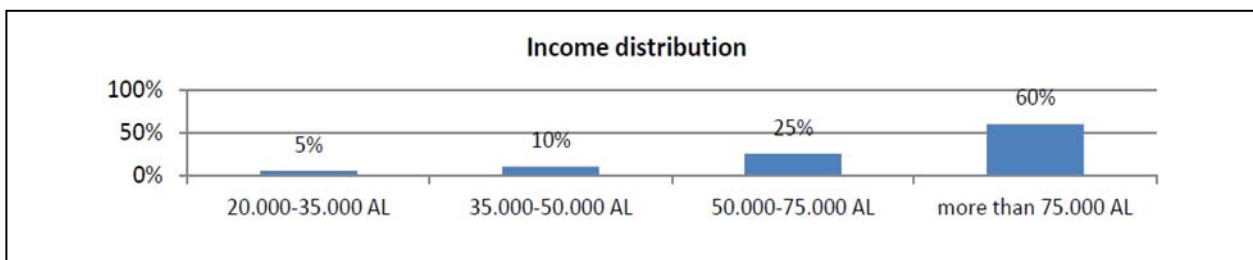


Figure 2. Income distribution.

After the survey, here is how rafting is apprehended:

- Modesty;
- Culture;
- Personality;
- Social relevance;

- Spiritual fulfillment;
- Happiness.

The perception varies from male to female. Females feel more modest if they are a part of this sport, and furthermore spiritually fulfilled. On the other hand, male kind feels way more personality and happiness. The variable of social relevance rests at the same level for both genders.

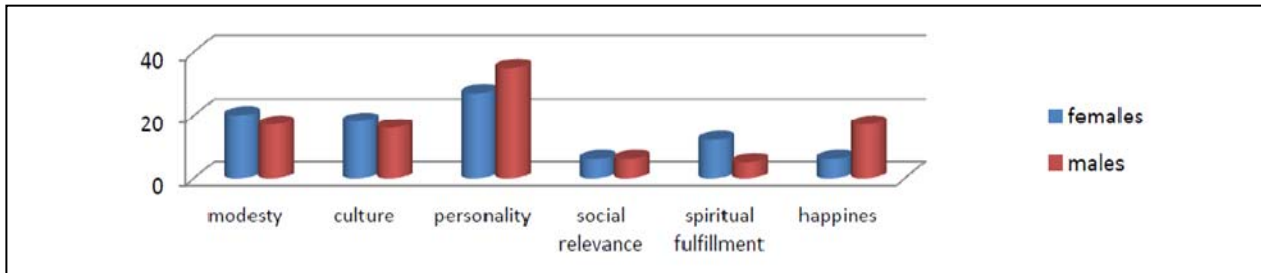


Figure 3. The understanding of rafting by the interviewers.

According to the gender, sports as an expression of personality is placed first from the two groups: The fact that its choice as the expression of personality sets second for females indicates clearly a close bond between the personality and the modesty reflects upon the social values. According to this result, regardless the gender is clearly perceived as: “A way to protect the modesty that does not only reflects the personality but also ensures happiness”.

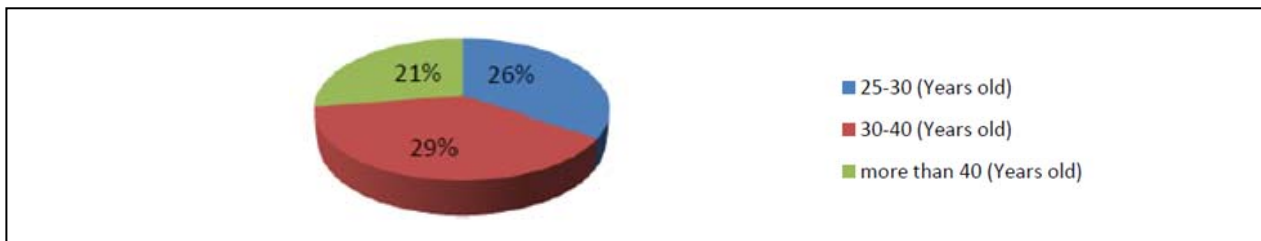


Figure 4. The percentage of the consumers to whom rafting brings happiness.

It is concluded that the consumers over 30 years of age have an affection led by feelings and emotions. At the moment of questioning the consumer on how often rafting is frequented by them and when not, the results are concluded below: 45% of male participants rafted even when they didn't need to, on the other hand, the female gender has a higher interest of 67%.

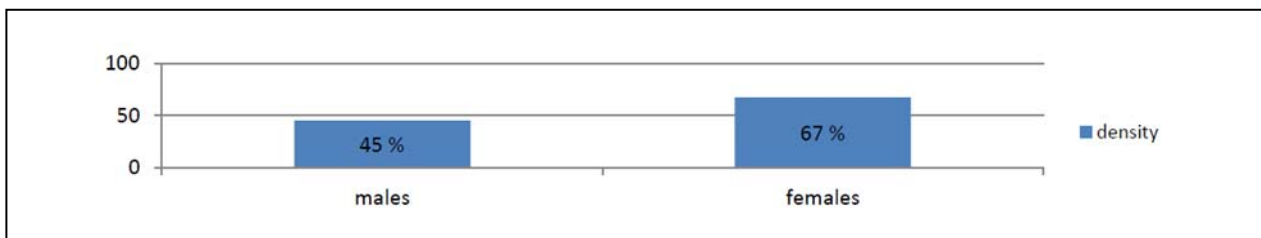


Figure 5. The percentage of male and female participants that practice rafting when they don't need to.

When studying on the marital terms, 54.3% of all single consumers spend on sports even when they don't find it necessary. When reflecting upon the responsibility terms and emotional circumstances, the singles sit at a more comfortable place to spend compared to other groups on the factors that indicate the purchase behavior.

From the results of the test, we can conclude that a statistical connection is placed between spending on rafting without the need and his/her level and the marital status.

At the moment of questioning the consumers on how they feel on spending and being a part of the Albanian Rafting Group, a 32.1% of them declare that they feel good “every time” they practice rafting and the other 31.3% declared that they feel relieved “every time” they practiced rafting. A further examination on genders reflects that 38.9% of female and 21.2% of the male consumers declare that they feel relieved.

Also 44.4% of all female declare that they always feel excited; this quote is seen to be lower on the male gender around 21.2%. According to the results, the trend of being part of an adventure which is simulating and exciting dominates on female gender rather than male one. Around 55.2% of female consumers and 30.7% of male consumers declare that they were “always” happy on this sport. It was also indicated that more females (31%) than males (16.2%) considered this trips a way to boost the humor and 35.6% of all female compared to 15.1% of male considered it a way of dealing with stress.

When we consider that 38.1% of female “always” consider the adventure as a social need and 29.6% of individuals “sometimes” also consider it as a social need. The fact that more female than male declared that “they liked the placement of communication with other people” and that “the person whom they meet made them feel more honest” can be interpreted that females were more prone to males on the matter of purchasing for “social purposes” with the pretext of having a better way of passing time.

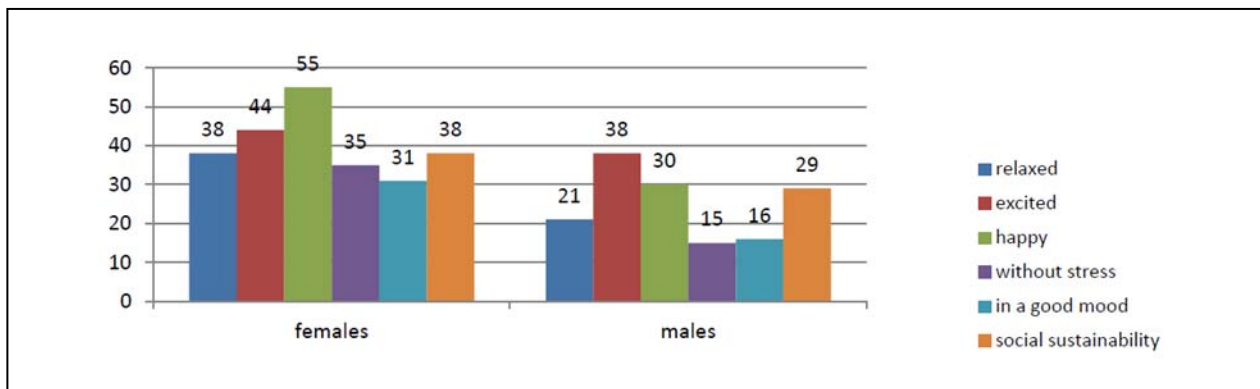


Figure 6. The feeling created by the make, over on consumers.

Conclusions

On the survey over the trend of consumers over the hedonic purchases on extreme sports, the reasons over the hedonic market for this kind of service according to the gender are interpreted while studying random situations where individuals according to their demographical characteristics did this kind of meaningless spending without the need.

- The mentioned understanding over the emotions for the studied group was conducted that it took a decline over the “personality expression”, “means of happiness”, and “the expression of modesty”.
- It was conducted that more females than males spend on the activities that give emotion and adrenaline without the need.
- It was decided that the trend of the studied group to “shop” “in order to obtain an idea” was lower than the other trends; on the other hand, the female consumers were more determined to engage with the hedonic market more than males.

In conclusion, it was overseen that the today's market on adrenaline is a pure concept that does not only serve to the fulfillment of the needs. At the same time, it is placed as a social activity. It is also seen to have emotional and sentimental qualities; also the consumers are indicated to have variable behavior. It is considered that the current instinct of the consumer to purchase is based not only on practical goods but also based on their feelings. Finally, it can be concluded that the process of purchasing contains rational motivation as well as emotion (hedonic).

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