CONCEPTUAL ASPECTS OF STUDYING VALUE REFERENCE POINTS AND CONSUMER PREFERENCES OF YOUNG CONSUMERS

Roman Roaljdovich Sidorchuk[*]**, Dariya Mikhaylovna Efimova**[*]**,
Irina Ivanovna Skorobogatykh**[*]**, Aleksey Aleksandrovich Meshkov**[*] **and
Larisa Aleksandrovna Danchenok**[*]

*Abstract: Context. Development of marketing methodology as related to closer attention to customer experience management requires further theoretical comprehension. The study analyses which value reference points and consumer preferences characteristic of the selected segment will become a conceptual basis of marketing tools. **Objective.** The objective is to identify value reference points and consumer preferences of students as "opinion leaders" among young people. **Data Sources/Study Design.** The research is conducted using focused interviews (focus-groups) with representatives of student audience residing in the Moscow region. Total number of respondents in focus-groups is 17 people. All of them fitted the age limit of 17 to 29 years old, which is meet requirements of the current research. **Principal Findings.** Value reference points and consumer preferences of the youth market were identified. Following the results of the comparative analysis, we devised a hypothesis on the possibility of creating a model of marketing management of customer experience at touch points on the basis of parameters "human values" – "consumer preferences". The gender differentiation in consumer's preferences among young respondents according to the different products were identified. **Conclusions.** There is a possibility of increasing the effectiveness of the practical application of the methodology of managing the client's experience adapting to behavioral shifts on the target audience. The basis of increase of productivity impacts at the touch points contact with the consumer model is the use of proposed model: "value systems" - "consumer preferences". Changing the parameters in the model of "value-reference points" - "consumer preferences" and the coupling strength between the two can be in-tenance indicator to control the influence of the contact points.*

Key words: human values, value reference points, consumer preferences, customer experience management, CEM, Smart technologies, youth market, marketing techniques, focus-group research,

1. INTRODUCTION

At the preliminary stage of our study an analysis of literary sources allowing to connect values (value reference points) and consumer preferences for their use in modern marketing techniques was conducted. A number of works (Zeithaml, 1988)

* Plekhanov Russian University of Economics, Stremyanny lane, 36, Moscow, 117997, Russia

studying marketing possibilities of influencing the consumer used the models which linked quality, price and product value to assess their perception by consumers. One should agree with Zeithaml A. Valarie's (1988) conclusion that "the selection of a strategy for a particular product or market segment depends on its customers' definition of value. Strategies based on customer value standards and perceptions will channel resources more effectively and will meet customer expectations better than those based only on company standards. At the same time, as other researchers mention and rightly so, "There is a missing link between what consumers perceive to their ultimate behaviors – what goes on inside the mind?" (Lee Sampson, 2006). One of the approaches to dealing with this problem practically is Customer experience management (CEM) practice. In the materials of KPMG consulting company titled *Seven steps to better customer experience management. Improving customer management to drive profitable growth* (2011) it is noted that CEM "…focuses on creating differentiated experiences at touch points that customers choose to interact with the company. Focusing on CEM as a strategy helps service delivery capabilities align and adapt to behavioral shifts of the target audience". Therefore, it can be said that consumer perception is differentiated by touch points, which simplifies the process of consumer preference management through product perception. In the CEM information package of Smith+Co company, in its turn, it is said that "…the brands that are transforming markets today and creating real differentiation and loyalty, do so because they see everything they do as part of the customer experience" (What is customer experience, 2006). It is also noted there that in response to intensification of competition and higher performance of companies, including marketing ones, manufacturers need to improve the quality of their products and services. This makes it difficult to choose between the products of practically the same quality. In our opinion, higher marketing efficiency also results in homogeneity of the offers of products with similar functional meaning aimed at target consumer segment of the same type. Thus, returning to CEM, this approach should become a tool for customer experience differentiation, for increase of their loyalty to brands. But another problem remains unsolved: to what extent CEM can be applied to young people whose customer experience is not very extensive?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

For our research we decided to study a segment of "young consumers" meaning people aged 17-25. Considering the possibility of using CEM in the work with this segment, on the one hand, we can draw on the research of influence of situational factors on the behaviour of young consumers (Lee, 2011; Young *et al.*, 2010). We can use CEM through the assessment of possible impact of certain situational factors. However, Lee (2011, p 23), for instance, when studying the influence on buying behaviour of young audience, emphasized the unquestionable significance of individual characteristics of a consumer apart from situational factors. For the

concept of ecological products, for example, he defined them as environmental consciousness, influence of local environment, as well as certain environmental knowledge of a young person. We believe that value reference points (values), which we understand as "human values", are of vital importance in the indicated factors of consumer behaviour. That said, for a young consumer the values are an important factor of involvement in the knowledge and consumption of certain products. Thus, a study (Te'eni-Harar *et al.,* 2009) showed that advertising is efficient if aimed at young consumers, when they are highly involved with a product. If they do not think that the product is related to them in any way, this significantly diminishes the influence of the advertisement. As a result, returning to the use of CEM approach, one might assume that it will be more efficient in case of simultaneous use of situational factors influence and young consumers' values system management. The issue of values having influence on consumer behaviour has been studied in a number of works, also for the further use in marketing (Parsons, 1951; Rokeach, 1973; Rohan, 2000; Babin, B., & Babin, L., 2001; Schwartz, 1992, 2012; Kansra, 2014; Sidorchuk, 2014). For instance, studying the behaviour of young consumers when shopping for clothes (Kansra, 2014), they show that "… it is important that the emphasis is on fresh innovative designs and not just on producing the same designs again and again". In his research Tapscott (2008) showed how easily young consumers use information technologies. He also noted that they are leaders in using these technologies among the family and in business. A research by Sergeev (2010) indicates that there are certain factors of leadership of young students compared to other young audience in Russia. The author singles out general and particular features of student community and other youth groups. The study shows the commonality of value system of student and non-student young audience. The key difference of student audience identified by the author is that all students can be united by the term "creative class"; its important feature is leadership position in consumer behaviour. While studying student audience, researchers Kayabaþý, Mucan and Tanyeri (2012) saw the changes in their consumer behaviour and attitude to brands. They explained it by the change in consumption structure, including the globalisation. For instance, social media let people instantly express and exchange their consumer experience. The study by Kacprzak, Dziewanowska (2015) showed that young consumers are the most active Internet users. But to what extent "global consciousness" is the factor that has changed their values? Or easy-to-use information technologies, smart technologies and the Internet included, are only a tool for searching and acquiring information for this group of consumers?

In this context we approach the consideration of values on the basis of works by Dokuchaeva (2009), Schwartz (1992, 2012) and Sidorchuk (2014). In terms of human values as a perfect model, as a perfect phenomenon, we single out value reference points which are interpreted as a set of requirements to this phenomenon. Consumer preferences, in their turn, can be based not only on values, but also on

situational factors and norms (requirements, criteria of society of social groups) which have not become an attractive activity model for an individual. In our opinion, the most effective tools in the context of CEM are marketing techniques based on value reference points.

3. METHOD OF STUDYING THE BEHAVIOUR OF YOUNG CONSUMERS

The study of literary sources and the abovementioned issues allowed to state the goal of the research as follows: to identify conceptual aspects of values and consumer preferences of young consumers. To do this we set a task to detect value and consumer preferences of young consumers.

The authors formulated the following hypothesis reflecting values and consumer preferences of student audience.

1. Hypothesis H1: Student audience has a certain system of values.

2. Hypothesis H2: Student audience has established consumer preferences.

3. Hypothesis H3: Potential connection between the system of values and consumer preferences of student audience can be identified through comparative analysis.

Further analysis was aimed at confirming/rejecting these hypothesis. Confirmation of the hypotheses that were put forward will let the authors consider the connection between value reference points and consumer preferences of student audience as a conceptual approach to values and consumer preferences of young consumers to be used in CEM methodology.

The method of focused group interviews (focus-groups) was chosen as the main research method. The focus-group, or advanced unstructured interview on the topics of values and consumer preferences took place in Moscow at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics. The focus-group was formed in accordance with guiding principles in the field of marketing research (Bellenger, Bernhardt and Goldstucker, 1976; Golubkov, 2000). Focus-group participants were selected on the basis of structure homogeneity principle. To achieve the homogeneity, two focus-groups with gender differentiation were conducted for the analysis of consumer preferences. To analyse value reference points a group without gender differentiation was formed. The basis was the youth profile of consumer audience. All the participants were university students, male and female, aged 17-25. The scenario for a moderator based on the principle of semi-structuredness (a combination of open-end questions to stimulate free answers and closed questions with a list of possible answers) included questions on the following topics: meaning of values, consumer preferences used to make a decision about a purchase. To identify the values, the following topics were discussed: "Safety and health", "Consciousness of one's personality", "Fashion",

"Attitude to mass media and the Internet", "Marriage, family, relationships", "Religion", "Influence of parents and people around on personal opinion", "Innovation", "Planning purchases and loans", "Devotion to brands and attitude to package", "Attitude to imports", "Attitude to expensive brands (goods) and shops", "Attitude to prices and discounts". To study consumer preferences questions on the following topics were asked: "Mobile phone or smartphone", "Tablet/laptop", "Everyday clothes", "Everyday shoes", "Refreshing drinks and juice", "Snacks and chocolate bars", "Mobile communication and Internet service in the home region". Before the conversation the participants filled in classification questionnaires with questions about the year of study, faculty and financial dependence on parents (sponsors). Focus-groups were conducted in June-July of 2016.

This study has the following limitations: 1. The authors consider student audience as "opinion leaders" among young customers. 2. A study by focus-group method has organic limitations characteristic of this approach – the obtained results may be non-representative and subjectively interpreted. 3. Participants of the focus-group for identification of consumer preferences were differentiated by gender. 4. Gender differentiation was not used for the assessment of value reference points. 5. Key topics for discussion in focus-groups were selected as a result of "brainstorm" by the authors of the research. 6. The respondents were not differentiated by their income by the following ratio: 50% are financially independent from their parents and 50% are financially dependent on their parents (sponsors). 7. The number of participants in focus-groups was not even due to the actual number of people participating in the study.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Consumer preferences

Due to limited purchasing capacity of the respondents, one of the main criteria defining their consumer preferences in all product groups was the product's reasonable price without compromising on quality. Respondents noted that even if the product is expensive and their parents are paying for it, the price spectrum is still limited and they ask their parents to buy (give them as a present) a certain product within this price spectrum.

All the respondents make their purchases in Russia. They mainly use the Internet to find out more about the models, range and technical characteristics (in case of purchasing mobile phones/smartphones, laptops/tablets). The Internet is also used to find lower prices on a selected model of the product.

Below are principal findings on the research identifying consumer preferences on each product category separately.

Making a choice in the category "Mobile phone or smartphone", the respondents pay attention to technical characteristics, easy and understandable interface, ability to use social networks, messengers and the Internet. For instance, a participant of the focus-group, Nina, first-year student, says she uses her smartphone "… to communicate with everyone… keep the information in the phone, some bookmarks, notes, so that I don't have to take too much stuff with me". Such important choice criteria as good camera and design of the phone/ smartphone were also mentioned in the discussion. Interesting results were obtained on the change of opinion concerning the choice of the brand. Nina noted that when "… my friend got an iPhone, I compared them and realized it was much better than other brands… and bought one myself". In general, the respondents agreed on many points while discussing this topic. At the same time, a significant difference was noted in the discussion (with gender differentiation) concerning software available in the smartphone. While the group with male respondents found the availability or lack of programmes for socialization and communication (social media and messengers) unimportant, the group with female respondents observed that such applications were very important. However, regardless of gender differentiation, the participants found different mobile applications for purchasing goods and services important.

When buying "Tablets/laptops", the respondents observed that such purchase was usually made by parents, therefore it was not important if it was some particular model or not. However, two of the respondents paid for their tablet/ laptop themselves and formulated the following requirements to the parameters: portability – light enough to carry around the city; compact size – it should be "not too bulky"; antivirus protection. Graphic parameters were also important for those participants of focus-groups who are interested in graphic design and working with photos. For instance, Daria said that "it should be high-power, have as many cores as possible, with 17-inch screen, the one that does not suddenly switch off when I'm editing a video… with good colour rendition". The requirements to the design of these devices were also mentioned. Zhavokhir, a participant of the focus-group, said he used HP devices because he "really likes their design".

As for the discussion of "Everyday clothes" product group, it should be noted that regardless of gender differentiation, parameters of choice of everyday clothes and clothes to wear on a date are different. Our discussion concentrated on everyday clothes. In this category the most important parameters are convenience, simple design and comfort. The respondents find their look important. Some participants of the discussion said that the opinion of their friends, relatives and the opposite sex was highly significant for them. Nevertheless, men hold the opinion that buying clothes is as simple as "just enter a shop and buy something". Some of the participants have their favourite shops and brands, usually it is connected to design and quality of the product. For instance, Vladimir noted,

"*Marks&Spencer*, I just love their shirts…". Another respondent said, "… I love *Zara* and I wish I could buy everything there…". At the same time there are preferences among brands with prohibitively high prices. For example, Kristina noted that "I pass by *Bebe*, they have such amazing dresses there, but they cost a lot", and Anna said that "*Michael Kors*, a really nice bag, but very expensive".

The following parameters were mentioned for choosing "Everyday shoes": a combination of comfort and attractive design. Young women noted that shoes should match their style, for instance, as Kristina said, "They should go with all my clothes". All the respondents stressed that buying shoes was a time-consuming process, and for that reason they preferred not to have many pairs of shoes. Kristina's statement seemed interesting, she said that "… I'm too lazy to walk around the shops for a long time and choose, so I buy only what I really need". Researchers did not expect to find out that young women absolutely hate high heels and fancy shoes as everyday choice, for instance, Nina shared her negative experience which defined her further choice, "I wore high-heels for my graduation party, and it was so uncomfortable I will never wear them again".

Discussing the category of "Refreshing drinks and juice", the participants noted that they (students) often bought plain water and non-alcoholic drinks. Most respondents said they bought water more often than juice and preferred sparkling water. Some think gas compensates for the bad taste of water. Some drink tea/coffee and prefer to do it in a café. Several participants find the following parameters important: manufacturer, convenient package and, for some of them, beverage composition. The purchase is usually impulsive, made when needed. Two female participants said they sometimes took a beverage from home. However, if young people organize a trip, they usually purchase the preferred drinks in advance.

As for packaged juice, some participants of the focus-groups said that "they consider it unhealthy and not as juice at all", since, as Vladimir noted, "There is no real juice in that, so I don't want to buy it". And "… even if I do, I prefer fresh juice or some expensive packaged juice, and I avoid mid-range segment juice because I don't trust its quality…". For instance, as Nina said, "… because I guess the cheap ones have more preservatives and don't taste really good".

While discussing the category of products "Snacks and chocolate bars", the participants agreed that they were considered as "snack", not the main meal. Some did not like the fact that they often have to have chocolate bars and snacks instead of a proper lunch. Only one female respondent noted that she preferred to buy fruit which, in her opinion, replaced chocolate bars.

The purchase is usually made independently and impulsively, depending on what one wants at a particular moment. A bar of chocolate is not considered to be a gift or a treat.

When choosing, several respondents find it important that the chocolate is nutritious and easy to eat. As for taste preferences, it was found that the participants mainly prefer milk chocolate and do not care about its composition or percentage of cocoa beans in it. Only one young woman said she was really fond of chocolate, so she tried bitter chocolate being interested in its unusual taste, not the brand.

Some young women stressed they preferred to buy the products of their favourite brand, and if it is not available, they would choose the one that is cheaper. Those who do not care about the brand choose by filling, stuffing and taste.

As for the situation of consumption, it was noted that chocolate bars are not for eating at the cinema. There they usually eat chips or popcorn.

While discussing the choice of "Mobile communication and Internet in home region" provider, the respondents agree that they choose one because of cheaper costs, however, one respondent also found coverage area important. As for mobile communication services, students need: phone calls, texts, Internet (Gb), communication stability. Some choose the same providers as their friends and acquaintances "so that the calls are free for us". As a rule, they prefer "packages" the cost of which includes a number of components. That said, it was found that priority of the components differs – some find the Internet more important, some – the calls included in their calling plan.

As for the change of the provider, if there is a new one on the market, the participants were wary and agreed that "… I'll see how it works if my acquaintances use it, and if it's alright, I'll choose it". However, some noted that the change of the provider is not desirable, since it results in changing the phone number. If the students go abroad for a short time, they use roaming; if they go abroad for a long time, "for several months", then they prefer to buy a SIM card of a local provider. They find such purchase irrelevant for a short-term journey, since they often use Skype via free local Wi-Fi.

As you can see from the analysis of responds by the participants of focus-groups, our hypothesis H2 was confirmed, and student audience has established consumer preferences. Using the obtained results, the authors have drawn up a comparative table of gender differences in respondents' consumer preferences (table 1).

Visual analysis of the data presented in table 1 shows gender differences when young consumers are buying products and services. For instance, women paid attention to security when choosing a tablet/laptop, while men were interested in their design and brand.

4.2. Value reference points

"Attitude to prices and discounts". During the discussion of prices, it was found that the participants consider the price to be a quality factor and one of the principal

Table 1
Gender classification of preferences

Product	Men	Women
Mobile phones and smartphones	• Technical characteristics	• Technical characteristics • Necessary programmes available
Tablets and laptops	• Design, model, brand	• Save money for the purchase • Information security
Everyday clothes	• Opinion of friends and relatives	• Defer to their own taste
Everyday shoes	• Style and comfort • Must have many pairs of shoes (trainers) • Stick to their favourite brand	• The process of choosing is too tiresome and time-consuming. Shoes must go with the clothes • Only the necessary types of shoes
Refreshing drinks and juice		• Manufacturer • Convenient package
Snacks and chocolate bars		• Brand • Filling, stuffing, taste
Mobile communication and Internet services	• Coverage area	

parameters influencing the purchase. However, the participants had different opinions about prices and quality. For instance, according to Anastasia, a member of the focus-group, "…a balance should be struck between the cost of a product and financial situation…" and "… buying cheap stuff when you're rather well-off is kind of stupid". Purchase of expensive things which requires serious efforts is "… unreasonable behaviour…", according to Mikhail. Some respondents said that "… maybe, quality is the most important thing in a purchase…", sometimes low quality even "… provokes rejection and further refusal even to look at the price of the product". As for discounts, focus-group participants had controversial opinions. Several respondents are wary about discounts because they think that "… shop assistants put bigger prices on a product and then offer a discount on it". Some respondents also had a negative experience of buying a cheaper product which did not meet their expectations, and, as Mikhail noted, "My purchase did not satisfy me after all". According to the respondents' opinions, being wary about discounts is often the result of "…having to look for certain conditions or limitations concerning the offered discount or some quality defects…" (for example, expiry date).

Some respondents, like Anastasia, hate the fact that they cannot "stop buying unnecessary things which have cheaper prices".

Others think that under otherwise equal conditions discounts allow them to get a better bargain and they are willing to use them to buy a high-quality product for a cheaper price, for example, when a discount is given on some product "… so that it does not lie around unsold…".

"Attitude to expensive brands (products) and shops"

Students are sceptical about expensive brands and products because "… can't afford to "try" an expensive brand due to low budget". For this reason, the respondents agreed that expensive brands either do not always offer high quality or their products are of the same quality as the products for people with average income. However, some respondents have personally tried a product of expensive brand, which changed their sceptical (critical) view into positive one. But Evgeniya shared with us her personal experience and said that "… when an expensive audio player got broken as fast as the cheaper one…", it changed her opinion about the purchase of expensive technical appliances being reasonable. Still, the participants of the discussion noted that "… being more financially reliable they would prefer more expensive brands of clothes…". As for expensive shops, the participants agreed that they either pass by expensive shops or enter and "… look at any price tag…" and leave, if they realize the price is too high for them, and go to another shop with more affordable prices.

It should be noted that respondents of the discussion distinguish the reasons for high prices. If a high price is related to "authoritative manufacturer", they consider it positive, but if it means "the reseller overprices", it causes indignation and forces to look for a cheaper product (for example, when buying technical appliances).

"Attitude to imports"

Participants of focus-groups unanimously noted that Russian products are the best, except for advanced technical appliances, films and some delicacies, which are "not the same" in Russia. They favour Russian goods because they like to feel they are supporting domestic manufacturer.

"Being loyal to brands and attitude to package".

The respondents think that "a brand is a set of emotions". Most respondents prefer to buy brands they used before, especially phones and cosmetics. They tend to trust a familiar manufacturer and are willing to pay more.

The participants know that brand awareness and reputation are included in its products' prime cost, but they believe they are ready to pay for it, if the product meets certain requirements to the quality and fits their income level.

Tatiana shared a separate opinion and said that "… the brand is important for certain products, and there should be several of such brands…". In case the market

of similar goods is overcrowded with brands, then she makes no difference between them and pays more attention to the product itself, not to the brand.

Package may be necessary or unnecessary for different categories of students. For instance, female respondents noted that they like packages that are easy to open, recognisable and will not cause injury. Mikhail said he liked to buy unpackaged bread which you can take yourself with special tongs, and this reminded him about Yaroslavl, his hometown. All the participants unanimously noted that package must correspond to its content and must not be disappointing.

"Planning purchases and loans".

When discussing the planning of purchases, young men and women had different opinions on impulse buying. Young men assured they never made impulse purchases, while young women admitted they bought something unplanned, something that caught their eye, even if they made a shopping list. Almost all the participants are familiar with the situation of buying more food "than they were going to buy" if they go shopping hungry (after studies).

The respondents have different attitude to buying long-use and everyday products. For example, for some of them planning means buying goods that become worn out after some time (underwear, technical appliances, sanitary protection) and monthly payments (phone, food). Others do not plan the purchase of "common stuff", but they also buy the desired expensive and less necessary products "if they get a chance to make some extra money". Anastasia noted she usually planned expensive purchases.

Students consider loans a heavy burden and a necessity which makes one more respectable in the eyes of others. However, they are not willing to take out a loan just to achieve the goal of possessing a certain thing. At the same time, Tatiana, for instance, noted that "… if in the future I would like to buy a car, I doubt I can save up such a big sum and I will probably take out a loan, but not to make people respect me".

"Innovation".

The result of the definition of such value reference point as "innovation" was rather unexpected. It turned out that none of the participants of the research consider themselves "innovation fans" or keep an eye on new technical devices on the market. They do not delve deeply into technical characteristics or technology details and materials used.

"Influence of parents and those around on personal opinion".

During the discussion the participants noted that they considered their parents' opinion and took it into account, however they influenced their final decision differently.

For some respondents the opinion of their parents is important, but only on some issues where they enjoy certain authority. That said, this authority is not emotional, it includes actual knowledge or experience on this particular issue. Young people admit that, in their opinion, parents do not know much in all the matters.

Other respondents consider their parents', especially mother's, opinion obtrusive, which results in young people "banning" them from their "personal life" and not accepting their taste in clothes.

Friends and boyfriend/girlfriend have strong influence on respondents if they spend much time together.

An individual question of the discussion was making a decision on a purchase of an expensive product. For instance, if the purchase is made fully or partly from the family budget, then the more money parents add, the weightier is their opinion, however, the final word rests with the future owner of the product.

Mikhail said he always asked advice of his family, but "the final decision is made by the one who need the expensive product most of all". In general, this participant does not trust the opinion of people who, in his opinion, "don't understand anything themselves".

"Religion".

Different opinions were voiced when discussing the topic of religion: for some it means the sacrament of baptism in their childhood and "this is the only thing they have to do with religion". For several respondents, religion is "moral principles and commandments", which they respect and try not to break, however, they realize that sometimes they fail to do it. That said, they do not consider themselves strict followers of church rules and do not seek to become ones. Another category includes students for whom religion is fundamental and even influences their eating behaviour on particular days (the Lent). However, none of the participants agreed that religion influenced their choice of clothes and requirements to their appearance, as "what's more important is a person's soul, how one acts and thinks".

All in all, most young students who took part in the study respect religion, consider it a personal matter which "is not for discussion", and they also do not like it when religious attributes are used in advertising campaigns.

"Marriage, family, relationships".

Students think family is the most important and some even place it before career, arguing that "… having a family one supports relationships, builds a career, because living just for oneself is useless…". However, they usually do not hurry with marriage and think they should take some time to know each other before

making a decision to create a family. One participant noted that before creating a family "… one should decide whether or not to get an education, and if one decides to do it, he or she should get it first…". According to members of the focus-group, having no career or being in the process of building it is no obstacle for creating a family. They are okay with de facto marriage or living together, only one participant was totally against it.

"Attitude to mass media and the Internet".

Mass media are useless for students and they do not trust them. They do not read newspapers, do not consider radio a source of information, do not watch TV or even TV series. They get information either from public pages in social networks or from those online sources where "… people share their opinion without advertising something on purpose…". That said, female respondents admitted they do not even read fashion magazines.

The Internet is usually used for communication via social networks, for posting pictures and watching films. It is worth mentioning that one participant considered "Vkontakte" social network only as a messenger.

Only one participant noted that for him social networks would never replace communication in person and that posting pictures and all that was just "for show" and should not be displayed.

Two female participants find Instagram very convenient for posting pictures, as this way they will not get lost "as it happens on a tablet", they also mentioned such word as "habit".

"Fashion".

Students differentiate between fashion and style. They do not consider themselves fashion-conscious and assure they have never met people who look "like on the runway", however, young women follow the trends via "different looks" and they care about style.

Young people are not keen on fashion, as they think it is just someone's way of "making money", however, they admit that fashionable things are usually of high quality, and "that's good". Nevertheless, they like to combine different clothes and always note when people around them do it well. It should be noted that "having a girlfriend" has a great influence on a young man's wardrobe, because "… it's all for her, so that she enjoys being with me…".

For some young women it is important to express their individuality through clothes, while others only care about convenience and comfort and "looking like everybody else". Young women noted that they care about the opinion of the opposite sex if it is a "special occasion" (theatre, club, walking around the city at night), but not if it is just a usual meeting with friends.

"Consciousness of one's personality".

While discussing the personality, the respondents shared different opinions on single-mindedness. All consider themselves single-minded, but for some there is a certain limit in the form of "interesting/not interesting for me, like/don't like", being interested in overcoming difficulties and the question of "Do I really need it?".

"Security and health".

The participants of the discussion do not recheck external conditions for security, they usually feel comfortable, however, one female respondent noted that security means "there is always some support, a certain group of people". Several respondents noted emotionality and need for safety and calm as a result of changes in external conditions. Some respondents consider themselves "risky" and not careful when it comes to security.

The topic of health is not pressing for the respondents, some admitted they liked sports, but they could not say anything else about health and importance of healthy lifestyle.

In general, the analysis of discussions in the focus-group suggests that hypothesis H1 about student audience having certain value reference points is true. To confirm the hypothesis H3 about the connection between values and consumer preferences, the authors conducted a comparative analysis on the basis of comparison of value reference points to consumer preferences (table 1 in Appendix 1). Visual analysis of the obtained groups connecting "Value reference points" with "Consumer preferences" of selected product categories confirm the hypothesis.

For additional empirical verification of the focus-group results within the grant titled "Transformation of the process of decision-making when purchasing goods or services with the help of smart technologies", conducted as a follow-up to previous research of Moscow public transport (Sidorchuk, Efimova, Lopatinskaya & Kaderova, 2015), consumer preferences in the use of mobile applications and methods of fare payment (including "digital wallet" application) have been studied. The research was conducted in July, 2016. 439 respondents answered the questions of our online-questionnaire. There were two blocks of questions:

- Social and demographic image of the respondent;
- Assessment of the influence of Smart technologies on passengers of Moscow public transport.

The results of the above-mentioned research can be used for statistical confirmation of certain findings obtained in focus-group of this study. In particular, we obtained the results showing the methods of payment and use of mobile applications by age groups. As you can see on the diagrams in figures 1 and 2, a

considerable number of respondents aged 18-25 prefer to use digital wallet (49%) to pay for public transport and use mobile applications to solve different problems on transport (54%).
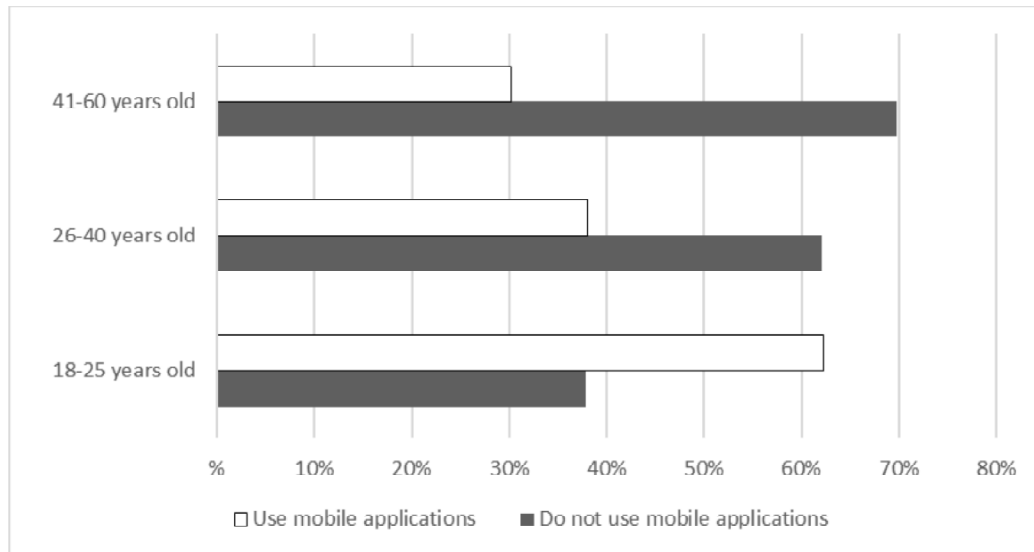

Figure 1: Differences in use of mobile applications when using the services of Moscow public transport (by age groups)
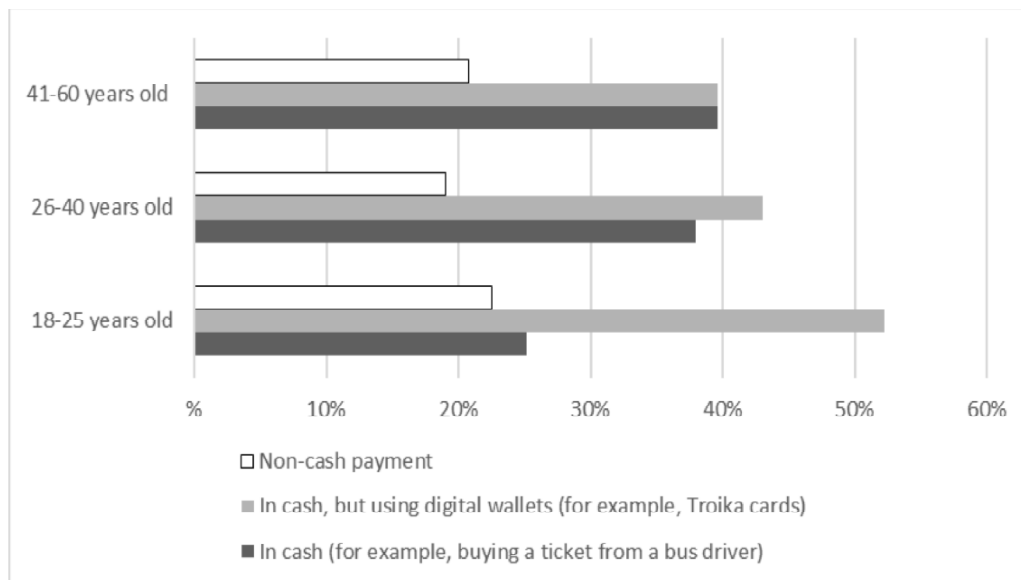

Figure 2: Difference in methods of payment when using the services of Moscow public transport (by age groups)

The indicated results show that the results of focus-groups can be trusted more, and the participants of these focus-groups, as we mentioned above, noted the importance of using different mobile applications when purchasing goods and services.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Discussion and implications

Confirmation of the hypotheses of our study suggests that the model of marketing customer experience management at touch points can be created on the basis of the analysis of "human values" – "consumer preferences" parameters. Figure 3 shows a conceptual model of choosing control activation at touch points on the basis of the analysis of parameters "Value reference points" (VRp_i), "Consumer preferences" (SV_i) and their binding force.

Here we rely on the studies by Schwartz (Schwartz, 2012) who notes that propositions of value theory which he put forward postulate 10 upper-level values, but nevertheless, there are related motivation continuums on lower levels. Analysis
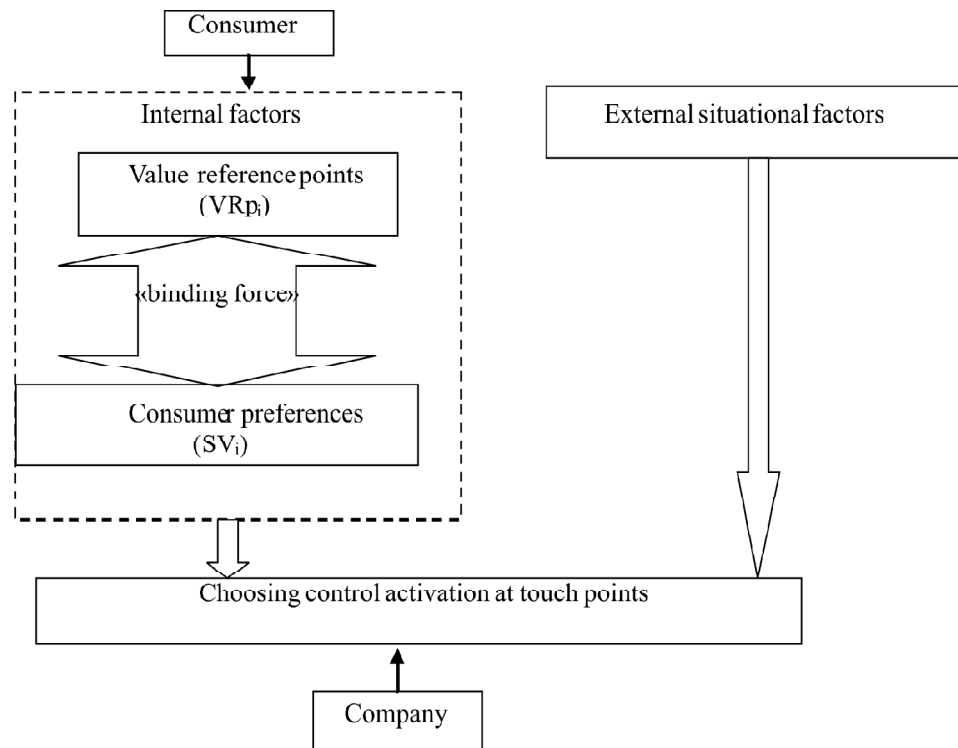
Figure 3: Model of customer experience management at touch points on the basis of the analysis of "human values" – "consumer preferences" connection

of parameters VRpi, SVi and connection between them allows us to identify content component of communication with a consumer. That said, parameters with greater connection between company's product, consumer preferences and value reference points have practical importance, and according to Schwartz's theory can be described as motivation for consumption. Using CEM methodology, companies get a chance to adapt to behavioural shifts in target audience. In particular, for young consumers studied in focus-groups continuum is groups of parameters singled out by us.

That said, we believe that parameters with most strong statistical connection have practical importance. Also, change of parameters in the model "human values" – "consumer preferences" and their binding force may be indicative of changes in control activation at touch points. The strength of binding force can be identified in a quantitative study, which, as the authors believe, is a prospect for further research.

Acknowledgements

References

Babin, B., & Babin, L. (2001), Seeking something different? A model of schema typicality, consumer affect, purchase intentions and perceived shopping value, *Journal of Business Research*, 54(2), pp.89-96, doi:10.1016/S0148-2963(99)00095-8.

Bellenger, Danny, Kenneth Bernhardt, and Jac Goldstucker (1976), Qualitative Research in Marketing. Chicago: American Marketing Association.

Dokuchaev I. I. (2009), Tsennost and *existential*. Fundamental*principle* of the *historical* culture of *axiology*. SPb.: Nauka, pp. 595.

Golubkov E. P. (2000), Marketingovye issledovanija: teorija, metodologija i praktika.(2-e izdanie), pererabotannoe i dopolnennoe. [Marketing research: theory, methodology and practice (*2nd* ed)]. Moscow: Finpress Publ., 464 p.

Kansra Pooja (2014), Determinants of the Buying Behavior of Young Consumers of Branded Clothes: An Empirical Analysis, *Journal of Brand Management*, 11(3): 57-70.

Kayabaşı Aydın, Mucan Burcu, Tanyeri Mustafa (2012). Analysis on Young Consumers' Consumer Values and Their Attitudes toward Foreign Firms, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*.

Lee Sampson (2006), Defining CEM. In What is customer experience? *http://www.smithcoconsultancy.com/pdfs/uploads/WHAT_IS_CUSTOMER_EXPERIENCE., Date of access: 18.08.2016.*

Lee, K. (2011), The Green Purchase Behavior of Hong Kong Young Consumers: The Role of Peer Influence, Local Environmental Involvement, and Concrete Environmental Knowledge. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing,* 23(1): 21-44.

Parsons, T. (1951), The social system. Glencoe, Il.: Free Press.

Rohan, M. J. (2000), A rose by any name? The values construct. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4: 255-277.

Rokeach, M. (1973), The nature of human values. New York: Free Press.

Schwartz, S. H. (2012), An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values, *Online Readings in Psychology and Cultur*e, 2(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1116.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992), Universals in the content and structure of values: Theory and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 25: 1-65 . New York: Academic Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6.

Sergeev P. V. (2010). Molodezh' i studenchestvo kak social'nye gruppy i obyekt sociologicheskogo analiza. Bulletin of the Adygei State University. Series 1: Regional studies: philosophy, history, sociology, law, political science, cultural science, 1: 127-133.

Seven steps to better customer experience management. Improving customer management to drive profitable growth (2011) *https://home.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/pdf/2011/02/seven-steps-better-customer-experience-management.pdf , Date of access: 18.08.2016.*

Sidorchuk, Roman & Efimova, Dariya & Lopatinskaya, Irina & Kaderova, Venera (2015), Parametric approach to the assessment of service quality attributes of municipal passenger transport in Moscow, Modern Applied Science, 9(4): 303-311, doi:10.5539/mas.v9n4pxx

Sidorchuk R. (2015), The Concept of "Value" in the Theory of Marketing, *Asian Social Science,* 11(9): 320-325, doi:10.5539/ass.v11n9p320.

Te'eni-Harari, T., Lehman-Wilzig, S. N., & Lampert, S. I. (2009), The importance of product involvement for predicting advertising effectiveness among young people. *International Journal of Advertising,* 28(2): 203-229.

Tapscott, D. (2008), Grown Up Digital: How the Net Generation is Changing Your World, New York: McGraw-Hill.

What is customer experience? (2006), *http://www.smithcoconsultancy.com/pdfs/uploads/WHAT_IS_CUSTOMER_EXPERIENCE.pdf,* Date of access: 18.08.2016.

Young, W., Hwang, K., McDonald, S., & Oates, C. J. (2010), Sustainable consumption: green consumer behaviour when purchasing products. *Sustainable Development,* 18(1), 20-31.

Zeithaml A. Valarie (1988), Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality, and Value: A Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence, *Journal of Marketing*, 52: 2-22.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Table 1
Comparative analysis of values and identified consumer preferences

Value reference points	Consumer preferences	Product group
Attitude to prices and discounts	Quality meets the requirements (preferences) Attractive design Nice package No impression of overpaying for the brand No impression of overpaying the retailer	Phone/smartphone
	Low-cost "package" of communication services	Communication services
	Price conforms to the quality High price means good quality Low price makes you wary and prevents from further consideration of the product May save up or earn specially for buying the desired product Discounts are for useless and low-quality products Discounts allow to get a better bargain for a high-quality product Reasonable price Cheaper product among the ones of similar quality	All products
Being loyal to brands and attitude to package	Not willing to overpay for brands	All products
	Expensive brands have better quality and their products are more attractive Have favourite brands, but with reasonable prices	Clothes, bags
	Some brands have more attractive design, interface and are easier to use The brand provides free access to music	Phones, smartphones / Laptops, tablets
	Have favourite brands, but will easily buy others in case favourite ones are not available	Snacks/drinks, chocolate bars
Attitude to imports	Foreign technical appliances are more reliable	
	Buy clothes in Russia	Clothes

Planning purchases and loans	Can save up to buy the desired product	Laptops
	Will never take out a loan	All products
	Not willing to spend "parents' money" on some "rubbish" (things that are not really necessary)	
	Buy as soon as they get money for personal disposal	Clothes/shoes
	If old clothes/shoes have worn out	
	If they need something to go with a new outfit	
	Regular current monthly expenses for the most necessary things	
	If they know they are going to get a big some of money, they may spend more	
	Buy in advance if a party/event is organized	Refreshing drinks
Fashion	Comfort	Clothes/shoes
	Convenient to wear	
	Fit for all occasions	
	Combination of attractive style and comfort	Shoes
	Simple design	Clothes
	Natural combination of several pieces of clothes	
	Presentable look	
	Should fit one's form	
	Approved by the opposite sex	
	Approved by friends	
	Approved by relatives	
Influence of parents	Parents make the choice	Laptops
	Parents approve the chosen product	Clothes
	Parents' opinion is important	All products
	Persuade parents to buy the necessary product/brand	Expensive products
Attitude to mass media, the Internet	Compare different products	Mobile phones/laptops
	Look for the cheaper ones	
	Get familiar with the product	
	Get familiar with the new collection	Clothes
Security and health	Information and data securityAntivirus	Phones, smartphones/ Laptops