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# **THE ROLE OF CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM AND HABIT IN POTATO CHIP PURCHASES: AN EXTENSION OF TPB**

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### ***Abstract***

*The aim of this study was to determine the factors underlying domestic product (potato chip purchases) using an extended model of theory of planned behaviour (TPB). A systematic sample of 348 Croatian potato chip buyers was surveyed. Structural Equation Modelling by Partial Least Squares was used to test the hypotheses. The strongest positive predictor of this intention was the attitude about the purchase of domestic potato chips. The perceived behavioural control did not have a significant impact on the behaviour (actual purchase), while intention was a strong predictor of the intended behaviour. Consumer ethnocentrism predicted the attitudes, while habit had a strong impact on all variables in the TPB model. This study extended the TPB model by adding two constructs, habit and consumer ethnocentrism, and by investigating their predictive impacts. While TPB is usually used to predict the prosocial and healthy behaviour, this study extended the previous knowledge by focusing on snacks (potato chips), which is expected to be more habit-driven than planned.*

***Keywords: potato chips, consumer ethnocentrism, habit, theory of planned behaviour, SEM***

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Thanks to globalization and an open market economy, consumers worldwide are exposed to a wide range of domestic and foreign brand choices (Makanyeza & du Toit, 2017), while domestic manufacturers face intensive global competition. The introduction and availability of foreign goods influence consumer purchasing decisions. Recently, consumer ethnocentrism (CE) has become an important strategic tool applied by national companies in the face of global competition (Wanninayake & Chovancová, 2012). Shimp and Sharma (1987) defined CE as a general tendency to avoid buying foreign products because it hurts the local economy, leads to unemployment, and is perceived as unpatriotic.

However, the fact that consumer attitudes towards foreign products vary across product categories (Sharma, Shimp & Shin, 1995) should also be taken into account, as this too affects the impact of CE (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos 2004).

Various theoretical frameworks have been proposed to deal with predicting and understanding consumer behaviour. One of the most applied theories is the theory of planned behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), which has been applied in the numerous previous studies to explain and predict many categories of food-related behaviours, such as novel food consumption (Menozzi, Sogari, Veneziani, Simoni, & Mora 2017), fast food consumption (Dunn, Mohr, & Wittert, 2011), organic food purchase (Yazdanpanah and Forouzani, 2015), fresh fish consumption (Tomić, Matulić, & Jelić, 2016) etc.

However, there is a lack of research using TPB in explaining domestic food consumption and/or purchase. Tomić Maksan, Kovačić, & Cerjak (2019) used TPB to investigate motives of domestic wine purchase using extended TPB model and found that consumer ethnocentrism has strong and positive impact on attitudes about domestic wine purchase, while attitudes have partial mediating effect on the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and intention to buy domestic wine. Furthermore, results from Norway have shown that consumer ethnocentrism has a positive direct effect on domestic food purchase intentions (Vabø and Hansen, 2016). Similarly, study by Wu, Zhu, & Dai (2010) indicated that consumer ethnocentrism has a significant effect on consumer purchase intentions of domestic products.

Given the fact that there is a lack of studies using TPB to predict domestic snack food, this study focuses on potato chips as the most popular snack food (Ouhitit, Al-Sharbati, Gupta, & Al-Farsi, 2014). Despite the increasing attention on the importance of a healthy diet, snacks have retained their place as "treats" within overall food consumption. According to Mielmann and Brunner (2018), consumers have a culture of continuous snacking. A high percentage of global consumers eat snacks at home (79%), usually with family and friends (68%). According to a 2014 BRANDpuls survey, 70% of Croatian consumers (aged 15–64) eat potato chips, and 27% reported eating potato chips at least once a week (Kovač, 2014). Potato chips are an ideal choice, since they are regularly purchased and frequently consumed, and the multitude of brands available

(domestic and foreign) can shed new light on consumer purchasing behaviour. Although healthier versions of snacks are often sought, other characteristics are also important, such as whether the product is of domestic origin (McIntyre & Baid, 2009). Another important factor affecting consumer choice of potato chips is familiarity and habit (Fernqvist, Spendrup & Ekelund, 2015). Towler and Shepherd (1991/1992) used the theory of reasoned action (TRA), extended with habit and perceived behavioural control, to predict potato chip consumption. However, research about the effects of CE on potato chip purchasing behaviour is lacking.

There are several reasons to explore the determinants of domestic potato chip purchasing behaviour. Firstly, Awdziej, Włodarek & Tkaczyk (2016) confirmed that food is still an underinvestigated topic in the context of CE. Secondly, potato chips are the most frequently consumed snack, hence buyers often make decisions on which potato chips to buy. Thirdly, the globalization of the food market gives equal opportunity to purchase both domestic and foreign potato chips. A great deal is known about the importance of different potato chip attributes (e.g., taste, brand and price) in the purchasing decision, though the importance of the origin of potato chips is an understudied topic.

The results of this study provide valuable information about the factors influencing the purchase of domestic potato chips, and as such are important for public policy makers, potato chip producers and marketers, allowing them to formulate effective strategies to strengthen CE. According to Weberova (2015), a carefully planned strengthening of CE can have important economic consequences, as it can increase consumer motivation to buy domestic products.

The main aim of the study was to investigate the effects of CE and habit on domestic potato chip purchases within the TPB model.

## **1.1. Research framework**

### **1.1.1. The theory of planned behaviour**

TPB posits that one's behaviour is best predicted by the intention to perform a given behaviour and the perceived behavioural control (PBC). In our case, PBC would refer to the ease or difficulty concerning the regular purchase of domestic potato chips. Intention is determined by attitude, the subjective norm and PBC. Attitude toward the behaviour refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question. The subjective norm refers to the perceived social pressure that comes from partners, family members, etc.

However, there are many previous studies that have revealed that consumers' generally have positive attitudes towards specific food or food category (e.g. organic food) but it does not reflect their food purchase/consumption behaviours (Iweala, Spiller, & Meyerding, 2019;

Michaelidou & Hassan, 2014; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008), which is referred to as the attitude-behaviour gap (Nguyen, Nguyen, & Hoang, 2019). Furthermore, many studies stop at determining the intention to perform specific behaviour even though the intention-behaviour gap is well documented in the literature. Recent findings suggest that researchers should focus on exploring different moderators and mediators that could bridge the gap between the intention to carry out certain behaviour and the behaviour itself. Therefore, it is important to measure not only intention, but also behaviour.

TPB has typically been applied to predict behavioural intentions for healthy eating (Grønhøj\_Bech-Larsen, Chan & Tsang, 2013) and the anti-consumption of junk food (Yarimoglu Kazancoglu & Bulut, 2019), since casual snacking is considered an automatic and impulsive behaviour (Teichert, Wörfel & Ackermann, 2020), whereas healthier choices are usually conscious, cognitively driven, controlled and intended. This poses the question of whether TPB could be an adequate theoretical framework for predicting snack purchases. A recent study confirmed that TPB can serve as a valid theory for explaining parent intentions to consume junk food (Yarimoglu et al., 2019). An important advantage of TPB is that it allows for the inclusion of additional predictors if adding constructs can increase the prediction power for the individual's intention or behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). We now turn our focus to two variables that recent studies suggest may be important when exploring determinants of snack purchasing: consumer ethnocentrism and habit.

### **1.1.2. Consumer ethnocentrism (CE)**

CE was originally created from a sociological concept - ethnocentrism, developed to distinguish between in-groups and out-groups. Sumner (1906) describes ethnocentrism as "the technical name for the view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it" (p. 13). CE is the specific application of the more general concept of ethnocentrism to the economic context (Evanschitzky, Wangenheim, Woisetschläger & Blut, 2008). CE is defined as beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness or even morality of purchasing foreign made products (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Consumers with a higher level of CE consider purchasing foreign products as harmful for the development of the domestic economy (Matić, 2012). CE, which remains fervent despite globalization, represents one of the strongest import blockades of our time (Shankarmahesh, 2006).

Shimp and Sharma (1987) developed the Consumers Ethnocentric Tendencies Scale (CETSCALE based on 17 items) as a tool to measure the level of ethnocentricity. However, there are many empirical applications using adapted versions of CETSCALE (Supphellen & Rittenburg, 2001), which possess good psychometric properties.

### 1.1.3. Habit

Previous studies have found that habit is one of the predictors of food-related consumer behaviour (Bonne, Vermeir, Bergaud-Blackler & Verbeke, 2007), especially concerning the consumption of sweet, salty and fatty foods (Tuorila & Pangborn, 1988). Bonne et al. (2007) defined habit as a behaviour that is performed automatically and without the individual's awareness.

Earlier studies have demonstrated that including the measure of habit improves the prediction of future behaviour (Bamberg & Schmidt, 2003). Furthermore, Verbeke and Vackier (2005) recommended further research with incorporation of habit in food decision-making models. Verhoeven, Adriaanse, Evers & de Ridder (2012) demonstrated that snack consumption is dependent upon the habit of unhealthy snacking.

Verplanken and Orbell (2003) developed the Self Reported Habit Index (SRHI), a 12-item measure constructed to measure habit strength. Previous research showed a high internal reliability of SRHI (Verplanken & Orbell, 2003).

## 1.2. Hypotheses

According to Erdogan and Uzkurt (2010), consumers with a higher level of CE have more favourable perceptions of domestic products than perceptions of foreign products. Ethnocentric consumers overvalue domestic products and report more positive attitudes toward them (Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar & Diamantopoulos, 2015) because they believe that producers from their own country produce the best products (Klein, Ettenson & Morris, 1998). The same conclusion is given by Schiffman and Kanuk (2004), who noted that ethnocentric tendencies are significantly positively correlated with attitudes towards domestic products. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

*H1. Consumer ethnocentrism has a positive impact on attitudes about domestic potato chip purchases*

Xin and Seo (2019) found that attitude has a positive effect on the intention to purchase Korean functional foods, while Vabø and Hansen (2016) found that attitude has a positive effect on the intention to buy domestic food products. Additionally, Chung and Pysarchik (2000) found a positive relationship between attitudes and behavioural intention in the choice of both domestic products and imported products. Earlier studies found that the subjective norm has a positive significant effect on the consumer's intention to buy domestic food (Vabø & Hansen, 2016). The importance of PBC has been confirmed in a study by Watson and Wright (2000), who indicated that if domestic products were not available, the consumer would have to buy a foreign product. Al-Ekam (2013) found that intention is a significant and strong determinant of behaviour in the actual purchase of local food. According to Candan, Aydin & Yamamoto (2008),

most consumers prefer to purchase domestic products over imports if they are available and reasonably priced. Hence, we hypothesized the following:

*H2. All TPB variables (attitude, subjective norm, and PBC) have a positive impact on the intention to buy domestic potato chips, and both intention and PBC have a positive impact on behaviour (purchase of domestic potato chips).*

Several studies have found that including the habit variable in the TPB model gave significant relationships with all other original variables (Mahon, Cowan & McCarthy, 2006). More specifically, Acebron et al. (2001) found that habit has a direct influence on attitude toward the product. Furthermore, a significant effect of habit on PBC was reported by Chen and Chao (2011), while Peng, Zhi-cai & Lin-jie (2014) pointed out that habit has a positive significant impact on the subjective norm. Habit was recognised as very important in the prediction of different food consumption; e.g., the intention to consume milk (Saba, Moneta, Nardo & Sinesio, 1998). An earlier study by Mahon, Cowan & McCarthy (2006) found that habit is a good predictor of behaviour (concerning the consumption of ready-made meals and takeaways).

*H3. Habit has a positive impact on all TPB variables (attitudes, subjective norm, PBC, intention and behaviour in the purchase of domestic potato chips)*

The proposed expansion of the theory of planned behaviour model for the regular purchase of domestic potato chips is presented in Figure 1.

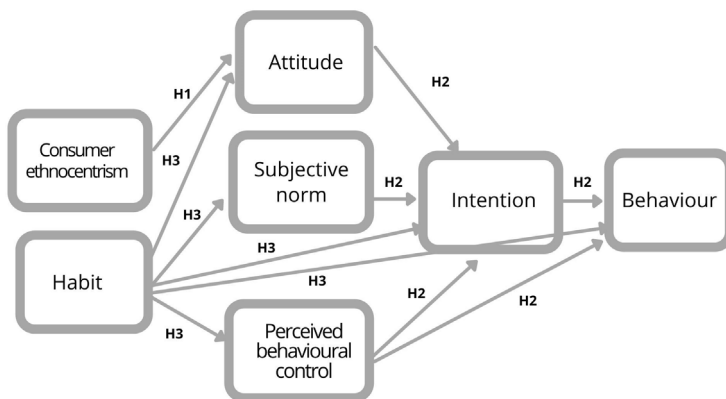


Figure 1 Proposed TPB model for the regular purchase of domestic potato chips

## **2. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

### **2.1. Procedure**

The survey was conducted in person at the entrance of two supermarkets in Zagreb, Croatia. The study used a systematic sample. From the basic group (shoppers of supermarkets located in the western and eastern part of Zagreb), every third shopper was selected, and the first one was chosen randomly. In the case the third customer was not willing to participate in the research, the survey was conducted with the next subsequent shopper who was willing to participate. Different times of day, including weekends, were used to reduce sampling bias and ensure a varied mix of respondents.

Participants were defined as potato chips buyers over 18 years of age. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. The average duration of the survey was 10 minutes. The acceptance rate of participation in this study was 80%.

### **2.2. Measurements**

The questionnaire was designed based on previous research and based on the TPB guidelines (Ajzen, 2013). The behaviour of interest was defined as the regular purchase of potato chips (at least once a month). The questionnaire contained questions about sociodemographic characteristics and all TPB constructs, as well as two additional constructs (CE and habit). The consumer ethnocentrism scale used in this study has ten items (Supphellen & Rittenburg, 2001), since one item was excluded: "Foreigners should not be allowed to put their products on our market (CE10)" due to an unacceptable outer loading of 0.4 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The original habit scale (Verplanken & Orbell, 2003) has 12 items but the item "Regular purchase of domestic chips is something I do frequently" was excluded since the behaviour of interest was the regular purchase.

All study constructs were measured using the 5-point Likert scale. All items, their source and scale reliabilities are presented in Table I. The questionnaire was pretested on a sample of 30 potato chip buyers, with the goal of testing the appropriateness and clarity of the questions.

Table 1

## TPB constructs, references and reliability

Construct	Items	References	Cronbach $\alpha$
Attitude (ATT)	(ATT1) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is very important for me.	Self-constructed, based on focus group (FG) discussions	0.94
	(ATT2) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is a pleasant experience.		
	(ATT3) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is fun.		
	(ATT4) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips evokes positive emotions.		
Subjective norm (SN)	(SN1) My family approves of my regular purchase of domestic potato chips.	Ajzen (2013)	0.87
	(SN2) My friends approve of my regular purchase of domestic potato chips.		
	(SN3) My colleagues approve of my regular purchase of domestic potato chips.		
	(SN4) My family buys domestic potato chips regularly.		
	(SN5) My friends buy domestic potato chips regularly.		
	(SN6) My colleagues buy domestic potato chips regularly.		
Perceived behavioural control (PBC)	(PBC1) Whether or not I buy domestic potato chips regularly is completely up to me.	Ajzen (2013)	0.91
	(PBC2) I expect I will be able to buy domestic potato chips regularly.		
	(PBC3) For me, the regular purchase of domestic potato chips is easy.	Bamberg <i>et al.</i> (2003)	
	(PBC4) If I want them, I believe I can regularly purchase domestic potato chips.	Dunn <i>et al.</i> (2011)	
Intention (In)	(In1) I intend to buy Croatian potato chips regularly.	Ajzen (2013)	0.97
	(In2) I am planning to buy Croatian potato chips regularly.	Verbeke and Vackier (2005)	
	(In3) I will probably buy Croatian potato chips regularly.	Markuš (2011)	
Behaviour (B)	(B1) I buy domestic potato chips regularly.	Self-constructed, based on FG discussions	0.97
	(B2) Domestic potato chips are regularly in my shopping basket.		
	(B3) When I buy potato chips, I regularly choose domestic potato chips.		
Consumer ethnocentrism (CE)	(CE1) A true Croat should always buy Croatian products.	Supphellen and Rittenburg (2001)	0.92
	(CE2) Croatian products first, last and foremost.		
	(CE3) Purchasing foreign made products is un-Croatian.		
	(CE4) It is not right to purchase foreign-made products because it puts Croatian people out of jobs.		
	(CE5) Croats should always buy Croatian-made products instead of imports.		
	(CE6) We should purchase products manufactured in Croatia instead of letting other countries get rich off us.		
	(CE7) It is always best to purchase Croatian products.		
	(CE8) There should be very little trading or purchasing of products from other countries unless out of necessity.		
	(CE9) It may cost me more in the long run, but I prefer to support Croatian products.		
Habit (H)	(H1) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something I do automatically.	Verplanken and Orbell (2003)	0.93
	(H2) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something I do without having to consciously think about it.		
	(H3) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something that makes me feel strange if I do not do it.		



(H4) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something I do without thinking.		
(H5) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something that would require effort not to do it.		
(H6) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something that belongs to my (daily, weekly, monthly) routine.		
(H7) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something that I start doing before I realize I'm doing it.		
(H8) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something I would find hard not to do.		
(H9) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something I have no need to think about doing.		
(H10) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something that's typically "me".		
(H11) Regular purchase of domestic potato chips is something I have been doing for a long time.		

### 2.3. Participants

The survey was carried out on a sample of 348 potato chip buyers. Although the sample was heterogeneous according to sociodemographic characteristics, there was higher share of younger (<45 years), employed and well-educated respondents (Table II).

Table 2

Sample characteristics

Sociodemographic characteristics		N=348	%
Gender	Male	178	51.1
	Female	170	48.9
Age	18–29 years	117	33.6
	30–45 years	130	37.4
	46–60 years	73	20.3
	60+ years	28	7.8
Education	Without school	1	0.3
	Elementary school	8	2.2
	High school	138	38.8
	University	148	41.6
	Master and/or PhD	53	14.9
Number of family members	1	29	8.3
	2	71	20.4
	3–5	217	62.4
	> 5	31	8.9
Income	Very low	14	4.0
	Low	33	9.5
	Medium	257	73.9
	High	39	11.2
	Very high	5	1.4
Status	Student	106	30.5
	Employed	151	43.4
	Retired	57	16.4
	Unemployed	34	9.8

## 2.4. Statistical analysis

The survey data were analysed using SPSS software, version 21. We used univariate analysis (frequencies) for the sample description, and descriptive analysis to investigate TPB variables. Furthermore, Cronbach's coefficient  $\alpha$  was used to calculate the reliability of the scales and all scales proved to be highly reliable.

To test the research model, we applied partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3. PLS-SEM is now widely applied in many social science disciplines, including marketing research (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle & Mena, 2012), due to its high predictive accuracy and low sensitivity to normality issues (Ali, Rasoolimanesh, Sarstedt, Ringle & Ryu, 2018).

In the first stage of data analysis, the measurement model results were presented to test the validity (convergent and discriminant) of the construct measures. Convergent validity is the extent to which the construct converges to explain the variance of its items (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt & Ringle, 2019). The metrics used for evaluating a construct's convergent validity are the composite reliability (CR), which should be higher than 0.7 (Malhotra & Dash, 2011), the internal consistency (also  $>0.7$ ) and the average variance extracted (AVE,  $>0.5$ ) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity is the extent to which a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs in the structural model and this was examined using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and HTMT criterion. The Fornell-Larcker Criterion compares the square root of the AVE with the correlation of latent constructs. Therefore, the square root of each construct's AVE should have a greater value than the correlations with other latent constructs. If the HTMT value is below 0.90, discriminant validity has been established (Hair et al., 2019).

The second stage included assessing the structural model. Standard assessment criteria included the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and the statistical significance and relevance of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2019).  $R^2$  measures the variance explained in each of the endogenous constructs and is therefore a measure of the model's explanatory power (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). According to Hair et al. (2019),  $R^2$  ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating a greater explanatory power. Additionally, we assessed the model fit with the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) that should be below 0.10 (Henseler, Dijkstra, Sarstedt, Ringle, Diamantopoulos, Straub, Ketchen, Hair, Hult & Calantone, 2014).

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1. Confirmatory factor analysis

Table III depicts the composite reliability of each construct. The convergent validity of the constructs was assessed with factor loading estimates for each item of the constructs. The results indicate that internal consistency was

high and thus acceptable. Furthermore, the AVE values in this study were greater than the suggested value of 0.5, indicating high convergent validity. The square root of each construct's AVE was higher than the correlations with other latent constructs, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. Finally, HTMT values between 0.38–0.78 suggest that the discriminant validity has been established (see Table IV).

Table 3

## Convergent validity

	ATT	SN	PBC	In	B	CE	H	CR	AVE
ATT1	0.91	0.57	0.45	0.72	0.70	0.54	0.66	0.96	0.85
ATT2	0.94	0.54	0.39	0.67	0.63	0.51	0.61		
ATT3	0.93	0.58	0.38	0.67	0.59	0.55	0.64		
ATT4	0.91	0.59	0.42	0.69	0.58	0.57	0.63		
SN1	0.56	0.81	0.43	0.60	0.51	0.44	0.53	0.90	0.60
SN2	0.48	0.81	0.39	0.50	0.38	0.37	0.42		
SN3	0.39	0.77	0.33	0.40	0.29	0.30	0.37		
SN4	0.50	0.77	0.39	0.55	0.49	0.38	0.48		
SN5	0.48	0.77	0.37	0.52	0.41	0.40	0.49		
SN6	0.43	0.73	0.31	0.42	0.32	0.35	0.39		
PBK1	0.49	0.53	0.90	0.53	0.47	0.39	0.48	0.94	0.80
PBK2	0.35	0.37	0.90	0.40	0.33	0.28	0.32		
PBK3	0.33	0.38	0.88	0.41	0.32	0.28	0.29		
PBK4	0.38	0.40	0.89	0.45	0.33	0.31	0.33		
In1	0.71	0.63	0.49	0.97	0.70	0.57	0.72	0.98	0.94
In2	0.72	0.64	0.51	0.98	0.69	0.55	0.72		
In3	0.73	0.63	0.49	0.97	0.70	0.58	0.72		
B1	0.65	0.50	0.38	0.68	0.97	0.45	0.66	0.98	0.95
B2	0.66	0.53	0.40	0.70	0.98	0.46	0.67		
B3	0.67	0.52	0.43	0.71	0.97	0.47	0.64		
CE1	0.44	0.36	0.27	0.45	0.38	0.77	0.36	0.93	0.61
CE2	0.53	0.43	0.35	0.53	0.42	0.81	0.47		
CE3	0.31	0.33	0.19	0.32	0.25	0.67	0.36		
CE4	0.42	0.35	0.24	0.41	0.31	0.81	0.40		
CE5	0.43	0.38	0.19	0.44	0.33	0.83	0.44		
CE6	0.41	0.34	0.20	0.37	0.33	0.83	0.39		
CE7	0.46	0.35	0.35	0.52	0.37	0.77	0.42		
CE8	0.41	0.38	0.31	0.40	0.33	0.79	0.37		
CE9	0.61	0.44	0.36	0.56	0.50	0.72	0.52		
H1	0.57	0.47	0.37	0.59	0.56	0.41	0.79	0.94	0.59
H2	0.63	0.54	0.38	0.68	0.62	0.46	0.87		
H3	0.70	0.61	0.45	0.76	0.69	0.50	0.85		
H4	0.48	0.45	0.33	0.52	0.47	0.38	0.74		
H5	0.40	0.35	0.15	0.47	0.45	0.36	0.70		
H6	0.50	0.40	0.34	0.53	0.46	0.36	0.78		
H7	0.35	0.31	0.11	0.35	0.32	0.34	0.62		
H8	0.57	0.49	0.37	0.61	0.55	0.50	0.83		
H9	0.44	0.37	0.26	0.51	0.45	0.36	0.76		
H10	0.52	0.42	0.23	0.55	0.52	0.47	0.75		
H11	0.49	0.37	0.31	0.51	0.48	0.37	0.70		

Table 4

HTMT results

	CE	H	In	PBC	B	ATT	SN
CE							
H	0.57						
In	0.60	0.76					
PBC	0.38	0.42	0.53				
B	0.49	0.70	0.74	0.43			
ATT	0.62	0.72	0.78	0.47	0.71		
SN	0.53	0.62	0.70	0.52	0.56	0.68	

Note ATT = attitude, SN = subjective norm, PBC = perceived behavioural control, In = intention, B= behaviour, CE = consumer ethnocentrism, H = habit

3.2. Correlation matrix

The Pearson correlation matrix of the study variables (Table V) showed positive and significant correlations among all constructs ( $p < 0.01$ ) in line with the TPB assumptions. The highest correlation was found between the attitudes and intention to buy domestic potato chips regularly ( $r_{AT-IN} = 0.74$ ), while the weakest correlation was found between CE and PBC ( $r_{CE-PBC} = 0.34$ ). As the two added constructs (habit and CE) are significantly correlated with other TPB constructs, we proceed to explore their role in explaining potato chip purchases.

Table 5

Construct summary statistics (N=348)

	M	SD	ATT	SN	PBC	In	B	CE	H
ATT	3.21	1.09	1	.62**	.44**	.74**	.68**	.57**	.68**
SN	3.07	0.89		1	.47**	.65**	.52**	.47**	.57**
PBC	3.71	0.75			1	.50**	.41**	.34**	.39**
In	3.33	1.11				1	.72**	.56**	.73**
B	3.21	1.17					1	.46**	.66**
CE	3.34	0.95						1	.53**
H	2.77	0.99							1

Note ATT = attitude, SN = subjective norm, PBC = perceived behavioural control, In = intention, B= behaviour, CE = consumer ethnocentrism, H = habit

\*\* $p < 0.01$

### 3.3. Predicting behaviour using the original TPB model

The original TPB model for predicting the regular purchase of domestic potato chips proposes that shoppers' behaviour (in view of the regular purchase of domestic potato chips) was predicted mainly by intention ( $B_{IN-B}=0.307$ ;  $t=5.295$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Furthermore, the intention to regularly purchase domestic potato chips was mainly driven by attitude ( $B_{ATT-IN}=0.515$ ;  $t=9.173$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Next, both the subjective norm ( $B_{SN-IN}=0.0258$ ;  $t=4.797$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and PBC ( $B_{PBC-IN}=0.156$ ;  $t=3.506$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) were significantly linked to the intention to buy domestic potato chips regularly. The subjective norm tended to have a stronger impact on intention than PBC.

In the present study, hypothesis 2 was only partially confirmed since PBC did not have a significant impact on behaviour, i.e. the regular purchase of domestic potato chips ( $B_{PBC-B}=0.069$ ;  $t=1.383$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

The results showed that this original TPB model was significant and explained 63% of the variance of the intention to regularly purchase domestic potato chips, and 51% of the variance in the behaviour to regularly purchase domestic potato chips.

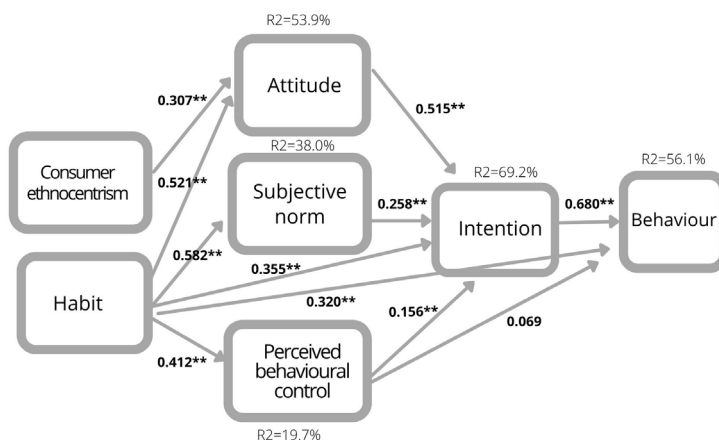
The original TPB model revealed a SRMR value of 0.07, indicating the validity of the proposed model (Henseler et al., 2014).

### 3.4. Extending the TPB model

In the next step, CE and habit were introduced into the original TPB model. Hypothesis 1 posited that CE directly influenced attitudes about the regular purchase of domestic potato chips; the path coefficient was positive and significant and hypothesis 1 is supported ( $B_{CE-ATT}=0.307$ ;  $t=5.295$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) (Figure 2).

Additionally, the standardized path coefficient of habit was statistically significant in the positive direction for attitude ( $B_{H-ATT}=0.521$ ;  $t=10.756$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), the subjective norm ( $B_{H-SN}=0.582$ ;  $t=15.214$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and PBC ( $B_{H-PBC}=0.412$ ;  $t=8.541$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Habit had a significant effect on the intention to buy domestic potato chips regularly ( $B_{H-IN}=0.355$ ;  $t=7.271$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and on behaviour ( $B_{H-B}=0.320$ ;  $t=5.503$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Thus, H3 is supported in the extended TPB structural model.

TPB model extended with the CE and habit constructs explained 69.2% of the variance of intention and 56.1% of behaviour concerning the regular purchase of domestic potato chips (Figure 2).



\*\*p < 0.01

Figure 2 Extended TPB model for prediction of the regular purchase of domestic potato chips

The extended TPB model revealed the same SRMR value as the original TPB (0.07), suggesting that the proposed model is valid (Henseler et al., 2014).

#### 4. DISCUSSION

In this study, we explored the possible predictors of both the intention to buy domestic potato chips and the actual behaviour (purchase of domestic potato chips), to avoid the “intention–behaviour gap”. Naderer et al. (2018) noted that studying actual choice behaviour regarding food is highly relevant. Our study confirmed the strong connection between consumer intention to buy domestic potato chips and their actual behaviour, which is consistent with earlier studies based on TPB.

The study also confirmed that the original TPB model can be used to predict both the consumer intention to buy domestic food (even when it comes to snack food) and the respective behaviour, corroborating the findings of earlier studies (Vabø & Hansen, 2016). The results indicate that the original TPB model explained the significantly higher percentage of the variance of behavioural intention than the average percentage of explained variance (37%) in an earlier meta-analysis covering 185 independent studies with the TPB model (Armitage & Conner, 2001). A possible explanation lies in the fact that this study closely followed the guidelines provided by Ajzen (2013) and thus investigated attitudes towards the purchase of domestic potato chips and not the attitude towards domestic potato chips as a product. Measuring attitudes at the same level of

specificity as the behaviour in question could likely explain the increased proportion of the explained variance.

All TPB variables (attitude, subjective norm, PBC) were significant predictors of the consumer's intention to buy domestic potato chips, additionally confirming the TPB as a useful model for predicting food choice.

Attitudes proved to be the strongest predictor, i.e. consumers who perceived the purchase of domestic potato chips as important, pleasant, fun and associated with positive emotions also had a stronger intention to buy domestic potato chips. The obtained results are consistent with previous findings confirming the strong influence of attitudes on purchasing intentions (Fiandari, Surachman, Rohman & Hussein, 2019). However, our respondents had neutral attitudes about the purchase of domestic potato chips, leaving space for domestic producers to develop advertising campaigns to promote domestic product purchases (e.g., brochures, leaflets that communicate strong arguments for selecting domestic products) to improve attitudes about specific domestic products. This study investigated the attitude towards purchasing domestic potato chips and not the attitude towards domestic potato chips as a product. However, as potato chips are considered a snack and thus potentially an unhealthy product, domestic producers might also focus on the positive aspects and healthier versions of their products that might improve these attitudes. Future research should accordingly focus on the attitudes towards the product itself to discover potentially repulsive aspects and focus on changing them.

The results confirm that the subjective norm is an important factor underlying the intention to buy domestic potato chips regularly, since this purchase often involves considering the views of other important people (especially friends and family members). This is in line with other studies confirming the importance of the subjective norm as a predictor of the intention to buy domestic products (Jianlin, Ning & Qi, 2010), as well as the finding that most consumers eat snacks together with family and friends (Mielmann & Brunner, 2018) and that the adolescent's subjective norm is positively associated with snack consumption (Van der Horst, 2008). However, the impact of the subjective norm in this study was lower as compared to the impact of attitudes about domestic potato chip purchases, corroborating the results of Towler and Shepherd (1991/1992). A possible explanation was offered by La Barbera and Ajzen (2020), who showed across three studies that PBC is a moderator of attitude and the subjective norm. More specifically, greater PBC strengthens the relative importance of attitudes in the prediction of intention, but weakens the relative importance of the subjective norm. As PBC was strong in our study, this could have resulted in enhanced importance of attitudes for behavioural intention.

The impact of PBC on the intention to buy domestic potato chips regularly was weak but significant. Consumers who perceive the purchase of domestic potato chips as simple have a higher purchase intention. This corroborates previous research that also found PBC to be an important factor

influencing food purchase intention (Vabo & Hansen, 2016). However, we did not find a significant impact of PBC on behaviour. Likewise, Towler and Shepherd (1991/1992) claimed that PBC was not significantly related to behaviour (chip consumption). Altogether, such a low or even insignificant impact of PBC in the model could be due to the fact that high-fat snacks are perceived to be generally available and accessible (Martens, van Assema & Brug, 2007) and confirmed by the descriptive variables in Table V.

The present study also tested the extent to which the two additional constructs in the original model (CE and habit) augment the predictive validity of the TPB in relation to the purchase of domestic potato chips.

As hypothesised, CE was a strong and significant predictor of the attitudes about domestic potato chip purchases. This is in line with previous studies showing that CE is an important determinant of attitudes toward domestic products (Maksan et al., 2019).

Recently, researchers proposed habit as a new variable in the TPB model (Canova & Manganelli, 2020) that could account for the complexity of human behaviour (Bošnjak, Ajzen & Schmidt, 2020). Some behaviour, especially concerning unhealthy choices, is usually considered habitual rather than planned. Thus, we wanted to explore whether habit can increase the individual's intention to buy such a product above and beyond the variables of the standard model. Indeed, our results showed that habit strength augments the predictive validity of the model, suggesting that the domestic potato chip purchases are controlled by both intentional and habitual processes.

The contributions of this paper are many. First, it is oriented towards potato chips, one of the most widely consumed snack foods around the world (Pedreschi et al., 2018), available in many different brands at a wide range of prices (Freedman & Jurafsky, 2011). Although potato chips as a food product have previously been explored (usually in the context of an unhealthy food choice), consumer behaviour concerning the purchase of domestic potato chips is still unexplored. As snack food is considered as food bought impulsively, it is important to determine whether common models such as TPB can also explain the purchase of this type of food. Next, we focused on both the intention to purchase and the purchasing behaviour itself, to avoid the intention-behaviour gap. Furthermore, this study adds to the existing literature not only by exploring the influence of CE, but also by looking at other factors related to domestic food choice, such as habit, which have not been well represented in the literature. An additional strength of this study is the systematic sample of consumers from two shopping points in the same city (to control the effect of store and sociodemographic characteristics), and the use of the mall intercepts method, thereby increasing the credibility of the results.

The results are useful for public policy makers in order to create more efficient strategies that could promote the choice of domestic products. Potato chip manufacturers are now aware of the roles of consumer attitudes, the



subjective norm, PBC, habit and CE in potato chip purchases, enabling them to better adapt to consumer needs and expectations. Understanding the determinants of domestic potato chip purchases can help the marketers of domestic food products to establish proper communication messages.

Despite these benefits, this study is not without limitations. Our sample was composed of younger and more educated respondents, who are usually less ethnocentric (Hsu & Nien, 2008). Therefore, generalising the findings to the general population is limited. In addition, we used self-reports to measure behaviour (domestic potato chip purchases) and future research could benefit from using a more objective and direct measurement of domestic food product purchases. Given that consumer preferences for foreign or domestic products are product and country specific, future research should focus on other food products and other countries.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to test whether the TPB model is a useful tool for explaining the main determinants of consumers' domestic food choices in Croatia, with a focus on potato chips. Furthermore, this study extended the TPB model with CE and habit to better understand the consumer preferences for domestic potato chips.

The results showed that the extended TPB model was applicable in predicting domestic potato chip purchases, explaining 69% of the variance in the intention and 56% of the variance in the behaviour to regularly purchase domestic potato chips. As expected, attitudes had the strongest effect on intention whereas intention proved to be the strongest predictor of behaviour (to purchase domestic potato chips). Interestingly, the impact of PBC on predicting purchasing behaviour was insignificant while it was weak in predicting the intention to purchase potato chips, suggesting that PBC might play a lesser role (or indeed no role) for generally available and accessible products. This finding offers new directions for future research.

CE and habit have proven to be valuable additions in the extended model, both for predicting intention and specific behaviour. We leave it for future research to explore their role more extensively.

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## **ULOGA POTROŠAČKOG ETNOCENTRIZMA I NAVIKE PRI KUPNJI ČIPSA OD KRUMPIRA: PROŠIRENI MODEL TPB-A**

***Sažetak***

*Cilj ovog istraživanja bio je utvrditi čimbenike koji utječu na kupnju domaćeg proizvoda (čipsa od krumpira) korištenjem proširenog modela teorije planiranog ponašanja (TPP). Korišten je sistematski uzorak od 348 hrvatskih kupaca čipsa. Modeliranje strukturnih jednadžbi uz pomoć metode parcijalnih najmanjih kvadrata korišteno je za testiranje hipoteza. Stav o kupnji domaćeg čipsa od krumpira bio je najjači pozitivni prediktor namjere. Percipirana kontrola ponašanja nije imala značajan utjecaj na ponašanje (stvarnu kupnju), dok je namjera bila snažan prediktor namjeravanog ponašanja. Potrošački etnocentrizam je predvidio stavove, dok je navika imala snažan utjecaj na sve varijable u TPP modelu. U istraživanju je korišten model TPP proširen s dva konstrukta, potrošački etnocentrizam i navika, te su istraženi njihovi prediktivni učinci. Dok se TPP obično koristi za predviđanje prosocijalnog ponašanja i ponašanje vezano uz zdravlje, ovo istraživanje je proširilo dosadašnje znanje usredotočivši se na ponašanje pri kupovini grickalica (čipsa), za koje se očekuje da će biti više određeno navikama, nego što će biti planirano.*

***Ključne riječi:*** čips od krumpira, potrošački etnocentrizam, navika, teorija planiranog ponašanja, SEM.

***JEL klasifikacija:*** D12, M31.

