

ASSESSING THE SITUATIONAL FACTORS AND IMPULSIVE BUYING BEHAVIOR: MARKET SEGMENTATION APPROACH

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The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation between situational factors and impulsive buying behavior with the aim of separating an adequate number of different customer segments. The study will try to provide answers to the following questions: Can situational factors stimulate impulsive purchase and to what extent? Considering the effect of the analyzed situational factors on impulsive buying is it possible to isolate different consumer segments? Do these segments differ in terms of particular demographic features? The obtained results reveal that most situational factors affect impulsive buying to some extent, but, in consumers' opinion, none of them to a great extent. Furthermore, in terms of the perceived impact of situational factors on impulsive buying behavior, the study separates three consumer segments: (1) markedly rational – immune to influence, (2) impulsive to some extent – sensitive to some situational stimuli, (3) mostly rational – generally immune to influence. In the first and the third segment (markedly or generally rational consumers) none of the analyzed situational factors affect the impulsive buying to a greater extent. On the contrary, in impulsive buyers it is found that promotional activities, friendliness and skill of the sales staff, store location, and attractive aroma of food generally stimulate them to buy on impulse, while the persons accompanying them generally can influence their buying behavior and choice but can only to some extent stimulate them to buy on impulse. Finally, the obtained results show that situational factors can to a larger extent affect the impulsive buying behavior in consumers of a particular employment status, and that such behavior is not significantly affected by gender, age, education, income, or the number of household members.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Impulsive buying behavior is affected by a number of factors, from demographic, cultural and individual to environmental ones. The leading idea of this study is consideration of situational factors as “stimulators” of impulsive buying behavior. Namely, the notion is that the consumer, who is determined by his/her personal characteristics, comes to a concrete shopping environment, which by its specific features will in some way influence him/her.

The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation of situational factors and impulsive buying behavior. Consequently, the study will endeavour to answer the following questions: Can situational factors stimulate impulsive buying and to what extent? Considering the effect of the analyzed situational factors on impulsive buying in respondents is it possible to isolate different consumer segments? Do these segments differ in terms of particular demographic features? The analysis is carried out on the data collected by a survey in Split-Dalmatia County. The data are analysed by descriptive analysis, cluster analysis, and chi-square test.

This study partly relies on the previous research of situational factors (Anić & Radas, 2006a), and their impact on impulsive buying behavior (Anić & Radas, 2006b; Belk, 1975), while it considers other and additional situational variables (such as skill and friendliness of sales staff, store location, promotional activities, special displays, etc.) associated with impulsive buying. Therefore this study develops and introduces new cognitive-behavioral statements which are subjected to cluster analysis to obtain consumer segmentation. Then it relates the separated segments to demographic variables. The contribution of the study is a new insight into the impact of the observed situational factors on impulsive buying behavior. As far as the authors are informed, in Croatia there are no studies that analyze situational factors and their correlation to impulsive buying in this way.

The research into this issue has twofold significance, i.e. it is important to both marketing and management experts because it provides an additional explanation of impulsive buying and comprehension of respondents' behavior, especially in terms of situational factors and their impact on such buying. Also, the results of this research will have a practical purpose providing the managers with useful insights that will allow them to create some elements of marketing strategy, e.g. adaptation or alteration of some sales promotion techniques.

2. THEORETICAL DETERMINANTS OF THE STUDY

2.1. Impulse Buying and Impulsive Buying Behavior

Impulse buying can be defined as unplanned, sudden, and spontaneous impulse to buy, which lacks careful evaluation of product and purchase consequences. (Kollat and Willet, 1967; Cobb & Hoyer, 1986; Rook, 1987; Piron, 1991; Beatty & Ferrel, 1998; Bayley & Nancarrow, 1998; Kacen & Lee, 2002; Vohs & Faber, 2003; Parboteeah, 2005) It is considered that the frequency of unplanned or impulsive purchasing is as high as 90% (Cobb & Hoyer 1986; Gutierrez, 2004). Thus according to some authors nine out of ten consumers sometimes buy on impulse (Coley, 2002) while according to others impulse buying occurs in 27% to 62% of all purchases (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998).

According to a number of studies (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001; Virvilaite et al., 2009) the main characteristics of impulsive buying behavior are: inclination to impulse buying, spontaneity in buying, satisfaction felt after unplanned purchase, and lack of shopping list. This refers to the individual characteristics of the consumer. However, impulse buying is also investigated in terms of other factors such as demographic, cultural, and situational ones. In accordance with its aims this study will highlight the situational factors.

2.2. Situational Factors and Impulsive Buying

Situational factors are the external factors coming from the shopping environment when buyer comes into contact with particular visual stimuli (product or promotion) that create the unplanned purchase. At that instant the shopper may feel a sudden need to purchase a particular product that has attracted his/her attention. (Youn, 2000) Some researchers attach more importance to the influence of individual characteristics of shoppers believing that individual behavior is consistent in particular situations. On the other hand, advocates of situational variables stress that consistency in behavior alters depending on situation. Namely, some studies reveal that consumer behavior is conditioned by situation (Belk, 1974; Mattson & Dubinsky, 1987) ranging from 4% to 43% of total behavioral variance, which points to the situational variables as the very reason for the change in stability of individual factors (Mattson & Dubinsky, 1987).

According to Belk (1974, p. 157) situation is a set of all the factors *"particular to a time and place of observation which do not follow from a*

knowledge of personal (intra-individual) and stimulus (choice alternative) attributes, and which have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behavior." Thus Belk's taxonomy of situational factors includes five elements: (1) physical surrounding, (2) social surrounding, (3) time, (4) shopping task and (5) previous conditions with which the consumer enters the shopping surrounding or which result from the shopping surrounding (Belk, 1975).

Internal factors of the shopping area or the *physical surrounding* include: (1) general interior design – color, lighting, aroma, music, equipment, etc.; (2) arrangement of equipment and merchandise within the store; (3) display of merchandise; (4) point of sale promotional materials (Mihić, 2002., p. 82.). In addition to this, the temperature and *presence* of other people in the surrounding (Coloma & Kleiner, 2005), i.e. *social shoppers* (Nicholls et al., 1997; Underhill, 1999; Luo, 2005; Zhuang et al., 2006.; Anić & Radas, 2006 (a); Virvilaite, 2009), *mood* (Rook & Gardner, 1993; Beatty & Ferrell 1998; Vohs & Faber, 2003; Herczeg, 2006), *in-store stimuli*, such as promotional techniques, shelf signs, end-of-aisle displays (Abratt & Goodey, 1990; Hart & Davies, 1996), conspicuous product display (Pavlek, 2002; Kesić, 2006), *product packaging* (Silayoi & Speece, 2004) or limited supplies notices (Shuman, 2006) also play a role in stimulating the impulse buying.

Moreover, the more *time* is available, the higher is the chance for unplanned buying (Iyer, 1989; Iyer et al., 1989; Herrington and Capella, 1995; Nicholls et al., 1997; Underhill, 1999, Anić & Radas, 2006(a),) especially when there is no buying task (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Other additional buying motivators are the *price discounts or sales* (Parsons, 2003; Virvilaite et al., 2009); *store accessibility* and *sales staff* (Aylott & Mitchell, 1998) as well as the *location* (Hart & Davies, 1996).

The product design, the way the products are displayed, attractive colors, aroma or music can attract the shoppers' attention by putting them in a good mood and stimulating the interaction with the store atmosphere and thus unplanned buying (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982; Hart & Davies, 1996; Tai & Fung 1997; Oakes, 2000; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001). While all mentioned refers to the positive relationship of the atmosphere and purchasing outcomes, there are some contrary research results that did not find any relationship (Nicholls et al. 1997, Anić & Radas, 2006a).

2.3. Customer Segmentation in Terms of Impulsiveness

As this study is based on market segmentation and relation of situational factors and impulsive buyer behavior it will subsequently expound the relevant research on consumer typology in terms of their purchasing impulsiveness. Considering planned and unplanned purchasing Cobb and Hoyer (1986) identify three customer types: *planners* (plan purchase, product category and brand), *partial planners* (partially plan purchase of product category but not the brand) and *impulse buyers* (plan neither product category nor brand). Moreover, in terms of buying habits and behavior.

De Rada (1998) distinguishes between *traditional* and *new* consumer segments; Sinha and Uniyal (2005) divide consumers as *choice optimizers* (involved in the shopping process and evaluations), *economizing* (price conscious), *pre-meditated* (know what they want), *recreational* (impulsive), *low information seekers* and *seeking support*. Jamal et al. (2006) focuses on *socializing*, *disloyals*, *independent perfectionists*, *apathetic*, *budget conscious* and *escapist shoppers* where the latter can be observed as impulsive buyers. Furthermore, Gilboa (2009) points out *disloyals*, *family bonders*, *minimalists* and *mall enthusiasts* where the final segment can be associated with impulsive consumers.

The segments can also be distinguished in terms of different perceptions of the atmospheric variables (odors, music and decoration) where the classification of *recreational shoppers*, *full experience shoppers*, *browsers* and *mission shoppers* can be found. (Ruiz et al., 2004). Namely, all segments share the positive perceptions of music, while differ in other atmospheric components. For instance, *recreational shoppers* and *full experience shoppers* prefer decorations and odors; *browsers* value perceptions of odors, music, and decorations very close to the average for all groups, while the *mission shoppers* are “less bothered by odors...consider the decorations more appropriate” (Ruiz et al., 2004, p. 340).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and data collection

This study was carried out on the sample of 180 respondents (supermarket shoppers) in the Split-Dalmatia County. In the selection of sample units, non-probability and within it proportional quota sample were used. The control characteristics were respondents' gender and age (Central Bureau of Statistics,

2006). To include respondents of various education levels, income levels, and employment status the non-proportional quota sample was used. The sample statistics is shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. Sample statistics

Characteristics	N (out of total of 180 respondents)	%
Gender:		
Female	98	54,4
Male	82	45,6
Age:		
18 - 19	9	5,0
20 - 29	35	19,4
30 - 39	38	21,1
40 - 49	35	19,5
50 - 59	27	15,0
60 +	36	20,0
Education:		
Elementary or less	25	13,9
Secondary/ qualified workers	92	51,1
College/highly qualified w	23	12,8
University	40	22,2
Employment status:		
Employed	107	59,4
Unemployed	16	8,9
Retired	35	19,5
Student	22	12,2
Household income:		
1000 - 2000 kn	8	4,5
2001 - 3000 kn	9	5,0
3001 - 4000 kn	13	7,2
4001 - 6000 kn	31	17,2
6001 - 8000 kn	23	12,8
8001 - 10000 kn	33	18,3
10001 - 13000 kn	28	15,6
13001 - 16000 kn	18	10,0
16000 kn +	17	9,4
Household members*:		
1	18	10,1
2	29	16,2
3	37	20,7
4	57	31,8
More than 4	38	21,2

* One respondent did not answer this question.

The study was carried out in 2009 by personal interviewing or survey. The questionnaire (see the table in the Appendix) consisted of 22 statements/questions of which 16 refer to situational factors, and the last 6 to respondent's personal and household characteristics. The questionnaire uses multiple choice structured questions and mostly five-point Likert scale. Namely, the respondents were offered a set of statements with which they had to express the degree of their agreement and disagreement. The degrees are coded by figures from 1 to 5, where 1 denotes total disagreement and 5 total agreement.

3.2. Research Hypotheses

Starting from the theoretical bases, research topic, and established aims, as well as from the previous research results, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- **H₁**: The observed situational factors positively affect impulsive buying behavior.
- **H₂**: Following the respondents' opinions and attitudes on the effect of particular situational factors on the impulsiveness of their buying behavior, it is possible to separate sufficiently different customer segments.
- **H₃ - H₈**: In more impulsive buyers, the impact of some situational factors is stronger than the average impact of other factors. These factors are: the presence of shopping companions (H₃), attractively designed store (H₄), sales staff (H₅), agreeable aroma (H₆), store location (H₇), and sales promotions (H₈).

3.3. Variables Used in the Empirical Research

To investigate the impact of situational factors on impulsive buying, authors created their own research instrument/questionnaire. Variables used in research contain cognitive-behavioral indicators (correlation variables of particular situational factors and impulsive buying, i.e. the impact of situational factors on impulsive buying) and demographic characteristics. The situational factors are divided into: *a) physical surrounding indicators* – store design, sales staff, music, aroma, store location, displays, product packaging, larger quantity of displayed merchandise, and shelf arrangement (statements from 3.3 to 3.7 and 3.9 to 3.12), *b) social surrounding indicators* – the influence of companions and product popularity (statements 3.2, 3.13. and 3.14), and *c) collateral situational factors* – time, promotional aspects, advertising, and point of sale events (statements 3.1., 3.8., 3.15. and 3.16.). The Cronbach alpha coefficient value of 0.896463 indicates the high reliability of the 'situational factors'

measuring scale¹. The *demographic variables* included in the analysis are: gender, age, education, employment status, household income, and number of household members.

3.4. Data Analysis and Research Results

Data processing and analysis was performed by using the *Statistica 8* software package. The following procedures were used: a) descriptive statistics (calculation of mean value/standard deviation) to determine the importance that respondents generally ascribe to the impact of particular situational variables on impulse/unplanned buying, b) cluster analysis to separate customer segments in terms of the expressed possibility of the impact of situational variables on their impulsiveness, c) analysis of variance (F-ratios) to determine the significance of the difference between the mean values of particular segments and cross tabulation and, within it, Pearson Chi-square, which relates the analyzed demographic indicators to the separated segments. The mean values and standard deviations of variables related to the impact of particular situational factors on their unplanned purchase are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean values and standard deviations for buying impulsiveness

Variables	Mean Value	Standard Deviation
P3.1.	2.64	1.17
P3.2.	2.49	1.23
P3.3.	2.59	1.28
P3.4.	2.67	1.24
P3.5.	2.29	1.16
P3.6.	2.89	1.20
P3.7.	2.60	1.29
P3.8.	3.10	1.21
P3.9.	2.61	1.11
P3.10	2.58	1.10
P3.11	2.29	1.02
P3.12	2.41	1.07
P3.13	2.39	1.16
P3.14	2.65	1.24
P3.15	2.61	1.12
P3.16	2.57	1.10

From Table 2, it can be seen that most situational factors have some impact on unplanned/impulsive purchasing in respondents while shopping companions,

¹ Namely, the value of Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above is considered good in explorative research (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

agreeable music, larger quantity of displayed merchandise, shelf arrangement, and product popularity generally have no impact. As most observed factors affect impulse buying to some extent, **hypothesis (H₁) is partially confirmed**. Among the analyzed factors, music and large quantity of merchandise have the weakest impact, while the strongest is the impact of promotional activities, although they are also in the domain of partial effect. Interestingly, none of the analyzed situational indicators (according to average responses) has a greater impact on buying impulsiveness. The accompanying values of standard deviations reveal a certain deviation from the average responses, i.e. somewhat differed opinions, suggesting that the application of multivariate statistical methods would be advisable here.

In order to separate different customer segments (in terms of the impact of situational factors on impulsive buying) and determine those that are more important than others for a certain customer segment, the authors used cluster analysis. The basic variables were the formerly described cognitive-behavioral ones. To allow a thorough description of the separated segments, analysis also included demographic characteristics.

Within the cluster analysis, the K-means method was used following which the three-segment solution was chosen as the best one. The mean values of particular variables for each segment and F-ratios are shown in Table 3, while demographics are given in Table 4. According to the variance analysis and the graph shown in Figure 1, it can be seen that this solution provides three sufficiently different segments. Namely, the results of ANOVA analysis - F-ratio (Table 3) reveal that the differences between the mean values of particular segments in all situational indicators are statistically significant. The three separated segments were called: “markedly rational”, “impulsive to some extent” and “mostly rational”. Considering the existence of different customer segments, based on the correlation of situational factors and impulse buying, **hypothesis H₂ is also confirmed**.

Segment 1 includes the smallest number of consumers (40 or 22.2%). It is labeled as “markedly rational – immune to influence” because shoppers in this segment believe that particular situational factors mostly do not or not at all affect their unplanned purchasing.

Segment 2 includes 71 or 39.5% of respondents. These respondents mostly neither agree nor disagree with the majority of statements, so they are labeled as “impulsive to some extent – sensitive to some situational stimuli”. The shoppers from this segment state that some of the analyzed factors, such as promotional

activities, friendly and skillful staff, store location and agreeable aroma of some food products can generally induce them to buy on impulse. Their shopping companions can generally affect their buying behavior and choice and, to some extent, motivate their unplanned purchasing. Of all the observed factors, promotional activities affect their impulsiveness the most, while large quantities of merchandise displayed in one place affects it the least. Among the factors that affect unplanned purchasing to some degree, store attractiveness is the most pronounced.

According to the respondents' opinions and attitudes on the impact of particular situational factors on their unplanned purchasing, **hypotheses H₅₋₈ are accepted, whereas hypotheses H₃ and H₄ are accepted only partially.**

Table 3. K-Means Clustering Results, Mean Values

Variables	Segment 1	Segment 2	Segment 3	F-ratio
P3.1.	1,90	3,08	2,61	15,35**
P3.2.	1,38	3,34	2,26	56,15**
P3.3.	1,38	3,45	2,42	55,94**
P3.4.	1,53	3,58	2,39	64,42**
P3.5.	1,30	3,14	1,99	60,46**
P3.6.	2,13	3,51	2,71	22,59**
P3.7.	1,23	3,54	2,43	77,42**
P3.8.	1,78	3,75	3,20	55,81**
P3.9.	1,50	3,38	2,46	64,28**
P3.10	1,53	3,15	2,61	40,23**
P3.11	1,30	2,83	2,30	41,82**
P3.12	1,25	3,11	2,35	67,86**
P3.13	1,33	3,01	2,38	38,94**
P3.14	1,58	3,51	2,39	53,01**
P3.15	1,63	3,21	2,57	36,16**
P3.16	1,55	3,24	2,46	45,61**

** Significant at $p < 0.01$

Segment 3 includes 69, or 38.3% of consumers. Since, according to their responses, most situational factors generally do not affect their unplanned purchasing, this segment is called “mostly rational – generally immune to influence”. The responses of these customers reveal that several factors, such as: time aspect, agreeable aroma, promotional activities, attractive and/or larger product packaging, as well as point-of-sale adverts and information on products can, to some extent, affect their impulsiveness in shopping; promotional activities being here of primary importance.

Table 4. Demographic characteristics in segment (with p values)

Characteristics	Total (N=180)	Segment 1 (N=40)	Segment 2 (N=71)	Segment 3 (N=69)	p
Gender					
Female	54.4%	57.5%	53.5%	53.6%	0.90767
Male	45.6%	42.5%	46.5%	46.4%	
Age					
18 to 19	5.0%	0.0%	2.8%	10.2%	0.07815
20 to 29	19.5%	15.0%	29.6%	11.6%	
30 to 39	21.1%	17.5%	18.3%	26.1%	
40 to 49	19.4%	20.0%	19.7%	18.8%	
50 to 59	15.0%	22.5%	11.3%	14.5%	
60 +	20.0%	25.0%	18.3%	18.8%	
Education					
Elementary or less	13.9%	7.5%	14.1%	17.4%	0.40846
Secondary	51.1%	55.0%	47.9%	52.2%	
Highly qualified	12.8%	20.0%	9.8%	11.6%	
University graduate	22.2%	17.5%	28.2%	18.8%	
Employment status					
Employed	59.4%	62.5%	56.3%	60.9%	0.01848
Unemployed	8.9%	10.0%	8.5%	8.7%	
Retired	19.5%	27.5%	12.7%	21.7%	
Student	12.2%	0.0%	22.5%	8.7%	
Household income					
1000 - 2000 kn	4.5%	0.0%	4.2%	7.3%	0.05049
2001 - 3000 kn	5.0%	7.5%	5.6%	2.9%	
3001 - 4000 kn	7.2%	7.5%	7.0%	7.3%	
4001 - 6000 kn	17.2%	25.0%	14.1%	15.9%	
6001 - 8000 kn	12.8%	25.0%	14.1%	4.4%	
8001 - 10000 kn	18.3%	7.5%	14.1%	29.0%	
10001 - 13000 kn	15.6%	15.0%	15.5%	15.9%	
13001 - 16000 kn	10.0%	2.5%	14.1%	10.1%	
16000 kn +	9.4%	10.0%	11.3%	7.2%	
Household members					
1	10.1%	10.0%	8.6%	11.6%	0.21614
2	16.2%	17.5%	15.7%	15.9%	
3	20.7%	30.0%	22.8%	13.1%	
4	31.8%	32.5%	24.3%	39.1%	
Above 4	21.2%	10.0%	28.6%	20.3%	

Based on previous discussions, it can be seen that, compared to other situational factors, promotional activities are the ones that affect the unplanned buying of the second and the third segments' respondents to the greatest extent. However, such influence is more expressed for the consumers of the second

segment. While the promotional activities mostly affect the second segment consumers in terms of impulse buying, they affect the third segment buyers only to some extent. Table 4 provides the description of the segments in terms of demographics. It is obvious that the separated segments differ significantly in terms of their respondents' employment status (at 0.05-level), while in terms of other characteristics, this difference is not statistically significant. In comparison to the other two segments, the segment "impulsive to some extent" includes significantly more students, and fewer retired persons.

4. CONCLUSION AND MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

This research provides new comprehension of the correlation between situational factors and impulsive buying behavior in the observed county in Croatia. The research results expressed by mean values of respondents' responses reveal that most situational factors to some extent induce shoppers to buy on impulse, which to some extent differs from the expectations and the first hypothesis proposed. Therefore, hypothesis H_1 is confirmed partially.

The question which is posed here is how much the respondents, as consumers, are really aware of the impact of situational factors to be able to perceive them and separate those that do affect their buying behavior. Besides, such responses can be ascribed to the current economic situation and recession in which shoppers behave more rationally and see the price/quality ratio as extremely important. Furthermore, research shows that respondents are not a homogeneous group, but that they can be divided into three different segments regarding the perceived impact of situational factors on their impulsive buying behavior: (1) "markedly rational – totally immune to influence", (2) "impulsive to some extent – sensitive to some situational stimuli", (3) "mostly rational – generally immune to influence". **These results confirm the hypothesis H_2 .**

As the study tried to separate those situational factors that are more significant for unplanned purchasing in a particular segment, the hypotheses H_{3-8} were tested. Thus, in the customer segment that in this research proved to be more impulsive ("impulsive to some extent – sensitive to some situational stimuli"), it was found that promotional activities, friendly and skillful staff, store location, and agreeable aroma of some food products can generally influence them to buy on impulse, while their shopping companions can generally affect their buying behavior and choice, but can only to some extent induce them to buy on impulse. Consequently, **hypotheses H_{5-8} are accepted, whereas hypotheses H_3 and H_4 are accepted only partially.**

For a more thorough description of separated segments, demographic data, i.e. socio-economic variables, were also used. Relating these variables to the impulsive purchasing produced the results that could be expected to some extent. By comparing them to the results of previous studies (which show the correlation of demographic characteristics and the inclination to impulsive buying²), as well as to the theoretical insights, it is revealed that situational factors can to a greater extent affect impulsive purchases in consumers of a particular employment status (e.g. students in comparison to retired persons), and that impulsive behavior conditioned by situational factors does not depend on respondents' education or income. Contrary to expectations, it is revealed that impulsive buying behavior does not significantly depend on the respondents' gender, age or number of household members. In terms of gender and number of household members, this is, however, not surprising, as the authors in their still unpublished research on buying behavior have reached the same conclusion. In terms of age, the obtained result can be partially explained by the fact that besides situational ones, other factors (e.g. personal factors, individual differences, etc.) affect impulsive purchasing.

Following the results of this research, the retailers and their sales staff are suggested the following:

- In cooperation with manufacturers, retailers should from time to time organize promotional activities which have proven effective with consumers³, informing the shoppers about them in an appropriate way both within the stores and out of them.
- Retailers should obtain sufficient knowledge and information on merchandise characteristics and brand differences by permanent training.
- Retailers should train their sales staff and require them to treat the customers helpfully and respectfully, and to help the customer find and reach the wanted product.
- They should be trained to praise the customers' choice and thank them for their business.

² Research results mainly show that impulsive buying is associated with age (Bellenger et al., 1978; Wood, 1998; Gutierrez, 2004), employment status (Bassett i Beagan, 2008; Gilboa, 2009) and the number of household members (Miranda & Jegasothy, 2008), while it is not associated with education (Bratko, et al., 2007; Gutierrez, 2004) and income (Bratko et al., 2007; Buendicho, 2003; Tirmizi et al., 2009; Gutierrez, 2004). Research results in terms of gender generally differ (Rook & Hoch, 1985; Dittmar et al., 1995; Dittmar et al.1996; Coley & Burgess, 2003; Gilboa, 2009; Buendicho, 2003; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001; Gutierrez, 2004).

³ For instance, daily and monthly price reductions (Anić & Radas 2006b) and price reductions in general (Lin & Lin).

- When selecting a store location, retailers should take into account its suitability for shoppers; like for instance, vicinity of bus stops, availability of parking lots, easy access.
- Retailers should create an atmosphere of freshness by aromatic stimuli at the entrance (e.g. fresh fruit and vegetables and flowers in supermarkets, aroma spreading “testers” in cosmetic shops, etc.).
- Retailers are advised to motivate social shopping by advertising the positive effects of such shopping (choice security and acceptability, socializing, making friends, etc.).

As the research results show that the impulsive buying of the second segment (“impulsive to some extent – sensitive to some situational stimuli”) is to some extent affected also by store attractiveness, we have to stress the importance of the appropriate use of sales promotions at the point of sale and the dynamic display of merchandise in creating an adequate atmosphere and an attractive, smart and purchase stimulating store. As it is found that students and respondents aged 20 to 29⁴ in their buying on impulse are more affected by some situational factors, the retailers are advised to direct some point-of-sale activities to that customer segment. Thus, for example, by the arrangement of some products in a particular place within a store, a special niche can be created for younger customers.

At the end, we have to point to the certain limitations of this research as, like most researches in marketing, it was conducted at a particular moment. More reliable results would naturally be obtained by multiple investigations conducted during a longer period of time. Also, for some indicators of situational factors (e.g. time aspect and social surrounding), several variables (statements) should be used, in order to explain them in more detail. In addition, it would be useful to include other indicators, such as the shopper’s mood and to try to separate the situational stimuli factors. When considering the sample selection, the future research could also try to apply the method of mall intercepts, i.e. intercepting customers in the shopping malls, due to the fact that this method might reflect the buyers’ structure more realistically. Impulsive purchasing is a comprehensive and wide field that can be investigated from various aspects. In Croatia, this issue has not been largely observed, which is motivating for future research and new insights into it. One of the studies could certainly focus on a more detailed investigation into personal and individual

⁴ Although research results show that the separated segments do not differ by gender, they do highly differ by age, as the second segment (sensitive to some situational stimuli) is characterized by a large number of shoppers in the 20-29 age group.

factors either separately or in combination with situational factors in order to obtain a more comprehensive presentation of shoppers' impulsive behavior.

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SITUACIJSKI ČIMBENICI I IMPULZIVNO PONAŠANJE POTROŠAČA U KUPNJI: SEGMENTACIJA TRŽIŠTA

Sažetak

Svrha ovog istraživanja je utvrđivanje povezanosti situacijskih čimbenika i impulzivnog kupovnog ponašanja potrošača s ciljem izdvajanja dovoljno različitih segmenata potrošača. Polazeći od navedenog u radu će se nastojati odgovoriti na sljedeća pitanja: Mogu li pojedini situacijski čimbenici potaknuti potrošače na impulzivnu kupovinu i u kojoj mjeri? Mogu li se, obzirom na utjecaj analiziranih situacijskih čimbenika na neplaniranu kupovinu ispitanika, izdvojiti različiti segmenti potrošača? Razlikuju li se izdvojeni segmenti obzirom na pojedina demografska obilježja? Dobiveni rezultati ukazuju na to da većina situacijskih čimbenika donekle utječe na neplaniranu kupovinu, no, prema mišljenju potrošača, niti jedan čimbenik nema veći utjecaj. Nadalje, istraživanjem su, s obzirom na percipirani utjecaj situacijskih čimbenika na impulzivno kupovno ponašanje, izdvojena tri segmenta potrošača: (1) "izrazito racionalni-potpuno nepodložni utjecaju", (2) "donekle impulzivni - osjetljivi na neke situacijske stimulanse", (3) "uglavnom racionalni - uglavnom nepodložni utjecaju". Kod prvog i trećeg segmenta (izrazito ili uglavnom racionalni potrošači) niti jedan od analiziranih situacijskih čimbenika u većoj mjeri ne utječe na impulzivnost u kupnji. Suprotno tome, kod "impulzivnih potrošača - osjetljivih na neke situacijske stimulanse" utvrđeno je da promotivne akcije, ljubaznost i stručnost osoblja u prodavaonici, lokacija prodavaonice i ugodan miris prehrambenih artikala ove ispitanike mogu uglavnom potaknuti na impulzivnu kupovinu, dok osobe koje su s njima u društvu uglavnom mogu utjecati na njihovo kupovno ponašanje i izbor, ali ih samo donekle potiču na neplaniranu kupovinu. Konačno, dobiveni rezultati pokazuju da situacijski čimbenici mogu u većoj mjeri utjecati na impulzivnu kupnju potrošača određenog statusa, te da na takvo ponašanje značajnije ne utječu spol, dob, obrazovanje, prihodi i broj članova kućanstva.

APPENDIX I. EXTRACT FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

	OFFERED STATEMENT
3.1.	I frequently make an unplanned purchase if I am under time pressure.
3.2.	When shopping with companions, I buy more products.
3.3.	Attractively arranged store stimulates me to buy more than planned.
3.4.	Friendly and skilled staff often talks me into buying a product I didn't plan to buy.
3.5.	Nice music can induce me to buy more.
3.6.	Attractive aroma (of sweets, fresh fruit and vegetables, etc.) can frequently induce me to buy more.
3.7.	Store location affects my unplanned buying.
3.8.	Promotional activities (price reduction, "buy 1/get 2" etc.) frequently affect my unplanned purchase.
3.9.	Specially arranged and particularly attractive display will attract my attention and may induce my unplanned purchasing.
3.10.	Attractive, unusual and/or larger packaging will attract my attention and induce my unplanned purchasing.
3.11.	Larger quantity of the same merchandise displayed in one place will attract my attention and induce my unplanned purchasing.
3.12.	Shelf arrangement (e.g. products within hand reach) affects my unplanned purchasing.
3.13.	Product popularity is frequently a reminder for unplanned purchase.
3.14.	My companions affect my buying behavior and choice.
3.15.	Product ads, fliers, point-of-sale notices induce my unplanned purchase.
3.16.	Point-of-sale events (demonstrations, degustation, etc.) can induce my unplanned purchase.

*) The possible responses were: *disagree strongly, mostly disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree strongly, mostly agree.*