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PRODUCT SAMPLING EFFECT ON PURCHASE DECISION ALSO BY SOCIAL ASPECTS

Abstract. Sampling is an important part of marketing for non-durable goods meaning food products. It provides space not only to introduce news on the market but also remind traditional types of products with innovative ingredients, new flavours and other variations. Moreover, the significant role of sampling is to support the sale of promoted products. The participation of promoter sustains this main role of sampling (support the sale). Following this reason, it is necessary to perceive the social aspects of sampling concerning customers and their purchasing decisions. The main purpose of the research is to verify the sampling efficiency concerning the customer purchase decisions in the conditions of the Slovak Republic considering the influence of the promoters, their behaviour and appearance. In addition to price factor impact on customer purchase decisions, the paper solved the social aspects of the interaction with the promoter and the taste of the product. For obtaining relevant results, 484 customers of retail stores and at the same time participants of sampling have been included in the survey. For meeting the stated goal, the methodological tool of the research method was a questionnaire survey which addressed the sampling participants. The paper presents the results that in most cases, Slovak customers don't purchase the product immediately after the sampling. When they decide to buy, the central aspect is the taste of the product and not the price. Thus, in a taste-price ratio, the taste is considered more convincing and more effective. This finding is in contrasts with previous ones about consumer's price sensitivity. Since sampling is a humanized sales promotion, it is also necessary to perceive the social factors of interaction with the promoter on the purchase decision. Sampling participants consider the behaviour of the promoter and communication skills to be significantly more important than the appearance. The results of the research could be useful to reveal a considerable room for improvement concerning purchase decisions after sampling. It can be influenced by increasing attractiveness of sampling by interesting innovations, either in the products themselves or in the forms of sampling provisions.

Keywords: customers, preferences, product sampling, promoters, purchase decision, social aspects.

Introduction. From food products producers point of view, sampling is an opportunity and possibility

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to get on the market. In addition to placing their products on the market, each producer wants the potential customers to become familiar with the product as soon as possible. Sampling of food products is designed exactly for these purposes (Amor and Guilbert, 2015; Bawa and Shoemaker, 2004; Buil et al., 2013). The paper solves sampling carried out in the retail stores with the participation of a promoter. From the marketing point of view, sampling is a sales promotion tool. In addition to the above mentioned, its role is to achieve increased sales (Low and Davenport, 2009; Sedliacikova et al., 2020). In order sampling becomes effective, it is necessary to persuade customers (sampling participants) to buy the promoted product (Heilman et al., 2011). Several factors that are addressed and mentioned in the Literature Review enter the process of influencing the purchase decision. It is important to perceive the factor of the personality who promotes the sampling besides the factors on the customer part. The promoted product itself could not be excluded as a major factor (Laran and Tsiros, 2013; Heiman et al., 2001). Therefore, all the stated components of sampling efficiency on the customer purchase decision are solved within the paper. This paper aims to find out the level of effectiveness of sampling concerning customer purchase decisions in the conditions of the Slovak Republic, taking into account the social aspects of the promoter's influence (behaviour and appearance).

Literature Review. One of the tools to support sales from a marketing perspective is sampling. It is used in the case of food products, which also means in the case of non-durable goods too. The task of the sampling is to present the product to the sampling participant, in other words, to a potential customer. The main reason for sampling is to introduce the novelty on the market or a changed product of an existing product. As a rule, sampling intends to catch the customer's attention and in particular, to persuade the participant to purchase decision ethically. One of the most important parts of the sampling is the person of the promoter. The role of the promoter is to reach out to customers actively. For this reason, the sampling is a humanized form of sales promotion tools (Chen et al., 2016; Jesensky et al., 2017; Hein, 2009; Biswas et al., 2014).

Fam et al. (2011), Dawes (2002) and Alvarez and Vazquez (2005) agree that most of the purchasing decisions are made in the store during the purchase. The share is set at two thirds. For this reason, it is necessary not to underestimate the importance of in-store marketing, which also includes sampling. Other tools of in-store marketing are discounts, store atmosphere, additional service and banners. Retailers have considerable space available to catch the attention of customers. It means that marketing based on information available in the store is a means of how to affect the purchase decision of buyers. This topic connects sellers, customers and producers into one unit (Fam et al., 2011; Dawes, 2002; Alvarez and Vazquez, 2005; Sadiku et al., 2019; Range and Leonard, 2016).

For maximizing the effect of promotional tools, including sampling as an in-store promotion type, sellers and companies are forced to consider the various aspects affecting consumer purchase decisions and behaviour. These include the cultural factors (culture of society and individual sub-cultures, characteristics of society), social factors (family and family life cycle, social trends of the individuals), personal factors (life stage, financial and economic condition, lifestyle, personality), psychological factors (external and internal motivation, faith, personal attitudes, expectations) and individual factors (age, gender, education). These attributes that affect the purchase decisions are presented in Figure 1 (Starchon et al., 2018; Abdolmaleki et al., 2018; SivaKumar and Gunasekaran, 2017; Anisimova, 2016; He et al., 2016; Olsiakova, 2003).

McGuinness et al. (2015) based on findings of his research, characterized the sampling as a means of influencing the purchase decision of customers and also as a sales promotion tool. Nowadays, it is a natural part of the shopping behaviour of people to make most of their purchase in supermarkets and shopping centres. The last two decades have seen a sharp increase in the popularity of supermarkets and shopping centres. The trend was supported by targeted marketing tools, which are effective, especially for price-sensitive customers. Marketing tools appeal to customer loyalty and by their influence differentiate

the method of purchase (Barret and Mutambatsere, 2008; Chen, 2013; Chandon et al., 2000; McNeill, 2006; Chen, 2013).

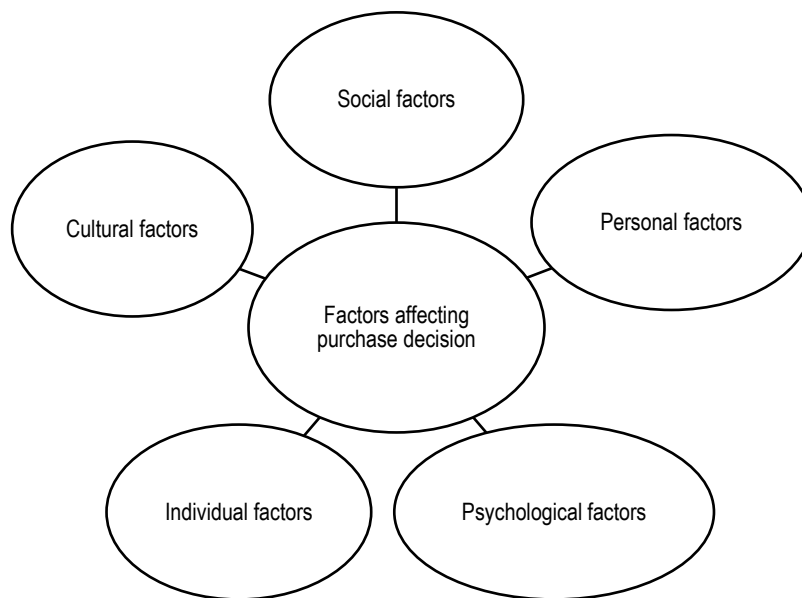


Figure 1. Factors affecting the customer purchase decision

Sources: developed by the authors based on (Starchon et al., 2018; SivaKumar and Gunasekaran, 2017; Anisimova, 2016; He et al., 2016; Olsiakova, 2003).

Achieving the popularity of a new product on the market and the part of customers is not easy. The role of the sampling is not only to influence the purchase decision but also to inform customers about the promoted product, ensure the growth of interest in the promoted product and present the product itself. Sampling is a popular tool to support sales from the customers' point of view of, sellers, and to some extent the producers themselves (Jesensky et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2016).

For ensuring sustainable growth and development in all areas, including marketing and trade, it is necessary to pay attention to the principles of responsible marketing, which is a tool for success in the future (Meler and Dragan, 2014; Mandal and Banerjee, 2018; Lammers, 1991). Part of the topic of samplings and ethical principles in the issue of influencing the purchase decision of customers must clearly be the communication factor manifested in the sampling process. When it comes to responsible marketing, the promoter plays an essential role during the sampling. His behaviour is primarily associated with the name of the company whose products promotes. Large companies that have been building their reputation for many years cannot risk customer loyalty. The person of the promoter must reflect the values of the company and at the same time must be the bearer of responsibility (Aggerholm et al., 2011; Vetrakova et al., 2018).

One of the areas that closely relates to the issue in question is the terms of preference, i.e. the choices in terms of selection, value and attitudes. It is assumed that the choice is the result of the preference. Therefore, it is adequate to examine, which decisions the customers make concerning sampling and its effectiveness. It is a specific topic since the human factor, in the role of a promoter, enters the selection process. The issue study and problem analysis present the look «inside» in terms of the psychological

side of preferences. Authors Warren et al. (2011) agree that customer values can be inferred and derived from the expressed preferences. These will prove to be sympathetic or unsympathetic to individual alternatives (Scherer, 2005). However, the phenomenon could be observed before the selection. It will finally result in a decision that is a manifestation of preference. Another term is the attitude by which the decision-makers shows a positive or negative will. The decision making is an explicit demonstration against alternatives (Lichtenstein and Slovic, 2006). The whole area is the psychological basis of the decision-making process itself and is also closely related to social aspects (Abdolmaleki et al., 2018; SivaKumar and Gunasekaran, 2017; Warren et al., 2011; Scherer, 2005).

Methodology and research methods. The research consisted of a preparatory and implementation phase, as recommended by Kozel (2006). In the first phase, the study defined its object and problem. It was followed by an orientation analysis of the issue and the compilation of a research plan. In addition to data collection, the implementation phase included their subsequent processing and interpretation appropriately. In addition to the statistical processing by the Chi-square test, the methods of descriptive statistics were also used.

The research problem in question was the impact of sampling on customer purchase decisions. The paper aimed to verify the sampling effectiveness on purchase decision in practice and to find out what extent the promoter influences their effectiveness in terms of his/her behaviour towards customers. For meeting the set goal, it was necessary to carry out a questionnaire survey intended for participants in samplings in terms of customers. The questionnaire consisted of identification questions, including age and gender. It focused on the level of education and the region of the respondent. For excluding from the survey those who did not participate in the sampling, the questionnaire contained a filter question. This step ensured that only those respondents were addressed who took part in the sampling. The other questions focused on the subject of the paper, namely the customer's decisions to buy the product after sampling and the factors influencing this decision. The attention was drawn to the importance of promoters' behaviour and conduct considering their impact on the sampling effectiveness. Data collection lasted a total of five months from November 2018 to March 2019, and a total of 484 completed questionnaires were obtained. Questionnaires were distributed among respondents through various social networks. The minimum number of respondents determined through the following mathematical relationship was met and exceeded:

$$n \geq \frac{(z^2 * p * q)}{\Delta^2} \quad (1)$$

where, n – the minimum number of respondents; z^2 – reliability coefficient in this specific case 95 %; p and q – shares of respondents concerning knowledge and non-knowledge of the issue (in this specific case who participated or did not participate in the sampling).

The behaviour of the file was not clear in advance. Therefore, the values were chosen at the level of 0.5 (each group 50 %). The permissible error (Δ^2) of 5 % was selected (Kozel, 2006; Pacakova, 2009). After substituting the values into the formula, the relation for calculating the minimum extent of the examined set was determined:

$$n \geq \frac{(2^2 * 0,5 * 0,5)}{0,5^2} \quad (2)$$

The calculation determined a minimum number of respondents on the level of 400. Another 84 questionnaires exceeded this value. The return rate of the questionnaires was at the level of 484 completed questionnaires. The data collection phase was followed by their evaluation.

Following hypotheses were tested at the significance level of 5 %, i.e. α (alfa) = 0,05 (Note: majority means at least 50 % of respondents):

H1: It is assumed that the majority of the customers usually buy the promoted product after the sampling.

H2: It is assumed that the majority of the customers prefers to purchase the product just tasted, regardless of its price, based on the taste perceptor.

H3: It is assumed that the majority of the customers consider the behaviour and communication skills of the promoter to be important during the sampling.

H4: It is assumed that the customers majority consider the promoter appearance to be important during the sampling.

The obtained data were tested by Pearson's chi-square test. This test is designed to determine the dependences of the observed variables. In this particular case, it is between demographics signs of the respondents and the questions asked concerning the sampling and their impact on the purchase decision. The null hypothesis is the assertion that mutually tested variables are independent. The principle of the calculation is to compare the expected values and the actual ones. The test characteristic of the Chi-square test is as follows (Kozel, 2006; Pacakova, 2009):

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{(X_i - Np_i)^2}{Np_i} \quad (3)$$

The results of the questionnaire survey were also processed by descriptive statistics and evaluated by means of tables. For keeping the work clear, only those dependencies that are considered the most important for the work were taken out from the Chi-square test.

Four questions were evaluated (each related to the numbered hypothesis), while the answers to the first question (Q1) were marked by the option Yes/No. The answers to the second questions (Q2) corresponded to the option Yes/No, thus focused on the selection and purchase of the tasted product or its cheaper variant. The answers to the other two questions (Q3 a Q4) were assessed on the Likert scale 1 – 5 (1 definitely unimportant up to 5 very important). The Likert scale allowed expressing the attitude of the customers and their preferences towards the behaviour of promoters, their communication skills and appearance.

Results. The results are presented in two areas according to the definition of the paper objective. The first is the impact of sampling on the customer purchase decision and the second is the perception of promoters from the perspective of customers concerning their efficiency, i.e. impact of social aspects on the sampling efficiency. The area of customer purchase decisions observes the habit to buy the tested product and at the same time, concerning this habit, the influence of the product price factor. The following questions were asked in the issue - Impact of sampling on the customer purchase decision.

Q1: Do you usually buy the product after sampling?

The hypothesis H1 is attributed to this question. The formulation of the question is derived from the statements of the authors Tuttle (2011), Pauwels and Weiss (2008), Shiv and Nowlis (2004), Wadhwa et al. (2018). They agree that sampling is an effective sales promotion tool. It is the taste of the product that is a decisive factor to decide on the purchase of the product (Hoegg and Alba, 2007; Elder and Krishna, 2010; Hein, 2009). However, none of the relevant publications reflects the attitude of Slovak customers towards sampling. Nor do they deal with the impact on the purchase decision of Slovak customers in retail stores. The following results were obtained by addressing a representative sample of respondents (Table 1).

Only 24.17% of respondents stated that they usually buy the product after sampling. This figure doesn't support the hypothesis H1 that most customers tend to buy the product after the sampling. Up to 75.83%

of respondents replied they were not used to buy the product. Sampling is currently still a favourite sales promotion form, and it occurs in the Slovak retail stores. Therefore, it is questionable why the purchase effect doesn't happen immediately after the sampling. It is possible to think about several variants. The Slovak consumer behaves differently and another factor, stronger than the taste, influences the purchase decision (e.g. the price). The question specifies the time of purchase, i.e. immediately after the sampling. The sampling effect may change the purchase decision after a certain time lag (e.g. after trying cheaper versions). Therefore, other parts of the paper deal with these factors.

Table 1. Answers of the customers (Q1)

Type of answer on question No. 1	Number of answers
Yes, I usually buy	117
No, I usually don't buy	367

Sources: developed by the authors.

The next Table 2 shows a dependence between the testing of the measured data by Pearson's Chi-square test concerning the effect of sampling on the customer purchase decision. It illustrates that as the age of customers increases, the percentage of those who have the habit of buying a tasted product increases. From the data available from the survey, it was found that the most frequently re-addressed group of customers is in the age category from 51 and more.

Table 2. Age vs habit to buy the tasted product

Age category	Habit of buying	No habit of buying
18-25	16 %	84 %
26-35	17 %	83 %
36-50	38 %	62 %
51 and more	40 %	60 %
17 and less	50 %	50 %

Sources: developed by the authors

The data from Table 3 have confirmed this finding. The survey focused on the effect of repeated addressing on product sampling if the customer refused once. It follows that the most frequently repeatedly addressed group of customers for sampling are customers in the age category 51 and more. It is related to their habit of buying a tasted product. Carrigan and Attalla (2001) emphasize that purchase decision are related to the level of socially responsible business and ethical behaviour, either of the enterprise or the promoter during the sampling. Such action is, therefore considered incorrect and does not lead to development.

Table 3. Age vs repeated request to taste a product after prior refusal

Age category	Repeated request	No repeated request
18-25	23 %	77 %
26-35	40 %	60 %
36-50	33 %	67 %
51 and more	44 %	56 %
17 and less	28 %	72 %

Sources: developed by the authors.

Q2: What is your purchase decision in case you liked the tasted product, but it is more expensive than other products of the same kind?

The hypothesis H2 solves this question. It is assumed that the customers prefer the taste of the product over the price or other factor that could influence their purchasing decision. In other words, it examines the effectiveness of the sampling on the purchase decision while observing the effects of other factors. Based on the authors' statements (Hoegg and Alba, 2007; Elder and Krishna, 2010; Hein, 2009) it is derived that sampling is an efficient sales promotion tool. Therefore, the confirmation of the hypothesis H2 is assumed. The findings of this issue are presented in the following Table 4.

Table 4. Answers of the customers (Q2)

Type of answer on question No. 2	Number of answers
I buy a cheaper product	174
I buy a product that I liked	310

Sources: developed by the authors.

Up to 64.05% respondents prefer the tasted product over the cheaper option, i.e. the assumed hypothesis H2 is confirmed. The remaining 35.95 % of respondents prefer the price. Indeed, sampling appears to be an effective sales promotion tool, but only if the taste of the promoted product is appealing to customers. As Notte (2011) claims, the customer is most sensitive to the product price. There is no statistical dependence on the purchase decision because of price, even though age is expected. The Person's Chi-square test did not confirm this dependence. In this case of data testing, the p-value was 0.575 (i.e. $\alpha > 0.05$; it is assumed that there is no dependence between the examined variables of age and the decision between price and taste).

The following questions were asked in the issue - Impact of social aspects on the sampling efficiency.

Q3: How important is for you the behaviour of the promoter during the sampling?

The promoter is an important part of the sampling concept and plays a central role in the active addressing of customers to participate in the sampling. During the sampling, the customer and promoter interact. It is assumed that the total effect of sampling and its efficiency on the purchase decisions depends on the ethical behaviour of the promoter (Biswas et al., 2014; Danaher, 2017; Kotler et al., 2007; Jesensky et al., 2017; Vysekalova, 2014). Therefore, the following part of the paper observes the extent to which customers consider promoter behaviour important (Table 5). It is expected to confirm the hypothesis H3 that the behaviour of the promoter and his/her communication skills are important for customers.

Table 5. Answers of the customers (Q3)

Type of answer on question No. 3	Number of answers
Definitely unimportant	7
Rather unimportant	4
Neither important nor unimportant	52
Rather important	117
Very important	304

Sources: developed by the authors.

A meagre percentage of respondents consider promoter behaviour and communication skills unimportant (2.27%). 10.74% of the respondents expressed a neutral attitude. Up to 86.99% of respondents consider promoter behaviour important. It follows that the hypothesis H3 was confirmed. Unsuitable promoter behaviour that does not reach the appropriate level may be one of the key causes of the sampling failure. In practice, if this is the case, it can mean the elimination of sampling efficiency.

Q4: How important is the appearance of the promoter during the sampling?

As mentioned in the question (Q3), this question also considers that the promoter is one of the most important parts of sampling in practice. Based on the fact of the interaction between the customer and promoter during the sampling, the appearance of the promoter also influences the sampling efficiency apart from behaviour. It makes part of the overall sampling concept and affects the sensory perceptions of the customers (Biswas et al., 2014; Danaher, 2017; Kotler et al., 2007; Jesensky et al., 2017; Vysekalova, 2014). This question puts into contrast the importance of the behaviour and the appearance of the promoter. The results are presented in Table 6. The question examines the confirmation or negation of the hypothesis H4 that assumes that customers consider the appearance of the promoter to be important during the sampling.

Table 6. Answers of the customers (Q4)

Type of answer on question No. 4	Number of answers
Definitely unimportant	59
Rather unimportant	56
Neither important nor unimportant	153
Rather important	121
Very important	95

Sources: developed by the authors

216 respondents answered on a scale 4 and more, which presents 44.63%. The value doesn't reach the majority. The assumed hypothesis H4 was thereby not confirmed that customers consider the appearance of the promoter to be important. 31.61% expressed a neutral attitude. 23.76% of respondents consider the appearance of the promoter to be unimportant. The survey has revealed that appearance doesn't present an essential aspect of the sampling efficiency in comparison to the communication skills of the promoter and the willingness to make contact with the client. The prior interest of the employers should be personal qualities of promoters, unlike appearance, which was also confirmed by the results of the analysis of the previous question.

In the area of the promoter perception from the perspective of customers in connection with the sampling efficiency on purchase decisions, which was evaluated through two questions of the questionnaire, the Pearson Chi-square test was also carried out. Dependencies between individual variables were tested – demographic data (gender, age, region, education) and questions related to the area. No dependencies were found out between the assumed demographic data and individual observed areas:

- Dependence between the age and importance of the promoter appearance. In this case of data testing by Pearson's Chi-square test, the value p corresponded to the level of 0.111 (i.e. $\alpha > 0, 05$; the hypothesis is accepted that there is no dependence between the variables).
- Dependence between the gender and importance of the promoter appearance. Following this tested dependence, the value p significantly approached the limit of the confirmation of the dependence. However, p reached the level of 0.056 (i.e. $\alpha > 0, 05$; there is no dependence between the variables even though the results of the survey showed that masculine population participated 9% more often in the sampling without prior addressing by the promoter).

In terms of the importance of promoter behaviour during sampling, no dependence has been confirmed by this testing. Thus, the high emphasis has been put on the promoter behaviour, which was expressed by 86.99% of respondents (Table 5).

The research verified that sampling is a popular sale promotion tool not only from the customer's point of view as claimed by the authors Danaher (2017), Kotler et al. (2007) and Vysekalova (2014). During

sampling, customers learn about a new product or a variation of an existing one and at the same time get access to the product for free as Tuttle (2011), Pauwels and Weiss (2008) and Shiv and Nowlis (2004) claimed. It is still true that samplings are cheaper sales promotion tool than others known so far. The biggest attraction of in-store sampling remains that the customer gets access to the product for free. It is especially true for price-sensitive customers, as Notte (2011) claimed. The paper objective aimed to see the sampling effect on the purchase decisions of customers. Besides, the attention was paid on the person of the promoter as the humanized form of sales promotion. The promoter is an important part of the sampling, Biswas et al. (2014) and Danaher (2017) expressed similar opinions. Its role is to catch the customers attention, find out and bring new findings and first of all, present the product. If the promoter doesn't address the customers actively, the efficiency of sampling significantly decreases. Therefore, the paper focused on the impact of the promoter's behaviour and their appearance on the sampling efficiency. Kim (2019) and Brammer and Pavelin (2006) note that social responsibility plays an important role and influences the behaviour of the enterprises as well as their employees. The behaviour of the promoter and individual production companies or agencies organizing the sampling affects the customer. The customer perceives this behaviour very sensitively and attaches great importance to this (Table 5).

On the other hand, in contrast to the appearance, this is much less important for customers (Table 6). Surprisingly, about a third of respondents encountered a repeated request for a tasting, even though they initially refused to participate (Table 3). The sense of sampling remains, as the authors Lusnakova et al. (2011), Brinkmann (2002) and Sindleryova Butoracova (2009) claim, to present a new product for the customer, gain feedback to provide an innovative development but not persuade to buy the product in an unethical way. The same as the authors Carrigan and Attalla (2001) state, the paper underlines that customer purchase decision depends in a great extent on the level of the ethical behaviour of the society or the promoter during sampling. The authors Wadhwa et al. (2018), Biswas et al. (2010), Nowlis and Shiv (2005) present that sampling is an effective and popular sales promotion tool and this paper has confirmed this statement. The same as the authors Hoegg and Alba (2007), Elder and Krishna (2010), Hein (2009) present, the paper confirms that the taste of the product may greatly affect the purchase decision and so proportionally, the sampling efficiency. The study results of Lockshin and Knott (2009) indicated on up to 400 per cent sale increase of the promoted items during sampling realization. The paper calls challenge into the product sampling future, while a comparison of the results of Keller and Lehmann (2006). It would allow making it even more attractive to reach better results, whether in the attractiveness of sampling and participation of customers or also in the improvement of ethics concerning the socially responsible business. In this area, a lack has been proven, namely in the repeated request to participate in the sampling.

Conclusions. The objective of the paper was to find out, through the questionnaire survey among sampling participants, the effect and impact of sampling on their purchase decisions. In addition to the product price, the survey included specific factors such as the promoters' behaviour and their appearance. Among others, the taste of the product plays an important role. The paper expects contribution in the area of marketing with the focus on the forms of sales promotion in the in-store environment. It brings specific findings in terms of sampling impact on the purchase decisions of Slovak customers. The assumed hypothesis was not confirmed that customers buy the promoted product immediately after the participation in the sampling. Slovak customers have a habit of buying the tasted products depending mainly on their age. Especially older customers do so. At the same time, this age category will meet during the sampling more often with the repeated request to taste the product in comparison with the younger customers. Among others, the taste of the product remains the key attribute at a purchase decision, and at the same time, this factor is considered more important than the price. It means that a customer decides to buy a product in case he/she liked it. The person of the promoter is a key part of the sampling, which impacts the purchase decision with equal importance. Customers marked the behaviour and communication skills

to be an essential attribute. In comparison with the behaviour, the appearance is considered less important, thus still rather essential.

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Вплив POS-матеріалів на купівельну поведінку споживачів: соціальні аспекти

Ця стаття узагальнює аргументи та контраргументи в межах наукової дискусії з питання вибору мерчандайзерами POS-матеріалів для оформлення торгових точок з метою стимулювання імпульсних покупок споживачами. У статті визначено поняття «імпульсна покупка», досліджено основні канали сприяння їх здійснення. Встановлено, що використання POS-матеріалів дозволяє не лише вивести нові товари на ринок, але нагадати про традиційні товари, що є оновленими інноваційними інгредієнтами, новими смаками та іншими варіаціями. У роботі наголошено на ролі мерчандайзера в забезпеченні зростання продаж шляхом ефективного стимулювання споживачів на місці здійснення купівлі товару з використанням POS-матеріалів. Основною метою статті є визначення впливу POS-матеріалів на купівельну поведінку споживачів з урахуванням ефективності комунікаційної складової мерчандайзерів. Для досягнення поставленої мети, авторами проаналізовано вплив смаку продукту та особливостей соціальної взаємодії промоутера з потенційними споживачем (його поведінку та зовнішній вигляд) на рішення придбати товар. Детерміновану вибірку даних сформовано на основі опитування 484 покупців роздрібних магазинів Словачької Республіки, що взяли участь у дегустації продукції. Результати емпіричного аналізу свідчать, що, загалом, споживачі не приймають рішення про купівлю продукту одразу після його дегустації. Зазначено, що рішення споживача придбати даний товар більше залежить від його якості, ніж ціни. Окрім цього, автори наголосили на необхідності враховувати соціальні аспекти взаємодії між споживачем та мерчандайзером. Дослідження емпірично підтверджує та теоретично доводить, що споживачі звертають увагу на поведінку та навички спілкування мерчандайзера більше, ніж його зовнішній вигляд. Результати дослідження мають практичне значення і можуть бути корисними для підвищення продаж за допомогою використання POS-матеріалів.

Ключові слова: дегустація, рішення про купівлю, промоутери, клієнти, уподобання, соціальні аспекти

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