

## RESEARCH OF GENDER-BASED BEHAVIOURAL DIFFERENCES IN THE PURCHASING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Dijana Tevšić\* , Arnela Nanić\*\* 

### Abstract

*The goal of this paper is to explore changes in consumer behavior which were caused by modern consumer trends with the accent on gender-based differences in behavior by purchasing process. Consumer behavior in the purchasing process depends on a great number of factors, and one of them is certainly the gender of consumer. Shopping habits and gender-based consumer attitudes are significantly different and have changed during the past several years. With the arrival of new technologies and the usage of modern marketing tools, these gender-based differences are remarkably changing. The habits of men and women during purchasing decision-making processes have completely new characteristics now. It is very difficult to gain consumers' trust in time when they can easily access a great amount of information in every moment and producers must invest a greater effort to please every need of modern and informed consumers. The aim of this paper is to analyze the considerable differences in shopping behavior of both male and female, to research their attitudes and habits by purchasing decision-making process and to determine new shopping trends of these consumer categories. Using a structured survey questionnaire in this paper the key differences will be explored of gender-based consumers presenting themselves in the purchasing decision-making process as well as their habits and styles.*

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior, gender-based differences, purchasing habits, trends, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**JEL:** M31, M39

### 1. Introduction

A research of consumer behavior as a newer discipline in marketing attracts increasing attention from marketing experts. The success of a business ultimately depends on consumers and their final decision in the purchasing process. This decision has a whole range of factors that determine the outcome of the purchasing process. A lot has changed so far since the beginning of the study of consumer behavior. This paper emphasizes modern trends in the consumer world and the new ways of deciding and purchasing, and the crucial differences between men and women in the purchasing decision-making process. A new way of life, new styles of consumer deciding, and new way of purchasing have imposed completely new trends in the consumer world. Differences between consumers of different gender become more pronounced in certain elements. Worldwide consumer trends determine the behavior of companies when creating their marketing program. There are new times ahead, new transformation in the purchasing decision-making process and consumer behavior in the world.

### 2. Theoretical background

Consumer behavior is one of the central categories in the marketing management process. This is a relatively young science discipline and is therefore very interesting for many marketing professionals. Consumer behavior involves the process of making a decision to purchase product or service as well as everything that happens before and after the final decision in the process of buying and using a product or service. Consumer behavior is closely related to psychology because it

\* dijana.tevsic@gmail.com

\*\* University of Bihac, Faculty of Economics, Bosnia and Herzegovina, arnela.nanic@efbi.unbi.ba

reveals the reasons for consumer behavior, as well as factors that influence such behavior.

The decision-making process involves a whole set of factors, which influence consumers in the purchasing decision-making process of a product or service. Consumer is a member of a community, a social and a cultural being, who aspires to acquire specific needs and desires by purchasing and using some product or service. All marketing activities start and end with consumers. Lately, a particularly interesting area in marketing is the study of consumer psychology, as well as the study of many environmental factors that ultimately affect the purchasing decision. The key question is what is in the so-called "black box" of consumers, and how we can influence the decision-making process itself? Marketing professionals who want to truly satisfy the wishes and needs of consumers must fully understand consumer behavior and consumer psychology. Knowing the needs of consumers and their expectations forms a strong basis for creating an optimal marketing program. When we know the most important values for the consumer, their real needs and specific wishes, we can focus all marketing activities and communication on their real needs.

In the literature, especially in the foreign literature, numerous definitions of consumer behavior can be found. The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines consumer behavior as a dynamic interaction of cognition, behavior, and environmental factors that result in behavior and the exchange of consumer aspects (Bennett, 1995). Consumer behavior can be defined as the decision-making process and physical activity involved in acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services (Khan, 2006, p. 4). According to Kesić (1999, p. 2), consumer behavior is the process of obtaining and consuming products, services and ideas from a consumer unit. It also includes post-sale processes that contain valuation and after-sales behavior.

Studying consumer behavior explores how individuals make purchasing decisions, which factors may influence this behavior, and whether the consumer is satisfied after using the purchased product. Consumer behavior in the purchasing process is influenced by many

internal and external factors, so it is susceptible to frequent changes. These factors are crucial for the final decision in the purchasing process of products or services.

Schiffman defines consumer behavior as a behavior that consumers show in seeking, buying, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services from which they expect to meet their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004, p. 8). Consumer behavior is the research of purchasing units and the exchange processes involved in searching, consuming and disposing of products, services, experiences and ideas (Mowen & Minor, 2001, p. 3). One of the most comprehensive definitions of consumer behavior is the definition according to Howard (1989, p. 2). He defines consumer behavior as a research of how and why consumers buy and spend. This definition in a simple and comprehensive way explains the concept of consumer behavior as a process of research on how consumers buy and consume products or services that meet their needs.

It is of great importance to constantly research and monitor consumer behavior, because consumers very often change their preferences. This creates such a situation in a market where entrepreneurial subjects are forced to continuously examine and check their needs and desires. However, it is not enough just to know the needs and desires of consumers and create a product/service which can satisfy these needs and desires. It is essential that such a product/service appears before and be better than those of competitors. Nowadays, it is crucial that you make a competitive advantage on a long-term basis in your business. The above statements are a requirement for achieving success, and the realization in many ways depends on the knowledge you have about your final consumers (Grbac & Meler, 2007, p. 12). A modern business environment is characterized by a relatively rapid change in market conditions and a large amount of information which is available to consumers and market entities (Grbac *et al.*, 2008, p. 23). In the new market conditions, the imperative is respecting final consumers who are buying our products or services. Therefore, for success in the market, it is necessary to know customer needs and desires and create an offer on such foundations. For better understanding

what is happening in relations established with consumers, we need to know and appreciate the trends that we are facing. The most significant binds to (Kotler, 2001, pp. 36-38):

- more attention on the quality, value and satisfaction of consumers/customers,
- more attention on building relationships and keeping consumers/customers,
- more attention on business process management and the integration of business functions,
- more attention on global thinking and planning of local markets,
- more attention on building strategic alliances and networks,
- more attention on direct and online business,
- more attention on providing additional services,
- more attention on high technology industries,
- more attention on ethical behavior in business.

The decision-making process begins with problem recognition (the problem can be solved by buying a product), followed by searching for information (looking for information about a product best suited to resolve the need or wish), an evaluation of alternatives (or values that are gained by buying a product), the purchase decision and post-purchase evaluation (Grbac, 2014, pp. 95-96). There are many factors that have an impact on the consumer and their behavior in the decision-making process. Marketing experts generally cannot control these factors, but they must certainly consider them. All factors which affect the behavior of consumers are interconnected and can be grouped into cultural, social and personal.

Precisely, timely and continuously monitoring the purchasing process, identifying factors in that process, and distinguishing between specific types of purchasing decisions are essential for the success of each company (Tihi *et al.*, 2006, p. 155). Consumer selection is the result of a complex interaction of cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. Although marketing experts cannot influence most of these factors, they can be useful for identifying interested customers and for designing products and appeals that

better meet their needs (Kotler *et al.*, 2006, p. 276).

A special emphasis in this paper is on gender differences among consumers, and their impact on decision making and shopping. Affiliation to different genders is largely determined by the very way of deciding and buying products or services. Many products, depending on the target group of consumers, are fully or partially adjusted to consumers of different genders.

Gender is one of the most common criteria of the market segmentation that is significant already in the earliest age of consumers. Research shows that women and men differ in relation to products they buy, the way they react to promotion, the way and time of processing information at the time of purchase, the time they are willing to spend shopping (Anić *et al.*, 2010). Out of all the factors that influence customer decision-making behavior, one of the main factors is gender. It refers to the social relationships/roles and responsibilities of men and women, and the expectations about the characteristics, attitudes and likely behaviors of both women and men (femininity and masculinity), which are learned through time and vary in culture (Bakshi, 2012, p. 4). It was found that women expressed more their love for shopping than men in general; five distinctive shopper types were also identified based on interviewees' self-descriptions and they include hedonic shoppers, utilitarian shoppers, value conscious shoppers, indecisive shoppers, and impulsive shoppers (Hayian & Cinthia, 2004, p. 114). Each gender has a firmly entrenched characteristic with women showing more sensitivity, warmth and apprehension than men but change depending on location, context and are influenced by a variety of social and cultural factors. In contrast, emotional stability, dominance, rule consciousness and vigilance are more typically male characteristics (Lakshmi *et al.*, 2017, p. 34).

Many products are also gender-typed: they take on masculine or feminine attributes, and consumers often associate them with gender. Gender-typing of products is often created or perpetuated by marketers (*e.g.* Princess telephones, boys' and girls' toys, and babies'

color-coded nappies) (Solomon *et al.*, 2006, pp. 216-217). Social changes, such as a dramatic increase in the proportion of women in waged work, have led to an upheaval in the way women view men, the way they perceive themselves, and in the products, they choose to buy.

Modern women now play a greater role in the decision regarding traditional male purchases (Solomon *et al.*, 2006, p. 218). Differences in consumer behavior of different gender before and after purchase and at each stage of decision-making are numerous. Studies have shown that women are prone to impulsive shopping and are more loyal to brands (Tifferet & Herstein, 2012, pp. 176-182). On average, women have a higher level of affective and cognitive aspects of the impulsiveness of buying; they are generally more inclined to impulsive shopping than men, while there are no gender differences in susceptibility to the situation factors of purchasing (Slišković *et al.*, 2014, p. 242). The influence of gender is statistically significant in the fourth phase of the purchasing process, which confirmed that women are more susceptible to the atmosphere in a shop (Štulec *et al.*, 2017).

Consumers are today very sovereign, demanding, disloyal and prone to criticism much more than the previous decades. It is important to understand what impacts all of their decisions and how to help them recognize the need, to provide what they need in the best possible way with the goal of long-term satisfaction that brings mutual benefit to both them and the company (Renko, 2009, p. 178). New trends create completely new segments of consumers with their specific requirements and needs. The influence of modern technology on the process of socialization of consumers, especially children, has significantly changed the world of consumption. On the world stage there are brand new times in the world of consumption, which means a new way of deciding and performing the act of buying. Consumers of the future will decide on the decision and act of purchase with the help of modern technological devices from their homes, mainly with the help of smartphones. Marketing experts of companies must keep up with consumer trends in order to keep their position on the world stage. Grbac (2014, pp.

244-254) emphasizes new trends in promotional activities and states that Internet-based promotional activities involve using webpages, e-mail and mobile communication, blog, newsletters, webinar, social networks (Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn) and using mobile devices in promotion.

Solomon (Solmon *et al.*, 2015, pp. 433-441) lists several categories of consumers in the structure of European families and highlights their key characteristics:

- *Children as decision makers* are increasingly recognized as a potential market, parents and television have a major impact on their purchases.
- *A teenage market* that is completely ruled by spending more than 61 billion euros a year
- *Baby busters: "Generation X"* - the consumer group aged between 18 and 29 makes up over 30 million Europeans who will be a major force in the upcoming years
- *Baby Boom generation* - the age group "baby boom" born between 1946 and 1964 is a source of many cultural and economic changes
- *Gray market* - this group is made up of older consumers, the age segment of the fastest growth

A few trends seem to be valid for all western European markets. These include:

- a tendency to more unevenly distributed income;
- an increasing number of older people;
- a decrease in household size;
- a growing proportion of immigrants;
- increase in environmental concern and consumption of 'green' products;
- relatively increasing consumption of services compared to durable goods.

Despite these common trends, there are big differences in the local contexts in which these trends are found as well as differences in the degree to which the trend is significant in each individual country (Solomon *et al.*, 2006, p. 591).



### 3. Methodology and the results

The research on this topic was conducted by an online questionnaire consisting of 23 statements, by which the respondents expressed their agreement or disagreement. An adjusted Consumer Style Inventory with a list of claims and different degrees of agreement in a form of Likert scale (1 – Strongly disagree, up to 5 – Strongly agree) was used for both, men and women. They gave us their opinion on each claim and helped us to see clear differences between the two genders during the purchasing process.

#### 3.1. Research methodology

The basic hypothesis implies a descriptive presentation based on the structure of the respondents' answers by modalities for pre-prepared questions and comparisons between two basic clusters, men and women, according to the models for the observed questions. The auxiliary hypotheses set out in the paper are:

- the purchasing decision-making process is much simpler and shorter by men than by women;
- women are impulsive when shopping and making the final decision in the buying process relative to men;
- shopping for women acts as a psychotherapy, reduces stress and has a relaxing effect;
- when shopping, women often spend more money than they planned.

For this empirical research, a structured questionnaire with a formal questionnaire was used, and created using online forms and distributed through the info service of the Faculty of Economics in Bihać and social networks.

The questionnaire consisted of opened and closed question types. The respondents were given a set of statements related to the hypotheses proposed. The respondents answered these questions by expressing some degree of agreement/disagreement, and a 5-point Likert scale was used (1-disagree at all to 5-strongly agree).

The random selection method was used. A sample for this research was made mostly of

the students and other respondents of different demographic characteristics. The sample consisted of a total of 101 subjects (n = 101). The survey was conducted in the period from March 2018 until April 2018 and it was made of three sections. In this paper the third section of the survey was analyzed, which referred to ways and habits during purchasing under the influences of modern trends.

Table 1. *Sample structure*

Features	N	(%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	33	32.7
Female	68	67.3
<b>Age group</b>		
18 – 23	42	41.6
24 – 29	36	35.6
30 – 35	10	9.9
36 – 40	4	4
41 – 45	4	4
46+	5	5
<b>Geographical area</b>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	70	69.3
EU	31	30.7
<b>Monthly income</b>		
up to 400 €	36	43.9
450 – 600 €	16	19.5
650 – 800 €	5	6.1
above 800 €	25	30.5
<b>Marital status</b>		
<b>Features</b>		
Single	40	39.6
Married	25	24.8
In a relationship	36	35.6
<b>Current status</b>		
Employed	30	29.7
Unemployed	11	10.9
Student	60	59.4
<b>Student status</b>		
First year bachelor student	15	25
Second year bachelor student	7	11.7
Third year bachelor student	8	13.3
Final year bachelor student	17	28.3
Master's degree	11	18.3
PhD	2	3.3

Source: Authors' own work

### 3.2. *The results of research*

The total number of the participants in the online questionnaire was 101 ( $n = 101$ ), of which 68 were female participants, or 67.3% of the total responses, and the remaining 33 participants were male participants, which is 32.7%.

The most responses were given by the student population from 18 to 23 years of age, which in percentage amounts to 41.6% of the total number of answers.

The third section of the questionnaire referred to modern trends and consumption, and changes that have been made using modern technology in the purchasing decision-making process.

The results of the research clearly indicate that the quality of the product is the priority for the customers. If we observe gender differences, the quality of the product is more important to women than to men. Out of the total number of the respondents, as many as 91.08% answered that they agreed with this claim. Certainly, this is confirmed by the previous statement, which was agreed by 84.15% of the survey respondents.

The respondents tend to find the best/perfect product that will meet their needs when shopping.

From the Table 2, we clearly see that the respondents invest a lot of time thinking about what product they really want to buy. In order to choose the best for themselves, they invest more effort and time to get that product, that is, the service that will meet their expectations.

The results further show that most respondents, or 58.41% do not buy fast, nor do they want to immediately take the first product or brand that attracts attention. Based on this, we can conclude that they prefer to explore which product is the best, and then only decide whether to buy this product or not.

Less than half of the respondents follow fashion and trends in the selection of footwear/clothing, which leads to the conclusion that most respondents value comfort more and do not follow trends and fashion blindly. We come to the next question where respondents expressed their views on whether shopping is a stress-reducing psychotherapy.

For the female, it really represents an escape from reality, problems and stress. Men disagree with this claim and shopping is not an opportunity for relaxation in their opinion.

For women shopping and trying out clothes is pleasurable, and they are happy to invest time in the buying process, while the shopping process is a waste of time for men and they give up trying out clothes very quickly. Both, men and women buy at discounted prices whenever possible. As many as 83.17% of the respondents agreed with this claim.

Discounts, more favorable prices, seasonal discounts and similar offers are an ideal opportunity for them to spend a certain amount of money. Male and female responses are not so different when they were asked about the most famous brands of products.

Most respondents answered this question neutrally and confirmed that the knowledge of a brand does not play a major role in the selection of their product.

Table 2. Review of research results for claims 1-8

	Gender		%		Total %
	M	F	M	F	
<b>Quality is the most important thing in the purchasing process</b>					
Strongly disagree	0	0	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
Disagree	2	0	1.98	0.00	<b>1.98</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	4	4	3.96	3.96	<b>7.92</b>
Agree	18	31	17.82	30.69	<b>49.50</b>
Strongly agree	9	33	8.91	32.67	<b>41.58</b>
<b>I always try to find the best or the perfect product in the purchasing process</b>					
Strongly disagree	0	0	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
Disagree	1	2	0.99	1.98	<b>2.97</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	5	8	4.95	7.92	<b>12.87</b>
Agree	11	31	10.89	30.69	<b>41.58</b>
Strongly agree	16	27	15.84	26.73	<b>42.57</b>
<b>I do not think much about shopping, nor do I invest a lot of effort and time in the buying process</b>					
Strongly disagree	4	22	3.96	21.78	<b>25.74</b>
Disagree	7	21	6.93	20.79	<b>27.72</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	10	13	9.90	12.87	<b>22.77</b>
Agree	9	8	8.91	7.92	<b>16.83</b>
Strongly agree	3	4	2.97	3.96	<b>6.93</b>
<b>I buy quickly, mostly the first product or brand that attracts me</b>					
Strongly disagree	6	22	5.94	21.78	<b>27.72</b>
Disagree	8	23	7.92	22.77	<b>30.69</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	9	15	8.91	14.85	<b>23.76</b>
Agree	7	4	6.93	3.96	<b>10.89</b>
Strongly agree	3	4	2.97	3.96	<b>6.93</b>
<b>I always follow trends and fashion in choosing clothes/footwear</b>					
Strongly disagree	5	8	4.95	7.92	<b>12.87</b>
Disagree	4	7	3.96	6.93	<b>10.89</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	9	21	8.91	20.79	<b>29.70</b>
Agree	12	15	11.88	14.85	<b>26.73</b>
Strongly agree	3	16	2.97	15.84	<b>18.81</b>
<b>Shopping is psychotherapy and reduces stress</b>					
Strongly disagree	12	7	11.88	6.93	<b>18.81</b>
Disagree	8	7	7.92	6.93	<b>14.85</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	11	20	10.89	19.80	<b>30.69</b>
Agree	1	11	0.99	10.89	<b>11.88</b>
Strongly agree	1	23	0.99	22.77	<b>23.76</b>
<b>Visiting shops and trying out clothes is a waste of time</b>					
Strongly disagree	1	27	0.99	26.73	<b>27.72</b>
Disagree	6	16	5.94	15.84	<b>21.78</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	13	17	12.87	16.83	<b>29.70</b>
Agree	8	4	7.92	3.96	<b>11.88</b>
Strongly agree	5	4	4.95	3.96	<b>8.91</b>
<b>I buy at discounted prices whenever possible</b>					
Strongly disagree	1	1	0.99	0.99	<b>1.98</b>
Disagree	3	2	2.97	1.98	<b>4.95</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	2	8	1.98	7.92	<b>9.90</b>
Agree	14	12	13.86	11.88	<b>25.74</b>
Strongly agree	13	45	12.87	44.55	<b>57.43</b>

Source: Authors' own work

The line chart, more precisely Figure 1, shows us how respondents' opinions are divided when asked if shopping is a form of entertainment and an opportunity to socialize.

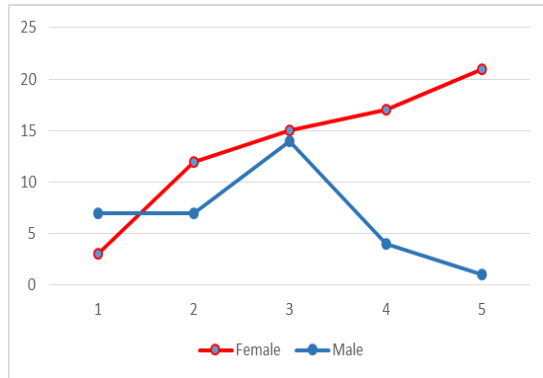


Figure 1. *Shopping is a form of fun and a chance to socializing*

Source: Authors' own work

On the one hand, the purchasing process is an ideal opportunity for socializing, relaxing and entertaining for women, and on the other hand, men usually buy if they have a chance of a short time buying process and do not look at it as a form of entertainment.

According to the answers of the respondents from Figure 2, we conclude that the sale is an ideal opportunity for each respondent to renew their wardrobe. Of the total number of respondents, as many as 84.16% do so in practice.

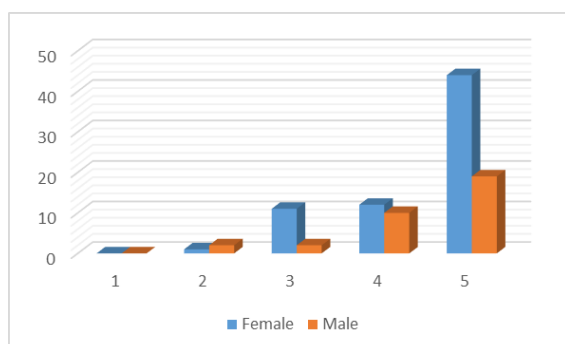


Figure 2. *Sales are great opportunities to renew the wardrobe*

Source: Authors' own work

The results of the line chart, more precisely Figure 3 shows that neither men nor women are largely impulsive in purchasing.

When we compare women with men in the purchasing process, we conclude that women are more impulsive in the process of buying.

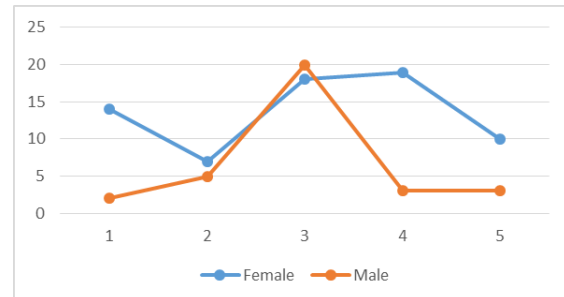


Figure 3. *I am impulsive in the purchasing process*

Source: Authors' own work



Table 3. Review of research results for claims 9-13

	Gender		%		Total %
	M	F	M	F	
<b>I often buy something that I did not plan</b>					
Strongly disagree	6	4	5.94	3.96	<b>9.90</b>
Disagree	6	4	5.94	3.96	<b>9.90</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	8	20	7.92	19.80	<b>27.72</b>
Agree	7	17	6.93	16.83	<b>23.76</b>
Strongly agree	6	23	5.94	22.77	<b>28.71</b>
<b>I always spend more money than I planned</b>					
Strongly disagree	3	4	2.97	3.96	<b>6.93</b>
Disagree	7	10	6.93	9.90	<b>16.83</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	11	13	10.89	12.87	<b>23.76</b>
Agree	7	19	6.93	18.81	<b>25.74</b>
Strongly agree	5	22	4.95	21.78	<b>26.73</b>
<b>It is harder to decide which product to buy and I need more time in the purchasing process, when there is a greater choice of products</b>					
Strongly disagree	1	4	0.99	3.96	<b>4.95</b>
Disagree	5	7	4.95	6.93	<b>11.88</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	10	8	9.90	7.92	<b>17.82</b>
Agree	11	22	10.89	21.78	<b>32.67</b>
Strongly agree	6	27	5.94	26.73	<b>32.67</b>
<b>I am confused by the excessive amount of information about different products</b>					
Strongly disagree	9	16	8.91	15.84	<b>24.75</b>
Disagree	9	10	8.91	9.90	<b>18.81</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	9	21	8.91	20.79	<b>29.70</b>
Agree	4	14	3.96	13.86	<b>17.82</b>
Strongly agree	2	7	1.98	6.93	<b>8.91</b>
<b>When I really like something, I am ready to take a risk and buy a new product</b>					
Strongly disagree	1	2	0.99	1.98	<b>2.97</b>
Disagree	2	2	1.98	1.98	<b>3.96</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	8	12	7.92	11.88	<b>19.80</b>
Agree	14	34	13.86	33.66	<b>47.52</b>
Strongly agree	8	18	7.92	17.82	<b>25.74</b>
<b>I have my favorite brands I always buy</b>					
Strongly disagree	0	3	0.00	2.97	<b>2.97</b>
Disagree	3	4	2.97	3.96	<b>6.93</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	12	14	11.88	13.86	<b>25.74</b>
Agree	13	33	12.87	32.67	<b>45.54</b>
Strongly agree	5	14	4.95	13.86	<b>18.81</b>
<b>I am determined in the purchasing process - I know exactly what I want and I buy it without too much thought</b>					
Strongly disagree	0	8	0.00	7.92	<b>7.92</b>
Disagree	4	11	3.96	10.89	<b>14.85</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	12	24	11.88	23.76	<b>35.64</b>
Agree	11	16	10.89	15.84	<b>26.73</b>
Strongly agree	6	9	5.94	8.91	<b>14.85</b>
<b>Opinion of other people is very important to me in the buying process</b>					
Strongly disagree	5	12	4.95	11.88	<b>16.83</b>
Disagree	7	17	6.93	16.83	<b>23.76</b>
Neither agree nor disagree	12	19	11.88	18.81	<b>30.69</b>
Agree	8	16	7.92	15.84	<b>23.76</b>
Strongly agree	1	4	0.99	3.96	<b>4.95</b>

Source: Authors' own work

Most respondents, or more precisely 52.47%, often buy a product that they did not even plan to buy. This phenomenon is more present among the female population, as they invest more time in the process of buying, more things attract their attention, and they often buy something that they really do not need.

Buying the products, they did not intend to buy, leads consumers to spend more money than they planned. By linking to the previous claim, it is logical that women are more inclined to spend more money, because their attention is often occupied with things that they do not need at the moment. Some 65.34% of the total number of the respondents strive to decide and need more time if they find themselves with a bunch of

different products. A greater choice adds trouble to customers, who are in a dilemma, and it is difficult to decide which product is the best. Too much information does not really bother the respondents. This shows us that the respondents already have a created picture and opinion about different products, and a lot of information cannot confuse them. Some 73.26% of the total number of the respondents risk to buy a new product, which they did not try until then, but they like it at first sight. Both genders, male and female will surely buy some product, if that is something they really like. Most respondents have their favorite brands of products which are expensive, but they are still loyal consumers. Opinions are divided when we talk about the purchasing decision-making process. Many factors can influence the very decisiveness/indecision of the purchase of a product. Depending on which product is purchased, it sometimes draws more thinking and time from customers, so they cannot decide immediately, because they may be afraid of making a mistake. In general, this happens in situations when it is necessary to choose/buy one more expensive thing/object, which will be able to serve us for a longer period. The respondents answered that other people's opinions are not so important when shopping, which tells us that they generally have their own views about some product/service and follow their established principles. In some situation they care about the opinions of other people, which again depends on what kind of product they have to buy.

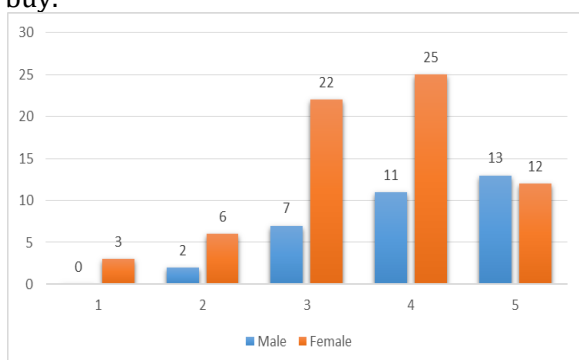


Figure 4. *The practicality and simplicity of the purchasing process are crucial*  
Source: Authors` own work

According to the results from the Figure 4, the convenience and simplicity of the purchasing

process are crucial for the male and female population. Nowadays, when stress and a busy lifestyle are in our lives every day, we all tend to make the process of purchasing much easier. Therefore, we often decide to buy online, where we can get what we need to our home address, just with a few clicks, which indeed saves our precious time.

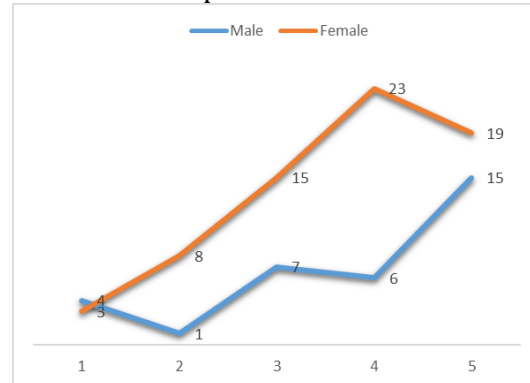


Figure 5. *Online shopping is a quick and convenient way of shopping*  
Source: Authors` own work

As we can see from the results of Figure 5, both, men and women choose to shop online and save time this way. This kind of purchase really represents a quick and convenient way of shopping and great relief to all of us, because, nowadays every moment is of great importance to us.

#### 4. Conclusion

We can say that current trends, directly or indirectly, affect the way we do business, when it comes to studying consumer behavior and monitoring their specific desires and needs. Modern technology can create a solid basis for the development of good relations with consumers, so that the needs and desires of individuals are always recognized by manufacturers, and so that manufacturers can offer them exactly the product or service they need on time. It is the understanding of end consumers that is the first step to achieving success in the market. The focus of manufacturers is on customer needs, which is also a safe way to make more profit. Satisfying the needs and desires of customers implies that such a satisfied consumer will buy the product or use the service again. The results of the research indicate that the respondents largely

remain faithful to their specific brands of products, which automatically gives the task to producers to maintain the image that customers have about their products. Respondents' answers have largely shown that product quality is the most important for customers, which means they are ready to allocate more money to meet their expectations and get a product that will meet their needs. What is very interesting is that the respondents confirmed their answer that they are ready to buy even a new brand if they like it. Furthermore, we conclude that manufacturers have to invest a lot of effort in the aesthetic appearance or packaging of the product in order to attract the attention of customers through its appearance. The results of this research lead us to confirm ancient research that says that women experience shopping as psychotherapy, an escape from reality and stress, and an ideal opportunity for fun and socializing, with which men mostly disagree. What is unquestionable, is that online shopping has become a favorite form of shopping process. Since the daily life of most individuals is hectic and we often do not have time to visit stores to do shopping, shopping online makes the whole shopping process easier because it allows us to buy everything we need from home.

A review of the previously mentioned hypotheses in our paper leads us to the following conclusions:

- the purchase decision-making process is much simpler and shorter for men than for women, because women think more about buying products and invest more time in the buying process;
- women are more impulsive when shopping - they buy online more often than men, and motivated by numerous promotions they buy a product and are willing to take risks by trying a new product;
- respondents' responses confirmed that shopping for women acts as psychotherapy, reduces stress and has a relaxing effect;
- women buy what they did not plan and spend more money than planned.

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