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**“Examining Consumer Behaviour”**

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## **Abstract**

The main purpose of my research is to study the behaviour of students as buyers. To understand the process of making and deciding on the purchase of goods, to study the attitude of consumers to catering enterprises, to identify the main factors influencing consumer behaviour when choosing products. For my research, I created a detailed survey in Google forms. I managed to collect 121 responses and also 23 questions were asked. As a result, I find out that buyers most often pay attention to the quality of products, taste and reasonable price. When choosing products store, consumers pay attention to the price level, the location of the store and quality of the goods.

**Key words:** consumer behaviour, quality and price of the product, buyers and sellers.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour is the process of forming the demand of buyers who make a choice of goods taking into account prices and personal budget, that is, their own monetary income. It is known that monetary income has a direct and immediate effect on demand, and prices on the quantity of purchased goods. This influence can be traced through the peculiarities of consumer behaviour, which the entrepreneur takes into account in the pricing policy. The entrepreneur should definitely know how much the prices of higher quality goods should be increased and what is the limit of this increase. Or vice versa, how much should the price be reduced without risk to trading income of the demand for this product decreases.

The main figure in business is the consumer and the study of consumer behaviour. Understanding who is the consumer and who is the consumer for enterprise is the most important issue for development of the entire marketing program. The consumer does not really need the goods or services of the enterprise, the consumer needs to solve the problems facing him and meet his needs.

Recently, interest in consumer behaviour research has been growing for several reasons. Firstly, within the framework of the analysis of consumer behaviour of the purchase and sale process, there are many mysteries hidden in the so-called “black box” of the consumer sphere. Secondly, the study of this issue allows to more accurately predict sales both quantitatively and qualitatively. Thirdly, thanks to the analysis of consumer behaviour and the study of its features, marketing strategies can be implemented more effectively and carefully. In-depth study of consumer behaviour will allow firms to develop more reasonable strategies to attract specific customer. All of the above indicates that consumer behaviour is one of the driving forces of the modern market and that ignoring it can lead to serious mistakes in the company’s marketing policy.

Every year the modern consumer has new desires not only to solve the problem with the help of goods and services of the enterprise, but the process of how this will happen is also important for him. For the consumer, the availability of the enterprise for contacts, the desire to communicate, the convenience of the process of purchasing goods and services, additional

advantages such as discounts and promotions, special offers that the enterprise can give in this process are very important.

Experts define consumer preferences as the way consumers allocate their spending in a free market. Any business owner wants the consumer to pay attention to his goods and services. Therefore, business need to be aware of consumer preferences and adapt production and sales strategies to them. Ideally, companies would like to shape these consumer preferences themselves, and in their favor.

Consumer preferences demonstrate changes on the tastes and incomes of consumers, their willingness to purchase certain goods and services. The key characteristics of consumer preferences are utility, value and price. Utility is usually understood as consumer satisfaction from using a particular product or service. The logic of consumer behaviour in the market is that with a constant level of income, he will strive to purchase a set of goods that best meets his needs and ideas about utility. At the same time, the purpose of marketing research of consumer preferences is to determine the point of equilibrium between these three characteristics. That is, the price set on the market of a product or service should correspond to its usefulness and value for the target audience.

In recent years, the topic of food in Hungary has been particularly hotly discussed and the behaviour of consumers and their opinions have been studied very carefully and in detail. Topics such as environmental products, product quality, inflation and so on are increasingly being raised. Companies are investing more and more time and money in developing new products, creating new ideas for promotion in order to attract customers.

An integral part in the study of consumer behaviour is the category of people studying at the university. Students are serious about choosing products, they make decisions based on certain reasons and different characteristics, needs and requests, of course such factors as price and quality are important to them.

I conducted a survey among students in Hungary and studied their consumer behaviour in choosing products.

The main purpose of my research is to study the behaviour of students as buyers. To understand the process of making and deciding on the purchase of goods, to study the attitude of consumers to catering enterprises, to identify the main factors influencing consumer behaviour when choosing products, to determine sensitivity to price changes and also to analyse audience preferences and the reasons for their decisions.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Consumer behaviour in literature**

With the development of markets and the corresponding strengthening of marketing principles in the organization of entrepreneurial activity, the need for marketing research increased, which gave a new impetus to the development of consumer behaviour models.

Marketing is done by people, and how to make it truly effective is best told by those who have a lot of experience in this – recognized marketing geniuses. The best theories of those who had a hand in the products that are used every day are collected. Successful companies are still being built according to their principles and ideas.

Based on these theories, there are a number of models of consumer behaviour and typologies of consumers.

James F. Engel, author of famous books, confirms that the behaviour of physical persons directly involved in the acquisition, use and disposal of economic goods and services, including decision-making processes that precede and determine this behaviour. (James F. Engel, 1986).

Philip Kotler, American economist and marketer, assert that consumer behaviour is the study of how, what, when and why people buy. (Kotler, 1994).

Consumerism is the study of process by which individuals and groups choose, acquire, use and dispose of products, services, ideas, and experiences to meet their needs and desires, confirms Michael R. Solomon. (Solomon, 1995).

According to Schiffmann, professor of New York University, the behaviour that consumers demonstrate when choosing products, purchasing, consuming, perceiving, and disposing of goods and services that they expect to satisfy their needs. (Leon G. Schiffman, 2007).

The concept of “consumer” first appeared in the United States of America in the 1960s. Scientific interest in consumers’ behaviour was formed in the second half of the XIX century, this phenomenon was viewed within the framework of philosophical and sociological theories. It should be noted that these theories differed in content and methodology, which allowed consumers to be viewed as carriers of different habits. (Brian Roach, 2019).

The first theory that deserves attention when studying the evolution of consumerism is the theory of K. Marx’s commodity fetishism. Remembering the author of this theory, commodity “is the best developed under the conditions of capitalism, when commodity-money relations become an absolute and universal form of economic activity. The reification of economic relations between people is determined by the unnatural properties of these things, but by the peculiarities of the organization of social production.” (Marx, 1981).

At the end of the XIX century, the American economist, sociologist, publicist and futurist Thorstein Bunde Veblen developed the theory of ostentatious, prestigious consumption. (Veblen, 1899).

German philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel (1904) put forward a number of important ideas on the theory of fashion. German sociologist and economist Werner Sombart has developed the concept of luxury. (1967) Another German sociologist, philosopher, historian, political economist Max Weber developed concepts of status groups and Protestant ethics. (1905). These concepts are often mentioned in consumer research. In the future, more specific studies of consumer behaviour appeared: at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries, prestigious consumption and the possibility of using psychological principles in advertising were studied, the 1950s, Freud’s ideas were popularized by motivation researches and used by advertisers. (1915). Probably, the need to study consumer behaviour was realized long before the advent of the concept of marketing in the 1950s.

George Katona suggests examining the purchase of goods as a principle of social structure: according to the position of George Katona, consumer behaviour is shaped by the influence of advertising. Advertising through the means of mass communication causes certain emotions, which, in turn, predetermine the choice of behavioural strategies of the consumer. Advertising



space limits the visibility of individuals in the real world, reduces real conflicts and problems, thereby loading them psychologically into a more comfortable world. (Katona, 1968).

Philip Kotler, American marketing author, professor of international marketing at the Kellogg School of Management confirms that real marketing is the art of knowing what to do, not how to sell a product. This skill of recognizing and understanding the needs of buyers and the technology of creating solutions, meeting the needs of consumers, benefits producers and stakeholders. (Kotler, 1994).

Innovation in the market by increasing customer satisfaction with innovations, product quality and customer service. In the absence, neither advertising, marketing and sales will be able to compensate for this. (Levinson, 1999).

In my opinion, Philip Kotler believes that the truth of the sale goods is to, based on the needs and desires of people, produce a product or service that could not only interest, but also cover the necessary needs of the buyer. In his opinion, it is a mistake to believe that by counting one advertising activity and marketing techniques, it is possible to achieve success in market innovations and success in sales. Discoveries of new areas of application of the product that allow the service to be implemented in new markets occur due to an increase in the quality of products, service for sale and other amenities that would ensure customer satisfaction.

“I don’t know the rules of grammar... If you’re trying to persuade people to do something, or buy something, it seems to me you should use their language, the language they use every day, the language in which they think. We try to write in the vernacular.” – David Oligvy, founder of the Oligvy advertising agency, an American entrepreneur, is often called the “father of marketing. (1983).

David Oligvy emphasizes the importance of using the native language peculiar to the consumer. This simple truth makes it possible for the company to be closer to the buyer, because the national language is an integral, firmly embedded part everyone’s life.

“The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him or her and sells itself” – Peter Drucker, the scientists, economist and publicist, author of the books. (1955).

The famous scientist, economist and publicist Peter Drucker declares the need for a deep study of the thinking and psychology of the buyer. It is precisely the correctly established needs of people and the conclusions from the process of studying these needs that allow us to actively implement the product in such a way that it is sold “by itself”, as the author of the theory asserts.

Michael Solomon confirms that usually, the consumer is thought of in such a way that he can determine his desired need, buy and then gets rid of the product. Ostensibly, these are the three main stages of the consumption process. But it also happens that in some cases other people may participate in this sequence of the process of buying and consuming. The buyer and the user of the product can be completely different people. Another person, such as friend or relative, can be an influential character and give advice, share experience or recommendation, give arguments for or against, but at the same time does not make a purchase of this product and not use it. (Solomon, et al., 2012).

In the book “A Passion for Excellence” by Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, they argue that for business success, it is necessary to take care of consumers by providing high-quality products and services and systematically renewing the assortment of products. (Tom Peters 1984).

Conner Acevedo confirms that if we analyze market opportunities, the study of consumer behaviour can show their unmet needs and desires. It requires a detailed study of the current situation on the goods market, what kind of lifestyle consumers lead, what salary they receive what affects them at the moment. This way of studying will help us to find out what consumers don’t like and also study their preferences. (Acevedo 2018).

Nowadays, consumers prefer to purchase goods, products and services in physical stores, but also very often place orders on online websites and in other places. Buyers quite often exchange their own opinions with each other and write reviews on the Internet, as well as share additional information through numerous social networks. As a result, sellers have to change and rethink their approach to studying consumer behaviour. Indeed, one of the irreversible consequences of the advent of the Internet is that consumers anywhere in the world now have access to various goods, products and services at any time of the day or night and can make purchases whenever they want. Initially, it was believed that Internet access would bring the economy closer to an economic model of perfect competition. But

unfortunately, we do not see such expected results. This is due to the fact that people cannot process all the endless information that is available in numerous sources on the Internet. In addition, popular social networks have allowed consumers and buyers on a global scale to inform other users about how the goods and services they receive meet their expectations and needs. (Monroe 2012, p. 12).

An equally important part of marketing is the field of consumer behaviour, it forms the basis for most marketing programs and research. If people understand the basics of consumer behaviour, then most often they occupy high-ranking positions in marketing. They have relevant knowledge and ideas about principles of consumer behaviour, and they also provide new research to various organizations in order to understand the choice of consumers of a particular product. In studies on consumer behaviour it was found out that consumers quite often make rash and impulsive purchases of various goods, and they are also strongly influenced by a certain situation in life, positive and negative emotions, a lot of important part of the influence on the consumer is advertising on TV or the Internet, the opinion of family and friends, recommendations of colleagues, and so on. With a detailed study of this industry, such factors help advertisers understand consumer behaviour, as well as see how important the cognitive and emotional aspects of consumer purchasing decisions and behaviour are. (Schiffman, et al., 2013, p. 18).

Consumer behaviour is a rapidly developing industry in our modern world. Significant and fairly rapid progress in the field of the Internet and technology as well as digital communications has had a very significant impact on consumer behaviour. Consumer behaviour is not only when customers just thoughtlessly buy goods or products. This is clearly a deeper and more challenging area of research. Customer behaviour it is a very important process that shows the totality of consumer decisions when a buyer purchases a certain product, uses it and then disposes of it. Each person has a constant interaction between other people, nature, his own thoughts, his feelings and behaviour with other people. As consumers, every year we change our buying behaviour and we are an important role in the global economic situation. Also, one of the important aspects is that all people in the world are consumers, and that is why enterpriser create their own companies, which then study people's wishes, satisfaction and dissatisfaction about certain products and services. "No matter who

we are – urban or rural, male or female, young or old, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, believer or non-believer, or whatever – we are all consumers.” (Satish K. Batra 2009).

No so long ago, within the framework of the well-known transnational research project of the European Commission “Informing about risks in the food industry and consumer confidence in the food supply chain”, the publication of this study and analyzing three main issues of interest. Firstly, this study mainly focuses on proving the level of importance of the buyers’ trust and also buyer’s perception of risk and consumer behaviour in conditions of their uncertainty. There have been such cases from previous practice that were related to such issues as how much food is safe in supermarkets, but it is also not worth reviewing the impact of trust and risk perception on consumer behaviour, it is all analysed both in normal and everyday situations, and in uncertain conditions and dangerous situations, for example, such as an alleged infection chicken salmonella. Secondly, in marketing, the impact of consumer confidence and perceived risk on consumer behaviour is assessed using a pan-European survey. The results obtained with help of consumer responses and reactions help to obtain the necessary and useful information about the main consumer influence, which is the basis of behavioural patterns. Such consumer behaviour in uncertain conditions will serve as a justification for strengthening the usual theory of consumption, as well as help in the economic sphere. Thirdly, most of the attention is paid to the study of the random relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of consumers and their trust of perception of a certain risk. For example, if the usual analysis shows that there are different segments of the population, which are determined by their trust as consumers in their chosen products, goods or services, as well as information, then relevant information can be predicted based on a survey and socio-economic characteristics of consumers. Such a clear classification of consumer confidence based on socio-economic characteristics will help developers inform marketers about the risks and, this means, it will help reduce economic losses from indiscriminate information and sales strategies. (Dierks 2005).

Consumer behaviour is the main and key factor that affects our society and the environment. The behaviour, actions of people, as well as their conscious choice and consumption of certain products, goods and services, leading a certain lifestyle – all this direct or indirect impact on our environment, as well as on the individual and collective well-being of consumers. That’s exactly why such a topic as “sustainable consumption” has become one of the most important

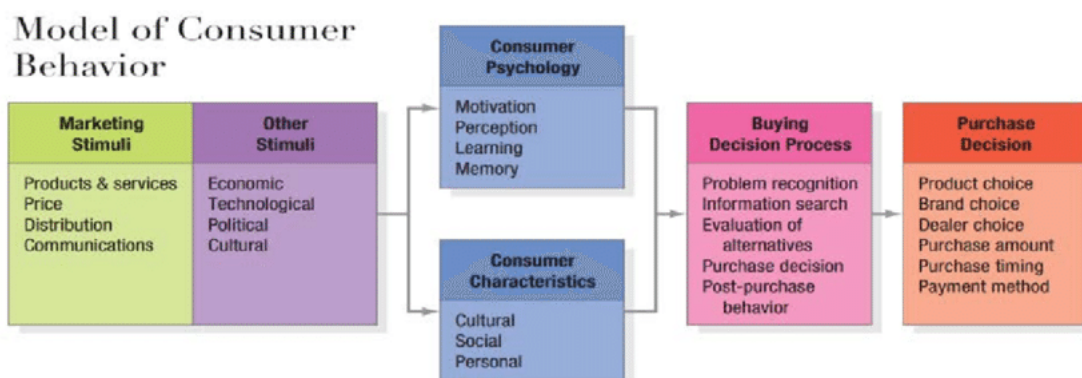
and fundamental in national and also international consumer policy and research. (Ánges Dr. Hofmeister 2012).

S.V. Golikov considers consumer behaviour as a series of continuous actions in space and time, implemented by economic, political, social, aesthetic, moral, educational or psychological attitudes, as well as consumer actions aimed at realizing the needs, interests, expectations and preferences of the realization of specific results. (Golikov 2007).

E.V. Ribokene directly addresses the concept of “consumer behaviour” and considers it as a motivational activity of personality. The purpose of this activity is not only to meet the needs, but also to develop the workforce as a basis for material adaptation. (Ribokene 2001).

## 2.2 Model of Consumer behaviour

The main question of concern to marketers is: how exactly do consumers react to various incentive marketing techniques that a firm can apply to a buyer? A firm that truly understands how consumers react to various characteristics such as product quality, reasonable price, advertising integration, and so on, will have a huge and influential advantage over other competitions. That is why firms, entrepreneurs and researchers spend so much effort, time and money on a detailed study of dependencies and the correlation between the motivating factors of marketing and the response of consumers to this. The starting point of all these efforts is a simple and easy to perceive model presented in the figure below.



1. Figure: Model of Consumer Behaviour by Philip Kotler.

Source: [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/ModelofConsumerBehaviourKotlerandKeller-2012\\_fig6\\_322476526](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/ModelofConsumerBehaviourKotlerandKeller-2012_fig6_322476526)

Kotler (1984), has developed a model of consumer behaviour (see the figure). Kotler's model assumes that consumer behaviour is not determined by the basic behavioural formula proposed by behaviourism S – R ("stimulus" – "reaction"). Marketing and other stimuli do not directly determine the selection process, much less the purchase decision. At the center between these two factors is the personality of the consumer, i.e. his psychological, cultural, social and personal characteristics.

Through the "black box" of the buyer's consciousness, various stimuli cause a number of observed reactions to the purchase. The greatest interest for psychologists is the psychological "black box" of the buyer. This "black box" consists of two parts: the characteristics of the buyer that affect the perception of stimuli and reaction to them and making a purchase decision.

Buyer characteristics include various levels of factors that influence buyers when making a purchase. These factors include:

1. Marketing stimuli: Products and services, price, distribution and communications.
2. Other stimuli: economic, technological, political and cultural.
3. Consumer psychology and characteristics: motivation, perception, learning, memory. Cultural, social and personal characteristics.
4. Buying decision process: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, post-purchase behaviour.
5. Purchase decision: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase amount, purchase timing, payment method.

The purchase process begins with the buyer's perception of a problem or a need. The buyer feels a discrepancy between his real condition and the desired one. Knowing, from previous experience how to cope with his impulse, he directs his motivation to the class of goods that will satisfy this impulse.

Consumers motivated to buy may or may not be looking for additional information. If the need is strong and a product that satisfies this need is readily available, then the consumer is likely to make a purchase. Otherwise, the need may persist in the consumer's memory. In this case, the consumer either stops searching for information, or tries to find additional

information, or actively searches for information. To search for information, the consumer turns to the following sources: family, friends, work colleagues, advertising, the Internet.

At the stage of evaluating possible options, it is very important to pay attention to the following points. Firstly, each consumer considers a number of product characteristics, but often pays the most attention to those that meet his needs and expectations. Secondly, consumers tend to attach different importance to those characteristics that they consider significant specifically for themselves. Thirdly, consumers form a set of their own beliefs about the brand of the product, which can be called the brand image. In addition, consumers assign their own specific utility function to each characteristics. Finally, the attitude of consumers towards brand alternatives is the result of consumer assessments. When evaluating alternatives, consumers rank the object they choose from a number of alternatives. The consumer forms the intention to purchase the most liked product from them. However, there are two factors in the decision-making process: the attitude, assessment and opinion of other people, as well as unforeseen circumstances.

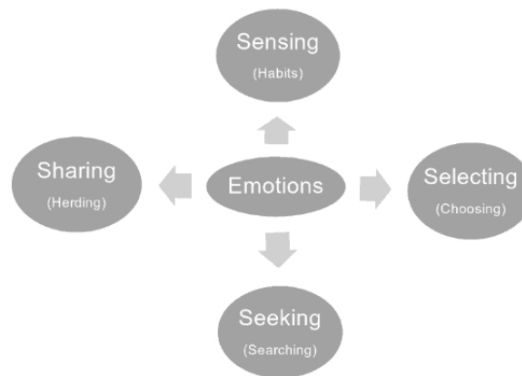
After purchasing a product, consumers experience either satisfaction or dissatisfaction, which affects their subsequent behaviour and attitude to this product, brand or company.

In the sociological framework, consumer behaviour can be understood as a number of interrelated social forms of behaviour, including the conscious social interests and needs of an individual, the search for information: services and goods, the evaluation of alternatives and the actual purchase. From the point of view of economic sociology, the motivation of behaviour goes beyond purely economic goals: satisfaction and needs. Consumers can be viewed not only as “economic entites” based solely on rational choice, but also as “institutional entities” actively participating in the economic process.

### **2.3. The 4 S’s of Consumer Behaviour**

The book “Breakthrough Food Product Innovation Through Emotions Research” (Lundahl, 2011) says that the scientific information that talks about the emotions of the buyer most often consists only of theoretical information. But sometimes theory is not enough and we should already move on to practice. It is very important to understand the basics of the concept of behaviour, which are devided into different types and affect the consumption of a particular

product in different ways. The author of the book David Lundahl divides behaviour into four main types that help the buyer in choosing a product. Each of these types is formed with the help of certain emotions of the buyer. Such studies of emotions are further used to obtain information and further analyze consumer behaviour.



2. Figure The 4 S's of Consumer Behaviour: Sensing, Selecting, Seeking, and Sharing. Source: [https://books.google.hu/books?id=CrEBAn6vwbAC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Consumer+behavior+food&hl=en&newbks=1&newbks\\_redir=0&sa=X&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Consumer%20behavior%20food&f=false](https://books.google.hu/books?id=CrEBAn6vwbAC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Consumer+behavior+food&hl=en&newbks=1&newbks_redir=0&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Consumer%20behavior%20food&f=false)

### 2.3.1. Sensing Behaviour

Psychologists say that most often, customers choose and use products that are familiar to them. Such sensory behaviour is explained by repeated actions, which later become a habit. This habit, although sometimes it seems unnoticed by our mind, but it controls our consciousness. The system is being investigated, with the help of which it is possible to strengthen previously used and familiar products. To do this, you need to know how habits are formed and work. Most often, the habit implies positive emotional reinforcement and the preservation of these positive memories. As example is given of a child who tried ice cream for the first time. He feels positive emotions from unusual combinations of taste, cold temperature and creamy texture. After the first time, the brain will put this positive memory into long-term memory. And the next time when the child remembers the word ice cream, he will also remember its shape, taste and place where he ate. And when the child passes the same place, he also sharply remembers about the ice cream that he ate for the first time. This example shows a psychological technique called "Pavlov's Dog". Of course, this method works not only for children, but also for adults and it's actively used in sales marketing. Then consumers use their reinforced habits to buy the same product over and over again.



### 2.3.2. Selecting Behaviour

Selecting behaviour is decided into two types: habitual and rational. With the usual behavior, we choose products that are more familiar to us, which have been used by us for some time. With rational behaviour, a person feels more responsibility when choosing products. He have to weigh the pros and cons. Also, the buyer uses rational thinking with a large assortment of alternative products.

### 2.3.3. Seeking Behaviour

Seeking is one of the types of consumer behaviour. The search for alternatives implies rational thinking. With the help of rational thinking, the consumer abandons old habits and changes his behaviour. Such behaviour may be a consequence of a change in the consumer's situation, for example, a change in health. The new situation forces the buyer to focus on an unfamiliar product and apply rational thinking.

### 2.3.4. Sharing behaviour

It is quite important when a customer shares his feedback about a food product with his family or friends. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to advertise a product. With the help of word of mouth, brand awareness increases, sales volume also increases and the audience of buyers increases. Also, reviews on social networks are gaining more and more popularity. Is it very important for marketers to promote a product on Internet. The buyer will believe the feedback of his friend more than he will buy the product after advertising on TV.

## **2.4. Consumer behaviour and food industry.**

Marketers claim that consumers are rational and emotional people. Buyers are interested in pleasant impressions from the purchase. The packaging of the product plays a very important role, it gives the first impression according to which the buyer decides whether he wants to cook and eat this product or not. Packaging can be perceived differently by the consumer, it can cause certain emotions, give messages and cause different feelings and perceptions. Marketers and designers need to understand how to draw the buyer's attention to the packaging with the help of design and emotions. It should also be noted that emotions can be pleasant and unpleasant. Also, a new product can cause new emotions in the buyer, but usually this is temporary feeling. After the product becomes more familiar, this emotion

disappears. It is also important to understand what and why the buyer wants to buy. In modern times, marketers are increasingly attracting the customer's attention with the help of sensory sensations. Sometimes secondary reinforcement is used. This is when a brand associates itself with a certain country. But it also happens that sensory sensations are not enough to sell a product. Therefore, additional information about the product, previous experience, as well as different attitudes and beliefs are also used in marketing. (Sebastiano Porretta, 2021).

A very important component is the aesthetic aspect of the products. The type of product can cause several reactions in the buyer at once, for example, such as a change in heart rate, the release of insulin into the body, as well as the presentation and preparation of the body for eating. There may also be different memories that are related to food, the expectation of a certain taste that the consumer has experienced before. Thus, the consumer gets a taste pleasure even before he tastes the food. (Batat, 2019).

It is also said that hearing is an important sensory organ comparable to vision. Music is one of the main tools in marketing and advertising. It will not attract more customers, but it may delay those who are in store a little longer than usual. With the help of music, a certain, necessary atmosphere is created and it also makes the client a little more loyal. The study says that different songs can influence the behaviour of the buyer in different ways. The results of the experiment show that, for example, slower and calmer music increases the revenue of a supermarket by 38% and a restaurant by 41%. And faster and more energetic music changes the behaviour of the buyer in a more positive way. The consumer is in good mood and begins to behave more calmly and kindly to the store's employees, and also becomes more responsive and sociable. (Sebastiano Porretta, 2021).

The pursuit of healthy and conscious nutrition has become a daily and basic lifestyle for many of us. More and more customers are interested in what the products that we consume every day actually consist of. Customer observations show that every year consumers are increasingly paying attention to the packaging of goods, to production, as well as to the ingredients in the product. With the help of this research, manufacturers began to write detailed information about the product for the consumer more often. This method of production is currently considered the most useful for the buyer. This trend is called a clean label. Such a concept as a clean label is used by manufacturers in order to designate the composition of food and beverages, from the simplest components that are understandable to

the consumer. Most often, if a manufacturer uses this clean label method, it implies that his product has been minimally processed, has the shortest possible list of ingredients, and also does not contain additives or preservatives. This tendency to use the clean label trend is explained by the buyer's insecurity. Since there is a psychological distance between the geographical remoteness of the manufacturer and the buyer. And also some buyers are more diligent about their health, so they study the label in more detail and are interested in the minimum composition. With the wide availability of goods in developed countries, sensory and economic factors take a back seat, more attention is paid to information marked clean. As a result of the consumer survey, it is indicated that buyers are increasingly avoiding unfamiliar components in the composition, and they also give less preference to artificial additives. Increasingly, buyers prefer to choose a product with natural and organic composition. Now it is a new task marketers to learn how to predict new consumer behaviour. But also such requirements may differ from person to person, depending on age, average income and lifestyle. Despite such a long study of consumer behaviour, researches still have a lot to understand in this matter. (Susanne Doppler, 2020).



3. Figure. Example of a logo "clean label". Source: <https://www.bauer-natur.de/en/our-philosophy/>

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The main aim of this research as mentioned in the introduction is to study the behaviour of students as buyers. And to be more precise then, to understand the process of making and deciding on the purchase of goods, to study the attitude of consumers to catering enterprises, to identify the main factors influencing consumer behaviour when choosing products. Moreover, to determine sensitivity to price changes and also to analyse audience preferences and the reasons for their decisions.

#### **3.1. Statistical analysis**

For my research, I created a detailed survey in Google forms, which then I distributed online among MATE students in a thematic group on Facebook, and I also interviewed several of my student friends from other Hungarian universities. A total of 23 questions were asked. I managed to collect 121 responses among students of both genders, different ages, different education levels and student programmes, and also different places and types of residence. I conducted further analysis of my survey in Excel and Google Forms.

#### **3.2. Data collection**

As I mentioned earlier, for my research, I conducted a survey among different students in Google forms. I used different types of questions in the survey. For example, such as choosing one from a list, choosing multiple answer options from a list, multiple choice, write an answer, and also a scale from 1 to 5.

#### **3.3 Subject population**

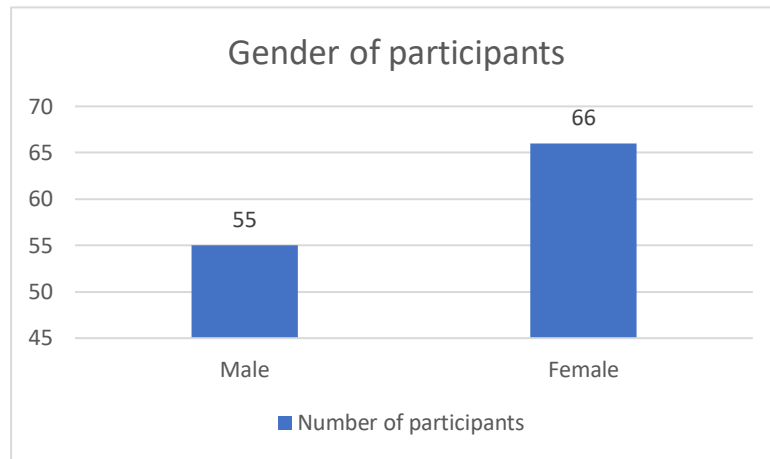
The main audience participating in my survey are students, or former students of both genders. The age group is from 17 to 45 years old. The respondents are students of various educational programs, such as bachelor, master or PhD, as well as scholarship participants or independently paying for tuition. They also live in different localities, from capital to the village, and live in their own apartment, rent an apartment or live in dormitory.

## 4. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

### 4.1. General information.

#### 4.1.1 Question about gender.

The first question was about the gender of the participants. In total, there were 121 participants of both genders in the survey.



4. Figure. Gender of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

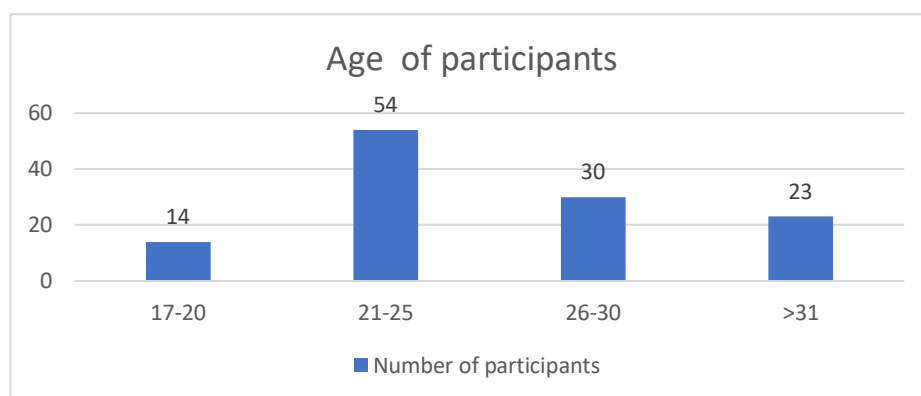
Gender	Number of participants	Percent of participants
Male	55	45,4%
Female	66	54,5%

1. Table. Statistics of the gender of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

In this survey 66 participants were women and 55 participants were men. The majority of the participants were females as shown in the graph above as 54,55% of the participants were female whereas 45,45% of the participants were males.

#### 4.1.2 Question about age.

The second question in my survey was about the age of the participants. The interviewee's age was between 17 and 50 years old. Also, this question was divided into different age groups: 17-20, 21-25, 26-30, >31.



5. Figure. The age of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

Age	Number of participants	Percent of participants
17-20	14	11,6%
21-25	54	44,6%
26-30	30	24,8%
>31	23	19%

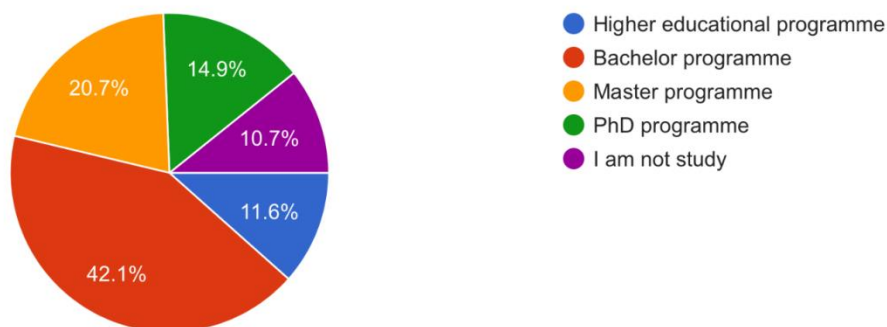
2. Table. Statistics on the age of survey participants. Source: Own work.

In this survey, 54 participants who were 21-25 years old answered the most in this survey, which is 44,63% of all those who answered. And then in second place in terms of the number of respondents are 30 people who are 26-30 years old, which is 24,79% of all those who answered.

#### 4.1.3 Question about studying programme.

The third question in my survey was “Which academic programme do you study in?”

There were several possible answers in this survey: “Higher educational programme”, “Bachelor programme”, “Master programme”, “PhD programme” and “I am not study”.



6. Figure. Studying programme of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

Studying programme	Number of participants	Percent of participants
Higher educational programme	14	11,6%
Bachelor programme	51	42,1%
Master programme	25	20,7%
PhD programme	18	14,9%
I am not study	13	10,7%

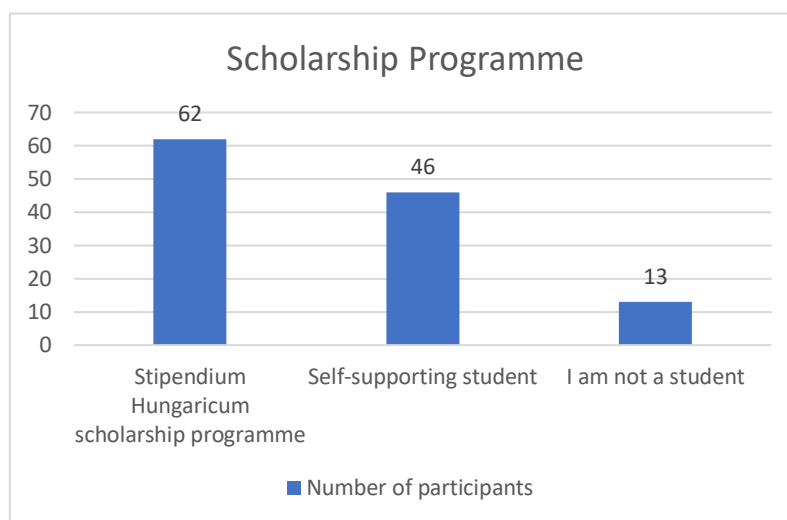
3. Table. Statistics on the studying programme of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

It can be noted that majority of the participants in the Bachelor’s degree programme, which are 51 participants, then 25 participants who answered the Master’s degree programme and 18 participants study in PhD degree programme.

#### 4.1.4 Question about scholarship programme

The fourth question in my survey was is the student studying on a “Stipendium Hungaricum” scholarship programme or it is a Self-supporting student.

U



7. Figure. Scholarship programme of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

Scholarship programme	Number of participants	Percent of participants
Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship programme	62	51,2%
Self-supporting student	46	38%
I am not a student	13	10,7%

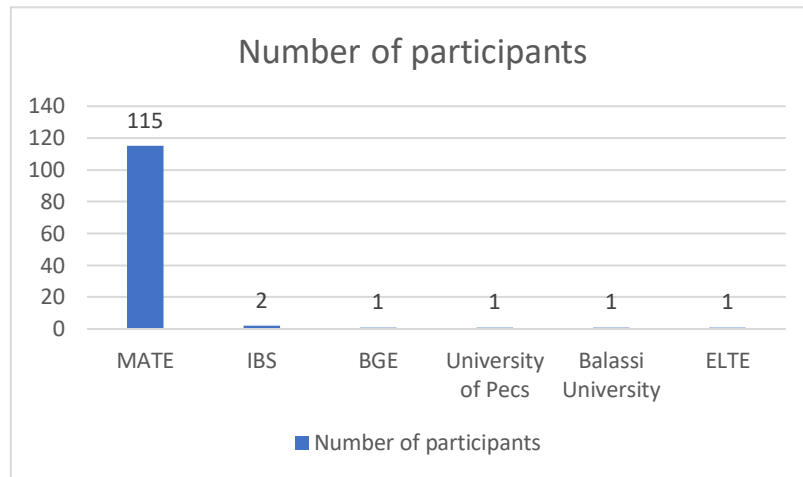
4. Table. Statistics on the scholarship programme of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

The result of the survey suggests that the majority of students, namely 62 participants, are study under Stupendium Hungaricum scholarship programme. But also a considerable number are students, which is 46 participants who pay for their studies on their own.



#### 4.1.5 Question about the name of the university.

The fifth question in my survey was the question about the name of the university where the participant studies. There were no variants of answers, the student had to write himself the abbreviation of his university.



8. Figure. Name of the university of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

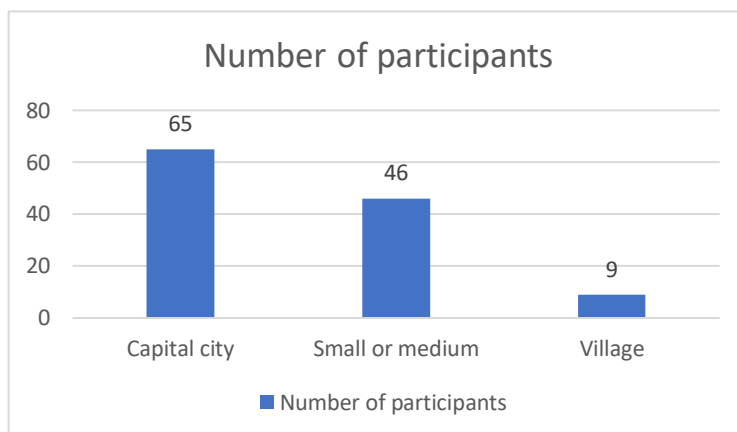
Name of the university	Number of participants	Percent of participants
MATE	115	95%
IBS	2	1,7%
BGE	1	0,8%
University of Pecs	1	0,8%
Balassi University	1	0,8%
ELTE	1	0,8%

5. Table. Statistics on the name of the university of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

As we can see, a very large part of the students are from MATE University, and only a few students study at other universities, such as: IBS, BGE, University of Pecs, Balassi University and ELTE.

#### 4.1.6 Questions about current place and type of residence

The sixth and seventh questions asked what the current place and type of residence of students is.

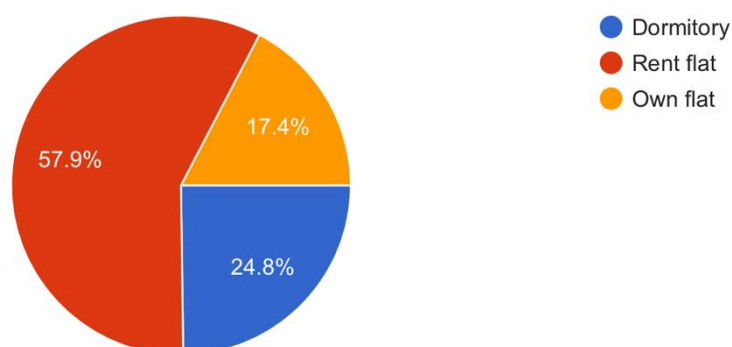


9. Figure. Current place of residence of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

Current place of residence	Number of participants	Percent of participants
Capital city	65	53,7%
Small or medium	46	38%
Village	9	7,4%

6. Table. Statistics on the place of residence of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

Most students live in the capital city, which is 65 participants or 53,7%, and also a considerable part is made up of students who live small or medium city, namely 46 participants or 38%.



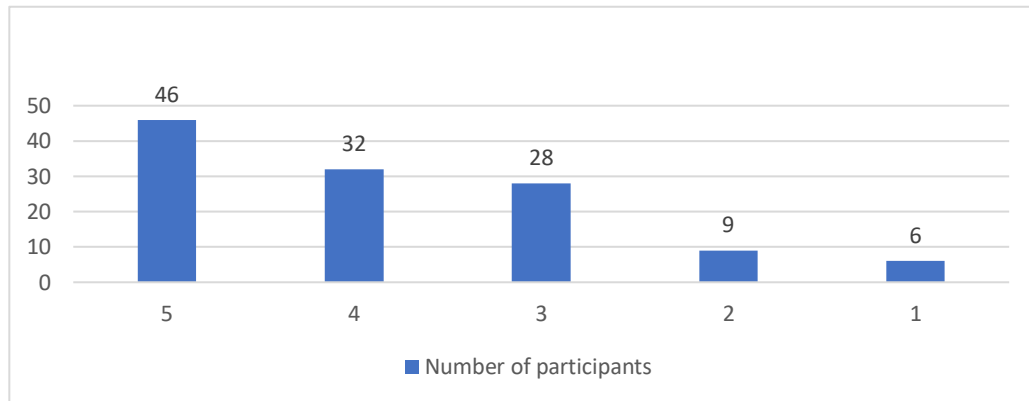
10. Figure. Type of residence of the survey participants. Source: Own work.

Also, 70 participants responded, that they rent a flat, 30 answers were about living in dormitory and 21 of them have their own flat.

## 4.2. Product stores and brands.

### 4.2.1 Cheaper products.

A very important study in consumer behaviour is the customer's choice of a grocery store. One of the questions was: "How likely is that you go to a different store if products are cheaper there?"



11. Figure. Participants' choice of different store with cheaper products. Source: Own work.

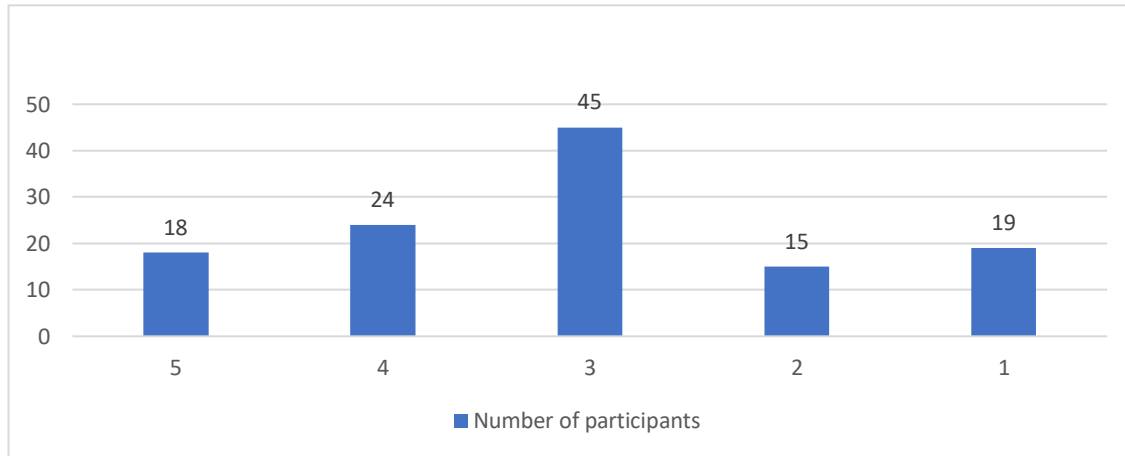
Respondent's rating	Number of participants	Percent of participants
5	46	38%
4	32	32%
3	28	23,1%
2	9	7,4%
1	6	5%

7. Table. Statistics on the participants' choice of different store with cheaper products. Source: Own work.

As we can see, the price of products is quite important for the participants, and if the price of the product is cheaper in one store than in another one, then most likely they will then choose the second option.

#### 4.2.2. Minimal impact on the environment.

Also important is the attention of buyers to the choice of packaging, so I decided to find out: “How much do you base your choice of brands and companies on the fact if they adhere to a strategy of minimal impact on the environment?”



12. Figure. Participants' choice of brands with minimal impact on the environment. Source: Own work.

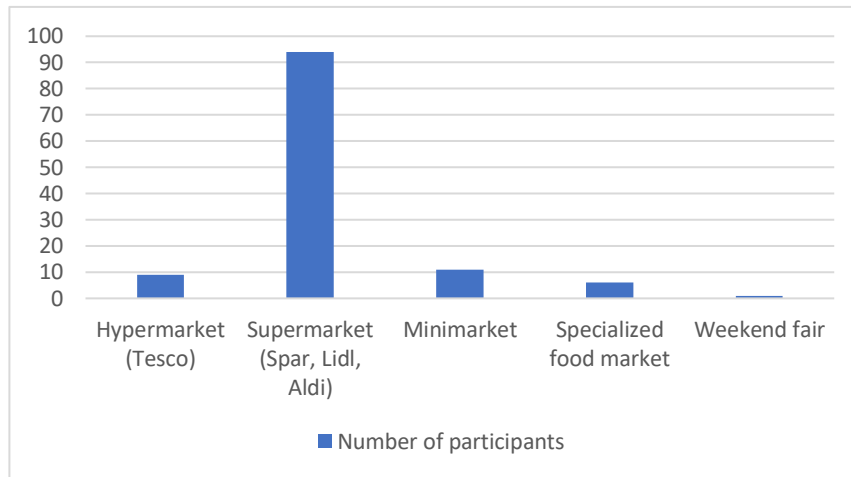
Respondent's rating	Number of participants	Percent of participants
5	18	18%
4	24	24%
3	45	37,2%
2	15	12,4%
1	19	15,7%

8. Table. Statistics on the participants' choice of brands with minimal impact on the environment. Source: Own work.

The survey shows that for the majority, namely 45 people, it is most likely does not matter to use minimal packaging for the environment. But no so few participants answered that the minimum packaging is important to them, 24 and 18 people. As well as 19 and 15 participants do not pay attention to the minimum packaging.

### 4.2.3. Choice of the food stores

In this question, I asked in which stores the survey participants prefer to buy products. The choice consisted of hyper markets, supermarkets, minimarkets, specialized food markets and weekend fairs.



13. Figure. Participants' choice of the type of food store. Source: Own work.

Type of food market	Number of participants	Percent of participants
Hypermarket (Tesco)	9	7,4%
Supermarket (Spar, Lidl, Aldi)	94	77,7%
Minimarket	11	9,1%
Specialized food market	6	5%
Weekend fair	1	0,8%

9. Table. Statistics on the type of grocery store. Source: Own work.

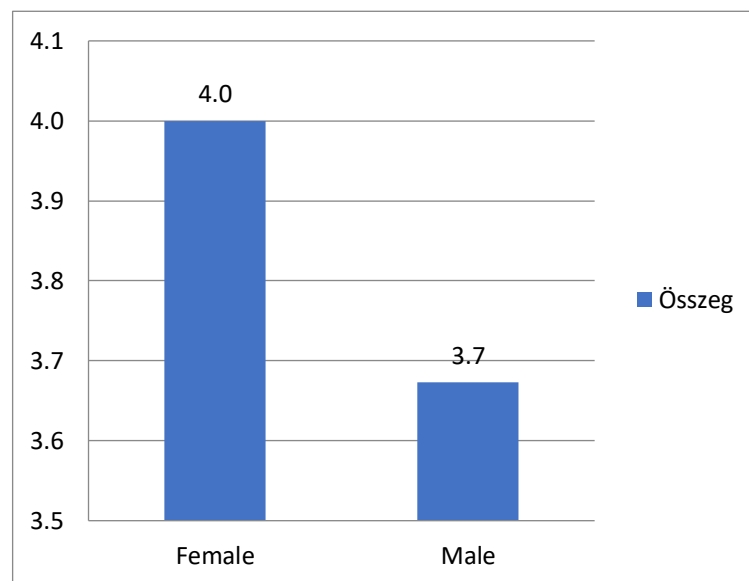
As we can see, most of the respondents choose a supermarkets, for example, such as Spar, Lidl and Aldi. Most likely, because there is a large selection of products, reasonable prices, they are close to the place of residence, and they have a long work schedule.

## 5. RESULT OF HYPOTHESES

### 5.1. Comparison of the gender and choice of the store with cheaper price.

It is not so easy to tell at first who pays more attention to cheaper products in the grocery store. But it seems like girls are little more attentive to financial literacy and monitor their spending on groceries.

The first hypothesis that I decided to check is: Is it true that girls would choose another store if there are cheaper products?



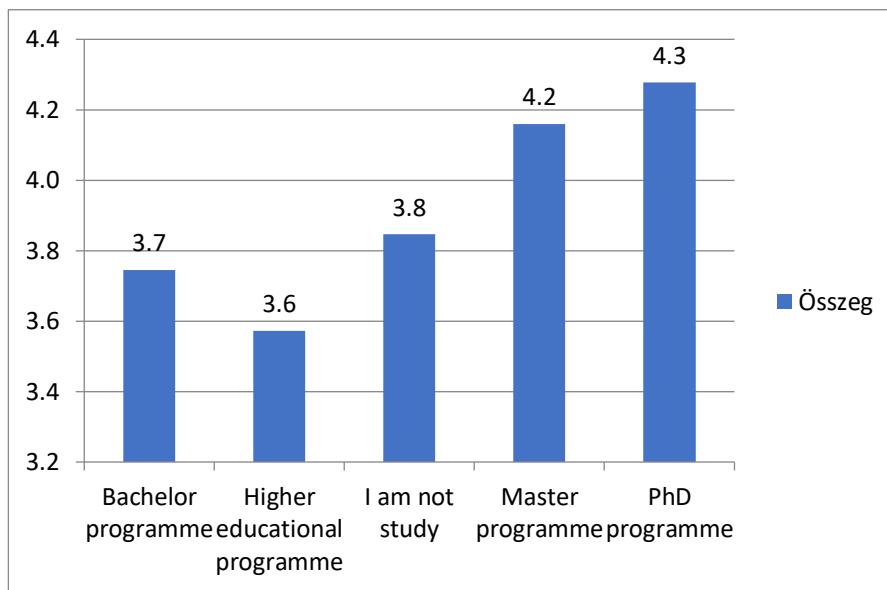
14. Figure. Comparison of the gender and choice of the store with cheaper price. Source: Own work.

As we can see, women are more likely to choose a store with cheaper goods. Men most likely do not attach importance to which store to buy products from. Most likely they will choose the nearest store at residence place.

## 5.2. Comparison of the studying programme and the importance of the product price.

Price is a very important criterion when choosing products. With age, people are more attentive to their spending of money and more carefully calculate the costs.

The second hypothesis that I decided to investigate was, is it true that a students of Master studying programme or PhD studying programme pays more attention to the price than a bachelor?



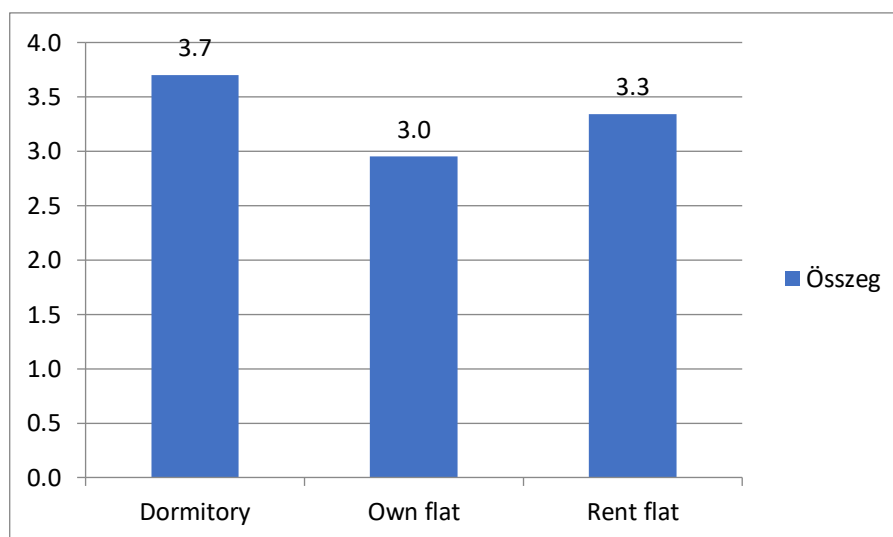
15. Figure. Comparison of the studying programme and the importance of the product price. Source: Own work.

With the help of the results, I can confirm this hypothesis. Indeed, Master studying programme and PhD studying programme students are more attentive to the price category of the product.

### 5.3. Comparison of the place of living and buying products for the promotion.

The desire to buy products from for the promotion has greatly increased in recent years. It also happens that a certain product is sold at a good discount, and then consumer can buy it in large quantities so as not to overpay later. Especially if it is a product with a long shelf life. Also, the purchase of goods in large quantities depends on the place of residence. If the customer lives far far away from the store, he buys a lot more products and goes to the store much less often.

I decided to check if it is true that residents who live in the flat are less likely to buy groceries for free, because most likely there is a store next to the house online grocery delivery also works.



16. Figure. Comparison of the place of living and buying products for the promotion. Source: Own work.

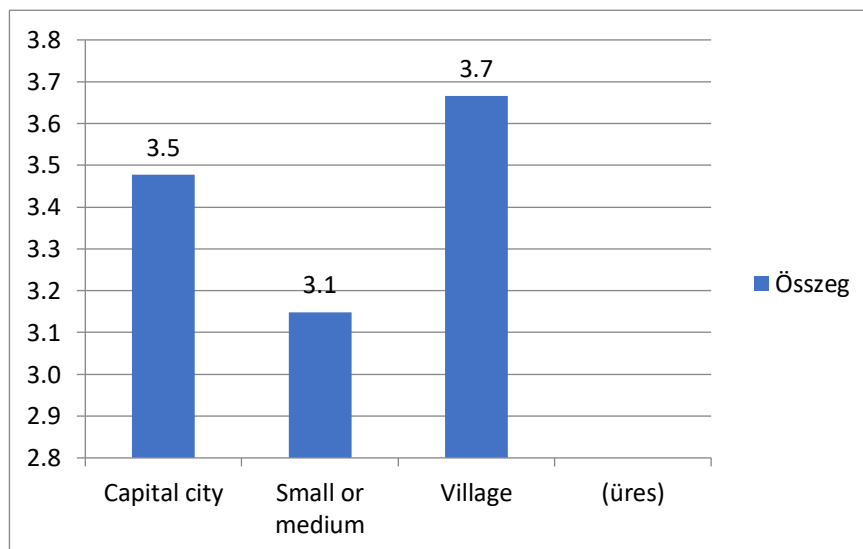
As we see in the result, I can confirm my hypothesis. Those who live in a dormitory buy much more for the promotion than those who live in the flat.



#### 5.4. Comparison of the place of residence and importance of product characteristics.

A healthy lifestyle is becoming more and more fashionable. People have begun to pay more and more attention to what they eat, carefully studying the composition of the product: how much protein, fat and carbon is contained in the product, as well as whether it contains dyes, preservatives or food additives. They also pay attention to the expiration date. The shorter the shelf life of the product, the more natural is. This lifestyle also depends on where consumer live. For example, in the village there is no free access to fast food and junk food. There is also the opportunity to grow vegetables and fruits in the garden.

My hypothesis was: is it true that villagers pay attention to the composition of the product more often than city residents?



17. Figure. Comparison of the place of residence and importance of product characteristics. Source: Own work.

With the help of a graph I can confirm my hypothesis. Indeed, villagers often pay attention to the composition of the product in the store. This suggests that they are trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

## 6. RECCOMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of my survey data, I can draw several conclusions for product sellers.

I would recommend sellers to reduce the price tag on products that are on store shelves. As a result, revenue will not decrease. Due to high food inflation in recent years, lower food prices will attract the attention of buyers. It is especially recommended to reduce the price of neseccary goods that customers most often purchase in stores. Buyers, seeing benefits in a particular store, will return to this store again and again. Sellers should pay attention that the buyer is ready to go to a more distant store for a better price.

Based on the answers of the participants, many of them most often cook at home and buy food in reserve, so I would recommend stores to expand the range of products with a long shelf life, for example, it can be semi-finished that do not take a long time to cook. Or it can be canned fish and meat, canned vegetables and fruits, as well as dried, cereals, pasta, flakes and so on. Also, products with a long shelf life are more profitable to produce, less money is spent on this during production, and they also lie on store shelves for a long time.

Based on the experience, what is important to the buyer when choosing products, less empathasis should be placed on advertising, since for those who answered in the survey, this was a less important aspect. It is necessary to place more emphasis on the quality of products, as every year buyers have become more and more likely to lead a healthy lifestyle and eat healthy food. If the seller wants to pay attention to advertising, then it worth doing loyal promotions, such as personal discounts and offers, the “bring a friend – get a discount” promotion, as well as discounts on currents products. If the seller wants to attract wholesale customers to the store, then they can make an action “buy more – pay less”.

A store hidden in the depths of courtyards without bright signs will not bring a lot money, so sellers need to choose a place in plain sight. Crowded streets and intersections, prominent places in shopping malls. Looking at the factor of the location and proximity of the place of residence of a potential buyer: based on the revealed statistical data, as a result of my survey, it can be concluded that many of the consumers are interested in the location of the store close to their home, thus, chain stores that have many stores and are distributed everywhere mainly

benefit in this issue. Also, chain stores can afford to put a cheaper price on the product. Local stores are inferior to supermarkets in this regard. This problem of small shops can be solved by developing the delivery of goods. Also, if increase the delivery radius, it will expand the range of buyers. If such a small store affects some small locality with the help of delivery, then obviously all residents will order products from this store online.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this research is to study behaviour of students as buyers. To understand the process of making and deciding on the purchase of goods, to study the attitude of consumers to catering enterprises, to identify the main factors influencing consumer behaviour when choosing products, to determine sensitivity to price changes and also to analyse audience preferences and the reasons for their decisions.

I conducted a survey in Google forms in which there were questions on the topic of consumer behavior. A total of 23 questions were asked. I managed to collect 121 responses among students of both genders, different ages, different education levels and student programmes, and also different types of residence. The respondents were most often MATE students.

Most of the respondents in the survey highlighted that they would choose a store with cheaper goods. They also prefer to buy food in supermarkets, most often 2-3 times a week and in reserve. Usually, the average buyers' basket comes out from 5,000 Forints to 15,000 Forints. Buyers claim to spend an average of 30% of their cash income. Most often they prefer to cook at home, and in about the same ratio, about 10%, they order food to home or go to restaurants.

When choosing products, buyers most often pay attention to the quality of products, taste, reasonable price, and availability of goods in the store. The least attention is paid to the packaging of the goods, the aesthetic component, and the brand of goods. Those who answered noted that they were satisfied with the local quality of products.

When choosing a store, buyers pay attention to the price level, the location of the store, and the quality of the goods. The least attention is paid to the level of service, and reviews on the Internet.

I also checked several hypotheses. The first of them sounded like "Is it true that girls would choose another store if there are cheaper products?" It turned out to be true, girls are more likely to choose more cheaper store than men. Men most likely will choose the nearest store at residence place.

With the help of following hypothesis, I checked, is it true, that a students of Master studying programme or PhD studying programme pays more attention to the price than a bachelor? The survey confirmed my words, students of Master studying programme and PhD studying programme often pay attention to the price of products.

With the help of the third hypothesis, I wanted to find out, if it was true that those who live in an apartment buy less food in reserve. And the results of the survey confirmed, that those who live in a flat buy much less for for reserve, that those, who live in dormitory.

And one of the last hypothesis, I checked that is it true, that those who live in a village pays more attention to the quality of products? The result of the survey showed that the villagers take better care of their nutrition, most likely because they do not have access to junk food and they themselves can grow fruits and vegetables in their garden.

At the end, I would like to note that the study of consumers is a very important aspect for both sellers and buyers themselves. When the seller knows his target audience well and takes into account all positive wishes, he can provide what the buyer needs. By studying consumer behaviour, marketers can develop new useful products and determine the current price of the product. To form a price, they need to know how much the audience is willing to spend on certain products. They also identify customer dissatisfaction and getect possible problems. Knowing exactly what the consumer wants, the buyer will be able to provide what is really needed.

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## DECLARATION

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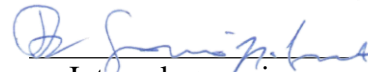
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