

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH OF FACTORS (CONVENIENCE OF ACCESS AND GENDER) INFLUENCING THE FOOD STORE CHOICE IN NAGYKÖRÖS

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the research is to analyze the food purchasing decisions of Hungarian customers depending on priority factors (convenience of access and gender) that impact the food store choice.

To identify the characteristics of food shopping behaviour, we conducted a customer survey of 220 individuals in the city of Nagyköros. The data collection was carried out using a standard questionnaire and an online survey on the Nagyköros public life community social media portal, and by informing shoppers about the possibility to fill in the questionnaire in the Municipality's posts. The sample can be considered representative based on the gender distribution of the primary food purchaser.

During the analysis of the data, in addition to descriptive statistics, we utilized factor analysis to describe the mindset of the customers, and created segments based on the factors influencing the choice of store using cluster analysis.

For the vast majority of consumers, the primary determinant in selecting a store is the affordable price level, regardless of how often they make purchases. When shopping on a daily basis, customers prioritize the store's proximity to their residence, promotional discounts, and variety of products available. Men tend to value a relaxed ambiance and convenient parking, while women prioritize special deals and competitive prices when choosing their regular shopping location

We have identified price sensitivity, accessibility, location, and atmosphere as key factors. Throughout our research, we have categorized customers into four distinct clusters: Action-oriented family members (36.1%), Conscious shopping family members (29.9%), Price-conscious seniors (20.6%), and Curious beginners (13.4%).

A significant hurdle for Hungarian retail companies is to enhance the quantity of their loyal customers, which they can solely achieve by taking market share from their rivals (primarily other retail companies). Initially, they must determine whether their customer base favours their kind of store for everyday or bulk shopping. They must cater to the demands of their target customer base (potentially the clusters established by our research) in relation to the key factors influencing store selection and purchase frequency, in order to attain success in their business. We suggest utilizing the factors that influence store selection as segmentation criteria.

KEYWORDS: *food store choice, convenience of access, gender, clusters, daily and bulk shopping*

JEL CODE: M31

INTRODUCTION

Understanding customer behaviour has been a concern of researchers for a long time. With its help, customers can be reached in a more targeted manner and their buying responses will be more predictable. Customers evolve as society changes, and so do their habits and expectations.

Customer preferences have changed during the pandemic (CSISZÁRIK-KOCSIR et al, 2022). The authors discuss the factors driving store choice, then present trends based on findings of the primary customer survey, and highlight associated opportunities and threats.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to define the research methods, the objectives were to choose and utilize them in a purpose-driven manner, diversify and implement them in a practical and outcome-oriented approach. After conducting a literature review and secondary research both domestically and internationally, primary research was carried out, which included quantitative research (online questionnaire survey) and qualitative research (customer interviews and expert interview). The qualitative research results have

already been published by the authors (FÖLDI and LÁSZLÓ, 2020), therefore the subsequent section will focus on discussing the circumstances and methodology of the quantitative research.

The research was specifically focused on the city of Nagykőrös, based on MASSEY's (1991) observation that local findings have global validity, meaning that the changes in the food retail structure in Nagykőrös and the impact of the Covid pandemic on consumer behaviour and store selection can be interpreted as representative of Hungary as a whole. According to MASSEY (1991), the worldwide occurrence can be encountered on a regional level, meaning that the reorganization of business spaces and the impact of the pandemic on consumer habits can be comprehended by examining solely the town of Nagykőrös. Conversely, the ultimate consumer who purchases products or services is, as stated by SIMAI (2009), fundamentally 'domestic', in other words, linked to a specific nation and within that, to a more restricted locality.

The objectives of the study are:

O1 To comprehend travel tendencies that impact preferences for grocery store choices

O2 To comprehend the significance of convenience of access in impacting the selection of grocery stores as a place of residence or employment, and for families with children, proximity to the child's educational institution

O3 To understand gender disparities and resemblances in the selection of daily and bulk food shopping.

Among the quantitative research methods, we opted for online surveys (CAWI, Computer-assisted web interviewing). This decision was driven by the need to facilitate the broadest possible response and to minimize expenses. We utilized a standardized questionnaire. This approach enabled us to conduct statistical and mathematical analysis of the research findings. The online questionnaire was made available on the Nagykőrös public life community portal and through the Municipality's posts. A total of 220 questionnaires were eligible for evaluation. The survey was carried out from 7th September 2020 to 13th September 2020. The table below presents the thematic distribution and structure of the questions in the standardized questionnaire (Table 1).

Table 1 Structure of the questionnaire on the food purchasing habits of the population of Nagykőrös

Topic	Number of questions
Filter question (Nagykőrös residence)	1
Preference examination of food purchasing habits	6
Food store choice	8
Distance to shop, place of residence and workplace - convenience of access	3
Sociodemographic questions	13

Source: edited by the authors

The makeup of the sample accurately reflects the population in regards to the gender distribution of the primary food shoppers (KSH, 2012) and can thus be deemed representative. The factors contributing to the disproportionate representation of females in the sample composition consist of their greater likelihood to participate (85%) and the subject matter of the survey.

According to the Central Statistical Office (CSO), among the Hungarian population aged 10-84, 42.9% of females and only 28.7% of males report shopping as a daily activity, which indicates that females dedicate more time to this task (KSH, 2012). This implies that since females spend more time shopping, they possess greater expertise than males in this domain. If shopping is considered to be a responsibility carried out by females in each household, it is also important to examine marital status, and the percentage of unmarried males in the population is depicted in alignment with the survey sample. According to Eurostat data, 19% of males aged 65 and above in the European Union live alone (HVG, 2020), whereas the CSO (KSH, 2020) discovered 568,744 (13.79%) individuals of the same household type nationally. The count of single-person households in Nagykőrös was obtainable from the 2011 census data, with a figure of 3,141 individuals, a rise of 27.8% compared to the 2001 census data. When examining their gender distribution, two thirds of them were females in 2001, which shifted by 4.4

percentage points towards males in 2011 (KSH, 2001, 2011). The composition of the sample by gender and age group is depicted in Table 2.

Table 2 Distribution of respondents by gender and age group (N=220)

Distribution of respondents by gender	Capita	%
Female	187	85.0
Male	33	15.0
Distribution of respondents by age group	Capita	%
between 18-24 years old	26	11.8
between 25-34 years old	55	25.0
between 35-44 years old	49	22.3
between 55-4 years old	46	20.9
over 55 years old	44	20.0

Source: edited by the authors

The data gathered were analyzed using SPSS 22 statistical software. Fundamental metrics (average, deviation, mode, median, frequency, cross-tabulation, Kendall's rank correlation coefficient) were computed, and multivariate techniques (factor, cluster, difference analysis) were employed to investigate more complex correlations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Literature review

In terms of the number of stages in the purchase decision process, two directions can be distinguished. They primarily refer to the 4th or 5th phase - often called as the decision or buying stage - due to the significance of selecting a store (HAWKINS et al. 1986; HOFMEISTER-TÓTH, 2003, 2008, 2014; VERES and SZILÁGYI, 2006; LANTOS, 2010; BAUER and BERÁCS 2016). Authors SZÁNTÓ (2007) and HOFMEISTER-TÓTH (2014, 2018) emphasized the significance of the fourth section in its name, the choice of the store. Until then, those belonging to the second direction divide the purchase decision process into 3 stages (pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase), which was quoted in the Hungarian literature by TÖRŐCSIK (2011) from authors FOSCHT and SWOBODA (2005). This is the direction represented by NÉMETH (2018), although the content of each phase differs from the above authors. Each phase is listed separately, based on its events. This method gives a sense of the interdependence of the phases and assigns to them the identification of further events (NÉMETH, 2018). KOTLER and KELLER (2012) classifies the store selection as a straightforward sub-decision. Store choice is described by many researchers as preceding brand and product choice (MONROE and GULILTINAN, 1975; HOFMEISTER-TÓTH and TÖRŐCSIK, 1996; TÖRŐCSIK, 1998; BAUER and BERÁCS, 2002; JÓZSA et al 2005; VERES and SZILÁGYI, 2006; BLACKWELI et al, 2006, BAUER et al 2007; LANTOS, 2010). In certain instances, the selection of the store comes before the selection of the brand, although this is contingent upon the product category, brand, situation, and customer behaviour (FÖLDI, 2012). With the advent of new research outlook, the sequence of consumers' purchasing decisions also alters, as the preference for store becomes prominent, gains independency, and takes precedence, may take precedence over the selection of product and brand (PÉNZES – PÓLYA, 2018).

The initiation of FÖLDI's (2012) store choice model begins with the household's minimum stock level and backup (material and product). The absence of these is seen as the beginning of the buying process. This five-phase procedure of problem identification and information search is identical to the overall understanding of the customer decision process. It demonstrates its distinctive approach by illustrating the decision system for evaluation of alternatives. The choice options are influenced by the characteristics of the purchase and the habits of the buyer (similar to the ASSAEL (1984) and BLACKWELI et al. (2006) models), but also take into account additional constraining evaluative perspectives. These cover, for example, the perceived evaluation criteria - for ASSAEL (1984), the importance of perceived characteristics -, including the location of the shops to be selected, i.e. the distance to be travelled. The need for 'convenience', which is also reflected in the factors determining the choice of store, is also important in terms of distance, i.e. when the shopper considers the range and

price level of the nearest shop and then compares it with a shop further away on the basis of these criteria. If the buyer experiences a significant discount, he or she may travel greater distances, however, for shorter distances, more competitive prices are sufficient to choose the more distant store (Figure 1).

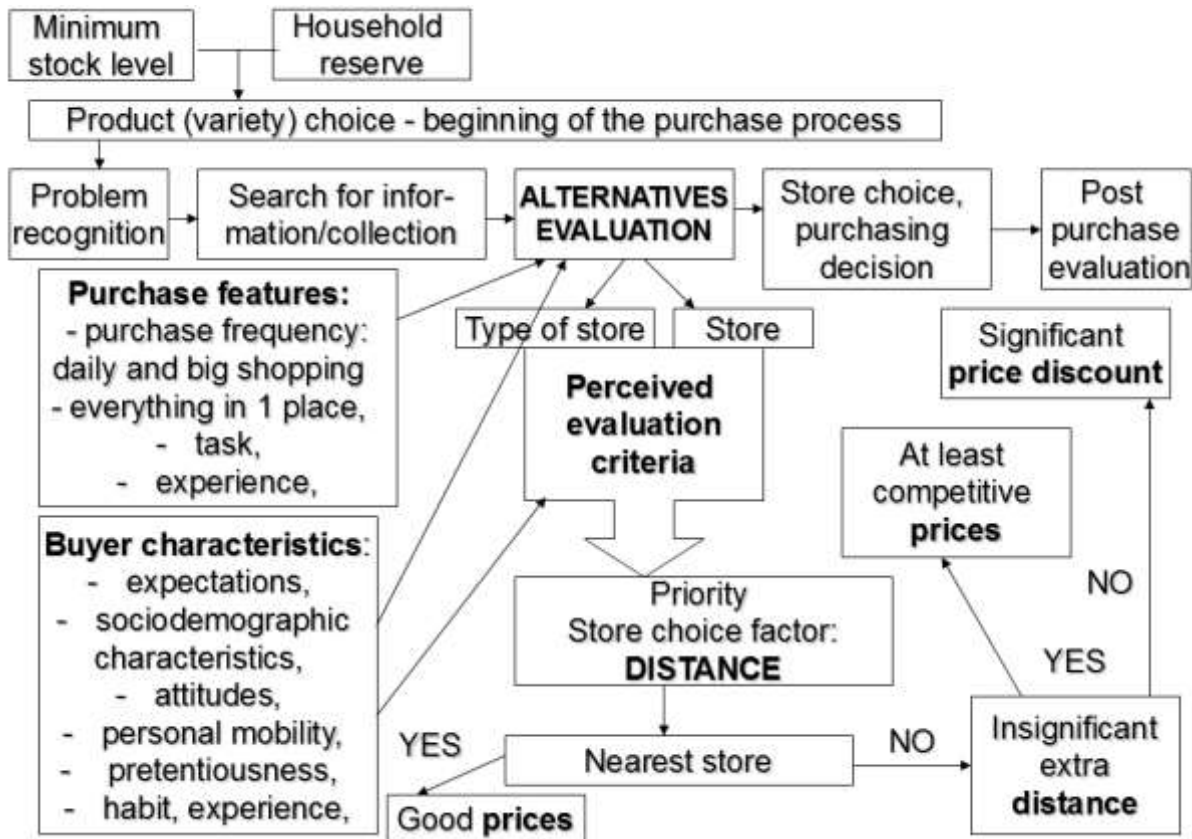


Figure 1: Földi's food store choice model

Source: Földi (2012) p. 173.

Authors GOODMAN and REMAUD (2015) conclude that store selection factors are more effective for segmenting consumers than traditional demographic factors, according to their research findings. We have identified two factors influencing food store choice, based on the findings of FÖLDI's (2012) doctoral thesis. One factor is proximity, which can be understood as the ease of access, while the other is gender, based on the findings of NÉMETH's (2018) doctoral thesis.

(1) Ease of access

According to most studies on store choice, the most important influencing factor is the location of the store (ARNOLD et al, 1983; FREYMAN, 2002). This was mentioned in different ways by different authors, but all authors, included in the literature review, mentioned it (FÖLDI, 2012; NÉMETH, 2018). The location and size of the store were mentioned most often (TÖRŐCSIK, 1995, 1998; HOFMEISTER-TÓTH and TÖRŐCSIK 1996; DANKÓ 2000, TÖRŐCSIK 2006, 2011). The authors VERES and SZILÁGYI (2006) added convenience of access to the location, while HOFMEISTER-TÓTH (2003, 2008) called it location and size of the store. The location of the store (LANTOS, 2010) was also interpreted as distance by BLACKWELL et al. (2006). The factor was also mentioned as place of the store (GYENGE, 2008; PÉNZES-GYENGE 2010), although LEHOTA et al. (2005) interpreted it as accessibility, location and approachability of the store. According to OLACH's (1997) research, distance can be interpreted in several ways: distance from home, distance from work, distance from the place of vehicle drop-off.

For consumers, convenience, efficiency, and experience are the main factors they expect from a store and which determine their decisions (TÖRŐCSIK, 2017).

Daily shopping and bulk shopping appear to be different shopping types (TÖRŐCSIK, 2011; HOFMEISTER-TÓTH, 2014). According to FÖLDI (2012), the store choice criteria for daily and bulk shopping can be distinguished, because the most important criteria for daily shopping are the proximity of the store to the place of residence and the freshness of the goods.

Contrary to the findings of WIIG and SMITH (2009), KRUKOWSKI et al (2012) also found that proximity to home is playing an increasingly important role in food store choices. According to SZÚCS - VILLÁNYI (2017), maximum convenience has become a priority for shoppers. Nowadays, convenience, efficiency and price are the motivational driving forces that determine the choice of where to purchase (KURUCZ, 2018).

Based on the results of a nationally representative research by SZAKÁLY et al (2020), proximity to the store ranked in the bottom third of factors influencing food store choice with a mean of 4.26 (on a pentavalent Likert-scale), a standard deviation of 0.988 and a relative standard deviation of 23.19%. Based on their factor analysis, three factors were identified, one of which was convenience. Out of their four clusters, the 'Fast and convenient shoppers' group in the second cluster scored 4.55 for the proximity of the store, while the 'Demanding and motivated shoppers' group in the fourth cluster scored an average of 4.52 for the same variable. The researchers' results showed that the factors influencing store choice were grouped into three factors in order of importance: price and speed, good image and convenience. These are consistent with the motivational drivers of store choice identified in Nielsen research (KURUCZ, 2018).

The role of location has become an increasingly important factor in the choice of store. Shoppers prefer to choose retail shops closer to their homes and ease of access has become an important factor (TRADEMAGAZIN, 2020).

According to GfK, 16% of domestic shoppers have switched stores due to the crisis (Tisza, 2020), and there are indications of a change in competition based on store size, with proximity also gaining more significance in store selection (TRADEMAGAZIN, 2020). In terms of store dimensions, stores with a floor space of 400-1,000 m² have experienced the greatest growth, while those between 1,000 and 2,500 m² have experienced less growth. It is also noteworthy that the average amount spent on purchases has increased in the 400-1,000 m² category, and although certain products were pricier compared to the largest stores, overall shoppers spent more (HUF 3,266 vs. HUF 3,204). In stores with a floor area of 400-1,000 m², high-value shopping baskets (over 10,000 HUF) made up 30% of the total, while in stores between 1,000 and 2500 m², the percentage was slightly lower at 26.7% (TÖRÖCSIK et al., 2020).

The primary determinant of grocery store choice and satisfaction is whether the store is easily accessible from home or on the way to work (TISZA, 2023).

(2) Gender

The relationship between gender roles and shopping is associated with the female role as the mother of a family (NAGY, 2001). A gender analysis of shopping duration shows that 90.32% of men and 71.04% of women shop for less than 30 minutes, signifying that females spend a longer time in stores (NAGY, 2001; KSH, 2012). The participants of the research spent an average of 15 and 16 minutes on food, consumer or consumer durables respectively in the two study periods, resulting in an average of 11 and 9 minutes per day. For males, individuals who are single and aged 60 or above spend the most time shopping for daily groceries. The majority of this demographic is retired, affording them more time for shopping. Both males and females dedicate the most time to shopping on Saturdays and the least on Sundays for daily consumer goods (SEBÖK, 2017).

Researches have indicated, not solely based on empirical evidence that women typically serve as the main drivers of consumption within a family, women possess a more positive attitude on shopping compared to men. In numerous instances, the contrasting conceptualization and engagement of both genders in consumption and shopping can also be observed as an outcome in primary investigations. There are distinctly divergent perspectives towards specific forms of shopping, as well as the emotions associated with them (TÖRÖCSIK and SZÚCS, 2021). A study conducted on a representative sample of 50-70-year-olds in Hungary further demonstrates the contrasting attitudes of the genders towards shopping, even within this specific age demographic (EFOP 3.6.2., HEGEDŰS and TÖRÖCSIK, 2020). The food purchasing behaviour of women has been examined from various perspectives by multiple researchers (RAMPRABHA, 2017; WAHYUDDIN et al, 2017; SHIER et al, 2022) both in Hungary (FÖLDI, 2011; DOGI et al, 2014; BALOGH, 2016, DÖRNYEI et al, 2019) and internationally (RAMPRABHA, 2017; WAHYUDDIN et al, 2017; SHIER et al, 2022). While ANGGRAINI et al (2016) explored the choices of food stores among women (188 individuals, aged 19-50) residing in an impoverished neighborhood in Jakarta, Indonesia, NÉMETH (2018) examined the decisions regarding the location of grocery stores among Hungarian males.

Secondary research

The town has a unique variety of food shopping. Five multimantional and two Hungarian food retail corporations, along with independent retailers and specialty stores, are found within the municipality, in addition to the daily market. The appearance of global chains in the FMCG market and the resulting market transformation in Nagykőrös has mirrored the nationwide trend, with a decrease in the number of independent retail establishments. Local specialized fruit and vegetable shops and small food vendors have been compelled to form partnership agreements in order to stay competitive. This is exemplified by the establishment of local stores of domestic chains as franchisees.

Since the 2000s, Nagykőrös has also garnered growing interest as a possible retail destination for multinational retail chains operating in the FMCG market in Hungary. The factors contributing to this are (1) convenient access, including various expressway connections (M5 and M44), efficient main road links (441) and close proximity to the county seats (Kecskemét 25 km and Szolnok 50 km), (2) the population size (almost 24,000 KSH 2023) and the relatively steady population.

In the first three quarters of 2020, the retail store network in Pest County generated a revenue of HUF 1,272 billion at current prices, accounting for 15% of the nationwide total. On an unadjusted basis, sales rose 1.4 percent year-over-year, while sales fell nationwide. Changing shopping habits due to the coronavirus outbreak and restrictions on store hours have disrupted a multi-year retail sales boom. Following a decline in April, sales at retail stores in the county surpassed the previous year's level from May to July, but then fell again (KSH, 2020).

The “quasi-monopoly” of the first Penny-Market Kft. (1998) in the store chain market was abolished by the opening of Tesco-Global Zrt. in 2007. The commencement of the two multinational chains was followed by the opening of LIDL Hungary Bt. (2009), then SPAR Hungary Kft. (2015) and finally ALDI Hungary Food Bt. (2017). These have gradually reduced the market share of the largest domestic chains operating in Nagykőrös, such as CO-OP Star Zrt., Szilvási és Társa Bt. (Szil-Coop) and REÁL Hungária Élelmiszer Kft. During this period, seven multinational chains were engaged in food retailing. Tesco-Global Zrt. as hypermarket, Spar Magyarország Kft. as supermarket, CO-OP Star Zrt. as three supermarket stores, Szil-Coop Kft. and Reál Hungária Élelmiszer Kft. as supermarket, and Lidl Magyarország Ltd., Aldi Magyarország Élelmiszer Ltd. and Penny-Market Ltd. as discount store. By June 2020, the number of food and grocery stores (82 stores) in Nagykőrös had decreased by 27.4% (31 stores) compared to December 2010 (KSH, 2020).

In the neighboring county seat, Kecskemét, there is also an Auchan food hypermarket, Tesco superstores with a broader selection of products, and Metro Cash & Carry limited-service wholesaler. These stores have been a significant draw for the community when deciding where to purchase groceries prior to the chains that have appeared in Nagykőrös. The geographical arrangement of the stores is depicted in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Location of grocery stores in Nagykorös
Source: edited by the authors

There are many overlapping characteristics in the selection of location for multinational food stores. They were interested in convenient accessibility, so they established themselves near a primary thoroughfare, and they transformed extensive regions to align with their own brand identity in order to accommodate the appropriate range of retail space. The expansive floor area and parking capacity meant that they could only operate on the outskirts of the city, due to the densely developed nature of the city center. On multiple occasions they had to inaugurate a store adjacent to a competitor's store, Spar adjacent to Tesco, Lidl next to Penny Market, and, most recently, Aldi opened a discounted store next to Tibiker (a food supermarket, an independent small business).

Primary research

The favoured sizes of grocery stores showed a downward trend. 72.8% of the survey participants expressed their preference for medium-sized stores (ranging from 200-400m²). Only 22.3% ranked the size category above 400 m² as their top choice, leaving only 4.9% of respondents who favoured smaller shops (under 200 m²).

A significant majority (60.5%) of the participants stated that promotional leaflets were a primary source of information. However, for the younger age group (18-24 years), brochures no longer hold the same importance. On the other hand, the surveyed individuals above 55 years old do pay attention to and actively seek out bargain shopping opportunities. Nevertheless, when examining the relationship between the variables, it was determined that there was no significant correlation between the two factors, namely age group and sources of information.

There is a moderate (Cramer's V: 0.230) statistically significant (0.002) correlation between respondents who endorse Hungarian enterprises and age groups. Age group has an impact on the inclination to support domestic businesses, due to the significant correlation. Nevertheless, for three-fourths of

participants aged 18-24, backing for Hungarian domestically owned enterprises holds no importance. The same criterion holds significance for 62% of respondents aged 25-34, 81.8% of respondents aged 35-44, 85.7% of respondents aged 55+ and 90.6% of respondents aged 45-51. Simultaneously, 60.2% were unaware or declined to specify Hungarian, domestically-owned stores and chains operating in Nagykőrös.

On average, respondents are more willing to go further away for an offer (3.80 on a pentavalent Likert scale). Half of the participants rated their inclination as a 4 (more willing).

The most commonly selected type of store was discount, where half of the participants visit once a week. This was followed by specialty stores with an average of 4.25 and hypermarkets with an average of 3.75. The least frequently visited source of supply was identified by participants as the daily market (3.21 on average), yet once a week was the most commonly chosen frequency. There is a significant (0.008) but weak (0.240) correlation between daily market and age group criteria in the cross-tabulation analysis. 44% of individuals aged 45 and above visit the daily market at least once a week.

To comprehend the criteria for selecting a store, attitude statements were employed to investigate everyday and bulk shoppings. The factors that were determined from the examination of existing literature have distinct impacts on everyday shopping, which entails a smaller number of items, and bulk shopping, which entails a lengthier duration (Table 3). There was no significant correlation found in the cross-tabulation analysis of either everyday shopping and place of residence, bulk shopping and place of residence, or age group.

Table 3 The most important store choice factors

Daily shopping	- Fast service (4.709) - Kindness of sellers and cashiers (4.525) - Proximity of the shop to the place of residence (4.0)
Bulk shopping	- Shops' special offers (4.451) - Brand range of stores (4.185)
Daily and bulk shopping	- Lower price level (4.082 – 4.043) - Calm atmosphere (4.052 – 4.005)

Note: measured on a pentavalent Likert scale, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important
Source: edited by the authors

Many of the store selection factors are identical for both genders when deciding where to shop for everyday and bulk purchases. For instance, two of the utmost important factors in everyday shopping are fast service and the kindness of sellers and cashiers. Men give priority to a calm atmosphere and convenient parking, while women give priority to promotional deals and affordable prices when selecting their everyday shopping destination. These findings are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4 The importance of store choice factors for daily and bulk shopping (N = 220)

	Factors of daily shopping				Factors of bulk shopping			
	Female		Male		Female		Male	
Most important	4.67 6	Fast service	4.96 5	Fast service	4.53 5	Shops' special offers	4.69 2	Fast service
	4.50 3	Kindness of sellers and cashiers	4.79 3	Kindness of sellers and cashiers	4.51 3	Fast service	4.69 2	Kindness of sellers and cashiers
	4.16 6	Shops' special offers	4.35 7	Calm atmosphere	4.30 3	Brand range of stores	4.53 3	Shops' special offers
	4.06 7	Lower price level	4.25 9	Easy parking	4.13 1	Kindness of sellers and cashiers	4.51 8	Brand range of stores
	4.06 0	Proximity of the shop to	4.14 2	Proximity of the shop to	4.0	Lower price level	4.42 3	Calm atmosphere

		the place of residence		the place of residence				
	4.05 2	Brand range of stores	4.0	Brand range of stores	3.99 7	Calm atmosphere	4.11 5	Lower price level
Least important	3.99 3	Easy parking	3.9	Shops' special offers	3.92 7	Easy parking	4.11 5	Easy parking
	2.81 0	Proximity to workplace	3.82 1	Lower price level	3.55 4	Proximity of the shop to the place of residence	2.96 0	Proximity of the shop to the place of residence
	2.35 3	Close to the child's educational inst.	3.10 3	Proximity to workplace	2.57 7	Proximity to workplace	2.11 5	Proximity to workplace
	2.04 2	Close to place of the children's private lessons	2.37 9	Close to the child's educational inst.	2.23 6	Close to the child's educational inst.	2.0	Close to the child's educational inst.
	1.08	Calm atmosphere	2.10 3	Close to place of the children's private lessons	2.1	Close to place of the children's private lessons	1.88 4	Close to place of the children's private lessons

Note: measured on a pentavalent Likert scale, where 1 is not important at all and 5 is very important
bold font = same range of important by gender

Source: edited by the authors

There exist disparities in the aspects deemed crucial in impacting the decision to make a bulk shopping based on gender. Men prioritize factors akin to those considered in daily shopping, while women seek out special offers, fast service, and their preferred brands. When it comes to daily and bulk shopping, proximity to one's residence holds more importance than proximity to one's workplace. The educational institution attended by a child and the location of their extracurricular activities do not influence parents' grocery shopping habits. This can be attributed to the mode of transportation used for shopping (65% of shopping is done by car) and the size of the municipality (measuring 228 km²).

One of the objectives was to investigate the reasons behind the selection of location for purchases. As a result, store preferences were analyzed in relation to the residential area (Figure 3) using cross tabulation analysis. Participants from all districts of the city showed equal willingness to travel (rated on a hexavalent Likert scale) in search of a good offer. This phenomenon can be explained by the proportion of car ownership (65%). It can also be stated that residents of all districts equally chose Lidl's store in Nagykörös as their preferred option. Additionally, it can be observed that Aldi was the second most popular store in 5 districts, while Tesco or Spar were favoured in 2 or 2 other districts. These two stores are in a similar competition for the third place.



Figure 3 Designation of the districts of the city of Nagykorös
Source: Own edition

Differences were observed by individuals residing near the hospital. According to them, the third preferred store was the Coop, which can be attributed to the close proximity of more stores near their residence (the survey results of 21 participants residing in the hospital vicinity indicated that the store played a significant role in their everyday (3.4091) and bulk shopping (3.0455)). Conversely, for those residing in suburban areas, Tibiker's shop ranked third. The rationale behind this choice, as indicated by their answers to the attitude statements, encompasses the store's atmosphere (daily: 4.25; bulk: 4.27), the kindness of the sales personnel (daily: 5.25; bulk: 4.90), the fast service (daily: 5.33; bulk: 5.18), and the pricing (daily: 4.00; bulk: 3.72). The respondents are open to selecting a store farther away, as the nearest ones are not the most popular options.

Table 5 Correlations between store preferences and place of residence

Residential district	cap ita	Travel willing-ness	Average ranking of stores (1 = most popular)							Top 3	
			Ald i	Coop	Lidl	Reá l	Spar	Tesco	Tibi-ker		
Centre	1	40	3.70	3.75	4.63	2.33	4.13	3.15	4.15	5.88	Lidl, Spar, Aldi
Gáti area	2	29	3.86	3.72	5.21	1.83	5.41	3.38	2.97	5.48	Lidl, Tesco, Spar
Hospital neighborhood	3	21	3.87	3.48	3.62	1.48	5.10	4.14	3.86	6.33	Lidl, Aldi, Coop
Market Square	4	10	3.80	3.70	4.20	1.90	5.00	4.50	2.70	6.00	Lidl, Tesco, Aldi
Market neighborhood	5	12	3.85	3.25	5.25	1.17	5.08	4.67	4.17	4.42	Lidl, Aldi, Tesco
Catholic cemetery	6	15	3.60	2.93	4.93	1.33	4.53	4.93	4.53	4.80	Lidl, Aldi, Tesco/ Reál
Tormás and its surroundings	7	22	3.95	2.77	5.45	1.36	5.36	4.14	4.14	4.77	Lidl, Aldi, Spar/ Tesco

Railway station and its surroundings	8	30	3.94	2.47	5.50	2.43	5.33	4.27	3.67	433	Lidl, Spar, Aldi
Suburban areas	9	12	3.42	3.17	4.83	2.17	4.75	4.67	4.42	4.00	Lidl, Aldi, Tibiker

Note: travel willingness is measured on a hexavalent Likert scale, where 1 is 'I am not willing to travel at all' and 6 is 'I will definitely travel'

bold font = 3 most preferred grocery store

Source: edited by the authors

We analyzed the associations between the preference for each store and location of residence. Consequently, we discovered that there is a significant (0.024), weak (0.246) relationship between the inclination for Spar store and the respondents' residential area. The convenience, as a primary determinant of store selection, is also manifested in the participants' preferences. A comparable correlation was observed in the cross-tabulation examination of Tibiker store and residential district, with a weak (0.249), significant (0.017) correlation between the criteria.

Factor analysis was employed to uncover hidden explanatory factors that were not directly observable. The analysis was conducted using principal axis factoring. Factors with an eigenvalue exceeding one were deemed acceptable, indicating that they retain more information than average. The analysis did not include any missing values. The weights are considered meaningful if they exceed 0.35. The model's validity was confirmed based on the results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test (0.691) and Bartlett test (0.000 level of significance). Collectively, the factors account for 54.77% of the total variance of the variables.

The resulting four factors are displayed as four sets of variables (Table 6). The initial factor is related to location, the second to the atmosphere of the store, the third to the external factor of accessibility, and the fourth to sensitivity towards prices. The factors individually account for 25.57% (location), 37.50% (atmosphere), 44.66% (accessibility), and 50.61% (price sensitivity) of the variables.

The analysis was also carried out based on the responses received in terms of bulk shopping. The KMO (0.743) and Bartlett's test (0.000 level of significance) remain applicable in the model. The factors in this case explain a total of 79.72% of the total variance of the variables.

For bulk shopping, only three main distinct categories of variables have emerged. These are connected to the location of the store, the atmosphere of the store, and the level of sensitivity to price. The factors explain 31.44%, 44.82%, and 52.19% of the overall variables, respectively. Contrasts in comparison to the factor groups associated with daily shopping can be observed in the rise in the significant role of parking and the emergence of price as an explanatory marketing tool factor.

Table 6 Factors of daily and bulk shopping

Attitude statements Factors	Daily shopping				Bulk shopping		
	Location	Atmos- phere	Accessi- bility	Price sensitivity	Location	Atmos- phere	Price sensitivity
I shop at a store that is close to my child's private and extracurricular activities (e.g., music or sport school, gym).	0.862				0.920		
I shop in the store that is near my child's educational institution (nursery, kindergarten, school).	0.813				0.914		
I shop at whichever store is near my workplace.	.614				0.771		
I shop at the store closest to where I live.	0.371				0.461		
I shop in the store where I feel in a calm, familiar atmosphere.		0.829				0.849	
I shop in stores where the employees are kind to me.		0.781				0.813	
I buy in the store where the service is fast, I do not wait.		0.467				0.636	
I shop at the store where I can easily find parking.			0.357			0.381	
I monitor the current offers and promotions of each store.			0.911				0.722
I am looking for shops with lower prices.				0.767			0.560

Source: edited by the authors

The K-means method (Sajtos - Mitev, 2007) was chosen for the further procedure of cluster determination, delegating the determination of cluster means to the algorithm. We employed a K-means clustering procedure with a predefined number of clusters. The specified number of clusters defined was four. The analysis was performed by comparing demographic and key issues related to the topic. The findings of the examination are presented in the analysis of variance (ANOVA) table (Table 7).

Table 7 Scatter analysis table for cluster analysis

ANOVA						
	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
Age	34.181	3	1.225	190	27.895	0.000
Residential area	427.038	3	1.407	190	303.445	0.000
Size of household	11.595	3	1.121	190	10.343	0.000
Number of detainees	9.280	3	0.995	190	9.324	0.000
Main source of information	43.018	3	1.798	190	23.932	0.000
Attractiveness of non-food products	52.645	3	1.583	190	33.259	0.000
Travel willingness	35.949	3	1.918	190	18.739	0.000

Source: edited by the authors

The members of the groups share similarities, yet possess distinct attributes from those in the other clusters. The entries of the group were considered during the recording of each object. The resultant cluster groups explain the results of a total of 194 respondents (88.2%) (26 omitted entries). Each cluster is comprised of 26, 70, 58, and 40 participants respectively.

The initial group was named “Curious Young Adults” (13.4%). This cluster consists of individuals between the ages of 25 and 34 who are married and either expecting a child or already have one in the household. Their incomes are on the rise, with net per capita earnings ranging from HUF 150 to 200 thousand. Each household possesses one or two automobiles. Their purchasing patterns are characterized by an interest in non-food items, reliance on discount catalogues for information, and a willingness to travel in pursuit of a good deal. When making their daily shopping decisions, they prioritize current special promotions based on the quality of service and the friendliness of the sales and checkout staff. Conversely, when purchasing in bulk, they prioritize the store’s selection of brands over the friendliness of the salesperson and cashier.

The second cluster consists of “Discount-Oriented Families” (36.1%). The individuals in this category are aged between 45 and 54 and are married with one or two children. They have a comfortable financial situation, with a specific net income of HUF 150-200 thousand. Typically, these households own one to two cars. Their shopping preferences lean towards non-food items, and they are more willing to travel to find these products compared to the members of the first group. Local newspapers and magazines are their primary sources of information for discount offers. When it comes to their daily shopping, the price level of the store plays a role in their decision-making, along with the quality of service and the friendliness of the sales staff and cashiers. For bulk purchases, they prioritize factors such as the store’s selection of brands, ongoing promotions, and the quality of service.

The third group consists of “Conscious Family Buyers” (29.9%). They share similarities with “Discount-Oriented Families” in terms of their demographic characteristics. However, they are younger, between the ages of 35 and 44, married, residing in a four-person household, usually with two children. They possess one vehicle. Their net earnings are lower than the preceding two groups. Consequently, they spend less on their average shopping basket. Their working hours are either individual or fixed, which makes them less inclined to shop further away. They do not pay attention to special deals in stores and have no interest in non-food products. They are task-oriented in their daily shopping, preferring a themed, fast-paced shopping experience. The primary factors that influence their choice of stores for daily shopping are proximity to their homes and the availability of parking facilities. They also seek out familiar products when making bulk purchases, so the variety of brands offered by the store, the quality of service, and the friendliness of the sales staff and cashiers are important factors to them.

The fourth cluster consists of “Price-Conscious Seniors” (20.6%). The demographic characteristics of this group include: a higher average age (over 55 years) compared to the other categories, being divorced/widowed in addition to being married, and having smaller household sizes (two people) compared to the previous groups. Only a few of them own a car. Due to their age, they are primarily retired and no longer involved in any form of employment, relying solely on their pension. As a result, their net income is lower, with 20% reporting a net income of less than HUF 150,000. They actively manage their finances and are always on the lookout for discounts and deals in catalogs, even if it means

travelling farther distances. They tend to prioritize purchasing non-food items and typically spend less on their shopping compared to other groups. The price level of products is crucial to their daily shopping decisions, along with the friendliness of the sales staff and cashiers, as well as the quality of service provided. When deciding where to buy in bulk, they take into consideration the store's brand selection and the level of service offered, in addition to any ongoing promotions.

The cluster groups identified and the elements within the categories were analyzed using discriminant analysis, with specific focus on their distinctiveness. Categories were assigned based on the clustering factor. The central points of the clusters and the representation of the cluster elements are depicted in Figure 4. The clustering of the majority of the elements is easily recognizable. However, there are variations between the primary clusters based on the placement of the cluster centers.

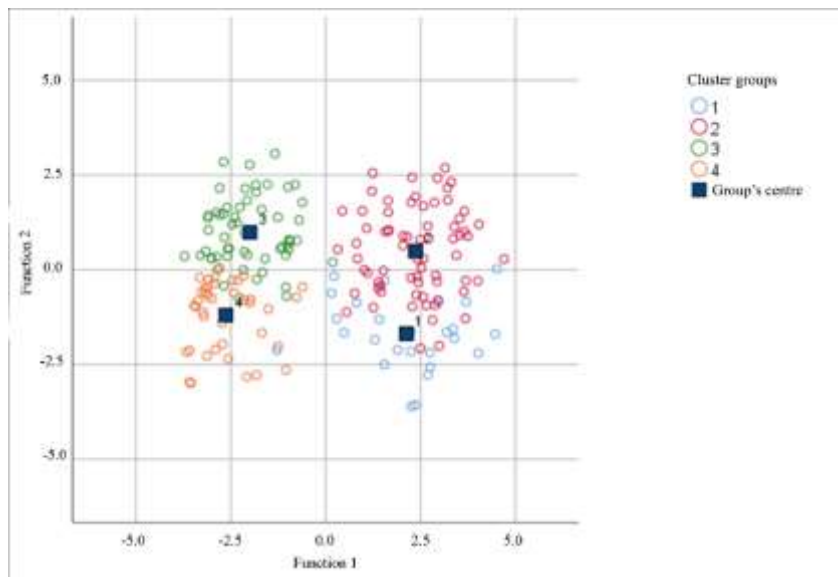


Figure 4 Scatterplot of the cluster analysis groups (N=194 persons)
Source: edited by the authors

Discussion

Quantitative research indicates that Lidl is the most favoured store. The same store preference factors were discovered to have an impact on both everyday and bulk shopping. The primary factor of importance was the efficient service, followed by the kindness of the sales personnel and cashiers, as well as the ongoing promotions. However, when it comes to bulk shopping, these aspects were ranked in the opposite order.

In the survey, proximity to home was ranked 7th-8th for both daily and bulk shopping, while proximity to work was ranked 9th. These factors do not seem to be particularly influential.

Both the secondary and primary research affirm that shopping is still perceived as a task associated with women's roles.

Based on consumer segmentation, four clusters have been identified, listed in descending order of size: Action-oriented Family (36.1%), Conscious Family (29.9%), Price-conscious Seniors (20.6%), and "Curious Young Adults" (13.4%). In the upcoming period, it may be beneficial to examine each group individually, as this could contribute to the existing knowledge in the field from both a market and scientific standpoint.

The article partly contains the results of the research work of László (2020), which was prepared and successfully presented at the 2020 Institutional Student Research Conference and then successfully presented at the 2021 National Student Research Conference (winning a podium place in the Consumer Behaviour Section), updated and supplemented with relevant parts.

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