

SELECTED PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS AS PREDICTORS OF EMOTIONAL CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

Many consumers believe that choices they make result from rational analysis of available alternatives. In reality, however, emotions greatly influence and determine our behaviour and decision-making also on the market of products and services. The main aim of this paper is to show the relationship between selected personality traits and emotional consumer behaviour. We used two psychological tests (Eysenck personality questionnaire and author's scale of emotionality) and tested several factors that might have influenced emotional consumer reactions. We found out that two of three tested personality predictors are significant – extroversion and neuroticism. The higher the score that respondents reach in the scales of extroversion and neuroticism was, the more emotional was their behaviour and decision making. In that connection, there are also differences between individual temperaments. Choleric and melancholic react more emotionally than other two temperaments.

KEY WORDS

personality of consumer, personality characteristics, personality traits, consumer behaviour, emotional consumer behaviour, emotions, temperament

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1 INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour and decision-making is one of the main objects of marketing research. For a long time it was assumed that consumers behave, decide and act rationally. Today, we know that it is not completely truth. Consumers

are individual human beings with specific needs, driven by emotions. Emotions greatly influence and also determine consumer behaviour. That is why psychology and neuroscience are nowadays an inseparable part of marketing and

economics. If we want to predict consumer behaviour and understand why consumers behave emotionally, we have to consider also the personality of consumer and the uniqueness of human mental and emotional processes.

Defining the concept of personality is not a simple task. There are so many different approaches that try to explain the concept of personality the most accurate. Proponents of Engel's biopsychosocial model define the personality as a complex of cognitive processes and affective states (Skorodenský, 2012). Raymond B. Cattell believed that personality can determine human behaviour in a given situation. Hans J. Eysenck understands the personality as more or less stable and lasting organisation of character, temperament, intellect and body, which determines its unique adaptation to the environment (Kubáni, 2010).

The personality characteristics represent a complex of very important variables which determine who a person really is, how he behaves, thinks, reacts, makes decisions and how he acts in all areas of his life. The personality factors do not affect only the final consumer behaviour and buying decisions, but they affect all other groups of factors. On the personality of consumer depends how he perceives his culture, family, world around him, and of course, how he perceives the marketing stimuli and motives and how he responds to them. Human personality has typical patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that define an individual way of interacting with the physical and social environment (Atkinson, 2003). The personality has its own structure that is a composition of individual psychological characteristics.

Hans Eysenck's theory of personality is based primarily on physiology and genetics. Although he was a behaviorist who considered learned habits of great importance, he believed that personality differences grow out of our genetic inheritance. He is, therefore, primarily interested in what is usually called temperament.

Temperament represents the dimensions of an individual's personality that are largely present at birth, exist in most historical ages and most societies, and are stable as the individual develops. Temperament is an individual

variation that is biological or constitutional, remains with the individual, and is linked to differences in behavioral or expressive style (Bauer and Shea, 1998).

Temperament represents the characteristics of mental dynamics that are applied in the human behaviour and experiencing. The oldest structure of temperament is known since Hippocrates, who named four types of temperament (sanguine type, choleric type, phlegmatic type and melancholic type) according to the amount of four body fluids that are circulating in human bodies (blood, phlegm, gall and black gall). The ratio of these fluids affects human responses to the external stimuli. Carl G. Jung divided persons according to their temperament into two types depending on what is their attitude to the environment in which they are located. A person who is closer to the outside world is an extrovert and a person who has well developed inner world is an introvert. Hans J. Eysenck built his personality model on the above mentioned theories. He has supplemented the Jung's model with another two characteristics – emotional stability and emotional lability. Emotional stability refers to the stable mental balance of a person, lability, on the contrary, is characterized by the irritability, or agitation (Slamka, 2008). Temperamental traits are moderately stable across an individual's lifetime, though their expression might be mitigated by environmental and developmental variables (Genova-Latham, 2010). Humans are, however, in some measure able to learn how to control expressions of the temperament. According to Eysenck's typology, the two dimensions or axes, extroversion-introversion and neuroticism (emotional stability-lability) define four quadrants. These are made up of: stable extroverts, unstable extroverts, stable introverts and unstable introverts. Stable extrovert is a sanguine, stable introvert is a phlegmatic, unstable extrovert is a choleric and unstable introvert is a melancholic (Fig. 1).

For marketers and consumer psychologists it is very important to know individual types of temperament, because each temperament is convenient with different approach.

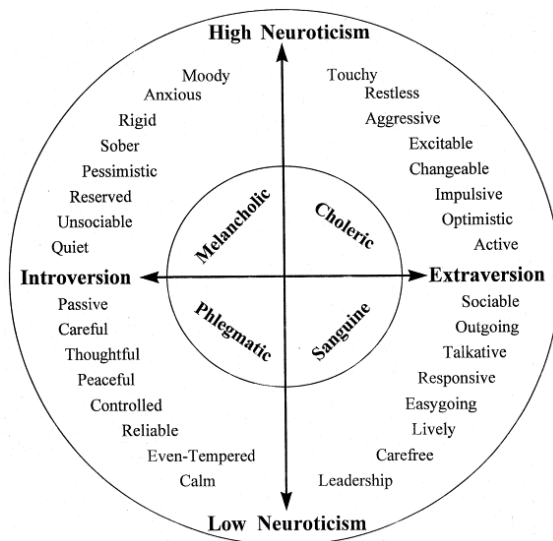


Fig. 1: Eysenck's model of personality

2 EMOTIONAL CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

The impact of emotions on judgements, evaluations and decisions has long been important for marketing and consumer psychology. The field's focus has progressed from demonstrations that emotions, like cognitions, have an impact on consumer behaviour, to more nuanced understandings of what drives the experience of discrete emotional states, how those discrete emotions uniquely affect decision making and the motivations that consumers might have to regulate their emotional states over time (Williams, 2013).

An emotions represents an important psychological phenomenon. Emotions are the result of not only phylogenetic but also of ontological evolution of individuals and are dealt with a variety of disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, neurophysiology, as well as economics and marketing (Vysekalová et al., 2014). An understanding of consumer behaviour have to be based on the knowledge of human emotions and include the paramount influence that emotions have on consumer decision-making.

An emotion is defined as a state of psychological arousal with cognitive aspects that is a consequence of specific context (Plutchik, 1997). Nakonečný (2012) characterizes emo-

tions according to their experiencing, as a mental state which is sometimes accompanied or followed by bodily changes, expressional demonstrations and specific behaviour. Emotions are subjective, the same stimulus can evoke different reactions in different individuals (Vysekalová et al., 2014).

We distinguish simple and complex emotions. Simple emotions are the same for all people, without regard to gender, age, race, culture, etc. We call them universal emotions. Ekman (2007) places among them six basic emotions – joy, anger, sadness, fear, surprise and disgust. Complex emotions represent different combinations of primary emotions (Histeroza and James, 2014). Most of emotions that influence consumer behaviour and decision-making are complex emotions. Nakonečný (2012) states that emotions integrate and organise the mental processes and they motivate human behaviour.

Emotions help to decide which information is relevant and which is not. Therefore, they also participate on decisions whether the information is remembered and under what circumstances it will be call out by an individual (Vysekalová et al., 2014). Most people believe that the choices they make result from a

rational analysis of available alternatives. In reality, however, emotions greatly influence and, in many cases, even determine our decisions. Emotion is a necessary ingredient to every decision. When we are confronted with a decision, emotions from previous, related experiences affix values to the options we are considering. These emotions create preferences which lead to our decision (Murray, 2013).

The influential role of emotion in consumer behaviour is well documented: fMRI neuroimaging shows that when evaluating brands, consumers primarily use emotions (personal feelings and experiences) rather than factual information. Advertising research reveals that emotional response to a commercial has far greater influence on a consumer's reported intent to buy a product than does the ad's content. Studies also show that positive emotions toward a brand have far greater influence on consumer loyalty than trust and other judgments which are based on a brand's attributes (Murray, 2013).

Emotions are the primary reason why consumers prefer some products. These products can create an emotional connection to the consumer. A brand is nothing more than a mental representation of a product in the consumer's mind. If the representation consists only of the product's attributes, features, and

other information, there are no emotional links to influence consumer preference and action. The richer is the emotional content of a brand's mental representation, the more likely the consumer will be a loyal user (Lindstrom, 2011).

Emotions result from sensory information. In the past 20 years, much research about human emotions were realised. Many researchers have explored sensory processes because they are convinced that sensory stimuli evoke different emotions and cause that consumers decide more emotionally (Bagozzi and Gopinath, 1999; Barsalou, 2008; Krishna and Raghurir, 1999; Krishna, 2006, 2012; Krishna and Schwarz, 2014; Lindstrom, 2011 and others). Mentioned studies indicate that the more sensory stimuli affect consumer, the more emotional is consumer's reaction on some product or brand. Emotions are, however, different in different people. Even though they are triggered by environmental (sensory) stimuli, the question remains how are emotions related to inherited characteristics of human personality. The term "emotionality" encompasses several variables, including predominance of an emotion in one's overall affect (mood), ability to regulate emotional responses (emotional self-regulation), and emotional responses themselves as elicited by specific situations (reactivity), see Genova-Latham (2010).

3 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

The main aim of this paper is to show the relationship between selected personality traits and emotional consumer behaviour on the market of products and services. We used two psychological tests (Eysenck personality questionnaire and author's scale of emotionality) and tested several factors that might have influenced emotional consumer reactions.

For the needs of the research Eysenck personality questionnaire revised – short form (EPQR-S) was used to assess the personality traits of a person, with the result sometimes referred to as the Eysenck's personality Inventory. It is a self-reported questionnaire that measures three dimensions of personality

– extroversion, neuroticism and psychoticism. The questionnaire consists of 48 items, 12 for each dimension (extroversion, neuroticism and psychoticism), and 12 for the lie scale. Each one of questions has a binary response (yes or no). Each dichotomous item is scored 1 or 0, and each scale has maximum possible score of 12 and minimum of 0.

The author's scale of emotionality is focused on the evaluation of emotional consumers' reactions and it also detects attitudes of consumers to emotional behaviour. It contains 11 items in which respondents express the degree of their acceptance of particular statements on the classic Likert-type scale, where 1 means

“strongly disagree” and 5 means “strongly agree”. The scale is a result of a factor analysis and its validity was verified on the sample of 70 probands (35 males and 35 females aged from 20 to 60 years). Every respondent gains a raw score from this scale (11–55 points). The higher is the gained score, the more emotional is the consumer. The reliability of the questionnaire was also verified on the pre-test sample. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is 0.65.

The sample consists of 182 respondents – 76 males and 106 females. All respondents are aged from 20 to 62 years. We selected this age group because we wanted to compare younger and older adults. All respondents are from Slovak republic, have Slovak nationality, live in Slovak republic and have minimally secondary education. 72 respondents have secondary education, 110 respondents have university education. 71 respondents live in the countryside, 111 respondents live in towns. Another characteristics of respondents are not important for our research.

With the use of Eysenck personality questionnaire we found out following personality traits of our respondents (Tab. 1–4).

The psychoticism dimension do not indicate any psychopathology, it just signals specific behavioral demonstrations such as higher aggression, egocentrism, inclinations to manipulating others, etc. The neuroticism very often assume borderline values, so the categorization of temperaments is approximate but sufficient for our study.

Several statistical methods were used in this study. For testing differences between individual groups of respondents, the one-way ANOVA and independent samples *t*-test (Student *t*-test)

were used. For determining the relationship between emotional consumer behaviour and selected personality characteristics, we used multiple hierarchical linear regression, the step-wise method.

Tab. 1: Temperament of respondents

Temperament	Frequency	%
Sanguine	79	43.4
Choleric	59	32.4
Phlegmatic	17	9.4
Melancholic	27	14.8
Total	182	100.0

Tab. 2: Extroversion/Introversion

E/I	Frequency	%
Extrovert	138	75.8
Introvert	44	24.2
Total	182	100.0

Tab. 3: Emotional stability/Emotional lability

Neuroticism	Frequency	%
High (lability)	114	62.6
Low (stability)	68	37.4
Total	182	100.0

Tab. 4: Psychoticism

Psychoticism	Frequency	%
High	0	0.0
Low	182	100.0
Total	182	100.0

4 RESULTS

To find out if there is a difference in emotional behaviour between four groups of respondents based on their temperament (sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, melancholic) we used one-way ANOVA (Tab. 5). Emotional reactions were discovered with the author’s scale of emotionality. Every respondent gained a score in the interval of 11–55 points. The higher is the gained score,

the more emotional is the consumer (the more emotional are his self-reported reactions).

There was a statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way ANOVA: $F(3, 178) = 31.516$, $p = 0.000$. We found out that there is a statistically significant difference in emotional behaviour among individual temperaments. A Scheffe post-hoc

Tab. 5: The result of ANOVA for emotionality as a dependent variable and temperament as a factor

Emotionality	Sum of squares	df	F	p
Between Groups	1,737.411	3	31.516	0.000
Within Groups	3,270.896	178		
Total	5,008.308	181		

Tab. 6: The difference in emotionality between males and females

	N	Mean	Standard deviation	t	df	p
Males	76	33.8	3.86	-7.292	180	0.000
Females	106	38.6	5.36	-7.292	180	0.000
Total	182					

test revealed that melancholics and choleric are more emotional than sanguines and all other temperament types are more emotional than phlegmatics. These results correspond with characteristics of individual temperaments.

To find out if there is a difference in emotionality between males and females, between older and younger adults and between respondents according to their residence, the independent samples *t*-tests were used (Tab. 6). The tested factors were chosen on the basis of previous psychological research.

We found out a statistically significant difference in emotionality between men and women. It can be assumed that females react more emotionally because of the evolution. Schmitt, Realo et al. (2008) claim that due to different evolutionary pressures, men may have evolved to be more risk taking and socially dominant, whereas women evolved to be more cautious and nurturant. Much research shows that women are more emotional and that their emotions work a little bit different than those in men. A cross-cultural research has shown gender differences on the domains and facets of the Big Five personality traits. For example, women consistently report higher neuroticism and openness to feelings, and men often report higher assertiveness (Costa et al., 2001). Women are more emotional in every sphere of life, so we can assume that female customers are more emotional, as well.

We also tested differences in emotionality according to respondents' age. Some psychological studies show differences in emotions of younger and older adults. Older adults use more passive

emotion-regulation strategies because of their motivation and experiences (Blanchard-Fields et al., 2004). We supposed older adults could have also more experiences on the market, so that they could be more rational. We found out that there is not a statistically significant difference between age groups of respondents. It can be assumed that age and experiences with purchasing goods on the market has no influence on consumers' emotional reactions mainly because there are always some new and exciting tools of marketing communication that can catch consumers' attention and emotions.

There is also no difference in emotional reactions between respondents according to their residence. Some psychological studies shows that introverts are more content in the countryside, while extroverts are more content in bigger cities which can lead to changes in the demographic structure. Our study did not prove that there are more extroverts in bigger towns and more introverts in the countryside, so there are also no differences in emotionality (joined with the temperament) among respondents.

For determining the relationship between emotional consumer behaviour and selected personality characteristics, we used multiple hierarchical linear regression (Tab. 7).

The multiple hierarchical linear regression, stepwise method, shows that two of three tested predictors of emotional behaviour are significant – extroversion and neuroticism. Neuroticism explains 17.6% of variance and extroversion 24.9% of variance of emotionality. The more respondents are emotionally unstable ($b = 0.827$) and the more they are extroverted

Tab. 7: Regression models for neuroticism, extroversion and psychoticism as predictors and emotionality as dependent variable (criterion)

Predictor	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ² -change	<i>b</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Neuroticism	0.419	0.176**	0.827	7.590	0.000
Extroversion	0.499	0.249**	0.419	4.170	0.000
Psychoticism			−0.138	−0.444	0.658
(Constant)			28.168		

Emotionality: $F_{\text{total}}(2, 179) = 29.656$; $p < 0.000$

($b = 0.419$), the more emotional is their behaviour on the market of products and services. Psychoticism is a dimension of personality that do not indicate any psychopathology, so we can assume that specific behavioral demonstrations can be present in every temperament type.

These findings also correspond with the characteristics of individual temperaments and with our results of ANOVA. A Scheffe post-hoc test revealed that melancholics and choleric are more emotional than other temperament

types. These two temperament types, of which one is extroverted and one is introverted, are emotionally unstable and emotional in many life spheres and situations. It follows from their basic characteristics. Choleric are more impulsive than other temperaments and melancholics are more sensitive. We also found out that all temperament types are more emotional than phlegmatics, so we consider our results of regression analysis as reliable.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

We found out that two of three tested personality predictors are significant – extroversion and neuroticism. The higher the score that respondents reach in the scales of extroversion and neuroticism was, the more emotional was their behaviour and decision making. In that connection, there are also differences between individual temperaments. Choleric and melancholic react more emotionally than other two temperaments. Phlegmatic react and behave the least emotionally. Another probed factors do not have influence on emotional consumer behaviour.

We confirmed the results of our previous research, when we found out, on the sample of 100 respondents, that personality traits and temperament are related with emotional behaviour. Emotions help to decide which information is relevant and which is not. Despite some terminological dispute, emotional behaviour can be considered in many cases also as irrational. The strongest are the emotions, the less rational is consumer behaviour (Rybanská et al., 2015).

This paper follows some previous studies that reached similar results. Fossum and Barrett (2000) researched the relationship between personality and emotions. Personality characteristics and emotional experiences contain both descriptive and evaluative aspects. These authors found out that there is a relationship between neuroticism and negative affect and also a relationship between extroversion and positive affect. Matzler, Faullant et al. (2005) examined the relationship between personality traits, emotions and consumer self-satisfaction. The demonstrated relationships among personality, consumption-based emotions and satisfaction offer insight into fundamental and stable differences in how consumers process consumption experiences. They not only confirm previous findings that emotions play a crucial role in satisfaction, but also reveal their dependence on customers' individual predisposition. This study evidences that a direct relationship between personality and self-satisfaction does exist, over the mediating system of emotions. Mogilner et al. (2013) researched the relation-

ship between particular emotion (happiness) and consumer behaviour. They found out that emotions, such as happiness, can have a powerful influence on choice.

All above mentioned papers suggest that there is a strong bond between personality of consumer, emotions and particular behaviour on the market. Our research suggests that every consumer have some specific emotional reactions depended on his personality traits, or

temperament. That is why it is very important for marketers to know more about human personality. If we can understand how human emotions based on personality works, we can get closer to our customers. Furthermore research should be addressed to investigate whether people, based on personality traits, also share common value patterns which would allow a segmentation approach on personality traits.

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