

A research on consumer satisfaction and shopping patterns of households in the North Eastern Savo region

Ossi Taavitsainen

Bachelor's Thesis

Field of Study Social Sciences, Business and Administration			
Degree Programme Degree Programme in International Business			
Author Ossi Taavitsainen			
Title of Thesis A research on consumer satisfaction and shopping patterns of households in the North Eastern Savo region			
Date	03/12/2015	Pages/Appendices	46/3
Supervisor(s) Kaisa Hämäläinen			
Client Organisation/Partners Jari Kosonen – Business advisor, Town of Juankoski			
<p>Abstract</p> <p>This Bachelor's thesis deals with shopping patterns of consumers and their satisfaction with local supply of goods in the North Eastern Savo region in Finland. The thesis was conducted as a follow-up research to the original research made by a student of the University of Eastern Finland in 2009-2010. The theoretical part of the thesis consists of two main topics: purchase behavior of consumers and development of online shopping. The empirical part is based on a survey, conducted among consumer households in the region.</p> <p>In the survey, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The goal of the survey was to find out what, where, how much and how often the consumers prefer to buy different products, what are the most significant reasons to buy products outside their hometown and what are the most important sources of information. In addition, the goal was to discover potential to develop local supply of goods. The information like this can help the entrepreneurs, when they plan to make new investments and developing their business. The research results showed that satisfaction with the current local supply of goods in the region varies widely. Most common reasons to make purchases elsewhere are related to lack of supply and high price level in the hometown's shops. Older consumers are generally more satisfied, but point out good service, while younger consumers tend to be more demanding and willing to travel for shopping elsewhere. The role of the internet has become significant, both as a shopping place as well as an information channel.</p> <p>Consumers are becoming more demanding and price conscious. Therefore, cities like Kuopio and online stores are becoming more and more attractive shopping places, especially when it comes to specialty products. However, development of local supply in rural areas should not be stopped and forgotten. Many consumers are truly worried about shrinking of the supply. Consumers find it important to have at least the everyday essentials (food, medicine etc.) easily available in their hometown. Entrepreneurs face challenges in adapting the supply to meet the demand and expectations of consumers, but still keeping the business profitable.</p>			
Keywords Consumer, rural area			

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	7
1.1	Background of the research	7
1.2	The research problem and objectives	7
1.3	Structure of the report.....	8
2	PURCHASE BEHAVIOR OF CONSUMERS.....	9
2.1	Factors affecting consumer behavior.....	9
2.2	Consumer decision making process.....	13
2.3	Consumer in a rural area	17
3	DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE SHOPPING.....	19
3.1	Internet transforms commerce	19
3.2	Online shopping in Finland	19
3.3	Online shopping in Europe and worldwide	22
4	THE REGION'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT	24
4.1	North Eastern Savo region	24
4.2	New shopping facilities nearby the region.....	24
4.3	Attractiveness of Kuopio	25
5	RESEARCH METHODS	26
5.1	Implementation of scientific research	26
5.2	Particular research method and data collection	26
6	SHOPPING PATTERNS OF THE HOUSEHOLDS IN THE NORTH EASTERN SAVO REGION	28
6.1	Background information of the respondents.....	28
6.2	Shopping patterns in the region.....	30
6.3	Distribution of purchases between each town	32
6.4	Online purchases.....	33
7	LOCAL SUPPLY OF GOODS IN THE NORTH EASTERN SAVO REGION	35
7.1	Lacks in the supply of goods and development opportunities	35
7.2	The most important sources of information about shopping facilities	38
7.3	Internet and social media as sources of information	39
8	CONCLUSIONS	41
8.1	Summary.....	41
8.2	Thinking	42
8.3	Further research opportunities.....	43
	REFERENCES.....	45

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Cover letter.

Appendix 2. Survey form.

Appendix 3. Survey form (translated into English).

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. Factors affecting consumer buying behavior.

FIGURE 2. Steps in consumer decision making process.

FIGURE 3. Share of online buyers of sports equipment, clothing and shoes by area during the years 2006-2014.

FIGURE 4. Share of online buyers of furniture, textiles, toys, consumer electronics, household appliances and car related products by area during the years 2006-2014.

FIGURE 5. Growth of online shopping worldwide in 2013.

FIGURE 6. Location and the towns (including Nilsiä) of the North Eastern Savo region.

FIGURE 7. Information what people most commonly search on company web sites.

TABLE 1. The municipalities' share of all respondents.

TABLE 2. The distribution of respondents by age as percentage.

TABLE 3. The monthly gross income distribution of respondent households.

TABLE 4. The most significant reasons for shopping outside own hometown.

TABLE 5. Consideration of time and costs, when choosing the shopping place.

TABLE 6. Sources of information about local companies and entrepreneurs.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the research

This is a follow-up research for the original research made by Sirpa Lintunen, a student from the University of Eastern Finland, in 2009-2010. The original research is named "The shopping patterns of households and the local supply of goods in the North Eastern Savo region".

On the background of the previous research was a concern about clientele and its sustainability, among entrepreneurs in small towns and in rural areas. The trend in Finland has been that shops, bigger and smaller, are more centralized. They create huge not only shopping, but also entertainment entities, mostly near large cities. At the same time, migration from countryside to large cities has been high. Cities have therefore increased their attractiveness as shopping destinations.

The previous research about 5 years ago found out where and how much the households in the North Eastern Savo region spend money in different areas. It offered information about the shopping patterns of households and examined their satisfaction with local supply of goods and services. Now, 5 years after the original research, client organization the town of Juankoski, was keen to find out the current situation and to see possible changes on it.

1.2 The research problem and objectives

The purpose of this research is to find answers to questions like: What kind of products consumers buy mostly in their hometown? What do they buy elsewhere? What are the main reasons for shopping elsewhere? What are their opinions about current supply of goods and services in their hometown? What kind of development opportunities there are? What kind of sources of information they prefer to use?

The objective is to collect information from the consumers living in the area. This will help to understand the needs and behavior of the consumers. The goal is to find information, which can be beneficial for the entrepreneurs operating in the region. This information will help the entrepreneurs to develop their business and respond better to the customers' needs.

1.3 Structure of the report

The theoretical content in this thesis consists of two main topics; purchase behavior of consumers and development of online shopping. The first topic deals with different factors affecting to consumer's buying decisions. It also describes the process with different stages, which a consumer goes through when making decisions. One chapter explains the special circumstances of a rural area and how they affect to a consumer's purchase behavior. This chapter is written basing on the writer's own experience. The second topic deals with online shopping and its rapid growth locally and globally. The topic is interesting because especially in areas, where the supply of goods is very limited, online trade could be expected to be in high trend. Therefore, it was interesting to discover, if the research results support this assumption.

In order to facilitate understanding of a reader, who doesn't know the area well, chapter 4 provides a brief description of the region this research covers. The definitions of different research methods used in this research are provided in chapter 5. It explains also how the planning and implementation of data collection and analysis was made.

Chapters 6 and 7 deal with the research results. There are 3 main topics, of which the data was collected; firstly the shopping patterns of consumers, secondly the satisfaction with the current local supply of goods and thirdly the information sources. For the last one, a special attention was given to internet as a source of information.

Conclusion chapter brings up and summarizes the most essential findings. It is followed by thinking and ideas about what kind of development potential there is and how it could be used. The content of the chapter is based on the quantitative and qualitative data (open questions and comments) collected from the respondents, a discussion with the client representative and the writer's own thinking. At the end, some suggestions for similar future research projects are provided. The cover letter (Appendix 1) and the survey form (Appendix 2), which were used for data collection from the consumers, can be found as appendices. In addition to these, a translation of the survey form (Appendix 3) into English is provided.

2 PURCHASE BEHAVIOR OF CONSUMERS

2.1 Factors affecting consumer behavior

A large number of different factors affect consumer behavior. As the figure (FIGURE 1.) below shows, the factors can be divided into four main categories which are cultural factors, social factors, personal factors and psychological factors. Mostly these factors are such which marketers cannot control, but they must be taken into account when designing marketing strategies. Each category of factors is explained further below the figure. (Kotler, 2008, p. 239.)

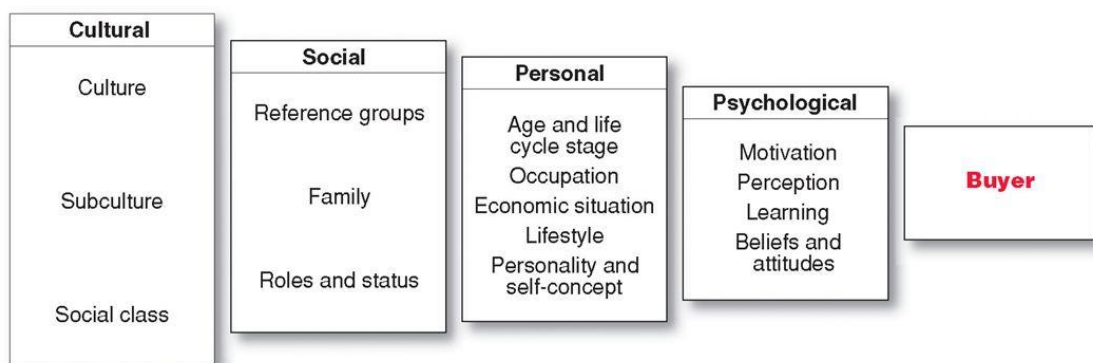


FIGURE 1. Factors affecting consumer buying behavior.

(Gupta, 2012.)

Cultural factors

The factors that have the deepest and broadest influence on consumer behavior are cultural factors. A human, as growing up in a society, learns certain kind of culture. Wants and behaviors, basic values and perceptions are learned from important institutions and maybe the most importantly from the family. In order to imagine and create new products, marketers continuously try to spot cultural shifts. This is a phenomenon, in which a large amount of people's perceptions, behaviors and values evolve into certain direction. This opens opportunities and a kind of gap in the market, as the demand of certain kinds of products increases. (Kotler, 2008, p. 240-241.)

Cultures usually contain smaller subcultures. They include for example religions, nationalities, racial groups and geographic regions. A group of people with similar beliefs and perceptions, common experiences in life and shared values form a subculture. Marketers can design and aim tailored marketing campaigns to different segments made up by subcultures. (Kotler, 2008, p.241.)

Social class also tends to affect buying behavior in many cases. Social classes are divisions of members in the society according similar values, behaviors and interests. There are multiple different social class classifications and they're mostly based on a person's position in the labour market. In some cultures, social class gives people a distinctive role and therefore steers more buying behavior. (Kotler, 2008, p. 242-243.)

Social factors

Groups have often significant influence on a person's behavior. Membership groups are those, to which a person belongs and therefore have a direct influence on behavior due to high interaction. Primary groups, such as family, neighbors, friends and workmates, have the greatest influence due to regular interaction. Secondary, though important groups include for example professional associations and other groups with less regular and more formal interaction. (Kotler, 2008, p. 244.)

Reference groups have often significant effect on a person's behavior and attitudes. A person doesn't have to belong to those groups, but still get influenced by it. Groups to which a person would like to belong are called aspirational groups. "Marketers try to identify the reference groups of their target markets. Reference groups influence a person in at least three ways. They expose the person to new behaviours and lifestyles. They influence the person's attitudes and self-concept because he or she wants to 'fit in'. They also create pressures to conform that may affect the person's product and brand choices." (Kotler, 2008, p. 244). As an example a brand called Salomon, manufacturing equipment for outdoor activities and adventure sports, targets their products to outdoor enthusiasts and athletic people. The reference groups in this case are for instance competitive athletes (xc-skiers, trail-runners etc.), with whom Salomon has established partnerships. These athletes play an important role in Salomon's marketing strategy, as the company communicates through them. Social networking has become a very effective marketing channel. The sponsored athletes become kind of opinion leaders, therefore affecting to consumer behavior. This is just in addition to companies' own and direct marketing through social networking. (Kotler, 2008, p. 244-245.)

Family members can have a strong influence on buying behavior. As a person grows up, an orientation towards economics, politics and religion for example, are provided by the parents. It is natural that these facts somehow guide buying behavior to certain way. Significance of the influence depends on the activeness of interaction between

these parties. In most cases it weakens when a person gets older, moves to his/her own home and starts an own family. However in many countries and cultures, parents' relationship to their children remains very strong and parents may continue living with the children longer. Therefore their influence also remains stronger. "The family of procreation – the buyer's spouse and children – has a more direct influence on everyday buying behaviour. This family is the most important consumer buying organisation in society and it has been researched extensively." (Kotler, 2008, p. 247). Each party (husband, wife and children) in this organization has some role in the buying process. According to Kotler, "the wife is traditionally the main purchasing agent for the family, especially in the areas of food, household products and clothing". (Kotler, 2008, p. 247). This perception is widely agreed and shared, but the roles show some signs of change, when society structures and consumer lifestyles are evolving. Husbands' willingness and interest to be more involved in the family's purchasing is increasing. (Kotler, 2008, p. 247.)

As mentioned before, people take different roles in a buying process. Many people participating and influencing a buying process together form a decision making unit (DMU). One person can play one or more roles in this sometimes complex system. There are five different roles in the DMU. Initiator is the person who first comes up with an idea of buying a certain product or service. Influencer is a person who influences the buying decision by giving an advice or telling his view about the product. Decider is the one who makes the final decision or a part of it concerning what, where or how to buy or whether to buy at all. Buyer is the one who takes care of the actual purchase (payment). User is the person who uses or consumes a product or service. The distribution of roles in the DMU often varies according to what kind of product the process concerns. For example a process and the DMU concerning buying of a smartphone is likely to be more complex than women's underwear. (Kotler, 2008, p. 248-249.)

People have different roles also as members of society. Definition of the role depends on what activities the people around the person expect him/her to perform. One person can have multiple roles at the same time for example a father, husband and CEO. "Each role carries a status reflecting the general esteem given to it by society." (Kotler, 2008, p. 250). People often communicate their status by product or brand choices, such as clothes, car etc. (Kotler, 2008, p. 250.)

Personal factors

A person passes through different life-cycle stages as he/she matures over time and so changes the products and services they buy. Life-cycle stages are based mostly on age and family situation, but there are also some identified psychological life-cycle stages. They are changes in a person's behavior and way to see things and therefore may affect to purchase decisions. Lifestyles and personal values are relatively permanent factors affecting buying patterns, but in some ways they evolve too over time. Occupation of a person affects the goods and services he/she buys. For example office workers tend to buy smart clothes, whereas nature tourist guides buy functional and weatherproof clothes. Economic circumstances are also one major factor affecting product and brand buying decisions. Expensive brands, such as Rolex watches, McLaren cars and luxury hotels are aimed to consumers with a lot of money. Whereas a wealthy person with enough disposable income tends to choose an expensive car, a person with an average income is kind of forced to go for a less expensive one. Redesigning, repositioning and repricing are marketers' ways to react to changing economic situations in order to keep up the demand and the products competitive. (Kotler, 2008, p. 250-252.)

A brand or a product is a great way to communicate one's personality. "Personality refers to the unique psychological characteristics that lead to relatively consistent and lasting responses to one's own environment. Personality is usually described in terms of traits such as self-confidence, dominance, sociability, autonomy, defensiveness, adaptability and aggressiveness." (Kotler, 2008, p. 253). Brands have also personalities and similar characteristics with humans. When looking at a brand as a person, a consumer can match up with it. Self-concept is a definition for a person's complex mental picture how he/she views himself/herself. Consumer may have to balance between three different self-concepts which are; actual self-concept (how the person views himself), ideal self-concept (how the person would like to view himself) and others' self-concept (how the person thinks other people see him). These all can lead to different buying decision. (Kotler, 2008, p. 253-254.)

Psychological factors

Consumers have needs and they buy products and services in order to satisfy those needs. But not only a need itself is enough to make a buying decision. A consumer must have motivation. A need becomes a motive when it's pressing the person enough and therefore drives him to seek satisfaction of the particular need. Motives

are often subconscious and may not be fully understood even by the buyer himself. (Kotler, 2008, p. 255.)

When a person is motivated enough, he is willing to act. What influences the person's way to act is his perception of the situation. While making a perception, a person kind of filters and interprets information to form a relevant and meaningful picture of the situation. People sense and see things in an individual way and therefore; "People can form different perceptions of the same stimulus because of three perceptual processes: selective attention, selective distortion and selective retention." (Kotler, 2008, p. 258). People are estimated to be exposed to between 3000 and 5000 ad messages every day. As we cannot pay attention to all, most of them are ignored. This is called selective attention. Selective distortion describes how people adapt information to their personal meanings. They usually tend to interpret information so that it supports their current beliefs. People cannot remember everything they learn. If the information supports their beliefs and attitudes, it's more likely to remain in the person's memory than contradictory information. This is the process of selective retention. (Kotler, 2008, p. 258-259.)

People learn by acting and act according to what they have learned. Own personal experiences can have a great influence on buying behavior and decisions. Positive and rewarding experiences lead often to choosing the same brand or product in the future. The same applies of course vice versa. (Kotler, 2008, p. 260.)

The last factors in this category are beliefs and attitudes. These are the creators of product and brand images. Beliefs are a person's descriptive thoughts about something. "Beliefs may be based on real knowledge, opinion or faith, and may or may not carry an emotional charge." (Kotler, 2008, p. 260). Attitudes are a person's feelings, tendencies and evaluations towards an object or idea. (Kotler, 2008, p. 260.)

2.2 Consumer decision making process

When a consumer is making purchase decision of a product or service, he/she moves through certain steps. This is called consumer decision making process. The figure below demonstrates the process and the order of different steps. There are five main steps in this process and each of them is explained further below the figure (FIGURE 2.). The process doesn't always follow all the steps and doesn't always lead to purchase of a product. For example, it is possible that the consumer's attention

moves to another activity. This kind of model can be applied not only to purchase of a product or service, but also to selection of a purchase place. There are two examples below the explanations of the steps. The first example describes the process concerning purchase of a product and the second one describes the process concerning selection of a purchase place. (Foxall, 1998, p. 26-27.)

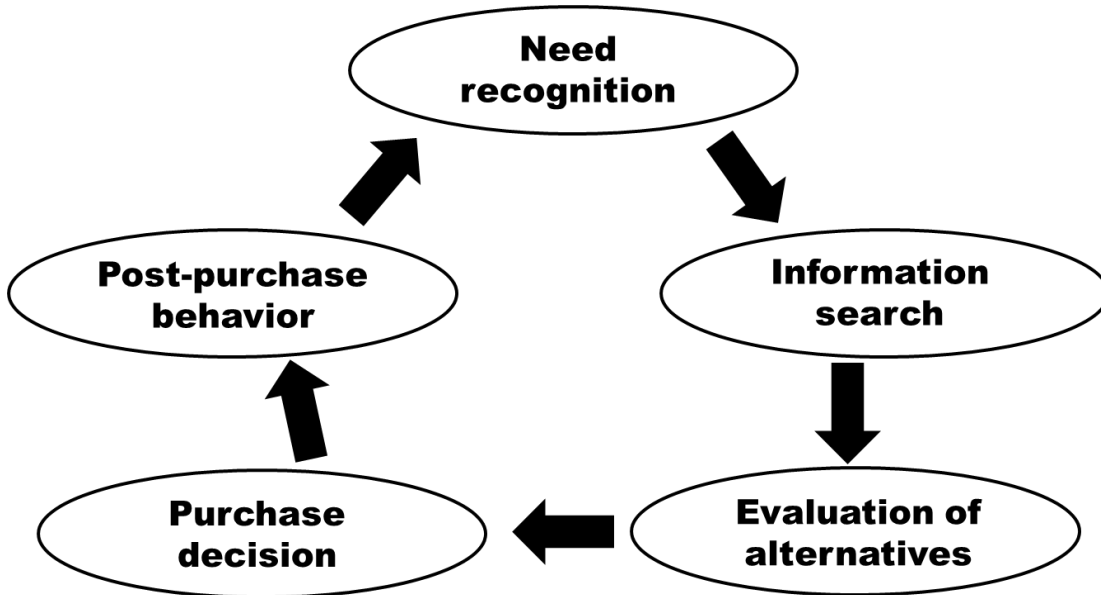


FIGURE 2. Steps in consumer decision making process.

Need recognition

All consumers have wants, but the fact is that we cannot get all we want. Some wants become needs. Consumers justify for themselves why they should buy a certain product or service. This is called need recognition or need awareness. Basically this means that a consumer has a need and enough motivation to satisfy the need. For marketers, it's difficult to create new wants and needs, but easier and more effective is to stimulate wants that already exist through different marketing means. (Foxall, 1998, p. 26.)

Information search

Once a consumer has recognized the need, he/she starts searching for different possibilities and alternatives to satisfy the need. There are multiple different sources for finding information. Internet with various search engines opens the doors to endless amount of data about different products and services, including tests, reviews and comparisons. However, many of them can be manipulated in a way or another. A consumer faces a challenge when trying to filter the facts out among incorrect or ma-

nipulated information. Sales personnel in stores are usually willing to offer information about different products and help customer to find a suitable product. Friends, relatives, acquaintances and so on can often offer valuable information. They generally speak about their own personal experiences. Talking with them is likely to be easier than with an unknown sales person. (Foxall, 1998, p. 26-27.)

Evaluation of alternatives

After searching information about different alternatives, it's time to evaluate them. Each product or service has its own characteristics concerning for example the brand, features, quality, price, country of origin etc. A consumer's personal values, attitudes and experiences steer the evaluation of these characteristics. A budget, in other words the disposable income, also has a significant effect on the evaluation and may limit the amount of alternatives. (Foxall, 1998, p. 26-27.)

Purchase decision

After evaluation of different alternatives, a consumer makes a decision whether to buy or not to buy a product. In most cases it's impossible to have it all in a product. Therefore, making a product choice is often a compromise. A consumer generally chooses a product, which he/she believes to have the most relevant features, to satisfy the need and which he/she can afford to buy. Purchase decision phase includes also the purchase act itself and payment of the product. It's basically the moment when ownership of the product moves from the seller to the buyer. (Foxall, 1998, p. 26-27.)

Post-purchase behavior

When the purchase act has taken place, it's time to evaluate whether it was a good decision to purchase the product or not. A consumer thinks now, if the product satisfies the need it's intended to do and how well it does it. Most products are not made to last forever and they have a certain lifecycle. This often leads to repetition of needs. The product either comes to the end of its lifecycle or may become outdated and is therefore incapable to execute the task it's intended to do. If the need for the product still exists, the consumer has to buy a new product. The decision making process starts again from the beginning, but from different circumstances because the consumer is more experienced. This stage opens an opportunity for the company to build customer loyalty. Taking care of the customer satisfaction and developing the

product or reforming the product range are essential activities. Already existing customers are also more likely to bring increase in sales than new customers. (Foxall, 1998, p. 27.)

Example 1: Decision making process concerning purchase of a product

John is a 35 years old man, who is considering of buying a smartphone. John has never had a smartphone before. All his friends have a smartphone and have suggested John to buy one also. John thinks that he could be easier in contact with his friends and relatives, if he had a smartphone. Furthermore his old phone's battery doesn't last long anymore and there's not a new battery available to replace it anymore.

John has searched information of the phones on internet and been discussing with his friends about different alternatives. Now he has decided to choose between 3 models; Samsung, Sony and Apple iPhone. The iPhone is the most expensive, Samsung is the cheapest and Sony is in the middle. John's friend has an iPhone and likes it a lot. John considers it a bit too expensive for his budget. Another friend had a Samsung, but it had just got broken, as he accidentally dropped it into a lake. Sony is waterproof and has got good reviews in multiple magazines and from other reviewers.

One of John's hobbies is sailing and he likes to spend time on lakes. Finally he decides to buy the Sony because of its waterproofness and a fair price. John starts using the phone and evaluates whether it was a good purchase or not. It's a long process, which continues at least until the phone reaches the end of its life cycle. Then John has a need for a new smartphone. Or maybe he doesn't want to buy a new smartphone, but prefers just a normal one. Anyway, he needs a phone. The same process starts again from the beginning.

Example 2: Decision making process concerning a purchase place

John has decided to buy a Sony smartphone. Now he has to decide, where to buy it. John lives in a small town of 10000 inhabitants. There's only one electronics store in the town and it happens to have the particular phone that John wants in stock. However the price is 50 € more expensive than the one what John has seen in a web store. A large electronics store in a city, 80 km from John's home, has advertised the

phone for the same price than on internet. John has now 3 alternatives to choose from and evaluates them.

John decides that he will not buy the phone on internet because he appreciates personal service in store. Like it's going to be his first smartphone, he thinks he may need assistance with some features at the beginning. John has a car and would be able to drive to the city and buy the phone there. He calculates that the cost of fuel for going and coming back is about 20 €. It is winter time and the roads are icy. John prefers to avoid excessive driving in those conditions. John knows the shopkeeper in his hometown, as he's the father of John's friend. He goes to the shop see the product. The shopkeeper is friendly and answers to all the questions John has concerning the product.

Finally John decides to buy the phone from the local shop. By doing so, he supports local entrepreneurship in his hometown. As a surprise, the shopkeeper offers John a protective case for the phone, free of charge. John leaves the shop satisfied and starts using the new phone. After a few weeks he has a problem with the speaker of the phone. He takes the phone back to the shop and explains the problem. The shopkeeper sends the phone to the manufacturer for maintenance and gives John a spare phone, while he's waiting to have his own back. The phone arrives after a couple of weeks and John is satisfied again. The time goes by and John has been building a customer relationship with the shopkeeper. He considers it a potential place to buy his next phone (or any other product) too.

2.3 Consumer in a rural area

In this research, the term rural area is used to describe areas, which are located outside large cities (for example Kuopio). It includes the inhabited centers of small towns, less densely populated areas as well as very remote areas. Therefore all the five towns this research is dealing with are considered as rural area.

Supply must follow the demand. As the number of inhabitants in rural areas is smaller than in large cities, the variety of products and services available is also limited. Prices of products also tend to be often higher than in large supermarkets and shops with higher sales volume. This can be partly a cause of monopoly status, but in many cases, fixed operating costs and relatively low sales volumes force the shops to keep

certain price level. Another fact is that large supermarket chains can offer lower selling prices due to large purchase quantities and therefore lower purchase prices.

Distances in rural areas are often long. People have often their job located in another town than where they live. In some cases, a home may be located closer to an inhabited center of another municipality than the actual home town. Public transportation is relatively limited and may not reach some areas at all. People who live far from inhabited centers are forced to have a car in order to be able to do shopping and take care of other affairs. Due to these circumstances, it is natural that many consumers do at least a part of their shopping in other towns.

3 DEVELOPMENT OF ONLINE SHOPPING

3.1 Internet transforms commerce

Modern technology offers plenty of opportunities for online shopping. Technology has become easily available for a large crowd and more and more people are familiar with it. Online shopping brings huge product ranges available equally for all the internet users, not depending on where they live. Competition has been transformed from local to global. Basically the only limiting factors are the type of equipment (PC, tablet-computer etc.) available for use and the quality/speed of internet connection.

Companies have put lots of efforts in development of their web stores. Competition on the sector is brutal. Consumers benefit from this situation, when companies are competing of customers. Some companies have specialized in running only online business. Quite often a company has one or more physical sites (stores) and in addition to that, a web store. A customer has lots of methods of delivery to choose from. He can buy a product on internet and collect it in a store later on. He may decide to wait a few days and choose a free delivery to a post office or corresponding. Or he may pay a little extra for the delivery and receive the shipment straight home on the following day. Large is also the variety of payment methods. In many cases, consumer don't need to have a credit card anymore, as the payment can often be made via internet bank, PayPal, cash on delivery etc.

Internet is also a powerful channel of information. It is easy for a consumer to compare prices and different models of a product. Internet and for example YouTube is full of product reviews, tests and comparisons. Consumers can easily find the certain and relevant information precisely of the product they need. The role of a salesperson (in a store) as an expert and information provider is not anymore as significant as it used to be. After comparison and consideration of alternatives, a consumer can choose the purchase place which they find the most convenient.

3.2 Online shopping in Finland

Statistics Finland has followed the development of popularity of online shopping in Finland. Their figures from 2014 show that more than 50 % of Finnish consumers (ages 16-74) do shopping online. In 2009, the share of online shoppers was less than 40 %. The numbers are based on a survey, where consumers have been asked, if

they have purchased or ordered products or services during the last 12 months. Relatively the most active online shoppers are consumers in ages 25-34 and 35-44. Consumers in ages 16-24, as well as 45-54 are also active online shoppers. Concerning the older consumers, the numbers are significantly lower, but they have increased fast since 2009. (Statistics Finland, 2014.)

The most online purchased product or service categories are accommodation services, travel tickets and services, clothes and footwear, entertainment and culture tickets and games of chance (gambling). The most significant growth has been in clothes and footwear, when comparing the numbers in 2010 and 2014. (Statistics Finland, 2014.)

The specific figures concerning different product categories show, how the popularity of online shopping has increased among consumers living in areas with different population density. The figure (FIGURE 3.) below shows that the consumers living in rural and less densely populated areas, were among the most active online shoppers in the category of sports equipment, clothes and footwear in 2014. As an example, 12 % of the consumers (ages 16-64) in rural areas had bought these products online during the last 12 months in 2006. According to the latest numbers from 2014, the corresponding number is 51 %. This category has been one of the fastest growing in online trade. Another explaining factor to this phenomenon is location far from large shopping centers and therefore lower supply in the area. The figures (FIGURES 3 and 4) are in Finnish language, but the explanations can be found below each figure. (Statistics Finland, 2014.)

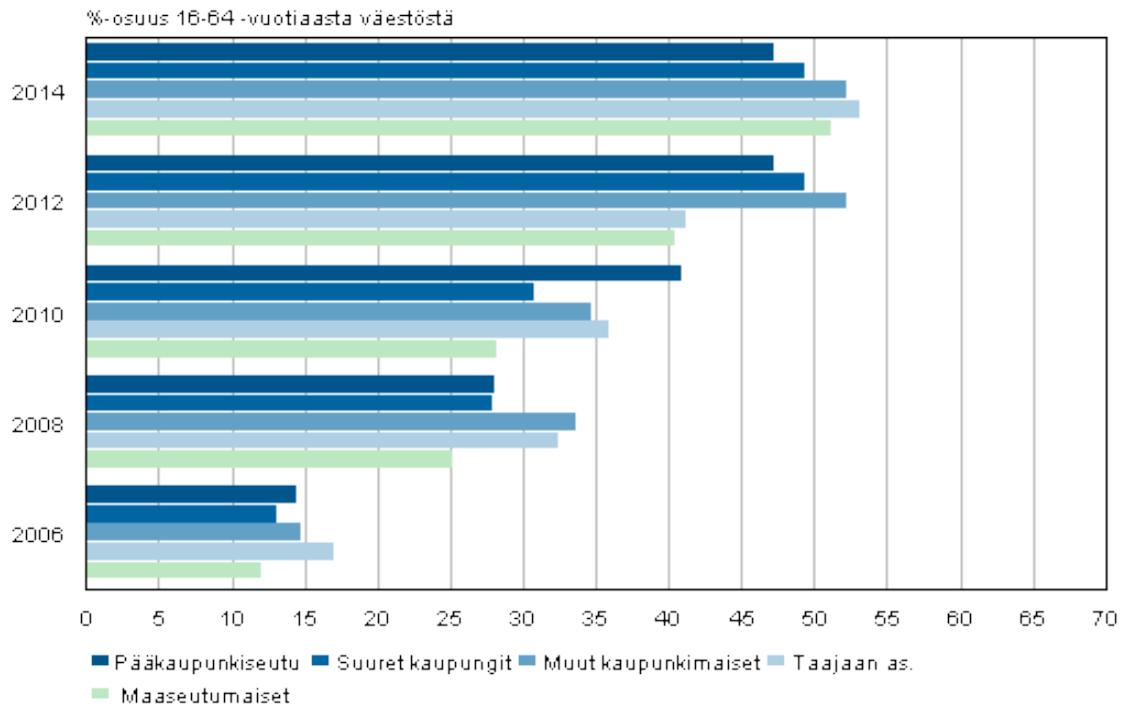


FIGURE 3. Share of online buyers* of sports equipment, clothes and footwear by area** during the years 2006-2014.

(Statistics Finland, 2014.)

* Percentage share of the population 16-64 years of age.

** Darkness of the color indicating the inhabitant density of the area.

The darkest tone = metropolitan area, the lightest tone = rural area.

When looking at the categories of furniture, textiles, toys, consumer electronics, household appliances and car related products (FIGURE 4.), the development of the numbers is quite similar, but less densely populated areas are highlighted even more. Consumer households in these areas are usually families, which increases the demand of these products. Long distances make the transportation of large items more difficult, which increases the attractiveness of online shopping. Households in these areas have also more likely one or more cars and probably other vehicles. That naturally increases the demand of spare parts and other car related products. (Statistics Finland, 2014.)

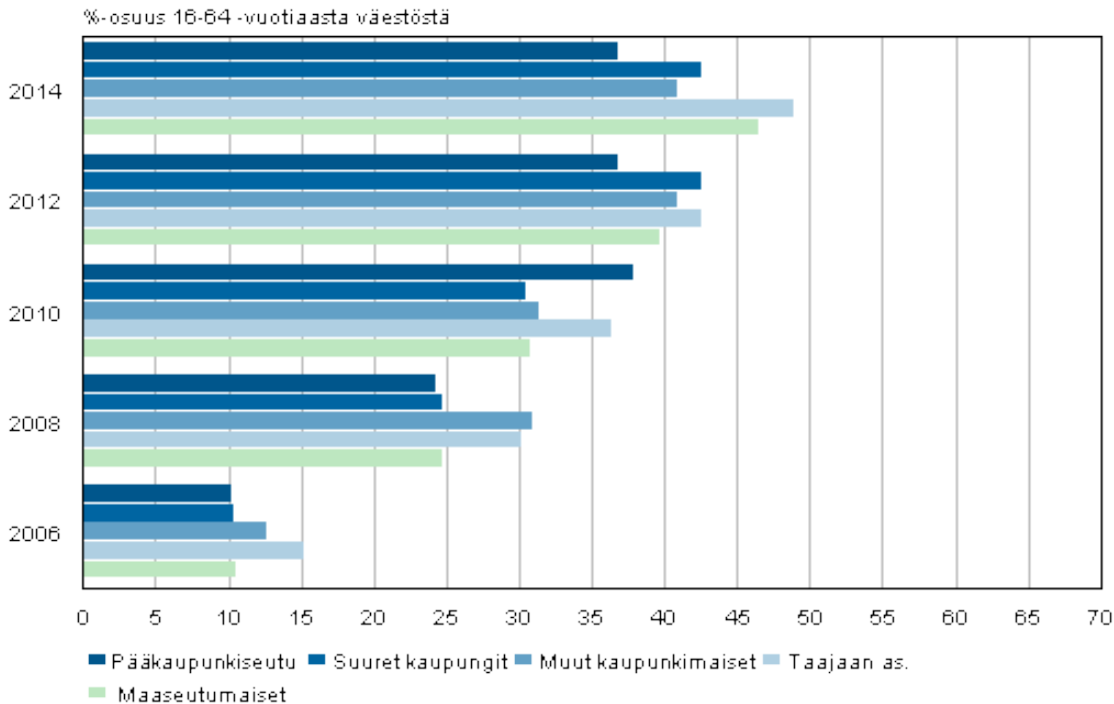


FIGURE 4. Share of online buyers* of furniture, textiles, toys, consumer electronics, household appliances and car related products by area** during the years 2006-2014.

(Statistics Finland, 2014.)

* Percentage share of the population 16-64 years of age.

** Darkness of the color indicating the inhabitant density of the area.

The darkest tone = metropolitan area, the lightest tone = rural area.

Despite the weakened purchase power of consumers in Finland, the domestic online trade has continued its growth. The value of orders has been increased by 6,3 % in 2014 compared to 2013. Finland is still left far behind in this matter from the rest of the world, where online trade is growing even faster. This is partly due to that most of the online trade companies in Finland sell their products only domestically. (Vilkas, 2015.)

3.3 Online shopping in Europe and worldwide

The growth numbers of online shopping globally has been massive. From 2012 to 2013, the value of online trade globally grew by 24 %. On the following year, the growth reached still impressive 23 % and is expected to continue on the years to come. The largest growth has been occurred in Asia-Pacific area, which has now

become the number one area in terms of value of the trade. The growth in 2013 was almost 45 % compared to previous year. China and its online trade giants have naturally been the most significant drivers for this development. It is followed by Europe and North America, which also have recorded good growth numbers. Other parts of the world like Latin America and Africa have still much smaller role in the global online trade, but the relative growth in those areas has been remarkable. (Finnish Commerce Federation, 2015.)



FIGURE 5. Growth of online shopping worldwide in 2013.
(Finnish Commerce Federation, 2015.)

In 2013, the top 3 online trade countries (in terms of value) were the USA, China and the United Kingdom. However, it has been estimated that today China has conquered the first place and is ought to keep it quite a while. North Americans and Europeans used the most money on online purchases in 2013, on average 2000 dollars per consumer per year. As a single country, the UK had the largest consumption per consumer, 3471 dollars. (Finnish Commerce Federation, 2015.)

4 THE REGION'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

4.1 North Eastern Savo region

The North Eastern Savo region is a part of the North Savo region. It covers 4 towns, which are Juankoski, Kaavi, Rautavaara and Tuusniemi. The fifth town, Nilsjä, shown on the map (FIGURE 6.) below, is not officially a part of the North Eastern Savo region anymore, as it became a part of Kuopio in 2013. Due to its geographical location and the fact that it participated in the original research in 2009, Nilsjä took part also in this research as one of the 5 towns.



FIGURE 6. Location and the towns (including Nilsjä) of the North Eastern Savo region.

(Ministry of Employment and the Economy.)

4.2 New shopping facilities nearby the region

K-group is one of the major trade groups in Finland. The group opened a new supermarket, K-citymarket Päiväranta, on summer 2008. It is located on the north side of the inhabited center of the city of Kuopio. It is also located right next to the highway no. 5, which is one of the main routes in Finland. Thanks to this, the supermarket is easily accessible. Instead of being just a supermarket, it forms a larger entity offering a wide range of other smaller shops and restaurants, located under the same roof.

Even if these facilities existed already, when the original research was conducted, their influence on the consumers' shopping patterns may be more visible. (City of Kuopio, 2008.)

Probably the most significant addition to the nearby region's shopping facilities happened in 2012. The Swedish furniture and home decoration giant IKEA opened its first store in the Eastern Finland in May 2012. In October 2012, Ikano shopping center was opened right next to the IKEA. These days the entity carries a name Matkus Shopping Center and provides access to approx. 90 stores and restaurants. Location next to the highway no. 5 on the south side of the city of Kuopio, make it easily accessible by car. (Matkus Shopping Center.)

4.3 Attractiveness of Kuopio

Kuopio as the largest city in the whole North Savo region, offers very good and wide range of shopping facilities. The infrastructure is functional and car friendly, which make it easily accessible for visitors from outside. This naturally attracts consumers to travel to Kuopio in shopping purpose. Many people from other towns and parts of the region come also to work in Kuopio. The North Eastern Savo region is not an exception in this matter. Therefore it's not surprising that many consumers prefer to take care of shopping in context with their journey from work back home. More than likely is also that many people have their friends and relatives living in Kuopio. All in all, shopping can be linked with many different other affairs. Large product ranges and lower price range due to higher volumes and competition make Kuopio an attractive shopping destination.

5 RESEARCH METHODS

5.1 Implementation of scientific research

The goal of a scientific research is to collect data, analyze it and therefore facilitate understanding of a certain phenomenon. The research can be conducted by using quantitative or qualitative method. In quantitative research, the questions as well as answer options are pre-formulated. A respondent chooses the most relevant option or options from the given alternatives. This makes the quantitative method rigid and highly structured. Quantitative data is numerical and can therefore be analyzed statistically. The results from a sample can be generalized to represent a larger population of interest. (ATLAS.ti.)

Use of qualitative method gives a more detailed and in-depth view of the researched subject. The questions are open and therefore the answers are not limited as in quantitative research. Qualitative method should be used, when wider understanding of the phenomenon and the underlying reasons are sought. The results cannot be generalized to represent a larger population like in quantitative research. The choice between these two methods depends on the subject of the research and what kind of data and information is aimed to be acquired. It has become more and more common to use these both methods in the same research. While quantitative research provides a good basic data, can qualitative research seek deeper understanding of a single specific phenomenon. (ATLAS.ti.)

5.2 Particular research method and data collection

The mostly used method in this particular research is quantitative method. However, some open questions were included in order to collect some qualitative data and therefore to get better understanding of the phenomenon. The client organization made an order for the address information of the survey receivers to the Finnish Population Register Centre. The sample size ended up being 1940 people and it represents the demographic structure of the area.

The same basic form of the questionnaire was used, than the one in the previous research in 2009. In cooperation with the client, some questions were edited or removed and some were added, in order to make it suitable for the purpose. The printed questionnaire was designed by using Microsoft Word and Excel. The question-

naire forms were printed and sent by postal mail by the client organization in March 2015. The “package” included a cover letter, the questionnaire form and a return envelope (postage paid). The receivers were advised to return the filled-in questionnaire within approximately 3 weeks. They were also informed about the survey via local newspapers and a reminder about returning was published during the last week of response time.

The online version of the questionnaire was made by using the online platform of Webropol. The link to the questionnaire was available on the participating towns’ websites and two local newspapers’ (Koillis-Savo and Pitäjäläinen) websites. The online responses (when successfully submitted) were automatically saved in the database for analysis. The received printed responses were later on submitted manually in the database. After submitting all the responses, the data analysis was conducted by using Webropol tools.

A report of the survey results was written in Finnish language and it was presented to the client representative and local media representatives at Juankoski in June 2015. Databases with quantitative data, as well as lists of open answers (qualitative data) sorted according to background information of the respondents, were also provided to the client.

6 SHOPPING PATTERNS OF THE HOUSEHOLDS IN THE NORTH EASTERN SAVO REGION

6.1 Background information of the respondents

The number of respondents in the survey was 692, which is 35,7% of the receivers. Unlike in 2009, this time the receivers had an opportunity to respond also via Internet. Thanks to this, not only the receivers of printed questionnaire, but also other people were able to respond to the survey. The majority of people still preferred a pen and paper. The online survey gained 110 responses and 582 printed questionnaires were returned. Out of these 582 responses, 7 were incompetent and therefore not submitted. So the number responses analyzed is 685. Another interesting fact is that the online survey link was opened 440 times without submitting a response.

43,1% (288) of the respondents were men and 56,9% (380) were women. 17 respondents were not willing to tell their gender. Most of the responses came from Juankoski (31,3%) and Nilsinä (24%).

TABLE 1. The municipalities' share of all respondents.

Number of respondents (2015): 683

	% of all respondents	
	2009	2015
Juankoski	32,7	31,3
Kaavi	17	18,9
Kuopio, Nilsinä area	27,2	24,0
Rautavaara	9,4	9,8
Tuusniemi	13,7	15,2
other	0	0,7
	100	100

Nearly a quarter (23%) of the respondents don't have any vocational education. 46% have completed a vocational school or course and 17% have a college-level education. 14% have a degree from university or university of applied sciences. Compared to year 2009, the shares of high-educated people have increased by a few percentages, while the share of not-educated people has decreased from approximately a third to less than a quarter.

TABLE 2. The distribution of respondents by age as percentage.

Number of respondents (2015): 671

age	% of all respondents	
	2009	2015
18-24	2,5	3,0
25-34	4,3	6,4
35-44	13,5	9,5
45-54	19,6	16,7
55-64	25,7	28,6
65-	34,4	35,8
	100	100

Nearly a half (48%) of the respondents is pensioners. 10% are entrepreneurs or farmers and 32% are working at other's service. 5% are unemployed job searchers and 2% are students. The rest 2% are on maternity leave, part-time pension etc. The figures follow almost precisely the 2009 trends.

92% of the respondent households have a car in use. This is 8% more than in 2009. 56% have one car, 31% have two cars and 5% have three cars or more in use.

The share of single person households is 23% and more than a half (56%) are couples with no children living in the same household with them. 18% are couples with one or more children and 3% are single parent households. The shares of households with children have remained almost the same since 2009. The number of single person households seem to have decreased from a third to less than a quarter, while the share of couples without children (in the same household) has increased from less than a half to significantly over a half.

Less than a half (44%) of the respondents live in the inhabited center of a municipality. More than a half (56%) live in sparsely populated areas. A clear majority (86%) of the respondents have lived in the same municipality for over 5 years. 12% have lived 1-5 years and only 2% have lived less than one year in their current municipality. Also all these figures follow the same trends than in 2009, with only a few percent difference. These kind of figures can be considered expectable, when looking at the age scale of the respondents.

The respondent households earn most typically 2601-3800€ (gross income) per month. There has been a significant drop in the three lowest income categories, while the shares of four highest categories have increased. This can be partly explained by

a drop in the number of single person households, but also the increased number of high-educated people.

TABLE 3. The monthly gross income distribution of respondent households.

Number of respondents (2015): 663

	% of all respondents	
	2009	2015
less than 900€	13,3	4,7
901-1700€	22,2	16,3
1701-2600€	24,3	19,8
2601-3800€	18	27,0
3801-5000€	13,6	17,0
5001-7000€	5,2	9,8
over 7000€	3,4	5,4
	100	100

6.2 Shopping patterns in the region

Purchases in the hometown

60% of the households do shopping in their hometown multiple times a week, 29% once a week and 11% use the hometown's services only once a month or more seldom. For 63% of the households, shopping is most commonly the only purpose of the journey to the hometown's shops. For about 16% a shopping journey is also the journey between home and work and also for 16% it's another journey (hobby, public services, visiting etc.) at the same time. A large number of pensioners among the respondents explains the low percentage in work-home journey. 5% do shopping very seldom or not at all in their hometown.

Purchases elsewhere

The share of shopping as the only purpose to visit other towns is less than a third (31%). Most commonly the respondents seem to take care of also other things, while doing shopping outside their hometown. The share of this choice is 44%. This can be considered normal, due to often long distances between different towns. As some respondents go to work outside their hometown, 14% do shopping most commonly on the same journey. 11% visit seldom other towns in shopping purpose and 1% not at all. Nearly a half (48%) of the respondents prefer shopping elsewhere on weekdays and 17% prefer weekends. 35% do shopping both on weekdays and weekends.

The main reasons for shopping elsewhere

The towns in North Eastern Savo region are small, what it comes to population. This results in that the product/service ranges are also limited and cannot satisfy all consumers' needs. Therefore it's not surprising that the most common and significant reasons to do shopping outside own hometown, are lacks in product ranges. Entrepreneurs in small towns usually tend to set prices a bit higher compared to big supermarkets in big cities, in order to cover the operating costs. Price is also clearly a significant factor when making decision of travelling elsewhere for shopping. Many people seem to enjoy taking the opportunity for shopping in a context of other affairs. Worth of mentioning is also the fact that people like comparing different products and spending time on shopping.

TABLE 4. The most significant reasons for shopping outside own hometown.

Number of respondents: 610

	the most significant (1)	the second most significant (2)	the third most significant (3)	Total	Average
unsuitable opening hours in the hometown's stores	3	8	21	32	2,56
easier access for shopping in another town	22	31	33	86	2,13
insufficient product range	143	151	62	356	1,77
products not available	220	101	61	382	1,58
wish to compare products	40	60	65	165	2,15
I get better service elsewhere in my opinion	6	16	31	53	2,47
I get the same product cheaper elsewhere in my opinion	126	122	85	333	1,88
shopping is my hobby	11	17	38	66	2,41
I go shopping when I travel for another purpose also	92	50	88	230	1,98
I have time to go shopping elsewhere	32	38	67	137	2,26
other reason, what	22	9	23	54	2,02
Total	717	603	574	1894	2,11

Consideration of time and costs of shopping elsewhere

The major issue, what affects to the consideration of time and costs, is what kind of consumer the person is. People who seek wide range of products, professional service etc. tend to take less care of time and cost, while people with high price-

awareness are more likely to consider these factors, when making decisions about shopping destination. Consumers in North Eastern Savo region generally take these factors into consideration often or at least sometimes.

TABLE 5. Consideration of time and costs, when choosing the shopping place.

Number of respondents: 672

	always	often	sometimes	seldom	never	Total	Average
How often do you take the time into consideration when choosing the shopping place?	16,49%	31,48%	21,14%	20,84%	10,04%	667	2,76
How often do you take the costs into consideration when choosing the shopping place?	19,7%	32,18%	22,86%	18,5%	6,77%	665	2,6
Total	18,09%	31,83%	22%	19,67%	8,41%	1332	2,68

6.3 Distribution of purchases between each town

Most of the respondents use the most money in purchases made in their hometown. The largest shares of food, medicine and fuel are in most cases bought from the hometown. Specialty products like electronics, household appliances, clothing and footwear and sports equipment are most often bought elsewhere, either from another town or online stores. In many cases, consumers are forced to buy the product elsewhere due to a lack of supply in the hometown. Working outside the hometown affects also a lot in selection of shopping place. Mostly older people seem to be more modest and are more likely to settle for shopping only in their hometown, despite higher price level. The following shows in which directions the purchases from each town are aimed in most cases.

Juankoski

77% of the respondents from Juankoski spend the most money on the purchases made in their hometown. The second most money is typically spent in Kuopio and the third most in either Nilsjä or Kaavi.

Kaavi

93% of the respondents from Kaavi spend the most money on the purchases made in their hometown. Kuopio is significantly the second most popular direction. The third most money flows either to Juankoski or Outokumpu and Nilsjä.

Nilsjä

87% of the respondents from Nilsjä spend the most money on the purchases made in their hometown. Kuopio is on the second place and Siilinjärvi on the third place.

Rautavaara

78% of the respondents from Rautavaara spend the most money on the purchases made in their hometown. Kuopio and Nilsjä share the second place with almost equal percentage. Also Iisalmi and Nurmes seem to catch a significant share of the purchases. Worth of mentioning is also that the attractiveness of Kuopio seems to have increased in this matter compared to year 2009.

Tuusniemi

66% of the respondents from Tuusniemi spend the most money on the purchases made in their hometown. Kuopio is the second most preferred direction. Kaavi and Outokumpu share the third place.

All in all, these results were not surprising. The geographical location is most likely to be the main reason, why the purchases flow to these directions. Attractiveness of Kuopio is remarkable and seems to be growing moderately. Comparatively high percentages (in purchases made in hometown) in Kaavi and Nilsjä can be explained by higher satisfaction to the local range of products and services.

6.4 Online purchases

As online shopping has increased so significantly in Finland and worldwide during the past few years, it was somehow expected to see a difference (compared to year 2009) also in this matter in this research. Even though the amounts and shares of online shopping in euros were not measured, the results show that online shopping has increased its popularity since 2009 in North Eastern Savo region. 15 % of all respondents had ranked online stores in top 3, when asking where they spend the most, the second most and the third most money. Most of these rankings were “the third most”. According to the results, relatively most active online shoppers live in Tuusniemi. However the differences between the towns are not remarkable.

The product category, which the households in the North Eastern Savo region buy the most from online stores, is electronics. The second most bought categories are household appliances, home textiles and tableware, furniture, small machinery and tools. The third most bought categories are sports and outdoor equipment, clothing and footwear and vehicle spare parts. The figures (categories and their shares) related to online shopping are very similar to the ones concerning purchases from Kuopio.

Younger age groups are highlighted in the activeness in online shopping. Also in the older age groups there are active online shoppers, but they seem to be more careful and moderate when it comes to clothing and footwear. Families with children are generally more active in online shopping than families without children. Consumers who buy from online stores appreciate the fact that the goods can be delivered straight to home.

7 LOCAL SUPPLY OF GOODS IN THE NORTH EASTERN SAVO REGION

7.1 Lacks in the supply of goods and development opportunities

Another topic that has been examined in this research, are opinions of the respondents about local supply of goods and services in their hometown. The products and services are such that they are currently available either in the hometown or at least in the same region (area nearby). The respondents were asked to evaluate the local supply of goods from their point of view according to their needs. The following four options were to choose from:

1. There's enough supply in my hometown
2. I'd buy the product/service more from my hometown, if there was more supply
3. I rather buy the product/service elsewhere
4. I don't use/buy the product/service

Households in Juankoski

Most of the households in Juankoski are satisfied to current supply of medicine and treatment supplies and fuel. 4-5 out of 10 are satisfied to supply of food/groceries, flowers and gardening products, beauty care and vehicle spare parts and maintenance. Food is naturally the most essential category of these. About every second household would buy more food from the hometown, if there was more supply. There's currently only one grocery shop in Juankoski, which belongs to S-group. This means that there's no competition in this sector.

From the open feedbacks, we're able to see that the lack of competition has resulted in higher prices and therefore causes a lot of dissatisfaction. The households wish that the price level would drop closer to other town's shops and the level of service would increase. They wish to have fresh meat, fish and grilled products available, which are currently not available in Juankoski. Another major wish from multiple respondents is to have a competitor for the only grocery shop in town, for example from the K-group. Households in Juankoski would also like to buy more alcohol, construction and renovation materials, small machinery, durable household goods and clothes in their hometown.

Households in Kaavi

Households in Kaavi are the most satisfied for the local supply of food, alcohol, medicine and treatment supplies, flowers and gardening products and fuel. They are relatively satisfied to the supply of durable household goods, even though nearly half of the respondents would like to buy more these goods. About a third is satisfied to the current supply of construction and renovation materials, but another third wishes more supply in this sector as well as in small machinery and tools. About 4 out of 10 respondents prefer to buy furniture, household appliances, home textiles and tableware, clothing and footwear, sports equipment and electronics elsewhere. About the same amount is satisfied to the current supply. Every second respondent is satisfied to local beauty care products and services. There seems to be just a little potential for more supply of vehicle spare parts and maintenance, as one quarter of the respondents would like to buy more and another quarter is satisfied with the current supply. Anyway more than a third prefers to buy these products and services elsewhere.

Households in Kaavi seem to be generally quite satisfied with the current supply of goods and services, as well as the level of customer service. They hope that the specialty stores and for example Alko can keep their business successful and therefore to stay in town. Special wishes and requests are related to lower prices and availability of special offer products.

Households in Nilsinä

According to this survey, Nilsinä has the best supply of goods and services in the region. Not less than a quarter of the respondents are satisfied with the current supply of all the categories examined in this research. They are the most satisfied with the supply of food, alcohol, medicine and treatment supplies, flowers and gardening products and fuel. More than a half (about 6/10) are satisfied with construction and renovation materials, durable household goods ja beauty care products and services. A quarter is satisfied with electronics, but about a third would like to buy more. Another quarter buy electronics preferably elsewhere. More supply is wished especially to affordable clothing and footwear. Some respondents find the current clothing supply too strongly aimed for tourists.

The staff in the stores in Nilsinä got positive feedback of being active and friendly. According to the results, Nilsinä has quite overall satisfied consumers. More restaurant services, a Lidl store and a 24/7 service station (for example ABC) are on many re-

spondents' wish lists. They wish also improvement in the availability of special offer products, up to date information and better communication from the local entrepreneurs.

Households in Rautavaara

Most households in Rautavaara are satisfied with the current supply of food, medicine and treatment supplies and fuel. The supply in other categories is generally not experienced satisfactory, so more supply in specialty products would be very welcome according to many responses. However, about a third prefers to buy these products elsewhere. Concerning alcohol, there's not really potential to increase supply in Rautavaara because 47 % say that they don't use the product at all.

Also in Rautavaara the price level is experienced too high, what encourages consumers to do shopping elsewhere. Some respondents experienced the quality of customer service poor and wished improvement in that matter. Consumers seem to understand the difficult situation of the entrepreneurs and want to encourage them.

Households in Tuusniemi

Households in Tuusniemi are mostly satisfied with the supply of food and medicine and treatment supplies. They're also quite satisfied with the supply of flowers and gardening products and fuel. The results have very similar characteristics with Rautavaara. Many respondents would like to aim more purchases to their hometown, if there was more supply, most importantly in construction and renovation materials, small machinery and tools and durable household goods. A significant share of the respondents prefers to buy other specialty products elsewhere.

The consumers experience that it's important to have the common everyday products, for example food and medicine, available in hometown. Concerning specialty products, they find it natural and convenient to buy in Kuopio or elsewhere. The consumers wish that the current range of products and services would remain at least the same as it currently is, despite tough competition. They generally wish also fair prices and encourage the entrepreneurs to serve friendly in the future as well.

7.2 The most important sources of information about shopping facilities

People in North-Eastern Savo region appreciate printed material as source of information about companies and entrepreneurs operating in their area. The respondents were asked to rank the 3 most important sources of information, so that one (1) is the most important, two (2) the second most important and three (3) the third most important source of information. A local newspaper is ranked most commonly as the most important source, followed by a company's own catalogue or flyer, which is ranked most commonly the second most important source. A provincial newspaper is commonly ranked as the second or third most important source.

Friends and acquaintances seem to play also a significant role in this matter. It was ranked most commonly the third most important source and gained relatively many markings as the most or second most important source as well. This shows that people talk a lot with each other about where and what they buy. Naturally they also share their shopping experiences with each other and therefore a satisfied customer is a good marketer.

TABLE 6. Sources of information about local companies and entrepreneurs.

Number of respondents: 638

	the most important (1)	the second most important (2)	the third most important (3)	Total	Average
local newspaper, an article or an advertisement	381	126	48	555	1,4
provincial newspaper, an article or an advertisement	48	117	132	297	2,28
company's own catalogue or flyer	160	190	98	448	1,86
company website	48	50	59	157	2,07
social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)	10	28	57	95	2,49
elsewhere on Internet	15	44	54	113	2,35
the municipal register of companies	16	16	52	84	2,43
customer loyalty letter of an entrepreneur	46	38	50	134	2,03
friends and acquaintances	71	96	145	312	2,24
other, what	4	8	17	29	2,45
Total	799	713	712	2224	2,16

7.3 Internet and social media as sources of information

One question was dedicated to find out, what kind of information people search for and what they expect to have, when visiting the websites of local companies and entrepreneurs in their area. Opening hours, product range and special offers are the most commonly searched information with over 50% popularity. Location of the company, novelties and an opportunity to reserve or buy products gained also popularity of over 20%.

28% of the respondents declared that they're not interested to get information via Internet. Some of these respondents are not experienced Internet users and may not have access to Internet at all. However, this choice confused some of the respondents. In many responses, multiple choices were selected, finally including also the choice "I'm not interested to get information via Internet". It's challenging to analyze, what the person means by this, but we can assume that they haven't read the question carefully. Another assumption can be that they use Internet, but don't want to receive advertisements and don't want their personal information to end up in third party's hands.

Young generations seem to be significantly more active Internet users than old ones. Of course some exceptions exist. 90% of the respondents prefer a company website as a source of information and 10% find social media more convenient channel for them. Younger age groups are highlighted also in preference of social media. According to many responses, people find Internet an important information channel. Some found a lot to improve in this matter. Always up-to-date information and clarity of websites were considered important.

Number of respondents: 613

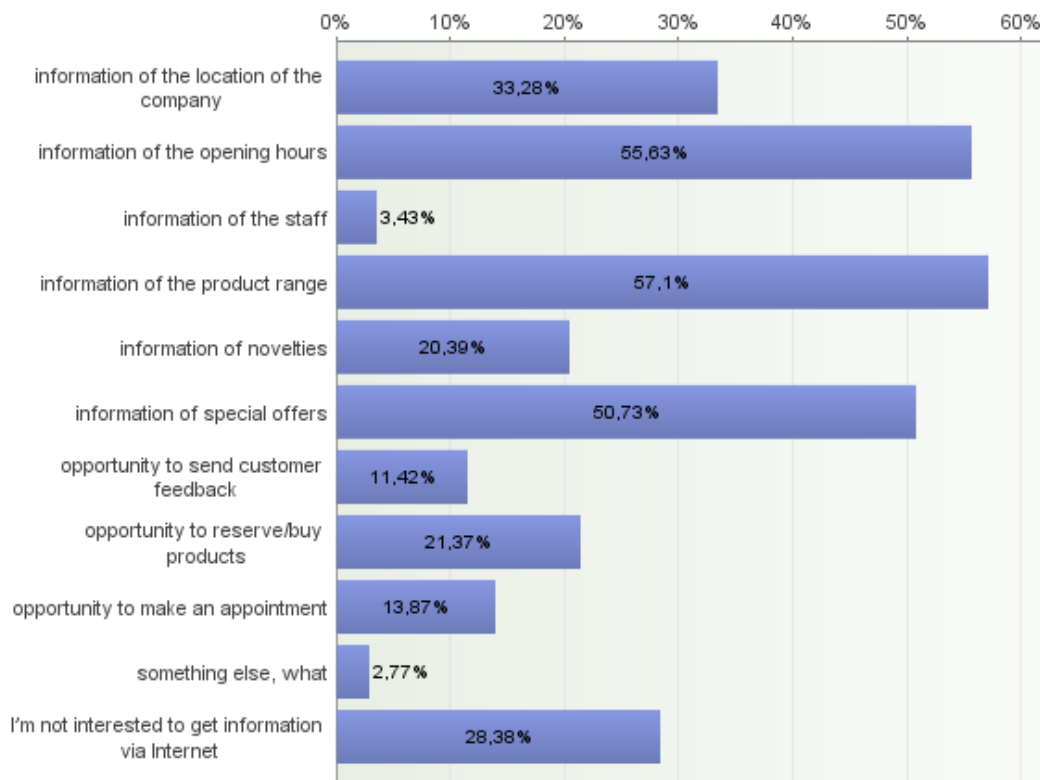


FIGURE 7. Information what people most commonly search on company web sites.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Summary

This research has collected information about distribution of purchases between the towns in the North Eastern Savo region and nearby areas. The response percentage 35,7 % is almost identical compared to 5 years ago (2009: 35,9 %). It can be considered a good percentage and the results can be generalized to adult population of the North Eastern Savo region. The online survey was a great addition to the research.

Common to all participated towns is that most of the households spend money the most for the purchases made in their hometown. In most cases, the location of home defines where the purchases elsewhere are aimed. Lacks in products ranges and high price level are the most common reasons for shopping outside hometown. Almost all households have a car in use and are ready to travel shopping elsewhere. Shopping journeys to other towns are often made in context with other affairs, but in hometown, shopping is in most cases the only purpose of the journey.

According to this research, the most important products and services that consumers expect or would like to have available in their hometown are food, medicine, fuels, hardware store products, alcohol and a relevant range of household goods. Demand and potential concerning specialty products varies between the towns. The attractiveness of Kuopio as a shopping place remains strong.

The research has also collected information about the consumers' satisfaction with the local supply of goods and services. Nilsinä has still the most satisfied consumers in the area. The results show similar lacks in product ranges and wishes from the consumers than the previous research 5 years ago. Variety to the selection of food is commonly wished. Prices should be fair and more competitive and availability of special offer products should be improved. Consumers find the quality of customer service very important. Especially the entrepreneurs in Juankoski, Rautavaara and Tuusniemi have the most to improve in this matter.

Newspapers and other printed advertisements are favored the most as sources of information about local products and services available. Internet and social media have an increasingly important role as a communication channel.

8.2 Thinking

Entrepreneurs face tough challenges in modern business environment, where consumers are becoming more demanding. Especially in rural areas like the North Eastern Savo region, the population is aging and younger generations should be encouraged to stay in the area. Consumers need services, but are also often facing economic challenges. Price plays a significant role in many consumers' decisions. The respondents wish courage for the entrepreneurs to make investments and brave strategic decisions. They also wish the municipalities' support for the local entrepreneurs and better communication and cooperation between the municipalities. Successful business is a necessity in order to sustain the employment situation, secure the supply of services and therefore encourage people to stay in the area.

It is natural that small businesses in rural areas can't always compete in prices with huge stores and supermarkets in bigger cities. Therefore the entrepreneurs need to find other "weapons" in order to remain competitive. One very important issue is the quality of customer service, which shouldn't be belittled. Consumers appreciate good service and friendly staff. A happy customer will often revisit the shop and spreads the word to the others. Simply, a happy customer buys more. The same applies vice versa. Negative experiences ruin the image and don't encourage the customer to come back again.

The demand situation defines what kind of and how wide product range is profitable to keep in stock. Entrepreneurs must be alert in changing market situation and develop the product range. Consumers in this research would like to see more evolution and development in this matter. They wish also to see new entrepreneurs in the area. However, it could be a better idea (in most cases) to develop already existing stores' product ranges. The idea behind this thinking is that a few successful businesses are better than many unsuccessful. By listening to the customers and understanding the market, entrepreneurs can respond better to the customers' needs.

Web stores have conquered a significant share of for example clothing, sport equipment and electronics trade. Younger consumers and families with children are generally more active on Internet, but the use of Internet among older people has also increased. Most of the older people still prefer visiting in traditional shops, where they get professional personal service and can compare different products. As the internet has become a powerful and widely used information channel, web sites and social

media sites offer great potential to attract new customers. Consumers wish that companies would keep their web sites clear and having always up-to-date information.

Consumers in the North Eastern Savo region are generally willing to spend more money for the purchases made in the hometown and nearby areas. Sufficient product range, fair prices, respect towards the customers and quality service are keys to improve competitiveness. Driving a long distance between home and a shopping place (for example Rautavaara-Kuopio-Rautavaara) may cost a large amount of money itself. By taking these costs into account, even small improvements in the customer experience can affect to the purchase place decision making.

Hopefully this research will help local entrepreneurs in the North Easter Savo region to develop their businesses, to understand better their customers and to respond better to their needs.

8.3 Further research opportunities

The world is changing fast and service structures and consumer behavior are continuously evolving. Still, concerning this particular research, the changes which have been occurred during 5 years are not so significant. Therefore it's not necessary to conduct this kind of research in shorter cycles.

The research would be possible to divide in smaller parts, each concentrating only in certain section. As in this form, the research is quite a wide topic and many respondents may find the questionnaire too heavy and time-taking to answer. An easier and more cost-effective way to conduct this kind of research, is to implement it only as online version. This of course has a risk that older people's response percentage would end up to be low. Therefore it would cause biased results and not represent the real age structure of the area. Anyway, some people for sure find the online version more comfortable way and it's an excellent addition to the traditional paper version. The online version saves the responses automatically in the system. That saves time and lightens the work load significantly. Furthermore it eliminates the chance of faulty responses, when the survey form is programmed to certain settings.

The topic is well suitable for a thesis topic, either bachelor's or master's. The size and objectives of the research should be proportioned to the orientation and extent of the studies, as well as to the number of researchers. A well planned research can be

done in a group of two or more people. Knowing the region in general beforehand can surely facilitate understanding and can help to provide more precise information and ideas.

REFERENCES

ATLAS.ti. Qualitative and Quantitative Research [web publication]. [reference made 29.10.2015]. Available at: <http://atlasti.com/quantitative-vs-qualitative-research/>

City of Kuopio, 2008. Yritysuutiset – Vuosi 2008, Uusi K-citymarket Päiväranta Kuopio avautui [web publication]. [reference made 16.11.2015]. Available at: https://www.kuopio.fi/web/elinkeinot-ja-yrittaminen/uutisarkisto/-/asset_publisher/8Kot/content/uusi-k-citymarket-paivaranta-kuopio-avautui-15-8-2008?redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.kuopio.fi%2Fweb%2Felinkeinot-ja-yritta-minen%2Fuutisarkisto%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_8Kot%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-2%26p_p_col_pos%3D6%26p_p_col_count%3D7

Finnish Commerce Federation, 2015. Kiina rynnimässä verkkokaupan ykköseksi [web publication]. [reference made 22.3.2015]. Available at: http://www.kauppa.fi/ajankohtaista/uutiset/kiina_rynnimassa_verkkokaupan_ykkoseksi_24630

Foxall, G. 1998. Consumer Psychology for Marketing. Second edition. International Thomson Business Press.

Gupta, V. 2012. Consumer Buying Behavior, [blog] WordPress.com [reference made 25.8.2015]. Available at: <https://iitmaverick.wordpress.com/2012/11/11/consumer-buying-behavior-2/>

Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. & Wong, V. & Saunders, J. 2008. Principles of Marketing. Fifth European edition. Pearson Education Limited.

Matkus Shopping Center. Matkusen tarina [web publication]. [reference made 16.11.2015]. Available at: <http://www.matkushoppingcenter.fi/matkus-story>

Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Maaseutupoliittisen erityisohjelman alueellinen maaseutuosio, Ohjelmaehdotus, Koillis-Savo [web publication]. [reference made 16.11.2015]. Available at: https://www.tem.fi/files/19395/Koillis-Savo_ohjelma.pdf

Statistics Finland. 2014. 5. Verkkokauppa [web publication]. [reference made 27.8.2015]. Available at: http://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2014/sutivi_2014_2014-11-06_kat_005_fi.html

Vilkas Group Oy, 2015. Kotimainen verkkokauppa pärjää suhteellisen hyvin lamassakin [web publication]. [reference made 20.10.2015]. Available at: <http://www.vilkas.fi/vilkas-group-oy/ajankohtaista/kotimainen-verkkokauppa-parjaa-suhteellisen-hyvin-lamassakin>

Juankosken kaupunki
Kaavin kunta
Kuopion kaupunki
Rautavaaran kunta
Tuusniemen kunta

SAATEKIRJE

11.3.2015

Arvoisa kuluttaja,

Kauppapalveluiden saatavuus on osa asumisviihtyvyyttä. Alueen asukkaana juuri te tiedätte, miten kauppapalvelut vastaavat tällä hetkellä tarpeitanne. Tällä tutkimuksella selvitämme Juankosken kaupungin, Kaavin, Rautavaaran ja Tuusniemen kuntien sekä Kuopion kaupungin Nilsiä alueen kuluttajien ostopaikan valintaa ja sen perusteita. Vastauksenne on arvokas, sillä sen perusteella alueen päivittäis- ja erikoiskauppojen sekä palveluyritysten tarjontaa voidaan kehittää vastaamaan entistä paremmin alueen asukkaiden tarpeita. Tutkimus toimii myös aineistona Savonia ammattikorkeakoululle tehtävään opinnäytetyöhön.

Teidät on valittu tutkimukseen Väestörekisterikeskuksen tekemällä otannalla alueen kotitalouksien joukosta. Otannan koko on 1.940 henkilöä. Kyselylomakkeen täyttämiseen menee aikaa noin 15-20 minuuttia. Täytetyn lomakkeen voitte palauttaa maksutta oheisessa palautuskuoressa.

Voitte vastata kyselyyn myös sähköisesti internetissä kuntien (Juankoski, Kaavi, Rautavaara, Tuusniemi) tai paikallislehtien (Koillis-Savo ja Pitäjäläinen) kotisivuilla olevan linkin, Kauppassakäyntitutkimus, kautta.

Toivomme teidän vastaavan kyselyyn 31. maaliskuuta 2015 mennessä.

Käsitlemme lomakkeet ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti eikä yksittäisten vastaajien henkilöllisyys tule ilmenemään missään vaiheessa tutkimusta.

Lisätietoja kyselystä ja tietojen käytöstä antaa Jari Kosonen, puhelin 0400 802 084 tai sähköposti jari.kosonen@juankoski.fi.

Kiitos mielipiteistänne ja ajastanne alueen kehittämiseen!

Ossi Taavitsainen
Ossi Taavitsainen
tutkija,
Savonia AMK

Jari Kosonen
Jari Kosonen
yritysasiamies
Juankosken ja Kuopion kaupunki

Osoitelähde: Väestötietojärjestelmä
Väestörekisterikeskus
PL 123
00531 HELSINKI

KOILLIS - SAVON PÄIVITTÄIS- JA ERIKOISTAVARAKAUPAN PALVELUTARJONTA KULUTTAJIEN NÄKÖKULMASTA

VASTAAJAN TAUSTATIEDOT

1. Vastaajan sukupuoli

- mies
 nainen

2. Vastaajan ikä

- 18-24 vuotta
 25-34 vuotta
 35-44 vuotta
 45-54 vuotta
 55-64 vuotta
 65- vuotta

3. Vastaajan kotikunta

- Juankoski
 Kaavi
 Kuopio, Nilsin alue
 Rautavaara
 Tuusniemi
 muu, mikä _____

4. Vastaajan koulutus

- ei ammatillista koulutusta
 ammatillinen koulutus (ammattikoulu tai -kurssi, teknillinen koulu, kaupallinen koulu)
 opistotasoinen koulutus
 yliopisto tai korkeakoulu

5. Oletteko

- töissä vieraan palveluksessa, sijaintikunta _____
 yrittäjä, maanviljelijä, sijaintikunta _____
 opiskelija
 työnhakija
 eläkkeellä
 muu, mikä _____

6. Taloutenne käytössä on _____ kpl autoja
 Autoa ei ole käytettävissä

7. Onko perheenne

- yhden henkilön talous
- pariskunta, ei kotona asuvia lapsia
- kahden huoltajan lapsiperhe, lasten lukumäärä _____
- yksinhuoltajatalous, lasten lukumäärä _____

8. Asuinpaikkanne on

- kunnan tai kaupungin keskustaajama
- haja-asutusalue

9. Kuinka kauan olette asunut nykyisellä paikkakunnalla?

- alle vuoden
- 1-5 vuotta
- yli 5 vuotta

10. Taloutenne yhteenlasketut bruttotulot keskimäärin kuukaudessa vuonna 2014 olivat

- alle 900 €
- 901-1 700 €
- 1 701-2 600 €
- 2 601-3 800 €
- 3 801-5 000 €
- 5 001-7 000 €
- yli 7 000 €

NYKYISET OSTOTOTTUMUKSET

Kysymyksissä numero 11-19 käsitellään päivittäis- ja erikoiskaupan tuotteita, joihin tässä luetaan elintarvikkeet, alkoholi, lääkkeet ja hoitotarvikkeet, rakennus- ja remonttitarvikkeet, pienkoneet ja työkalut, huonekalut, kodinkoneet, kodintekstiilit ja astiat, kodin kulutustavarat, vaatteet ja jalkineet, urheilu-, retkeily- ja ulkoilutarvikkeet, kalastus- ja metsästystarvikkeet, kukat ja puutarhanhoitotarvikkeet, viihde-elektroniikka (*musiikki, elokuvat, pelaaminen ym.), muu kodin elektroniikka (**TV, tietokone, tablettitietokone, älypuhelin ym.), kauneudenhoitotuotteet ja -palvelut, lemmikkieläinten ruoka ja tarvikkeet, ajoneuvojen polttoaine sekä ajoneuvojen varaosat ja huolto.

Kysymyksissä 11-19 tarkastellaan vuoden 2014 ostotottumuksia.

11. Kuinka paljon rahaa kotitaloutenne käytti vuonna 2014 keskimäärin kuukaudessa edellä mainittuihin menoihin?

_____ euroa

12. Arvioikaa, miten kotitaloutenne hankinnat jakautuvat keskimäärin prosentteina eri paikkakunnille. Merkitkää ostojen osuus paikkakunnalta prosentteina kokonaisostostenne arvosta keskimäärin kuukaudessa vuonna 2014.

	Juan- koski	Kaavi	Nilsjä	Rauta- vaara	Tuus- niemi	Kuopio	muu	verkko- kauppa	=100%	En osta
elintarvikkeet	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
alkoholi	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
lääkkeet ja hoitotarv.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
rakennus- ja remonttitarv.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
pienkoneet, työkalut	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
huonekalut	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
kodinkoneet	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
kodintekstiilit, astiat	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
kodin kulutustavarat	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
vaatteet ja jalkineet	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
urheilu-, retkeily- ja ulkoiluvarust.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
kalastus- ja metsästystarv.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
puutarhanhoito , kukat	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
*viihde- elektroniikka	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
**muu kodin elektroniikka	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
kauneudenhoi- totuotteet ja - palvelut	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
lemmikkiel. ruoka ja tarv.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
ajoneuvojen polttoaine	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
ajoneuvojen varaosat ja huolto	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	

13. Miten ostoksenne jakautuvat eri paikkakuntien kesken? Valitkaa listalta ne paikkakunnat, joilla käytätte eniten rahaa ostoksiinne, mukaan lukien kotipaikkakuntanne.

Merkitkää 1= eniten rahaa, 2 = toiseksi eniten ja 3= kolmanneksi eniten.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juankoski | <input type="checkbox"/> Iisalmi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kaavi | <input type="checkbox"/> Kuopio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nilsjä | <input type="checkbox"/> Nurmes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rautavaara | <input type="checkbox"/> Outokumpu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tuusniemi | <input type="checkbox"/> Siilinjärvi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> verkkokauppa | <input type="checkbox"/> joku muu, mikä _____ |

14. Kuinka usein ostatte tässä tutkimuksessa mainittuja tuotteita ja palveluja kotipaikkakuntanne yrityksistä? Valitkaa yksi vaihtoehto.

- useita kertoja viikossa
 noin kerran viikossa
 noin kerran kuukaudessa
 harvemmin

15. Asiointimatkanne kotipaikkakuntanne liikkeissä on... Valitkaa useimmiten toteutuva vaihtoehto.

- .. vain ostosmatka
 .. samalla myös työmatka
 .. samalla muu matka (harrastus, kyläily tms.)
 .. asioin harvoin kotipaikkakuntani liikkeissä
 .. en asioi kotipaikkakuntani liikkeissä

16. Asiointimatkanne kotikuntanne ulkopuolelle on... Valitkaa useimmiten toteutuva vaihtoehto.

- .. vain ostosmatka
 .. samalla myös työmatka
 .. samalla muu matka (harrastus, kyläily tms.)
 .. asioin harvoin muilla paikkakunnilla
 .. en asioi muilla paikkakunnilla

17. Käyttekö ostoksilla kotipaikkakuntanne ulkopuolella enimmäkseen... Valitkaa useimmiten toteutuva vaihtoehto.

- arkisin
 viikonloppuisin
 sekä arkena että viikonloppuna

18. Miksi ostate tuotteita kotikuntanne ulkopuolelta? Valitkaa alla olevista vaihtoehdoista 1= merkittävin, 2= toiseksi merkittävin, 3 =kolmanneksi merkittävin syy.

- sopimattomat aukioloajat kotipaikkakunnalla
 helpompi asiointi muun kunnan ostospaikkaan
 puutteelliset tuotevalikoimat
 tuotteita ei ole myynnissä

 halu vertailla tuotteita
 saan mielestäni parempaa palvelua muualta
 saan mielestäni saman tuotteen edullisemmin muualta
 harrastan ostoksilla käyntiä

 hoidan ostokset työ- tai muun matkan yhteydessä
 minulla on aikaa käydä muualla ostoksilla
 muu syy, mikä _____

OSTOSPAIKAN VALINTAPERUSTEET

19. Mitä asioita pidätte tärkeinä, kun valitsette ostospaikkaanne? Käyttäkää asteikkoa 1= ei merkitystä, 2= vaikuttaa vähän, 3= vaikuttaa jonkin verran, 4= vaikuttaa paljon. Ympyröikää yksi numero jokaiselta riviltä.

tarjolla tuotteita, joita ei saa muualta	1	2	3	4
monta kauppaa lähellä toisiaan	1	2	3	4
rundas tuotevalikoima	1	2	3	4
tuote-esittelyjä ja työnäytöksiä	1	2	3	4
asiantuntevat myyjät	1	2	3	4
sijainti kulkureitin varrella	1	2	3	4
helppo pysäköidä kaupan lähelle	1	2	3	4
pitkät aukioloajat	1	2	3	4
viihtyisä ostosympäristö	1	2	3	4
ostokset voi hoitaa muiden asioiden hoidon yhteydessä	1	2	3	4
hyvä asiakaspalvelu	1	2	3	4
kaikki tarvittava löytyy samasta paikasta	1	2	3	4
mahdollisuus kahviin tai ruokailuun ostosten yhteydessä	1	2	3	4
hyviä tarjouksia	1	2	3	4
edullinen kokonaishintataso	1	2	3	4
maksuton pysäköinti	1	2	3	4
mahdollisuus tavata tuttuja ostosmatkalla	1	2	3	4
nopea kaupassakäynti mahdollista	1	2	3	4
sijainti lähellä kotia	1	2	3	4
verkkokaupan ajasta ja paikasta riippumattomuus	1	2	3	4

KOTIPAIKKAKUNNAN TUOTEVALIKOIMAN JA PALVELUJEN KEHITTÄMINEN

20. Arvioikaa seuraavia tuoteryhmiä oman taloutenne tarpeiden perusteella ja valitkaa sopivin vaihtoehto seuraavista väittämistä jokaisen tuote/ palveluryhmän kohdalla.

1= Tarjontaa on minulle riittävästi kotipaikkakunnallani

2= Ostaisin tuotetta/palvelua kotipaikkakunnaltani, jos tarjontaa olisi enemmän

3= Ostan tuotteen/palvelun mieluummin muualta

4= En käytä/osta tuotetta/palvelua

elintarvikkeet	1	2	3	4
alkoholi	1	2	3	4
lääkkeet ja hoitotarvikkeet	1	2	3	4
rakennus- ja remointitarvikkeet	1	2	3	4
pienkoneet, työkalut	1	2	3	4
huonekalut	1	2	3	4
kodinkoneet	1	2	3	4
kodintekstiilit, astiat	1	2	3	4
kodin kulutustavarat	1	2	3	4
vaatteet ja jalkineet	1	2	3	4
urheilu-, retkeily-, ulkoiluvarusteet	1	2	3	4
kalastus- ja metsästystarvikkeet	1	2	3	4
puutarhanhoito, kukat	1	2	3	4
viihde-elektroniikka	1	2	3	4
muu kodin elektroniikka	1	2	3	4
kauneudenhoitotuotteet ja -palvelut	1	2	3	4
lemmikkieläinten ruoka ja -tarvikkeet	1	2	3	4
ajoneuvojen polttoaine	1	2	3	4
ajoneuvojen varaosat ja huolto	1	2	3	4

21. Muu tuote tai palvelu, jota ostaisitte kotipaikkakunnalta? _____

22. Matka-ajan ja kustannusten huomiointi ostospaikan valinnassa. Valitkaa sopivin vaihtoehto.

	aina	usein	joskus	harvoin	en koskaan
Huomioitko ostosmatkaan kuluvaan aikaa valitessanne ostopaikkaa?	1	2	3	4	5
Huomioitko ostosmatkan kustannuksia valitessanne ostopaikkaa?	1	2	3	4	5

TIEDON SAANTI KOTIPAIKKAKUNNALLA MYYTÄVISTÄ TUOTTEISTA JA PALVELUISTA

23. Mistä saatte tietoa paikallisten yrittäjien tuotteista ja palveluista? Merkitkää tietolähteet tärkeysjärjestyksessä; 1= tärkein tietolähde, 2= toiseksi tärkein ja 3= kolmanneksi tärkein tietolähde

- _____ paikallislehdestä, juttu tai mainos
 _____ maakuntalehdestä, juttu tai mainos
 _____ yrityksen omasta esitteestä tai mainoslehdestä
- _____ yrityksen Internet-sivuilta
 _____ sosiaalisen median kautta (Facebook, Twitter tms.)
 _____ muualta Internetistä
- _____ kunnan yritysrekisteristä
 _____ yrittäjän kanta-asiakaskirjeestä
 _____ ystäviltä ja tutuilta
 _____ muualta, mistä _____

24. Mitä seuraavia tietoja ja palveluja haette tai haluaisitte saada vieraillessanne kotipaikkakuntanne yritysten Internet-sivuilla ja/tai SOME-ympäristöissä?

Ensisijaisesti käytän: yritysten Internet -sivuja,
 SOME-ympäristöjä (Facebook, Twitter tms.)

Voitte valita yhden tai useampia vaihtoehtoja.

- tietoa yrityksen sijainnista
 tietoja aukioloajoista
 tietoa henkilökunnasta
- tietoja tuotevalikoimasta
 tietoja uutuuksista
 tietoja tarjouksista
- mahdollisuutta lähettää asiakaspalautetta
 mahdollisuutta varata/ostaa tuotteita
 mahdollisuutta ajanvaraukseen
- jotain muuta, mitä _____
 en ole kiinnostunut saamaan tietoja Internetin kautta

25. Terveisenne paikkakunnan yrittäjille _____

KIITOS VASTAUKSISTANNE!

Palauttakaa lomake oheisessa palautuskuoressa 31.3.2015 mennessä (postimaksu maksettu).

LOCAL SUPPLY OF GROCERY AND SPECIALTY PRODUCTS FROM CONSUMERS' POINT OF VIEW IN THE NORTH EASTERN SAVO REGION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender

- male
- female

2. Age

- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55-64 years
- 65- years

3. Hometown

- Juankoski
- Kaavi
- Kuopio, Nilsia area
- Rautavaara
- Tuusniemi
- other, what _____

4. Education

- no vocational education
- vocational education (vocational school or course, technical school, business school)
- college-level education
- university or university of applied sciences

5. Are you

- working, location _____
- entrepreneur/farmer, location _____
- student
- unemployed
- retired
- other, what _____

6. In your household there are _____ cars in use
 The household does not have a car in use

7. Is your family

- a single person household
 a couple, no children living at home
 a two-parent family with children, number of children _____
 a single parent household, number of children _____

8. Your residence is located at

- the center of a town or a municipality
 a sparsely populated area

9. How long have you been living in the current municipality?

- less than a year
 1-5 years
 more than 5 years

10. The total average gross income of your household per month in 2014 was

- less than 900 €
 901-1 700 €
 1 701-2 600 €
 2 601-3 800 €
 3 801-5 000 €
 5 001-7 000 €
 more than 7 000 €

THE CURRENT SHOPPING PATTERNS

Questions number 11-19 deal with grocery and specialty trade goods, which herein include food, alcohol, medicines and treatment supplies, construction and renovation materials, small machinery and tools, furniture, household appliances, home textiles and tableware, durable household goods, clothing and footwear, sports, camping and outdoor accessories, fishing and hunting equipment, flowers and gardening accessories, consumer electronics (*music, movies, gaming etc.), other home electronics (**TV, computer, tablet computer, smart phone etc.), beauty products and services, pet food and supplies, fuel for vehicles and vehicle spare parts and maintenance.

Questions 11-19 deal with shopping patterns of the year 2014.

11. How much money did your household spend on average in the above-mentioned expenditure per month in 2014?

_____ euros

12. Estimate how were the purchases of your household distributed by average percentage in various locations. Mark the percentage share of total value of the purchases from each location on average per month in 2014.

	Juan- koski	Kaavi	Nilsjä	Rauta- vaara	Tuus- niemi	Kuopio	other	web shop	=100%	I don't buy
food	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
alcohol	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
medicines and treatment supp.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
construction and renovation mat.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
small machinery and tools	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
furniture	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
household appl.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
home textiles and tableware	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
durable household goods	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
clothing and footwear	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
sports, camping and outdoor acc.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
fishing and hunting eq.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
flowers and gardening acc.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
*consumer electronics	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
**other home electronics	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
beauty products and services	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
pet food and supplies	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
fuel for vehicles	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	
vehicle spare parts and maintenance	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	=100%	

13. How were your purchases distributed to different locations? Choose from the list below those locations, where did you spend the most money, including your hometown.

Mark 1= the most, 2 = the second most and 3= the third most money

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ Juankoski | _____ Iisalmi |
| _____ Kaavi | _____ Kuopio |
| _____ Nilsjä | _____ Nurmes |
| _____ Rautavaara | _____ Outokumpu |
| _____ Tuusniemi | _____ Siilinjärvi |
| _____ web shop | _____ other, what _____ |

14. How often do you buy the products and services (mentioned in this survey) from the companies located in your hometown? Choose one option.

- several times a week
- about once a week
- about once a month
- less often

15. The purpose of a shopping journey in the stores of your hometown is the most often... Choose one option.

- .. only a shopping journey
- .. a journey between home and work place at the same time
- .. another purpose at the same time (hobby, visiting etc.)
- .. I seldom go to the stores in my hometown
- .. I don't go to the stores in my hometown

16. The purpose of a shopping journey in the stores outside your hometown is the most often... Choose one option.

- .. only a shopping journey
- .. a journey between home and work place at the same time
- .. another purpose at the same time (hobby, visiting etc.)
- .. I seldom go to the stores in other towns
- .. I don't go to the stores in other towns

17. When do you go shopping outside your hometown mostly? Choose one option.

- on weekdays
- on weekends
- both on weekdays and weekends

**18. Why do you buy products outside your hometown? Choose from the options below
1= the most significant, 2= the second most significant, 3 = the third most significant reason.**

- unsuitable opening hours in the hometown's stores
 easier access for shopping in another town
 insufficient product range
 products not available

 wish to compare products
 I get better service elsewhere in my opinion
 I get the same product cheaper elsewhere in my opinion
 shopping is my hobby

 I go shopping when I travel for another purpose also
 I have time to go shopping elsewhere
 other reason, what _____

THE SELECTION CRITERIA OF A SHOPPING PLACE

**19. What issues do you consider important when selecting the shopping place? Use the scale
1= has no effect, 2= has a little effect, 3= has some effect, 4= has a lot effect.
Choose one number from each row.**

products available, which are not available elsewhere	1	2	3	4
many stores near each other	1	2	3	4
wide product range	1	2	3	4
product exhibitions and demonstrations	1	2	3	4
staff with high expertise	1	2	3	4
location along the route	1	2	3	4
easy parking near the store	1	2	3	4
long opening hours	1	2	3	4
comfortable shopping environment	1	2	3	4
shopping can be done in the context with other affairs	1	2	3	4
good customer service	1	2	3	4
all necessary can be found in the same place	1	2	3	4
opportunity for a coffee break or dining in the context with shopping	1	2	3	4
good special offers	1	2	3	4
affordable overall price level	1	2	3	4
free parking	1	2	3	4
opportunity to meet friends on the shopping trip	1	2	3	4
fast shop visit possible	1	2	3	4
location near home	1	2	3	4
web shop's independence of time and place	1	2	3	4

DEVELOPMENT OF HOMETOWN'S PRODUCT AND SERVICE RANGE

20. Evaluate the following product/service categories according to your household's needs and choose a relevant option from each category.

1= There's enough supply in my hometown

2= I'd buy the product/service more from my hometown, if there was more supply

3= I rather buy the product/service elsewhere

4= I don't use/buy the product/service

food	1	2	3	4
alcohol	1	2	3	4
medicines and treatment supplies	1	2	3	4
construction and renovation materials	1	2	3	4
small machinery and tools	1	2	3	4
furniture	1	2	3	4
household appliances	1	2	3	4
home textiles and tableware	1	2	3	4
durable household goods	1	2	3	4
clothing and footwear	1	2	3	4
sports, camping and outdoor accessories	1	2	3	4
fishing and hunting equipment	1	2	3	4
flowers and gardening accessories	1	2	3	4
consumer electronics	1	2	3	4
other home electronics	1	2	3	4
beauty products and services	1	2	3	4
pet food and supplies	1	2	3	4
fuel for vehicles	1	2	3	4
vehicle spare parts and maintenance	1	2	3	4

21. What other product or service would you buy from your hometown?

22. Consideration of travel time and costs when choosing the shopping place. Choose a relevant option from the following.

1= always, 2= often, 3= sometimes, 4= seldom, 5= never

How often do you take the time into consideration when choosing the shopping place? 1 2 3 4 5

How often do you take the costs into consideration when choosing the shopping place? 1 2 3 4 5

GAINING INFORMATION OF THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE IN YOUR HOMETOWN

23. Where do you get information of the products and services sold by the local entrepreneurs? Rate the sources of information; 1= the most important, 2= the second most important and 3= the third most important source of information

- local newspaper, an article or an advertisement
 provincial newspaper, an article or an advertisement
 company's own catalogue or flyer

 company web site
 social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.)
 elsewhere on Internet

 the municipal register of companies
 customer loyalty letter of an entrepreneur
 friends and acquaintances
 other, what _____

24. Which of the following information do you search or would like to find when visiting web sites or social media environments of the companies in your hometown?

I primarily use: companies' web sites
 social media environments (Facebook, Twitter etc.)

You may select one or more options.

- information of the location of the company
 information of the opening hours
 information of the staff

 information of the product range
 information of novelties
 information of special offers

 opportunity to send customer feedback
 opportunity to reserve/buy products
 opportunity to make an appointment

 something else, what _____
 I'm not interested to get information via Internet

25. Your regards to the local entrepreneurs in your hometown

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ANSWERS!

Please return the form in the enclosed return envelope by 31.3.2015 (postage paid).

