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FACULTY OF FORESTRY
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**SATISFIED CUSTOMER IS A
GUARANTEE FOR
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

INTRODUCTION

- ◎ To find a new customer is much more difficult than to keep the old one, and today it is, agreed by many manufacturers and dealers harder than ever before. Today, but also in the past, a salesroom which largely determines the daily circulation of potential buyers is very important in sell realization.
- ◎ Due to the competition of the same type of salesroom that mostly offer similar goods with approximately the same rates, factors such as salesroom layout and sales staff are increasingly influencing the choice of salesroom and purchase.



- Expanding sales to new conditions is a very complex activity that requires a multidisciplinary approach, quite different from the traditional model of work, which is characterized by aggressive marketing. Flexibility and high levels of coordination becomes imperative in the business.
- Customer satisfaction and its fulfilment create an emotional affinity for the brand, which results in high customer loyalty.
- Customer expectations are determined by experiences from past purchases, advice of friends and acquaintances, and information and promises of the competition.



RESEARCH METHODS

- Research included four furniture stores in the Zagreb market area – A, B, C and D.
- Data collection involved random distribution of 200 questionnaire forms in four selected furniture stores, or 50 questionnaires in each. A part of the questionnaires was not returned, while a part was not completed correctly.
- Twenty-one out of 50 questionnaire forms, or 42%, were completed and returned in the sales centre A, 40 % in in the sales centre B, 42% in the sales centre C and 52% in the sales centre D.



- Out of 200 questionnaires, 88 or 44% of the forms were completed and returned.
- The questionnaire form consisted of 8 statements/questions, of which two related to the sales staff, two to the sales location, and four to the product itself. Each statement/question was accompanied by marks from one to three, allowing the customers to express their degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
- The χ^2 test was used to establish whether there is considerable difference in customer satisfaction between sales centres A, B, C and D in the Zagreb market area.



RESEARCH RESULTS

- Question 1 relating to the location of the sales centre earned an average mark of 2. The respondents in the sales centre A declared that they were satisfied with the location (average mark 2.5). Slightly less satisfaction with the location of the sales place was expressed by the respondents in the sales centres B and C (average marks 1.9 and 2.0), while the respondents in the sales place C gave the lowest marks (average mark 1.6).



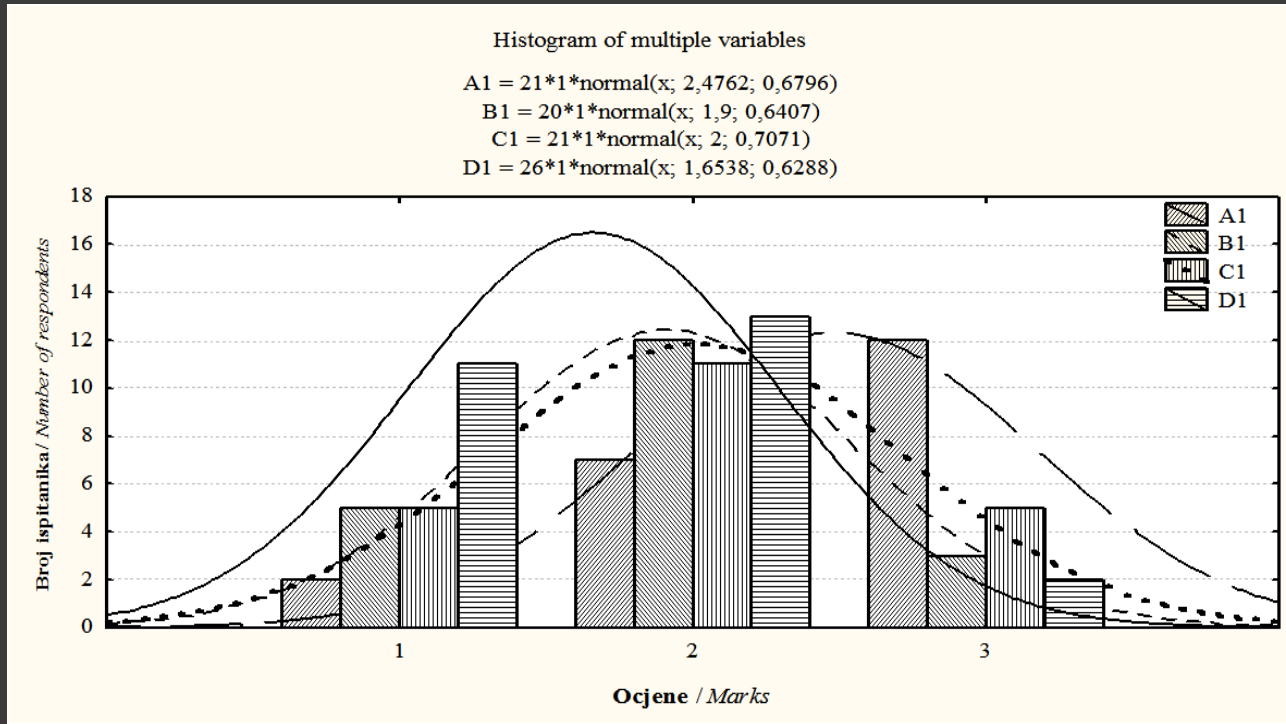


Figure 1. Customer satisfaction with the location of with sales center



Question 2 concerning the satisfaction of customers with the appearance of the sales place attracted an average mark of 2. According to Figure 2, the respondents in the sales centre A declared themselves to be very satisfied with the appearance of the sales centre (average mark 2.5), but the respondents in the sales centre B were less satisfied (average mark 2.4). The respondents in the sales centres C and D graded their satisfaction with the appearance of these centres with lower marks (average marks 1.6 and 1.5).



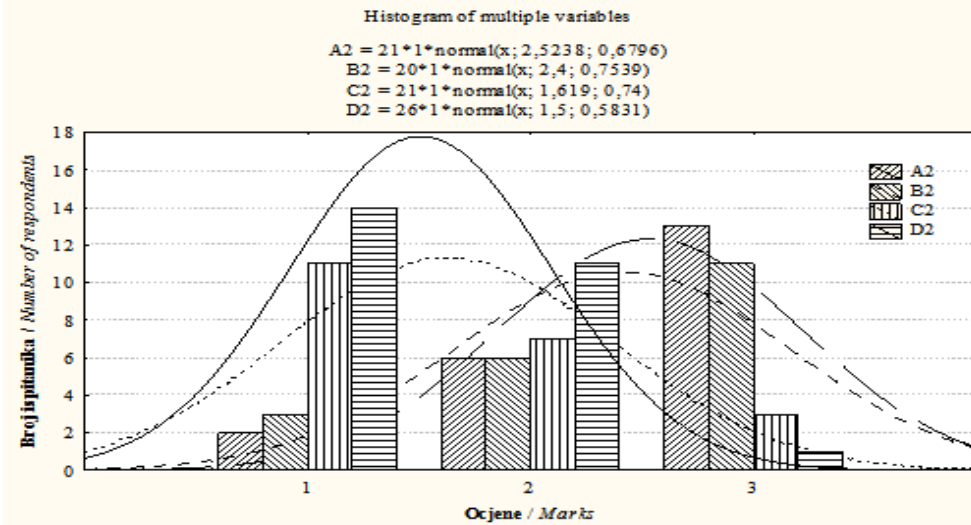


Figure 2. Feedback satisfaction appearance with sales center



- According to Figure 3, the respondents in the sales centres A, B, C and D were equally satisfied with the information regarding the range of products. The highest marks were given by the respondents in the sales centre C (average mark 2.2).

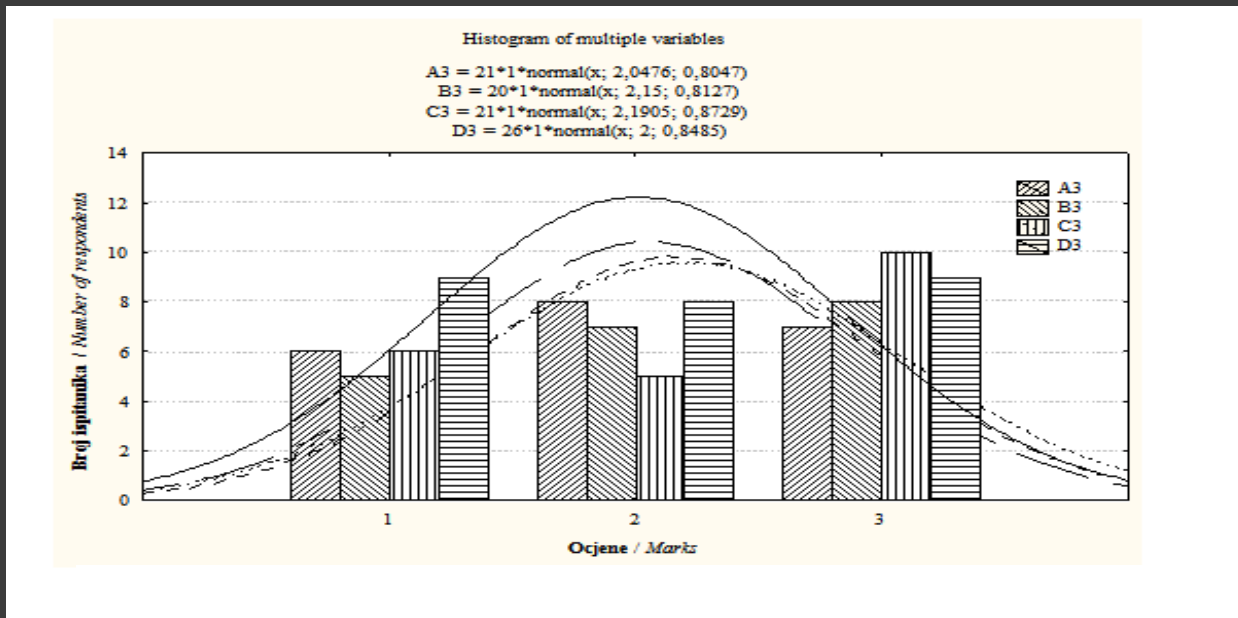
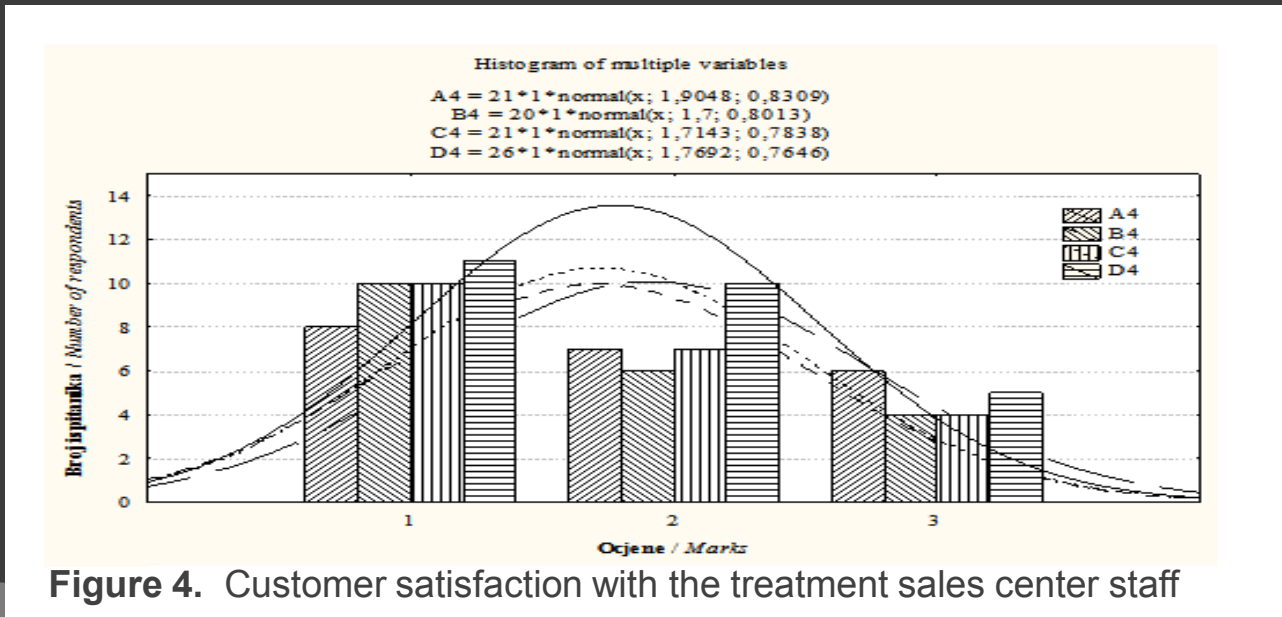


Figure 3. Customer satisfaction with received information about the range of products



- The average marks in Figure 4 show that the respondents expressed the highest satisfaction with the treatment they received from the salespeople in the sales centre A, where the average mark was 1.9. The largest number of the respondents (39 respondents in all the sales centres) marked the treatment by the sales staff with mark 1, as evidenced by the relatively low average marks.



- The respondents in the sales centre B declared themselves to be relatively satisfied with the range of products offered by the sales centre (average mark 2.15), while those in the sales centres A, C, and D were equally satisfied, giving the average mark of close to 2, as seen in Figure 5.

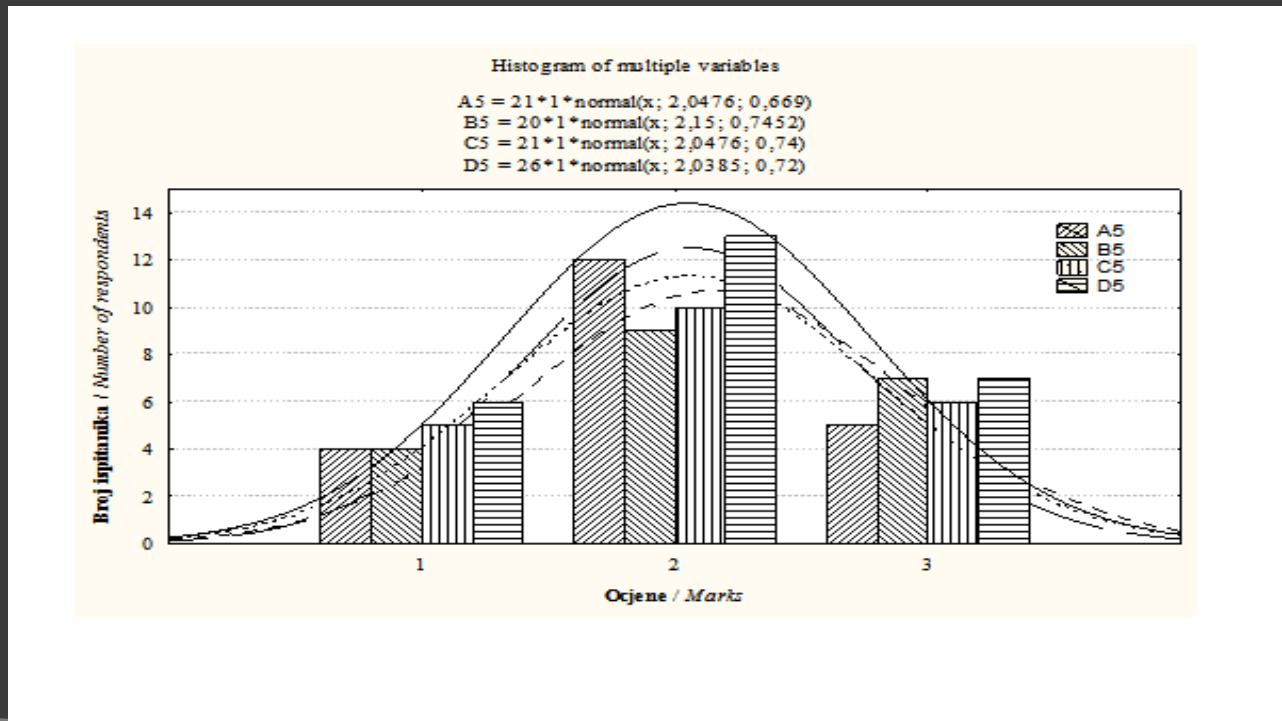


Figure 5. Customer satisfaction with the range of products



- The question relating to product quality (Figure 6) earned a similar degree of satisfaction (average mark 1.9). The respondents in the sales centre A expressed their satisfaction with the quality of the products by awarding the lowest marks (average mark 1.7).

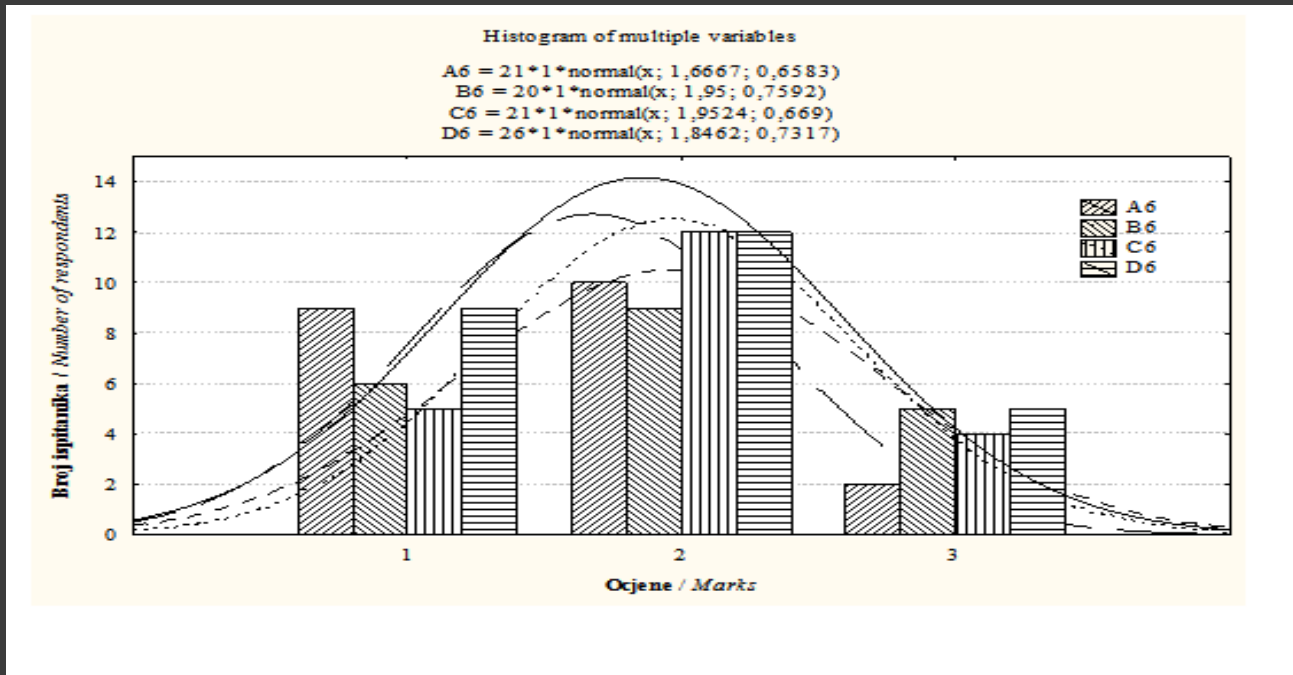


Figure 6. Customer satisfaction with the quality of products



- The respondents in the sales centre D showed the least satisfaction with the price of the products, as evidenced by the average mark of 1.4, which is also the lowest average mark in terms of all the sales centres and all the questions from the questionnaire. The average marks in other sales centres were also relatively low, amounting to 1.6 in the sales centres A and B and to 1.9 in the sales centre C.

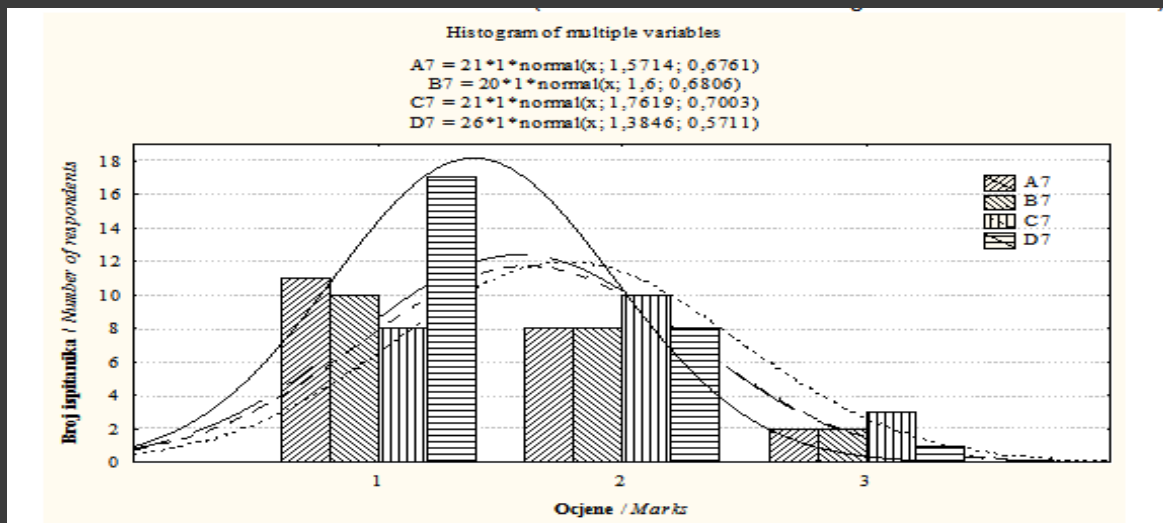


Figure 7. Customer satisfaction with the price of products



- Figure 8 shows equal customer satisfaction with the conditions of payment in the sales centre A and B (average mark 1.8). The customers in the sales centre D showed less satisfaction with the conditions of payment (average mark 1.7), while the least satisfied were those in the sales centre D (average mark 1.6).

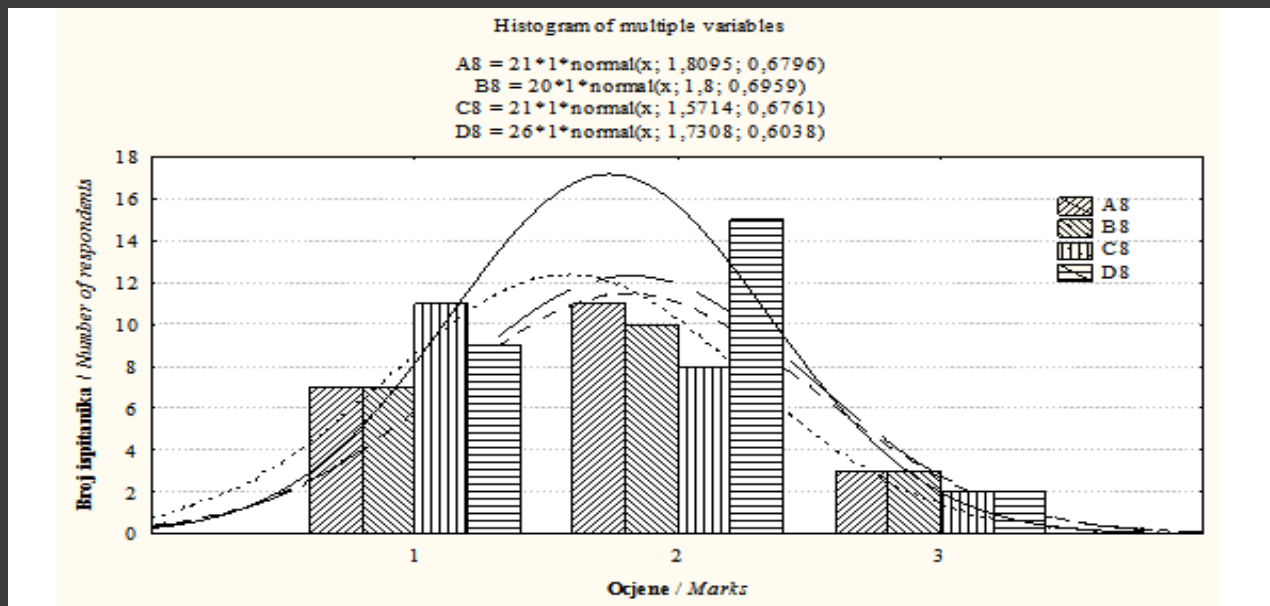


Figure 8 Customer satisfaction with payment conditions



- In order to determine considerable differences in the responses between the sales centres, we established the null hypothesis H_0 : There is no considerable difference in the responses among the sales centres A, B, C and D. The null hypothesis was tested at the significance level of 0.05.
- The χ^2 test for question number one, „Are you satisfied with the location of the sales place?“ and the responses obtained from the sales centres A, B, C and D showed that there was considerable difference in customer satisfaction in terms of the location of the sales place ($\chi^2=19,08$, $p = 0,004$, $df = 6$).



- Using the χ^2 test for question number two, „Are you satisfied with the appearance of the sales place?“, it was found that there was considerable difference in the responses between the sales centres A, B, C and D ($\chi^2=29,47$, $p = 0,00005$, $df = 6$).
- The results of the χ^2 test for the remaining questions (from 3 to 8) showed that there was no significant difference in the responses among the sales centres, as seen in Figure 9.



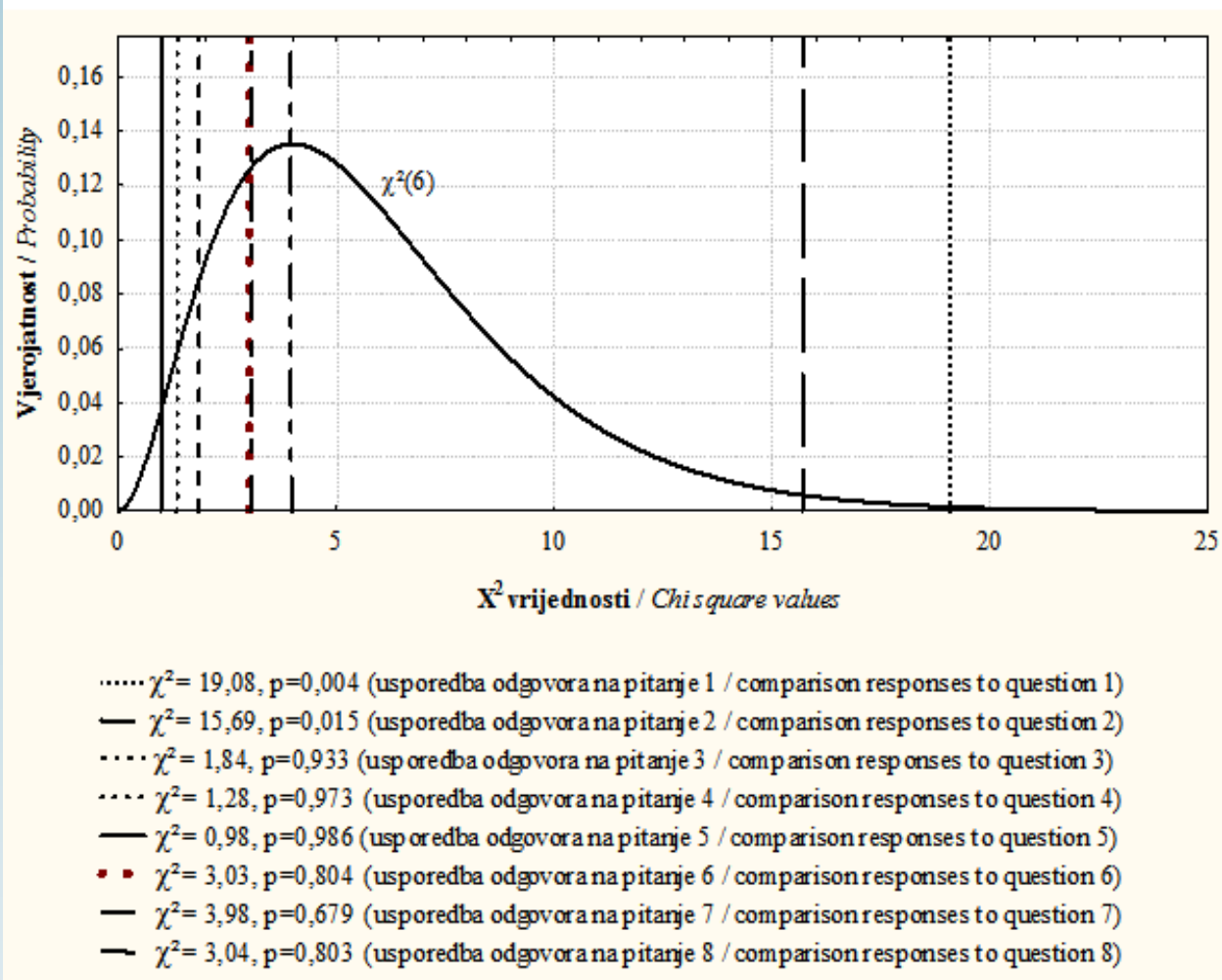


Figure 9. χ^2 test responses to questions from the questionnaire survey

CONCLUSION

- Research has shown that the customers in the Zagreb market area are the most satisfied with information provided by the staff and with the range of products in the sales centres.
- The customers expressed the lowest degree of satisfaction with the prices and payment conditions in all the four sales centres. Sales centres pay outstanding attention to the salespeople – customer relationship, and less attention to understanding the economic situation of their customers.
- Furniture buyers regard the location and the appearance of the sales place as important factors which influence the build-up of satisfaction.



- ⦿ High satisfaction and fulfilled expectations create an emotional affinity for the brand, which results in high customer loyalty.
- ⦿ Each sales centre should strive to fully meet all their customer demands. After all, only a satisfied customer will become a repeat customer.



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