

Jan Dvoracek

Hana Matova

Technical University in Zvolen

Slovakia

**THE SURVEY OF
PERCEPTION OF
"DESIGN FOR ALL
PHILOSOPHY" IN**

**THE FURNITURE
INDUSTRY
AMONG
CONSUMERS IN
SLOVAKIA**

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Collecting of data: questioning by a questionnaire on the topic: the influence of company's pro-social activities on shopping behavior of consumers.

The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions - 5 questions were aimed at socio-demographic data of respondents and other questions were related to exploring problematic:

- perception of CSR,
- preference of company's CSR activity,
- information about company's CSL,
- form of a contact with wheelchair user.

Two questions were aimed at **verifying of perception of "Design for all" philosophy** and the questions were set in an opposite meaning – suitability of the furniture for average (healthy) consumers for the needs of disabled consumers and on the other side, the suitability of furniture for disabled consumers for the needs of average consumers.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

For our survey was determined:

- allowable error of 5 % and share of character "p" in the rate of 50 %.

The range of sample shouldn't be less than 384 respondents or there shouldn't be less processed and returned questionnaires. After collecting and separating of questionnaires **were qualified 471 received questionnaires for final evaluation.**

For the questionnaires evaluation was used method:

- one-dimensional and two-dimensional descriptive statistics: frequency and contingency tables.

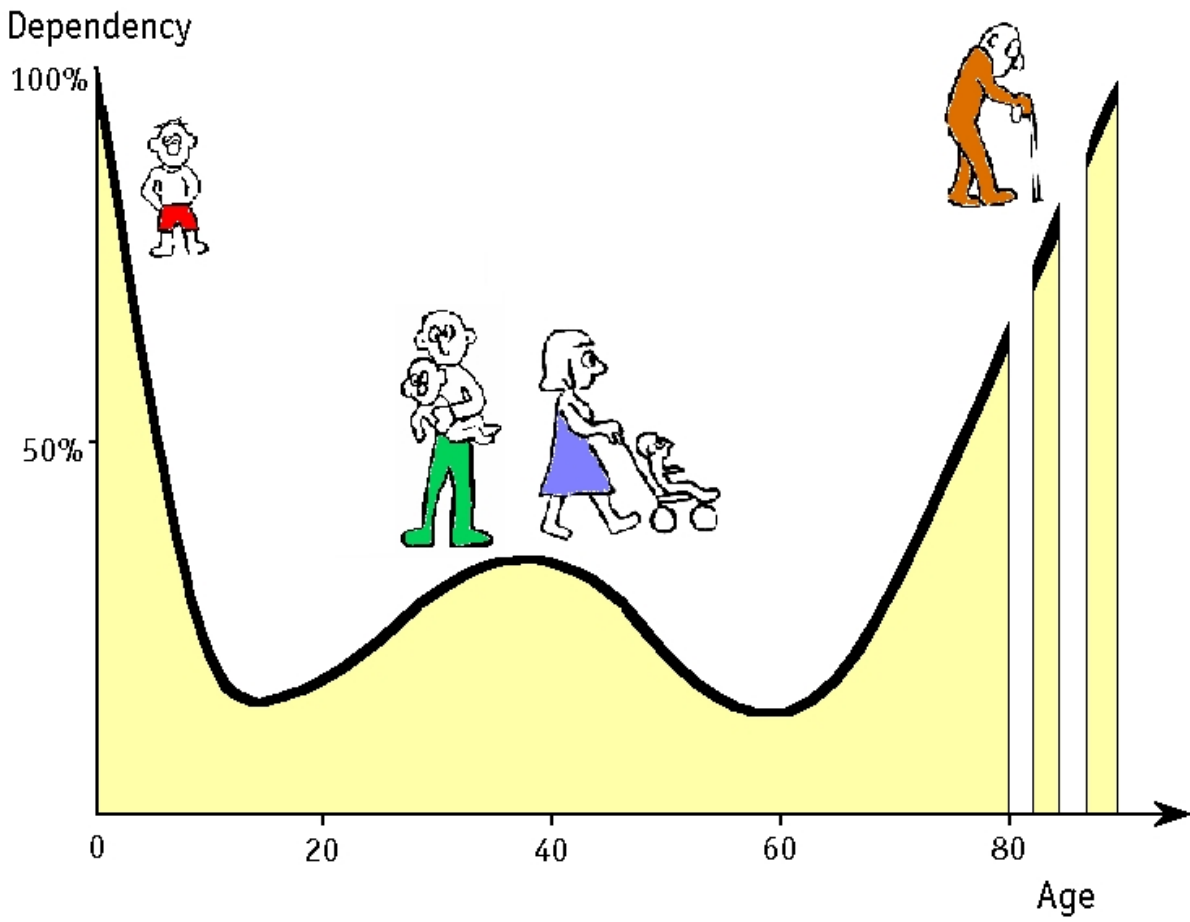
Hypotheses were tested at significance level of $p(\alpha) = 0.05$. The test of null hypothesis was realized by the method of independence test – Pearson χ^2 (chi-square) test.



„Design for all“ philosophy

“Design for all” or in wider perception “Accessibility for All” means designing mainstream products and services so that as many people as possible can use them easily – whatever their age and ability.

Dependency of people



Benefits of „Design for all“ philosophy

- **Demography** – Europe has an increasing elderly population, which is leading to increasing prevalence of disability,
- **Easy use** – „Design for all“ benefits all consumers,
- **Wider choice** – Older and disabled people will have a wider choice of accessible and usable products,
- **Independence** – Inclusive design leads to increased and prolonged independence for older people if mainstream products and services continue to meet their needs,
- **Innovation** – Adherence to „Design for all“ principles does not have to be design restrictive. On the contrary, industry will need to develop innovative solutions to make their products and services accessible to and usable by more consumers.
- **Cost savings** – Inclusive design does not inevitably raise production costs if it is built in from the start of product conception – from the point at which manufacturers refer to the standards that they work to comply with,
- **Growing market** – At the end of the day, „Design for all“ would even be of benefit to industry because there is clearly an increasing market and demand for products designed for all

Premise I: “The furniture for average consumers does not fit for the needs of wheelchair users”

Premise I	confirmed
a) will agree all respondents regardless of gender,	confirmed
b) will more agree respondents in the age 61 or more,	unconfirmed
c) will agree all respondents regardless of education,	confirmed
d) will more agree respondents from the group of pensioners,	unconfirmed
e) will agree all respondents regardless of residence,	confirmed
f) will more agree respondents that perceive CSR,	confirmed
g) will more agree respondents that prefer activities of company in social field,	confirmed
h) will more agree respondents that are affected by information about the CSL of company,	confirmed
i) will more agree respondents from the family of wheelchair user	unconfirmed

Premise II: „Furniture for wheelchair users is also suitable for the needs of average consumers”

Premise II	confirmed
a) will agree all respondents regardless of gender	unconfirmed
b) will more agree respondents in the age 61 or more,	unconfirmed
c) will agree all respondents with higher education,	confirmed
d) will more agree respondents from the group of pensioners,	confirmed
e) will agree all respondents regardless of residence,	confirmed
f) will more agree respondents that perceive CSR,	confirmed
g) will more agree respondents that prefer activities of company in social field,	confirmed
h) will more agree respondents that are affected by information about the CSL of company,	confirmed
i) will more agree respondents from the family of wheelchair user	confirmed

Contingency table – suitability of ordinary furniture vs. suitability of furniture for wheelchair users

	Suitability of ordinary furniture for the needs of wheelchair users	Suitability of furniture for wheelchair users for the needs of average consumers			SUM
		yes	no	other	
Absolute frequency	yes	60	28	2	90
Column frequency (%)		28,30 %	14,81 %	2,86 %	
Row frequency (%)		66,67 %	31,11 %	2,22 %	
Overall frequency (%)		12,74 %	5,94 %	0,42 %	19,11 %
Absolute frequency	no	120	156	29	305
Column frequency (%)		56,60 %	82,54 %	41,43 %	
Row frequency (%)		39,34 %	51,15 %	9,51 %	
Overall frequency (%)		25,48 %	33,12 %	6,16 %	64,76 %
Absolute frequency	other	32	5	39	76
Column frequency (%)		15,09 %	2,65 %	55,71 %	
Row frequency (%)		42,11 %	6,58 %	51,32 %	
Overall frequency (%)		6,79 %	1,06 %	8,28 %	16,14 %
Absolute frequency	SUM	212	189	70	471
Overall frequency (%)		45,01 %	40,13 %	14,86 %	100 %

Interaction between the "Design for all" philosophy and survey results

- The basis for the "Design for all" philosophy is the idea that what is suitable for average consumer may not be suitable for wheelchair user, but what is suitable for wheelchair users, should also be suitable for the average consumer.
- "Design for all" philosophy is primary not aimed at production of special devices for disabled people, but tries to find compromise solutions that are usable by average consumers but also by disabled consumers. We mean that the products "designed by this philosophy" could be used indiscriminately by all consumers.
- Based on the survey results we can conclude that the main idea of this philosophy is understood by approximately quarter of respondents. An important finding is that approximately one third of respondents separate "the suitability of products for the consumer" based on the "type of consumer". The reasons of these findings can be found in several aspects:

Interaction between the "Design for all" philosophy and survey results

- "Design for all" is relatively new philosophy and in our region is not yet enough promoted on the public.
- Separation of "the suitability of products for the consumer" based on the "type of consumer" may be a consequence of the past of our country and by the communist era. There almost did not exist any integration of handicapped people into society. Mostly they were isolated and prevailed medical model of care for handicapped people. This model regards handicapped people for ill people and they were placed in hospital or houses of social care. The communist concept consider for an ideal citizen – a healthy manual worker.
- We assume that respondents who advocate "separation" have frequent contact with the wheelchair user, who is forced to use "common things" (they know problems of the wheelchair users with using these common things) and they think that for the disabled people should be produced "special products".



Thank you for your attention!