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PROFILING OF THE WORKING-AGE POPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA TOWARD ATTITUDES ABOUT WORK AND CAREER

Abstract:

There are many definitions of market segmentation - strategy of dividing a broad target of population into subsets who have, or are perceived to have, common needs, interests, and priorities, and then designing and implementing strategies to target them. Traditional segmentation variables are demographic variables, such as gender, age, income, education. They can be used to explain the characteristics of the segments, however, they cannot identify the complete characteristics of the segments because it is proven that population in the same socio-demographic group can have very different psychographic profile. Due to the criterion variable, different segmentation can be used for creating profiles, such as geographic, behavioural, psychographic, occasional, segmentation by benefits, cultural segmentation. Still, demographic segmentation is dominant in most fields and disciplines where there is need for understanding different subgroups within population. Profiling of population based on segmentation model can be used much wider than in business and marketing. Understanding population and their perception is crucial in law, primarily when decisions, which will "regulate" the lives of certain population, have to be made. This paper examines profiles of the working-age population in The Republic of Croatia toward attitudes about work and career, which means that this study discusses demographic variables as output (profile description), not input (criteria variable). Aim of this paper was not only to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the key concepts related to the non-demographic segmentation, but to help in creating a clearer picture of Croatia's population on attitudes on work and career. Analysis of Croatia's population was done using backdate of 4 research waves through 2 years, two waves per year for years: 2010 and 2014. Year 2014 was in the focus of analysis and 2010 was used for comparison and time change detection.

Keywords: *segmentation, profile, working age population, research*

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I. TRADITIONAL SEGMENTING AND PROFILING OF POPULATION

Strategy of dividing the market in homogenous group is known as segmentation. The purpose of segmentation is the concentration of communication energy within the segment, primarily in business communication. There are many definitions of market segmentation. The segmentation concept was first developed by Smith[1], an American professor of marketing, in 1957, and is concerned with grouping consumers in terms of their needs. The aim of segmentation is to identify a group of people who have a need or needs that can be met by a single product, in order to concentrate the marketing firm's efforts most effectively and economically. Basic definition says that "market segmentation is to divide a market into smaller groups of buyers with distinct needs, characteristics, or behaviours who might require separate products or marketing mixes."[2] According to Peter D, Bennett, "market segmentation is the process of subdividing a market into distinct subsets of customers that behave in the same way or have similar needs. Each subset may conceivably be chosen as a market target to be reached with a distinctive marketing strategy. The process begins with a basis of segmentation - a product specific factor that reflects differences in customers' requirements or responsiveness to marketing variables (possibilities are purchase behaviour, usage, benefits sought, intentions, preference or loyalty)".[3]It can be summarised that segmentation is a strategy which involves dividing a broad target of population into subsets who have, or are perceived to have, common needs, interests, and priorities, and then designing and implementing strategies to target them.

Traditional segmentation variables are demographic variables, such as gender, age, income, education. They can be used to explain the characteristics of the segments. Traditional demographic variables, however, cannot identify the complete characteristics of the segments because it is proven that population in the same socio-demographic group can have very different psychographic profile.[4] Consumer behaviour can be modelled from a number of perspectives. As furthermore pointed out by Kotler and Armstrong[5]consumer behaviour and purchases are influenced by forces such as:

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[1] W.R. Smith, „Product differentiation and market segmentation as alternative marketing strategies", *Journal of Marketing*, 1957, p.3.

[2] C. W. Lamb, J. F. Fair and C. McDaniel, *Marketing*, Beijing, Peking University Press, 2003, p. 214.

[3] 'Market segmentation', in P. D. Bennett (ed.), *Dictionary of Marketing Terms*, 2nd edn., Chicago, AMA NTC Publishing Group, 1995.

[4] P. Kotler and G.Armstrong, *Principles of marketing*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall International, 2012, p.160

[5] Kotler and Armstrong, p.161

- Cultural: the set of basic values, perceptions, wants and behaviours learned by an individual from being a member of society
- Social: the influences of social factors such as the consumer's relation to small groups, family and social roles
- Individual: the characteristics of the individual such as the consumer's age, economic situation and occupation
- Psychological: the motivation, perception and beliefs and attitudes1 of the consumer.

Due to the criterion variable, different segmentation can be used for creating profiles, such as geographic, behavioural, psychographic, occasional, segmentation by benefits, cultural segmentation, multi-variable account segmentation… Still, demographic segmentation is dominant in most fields and disciplines where there is need for understanding different subgroups within population.

II. PROFILING OF POPULATION TOWARD ATTITUDES

Profiling of population based on segmentation model can be used much wider than in business and marketing. Understanding population and their perception is crucial in law, primarily when decisions, which will "regulate" the lives of certain population, have to be made. Segmentation variables must be considered in light of their measurability, availability, reliability and ability to uncover the characteristics and a profile of certain segment. Psychographic segmentation variables include interests, activities, opinions, values and attitudes.[6]

This paper examines profiles of the working-age population in The Republic of Croatia toward attitudes about work and career, which means that this study discusses demographic variables such as gender as output (profile description), not input (criteria variable).

III. CROATIAN CITIZEN'S ATTITUDES ON WORK AND CAREER

Since the aim of this paper was not only to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the key concepts related to the non-demographic segmentation, but to help in creating a clearer picture of Croatia's population on attitudes on work and career, analysis of Croatia's population direct responses related to work and career was conducted.

[6] S. Goya, „The basis of market segmentation: a critical review of literature", *European Journal of Business and Management,* Vol 3, No.9, 2011, p 48.

3.1. Methodology Overview

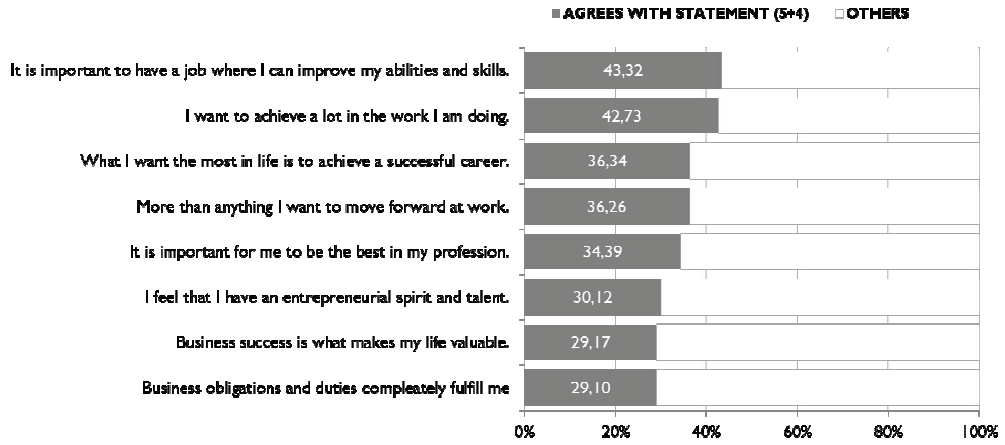
Analysis was done using backdate[7] of 4 research waves through 2 years, two waves per year (April and October) for years: 2010 (n=4029) and 2014 (n=4000). Year 2014 was in the focus of analysis and 2010 was used for comparison and time change detection. Data collection was done using self-completion method, and data set related to attitudes toward work and career was a part of wider research project. Sample was representative for Croatian population aged from 15 to 65 years, meaning that sample represents around 2.970.000 Croatian inhabitants. Controlled variables were gender, age, and region and settlement type. Selected segment of measurement instrument was consisted of attitudes statements plus questions related to socio-demography. Statements were evaluated using predefined answers of ordinal Likert scale (1 to 5, while analysing recoded to 1 to 3 point scale: agree, nor/neither, disagree).

3.2. Research Results

First observed 8 statements, all presented in Graph 1, were evaluating attitudes toward work and career. In year 2014, with statement: *"It is important to have a job where I can improve my abilities and skills."* agrees 43% of adult Croatian population, while 19% of them disagree with that statement. Around 38% does not have firm attitude about this statement. This statement is followed by: *"I want to achieve a lot in the work I am doing"* is describing also around 43% of working age population. It is interesting that almost ¼ of working age population does not agree with this statement. *Achieving successful career*, *moving forward at work* and *being best in profession* is important for around 34% to 36% of working age population in Croatia. There are almost the same proportion of population whit disagrees with these statements. *Entrepreneurial spirit and talent, business success oriented lifestyle* are describing around 30% of Croatian adult population.

[7] BRANDpuls is a research project of IPSOS, market research agency, created in Croatia in 2006 in response to advertiser and agency dissatisfaction with other offerings in the market. By early 2011, BRANDpuls was running in seven countries: Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia/Herzegovina in Europe and Egypt, the Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in the Middle East. BRANDpuls blends four key aspects of consumer markets in order to build a comprehensive picture of consumers: attitudes, brand analysis, demographics, and media. BRANDpuls collects data by means of self-completion surveys placed by interviewers, who train respondents how to complete the surveys. IPSOS agency gave us permission to use work and career set of data for purpose of this study.

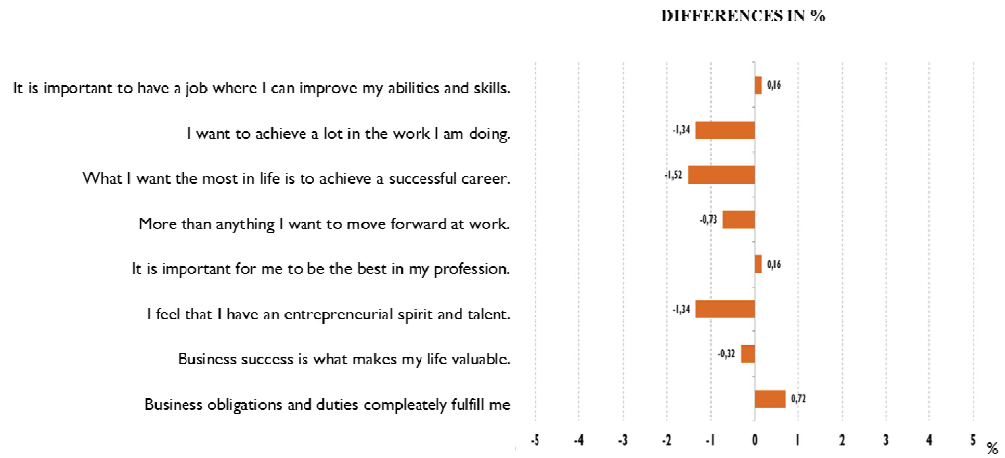
Graph1. Agreement with statements about work and career



Source: Made by authors based on data from BRANDpuls project, 2014.

Stated did not changed through time: it is almost on the same level from 2010 to 2013. Differences are in range from 0% up to 2% per item (Graph2).

Graph 2. Differences in relation to 2010.

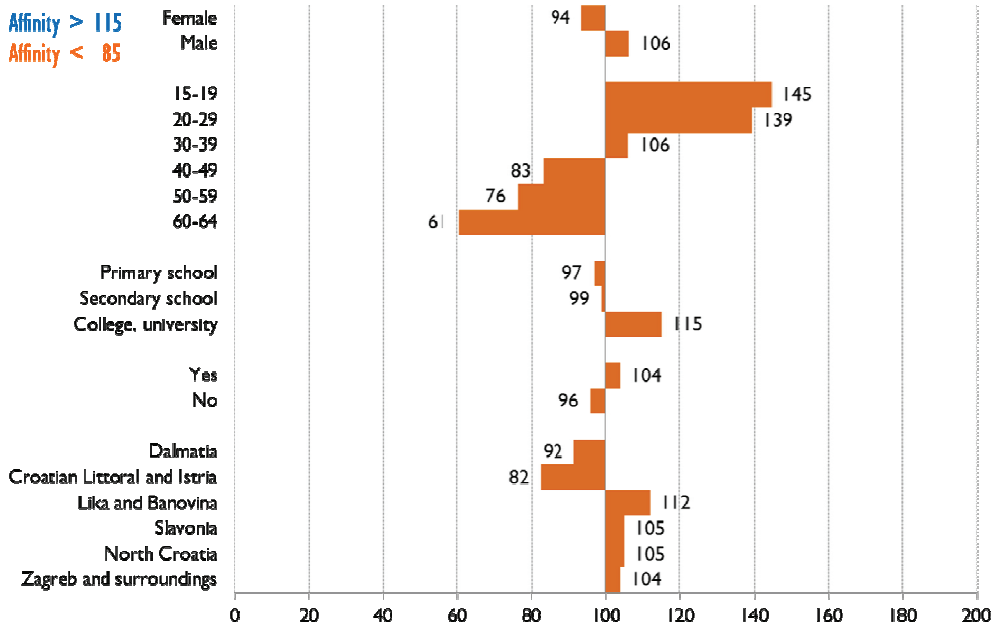


Source: Made by authors based on data from BRANDpuls project, 2014.

When analysing overlapping of statements agreement, there is around **30%** of working population who are **fully business/work oriented**, and it goes **up to 36% of career oriented population**, furthermore **to 43% business achievement oriented population**.

This 30% of working population being fully business/work oriented is homogeneous segment of population which can be profiled by socio-demographic variables. Profile is shown in Graph3. Comparison is done by using affinity index, which means target's affinity toward particular answer. Differences between demography groups were measured through affinity index = target's affinity toward particular answer (null point = 100, affinity reference - total sample). Interpretation criteria says that if affinity is above 115, meaning 15% more that reference target, in this case population average, it is significant for positive interpretation. If affinity index is lower than 85, meaning 15% less that reference target, in this case population average it is significant for negative interpretation.

Graph 3. Profile of "Fully work oriented" segment



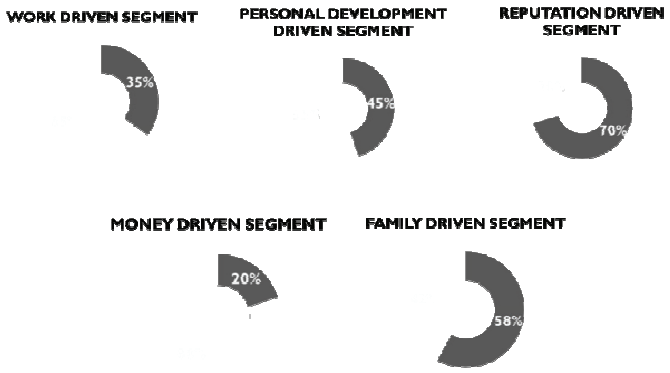
Source: Made by authors based on data from BRANDpuls project, 2014.

Regarding gender differences, men are somewhat more fully work oriented, but it is not significant difference. Regarding age differences, youngest target groups, up to 30 years are, as expected, more work oriented than older one. It significantly drops in 40ties. When observing education level, although there are some differences, they are not significant for interpretation, although higher education correlates with higher work orienta-

tion. People already working are somewhat more work oriented people comparing to ones not working at the moment. Still, this criterion is also not the one that drives differences. Regarding regions in Croatia, there are some differences, interestingly; "sea regions" are less work oriented than average population, where Lika and Banovina are significantly more work oriented than average or other regions.

In order to contextualize size of described "work oriented" segment, several more segments were extracted from survey data (Graph 4).

Graph 4. Size comparison to other segments



Croatian adult population is mostly "reputation driven" nation, meaning that there is 70% of working age population who finds reputation very important and reputation is criteria for making daily decisions. Secondly it is "family oriented" nation, meaning that for 58% of adult population, family comes first, followed by "personal development" driven population, where for 45% of population, personal development is very important. Finally, "work driven" population is bigger only than "money driven segment", where socially acceptable responses must be taken into consideration.

IV. CONCLUSION

Segmentation and profiling of homogenous segment is important tool not only in business and marketing, but in other social studies as well, where understanding working age population not only by demographic differences but their attitudes toward work and career, can help when generating working policies, procedures and laws, since attitudes are basis for people behaviour.

Regarding Croatia's population profile on attitudes about work and career, there is around 30% of working population who are fully business/work oriented, and it goes up

to 36% of career oriented population, furthermore to 43% business achievement oriented population.

There are no changes within last four years; there are around 20% to 30% of people without attitudes, meaning that they are open / available for changes (more than negatively oriented segment). Regarding socio-demographic differences men are somewhat more fully work oriented, but it is not significant difference. Regarding age differences, youngest target groups, up to 30 years are, as expected, more work oriented than older one. It significantly drops in 40ties. When observing education level, although there are some differences, they are not significant for interpretation, although higher education correlates with higher work orientation. People already working are somewhat more work oriented people comparing to ones not working at the moment. Still, this criterion is also not the one that drives differences. Regarding regions in Croatia, there are some differences; "sea regions" are less work oriented than average population, where Lika and Banovina are significantly more work oriented than average or other regions. Although work is important for rather wide proportion of population, Croatian adult population is mostly "reputation driven" and "family oriented" nation.