

The Impact of Marketing Strategies on Changes in Eating Habits – An Approach from a Consumer Perspective

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Abstract

In recent years there has been a tendency to standardize the consumption habits of economically developing countries. This was mainly caused by the change in available products, but also in the new way of life of consumers.

The food sector manifests itself differently worldwide, making its mark both in the agricultural sector and in the social and economic sector, with food being the focus of consumers' attention, especially as a result of various scandals, such as epidemics.

Organic products and functional foods are increasingly purchased with age, because with age, health problems appear and intensify, healthy eating being a priority for them. The purchase of organic food also depends on their price, as consumers are not willing to spend large sums of money on organic products.

In this article we tried to identify as exhaustively as possible in the literature the theoretical aspects related to the cultural factors influencing consumer behavior and the impact of marketing strategies on changes in eating habits. In the practical part, a quantitative research was carried out which aimed to identify the perceived impact of marketing on consumption habits. Thus, information was obtained on the sources of information and persuasion identified by the respondents that led to the adaptation of new eating habits.

Key words: marketing strategies, eating habits, consumer behavior

J.E.L. classification: M31

1. Introduction

The marked economic changes that have taken place in Central Europe and in the Eastern countries since 1989 have changed the patterns of food consumption. The variety of food products, higher incomes, the choices of food distributors, have led to a change in the food system. One of the trends in the food field in the last decade is the consumption of organic food (Biemans, 2011, p. 122). Despite agricultural trends, promotion for organic food and functional foods faces three major limitations: prices are much higher than conventional products; consumers are not aware of the attributes of these products, the way labeling being one of the main problems; marketing difficulties related to the heterogeneity of supply, as well as the seasonal sale of products. A large number of studies on nutrition have focused on the relative importance of price as the main determinant of demand (Soler, Gil and Sancez, 2006, pp. 670-671). For both environmental and ethical reasons, there has been a growing political interest in having food diversity on the market. This interest came amid the growing number of crises in agriculture, such as swine fever, "mad cow disease" and various epidemics. The only thing that prevents it from increasing the purchase of organic products, functional foods or international foods is the willingness of consumers to buy them, being somehow more expensive than other foods (Vindigni, Jansen and Jager, 2006, p. 625).

Despite the cultural habits of consumption, internationalization has produced the spread of different types of food among different peoples, thus becoming a new habit of trying foods and types of food from different cultures. The major changes that have taken place both in the structure of families and in their lifestyle, as well as the increase in disposable income over the last 30 years have led to a major evolution in consumer patterns and eating habits with a progressive increase in demand for characteristic products. by increasing the number of services for their manufacture. This process included agriculture, leading to an increase in consumer interest in simple and nutrient-rich products, ensuring health (Chinnici, D'Amico and Pecorino, 2006, p.198). Noticing consumers' desire to try new foods and even the preferences developed for them, marketers have begun to implement specific strategies for promoting international foods.

2. Literature review

Jim Blythe (1997) characterizes consumer behavior as a complex system of manifestations, attitudes and decisions. In order for the product to guarantee a large number of sales, marketers must also take into account the fact that this behavior causes interactions and that it is good to know what consumers think (perception), what they feel (impression) and how the sales process works).

2.1. Consumer eating behavior

According to Gueguen (2006), nonverbal behavior of staff greatly influences the purchase of products. He mainly addressed grocery stores and restaurants, finding that touching the customer's arm for a few seconds and smiling at him led to a significant increase in sales and tips. Touch contact, for a few seconds, was analyzed through a series of studies and experiments conducted in grocery stores, when staff touched the customer's arm to present a product, there was a greater interest from the subject and a higher level of sales. .

It has also been shown that this tactic can be applied with similar results in restaurants. Gueguen (2006) demonstrates in the same paper the importance of a smile and eye contact, when waiters smiled broadly at customers and looked them in the eye, they had a high tendency to leave larger tips and order more drinks and drinks.

Sethna and Blythe (2016) state that an important factor in the influence of the consumer is the segmentation of the market because it determines the elements that help to form a relationship of knowledge of buyers' preferences. They determined several types of market segmentation: "geographical segmentation", "psychographic and behavioral segmentation" and "demographic segmentation". Geographical segmentation provides information about consumers' preferences according to the areas where they live or under certain circumstances are forced to live. "We can say that a consumer living in a cold area is tempted to buy thicker clothes, thermal insulation elements (in the case of real estate construction) and thermal equipment" (Sethna and Blythe, 2016), also the consumer will be tempted to fatter or higher calorie foods. Otherwise, a consumer living in a warmer area will be tempted to buy thin clothes, home cooling systems, and food will be lighter and lower in fat. Psychographic and behavioral segmentation helps us to understand how people choose according to their temperamental characteristics, for example an individual with a bloody temperament is more likely to buy products associated with adventure and fun, on the contrary, an individual with a melancholy temperament is tempted to buy products associated with the artistic or meditation field. We can say that behavioral segmentation helps us to know how individuals will buy certain items or services depending on their hobbies, favorite foods, how they travel or how they spend their free time. Demographic segmentation helps determine consumer behavior based on age, health, gender and even education level. We understand why sick people tend to buy healthy food, why young people buy more video games than the elderly, why women buy skirts and dresses, and why most men do not, and why it is much easier to manipulate a man with a lower level of education.

Teodoru (2004) states that two particularly important factors in the choices made by consumers are religion and culture. Depending on the religious orientation, people often choose their main foods, and this is a very important element for the food industry. Some religions impose food restrictions (certain types of meat: pork, beef) and impose periods when it is forbidden to eat

different types of food and drink. For example, in the Orthodox religion, there are periods of fasting that involve the adoption of a vegetarian diet. The food industry must take into account the religious aspects of the citizens, so in shops and restaurants during Lent will sell more vegetables, vegetables and fruits, and during the holidays will require much larger amounts of food and primary ingredients. It is essential for the food industry to know the areas or countries where certain commodities are not consumed or banned (alcohol in Pakistan and beef in India).

2.2. Formation of eating habits

Eating designs are influenced by a mind boggling set of monetary, social, and mental elements. One way to deal with understanding these elements is to examine buyer conduct—that is, the demonstrations by which people acquire and utilize financial merchandise and enterprises, including the choices that go before and decide these demonstrations (Square and Roering, 1979). Despite the fact that its underlying foundations can be followed to the incredible scholars, business analysts, and mental labs, shopper conduct look into is just around 30 years of age, the most significant research having happened over the most recent 15 years. At the point when Square and Roering (1976) distributed their first book on purchaser conduct, there were maybe four or five others accessible. Today the quantity of buyer conduct writings is well into the 50s, and the quantity of new books is expanding drastically. This development in shopper conduct writing reflects both expanded intrigue and research progress. Shockingly, this writing isn't notable by numerous gatherings, for example, open policymakers, that may profit by it.

Individuals generally associate with their social or ethnic gathering through food designs. For Workers food currently become the methods for holding their social character. Every single individual have diverse social foundations and have distinctive dietary patterns. The fixings, strategies for readiness, conservation methods, and kinds of food eaten at various dinners are diverse among societies. The territories and the atmosphere factors in which families live-and land area where their predecessors began likewise impact food different preferences. These food inclinations bring about assortments of food decisions inside an alternate social or territorial gathering.

Food things themselves have significance and some social character joined to them. For instance in numerous Western nations a container of chocolates would be seen as a fitting blessing while in different nations chocolates may be a less suitable blessing.

Various countries or nations are as often as possible related with specific nourishments. For instance, numerous individuals partner Italy with pizza and pasta yet Italians eat numerous different nourishments, and kinds of pasta dishes are famous all through Italy. Strategies for arrangement and kinds of food additionally differ by districts and culture of a country. A few families in the US like to eat "basics," yet in certain families "fundamentals" are not eaten all the time, nor even liked, by numerous individuals in the US, so would not be marked as a national food. Corn meal, a coarsely ground corn that is bubbled, is eaten in the southern US. A bundle of corn meal is just accessible in the biggest grocery stores in the upper Midwest and it's hard to track down even in enormous Midwestern general stores quite a while prior. This might be called as the geological impact.

Local food propensities likewise exist in countries and nations however they additionally change by time. As individuals make a trip here and there food propensities and inclinations are imported and sent out. Families move to different countries, nations or spots carrying their food inclinations with them. They follow their old plans with new fixings accessible at better places or test with new plans, consolidating fixings to coordinate their own preferences. Likewise, the food itself is imported from different nations (Featherstone, 1987).

In any case, what is viewed as palatable or even a delicacy in certain pieces of the world may be viewed as unappetizing in different parts. Albeit a large portion of the occasions, food is chosen with some consideration regarding the physical need, the qualities or convictions by which society joins to potential food things and characterize what families inside a social gathering will eat (Tan, 2017). For instance, both plant and creature sources may add to meeting healthful prerequisites for protein; soybeans, hamburger, horsemeat, and canine meat are generally sufficient protein sources. However, because of the few qualities and convictions joined to these protein sources, they are not considered in all social orders. Additionally, in any event, when the nourishment saw to be

bothersome are accessible, they are not eaten by individuals who have a compelling passionate response against those potential food things.

It can be seen that the culture and innate consumption habits have a major impact on consumers' food decisions. However, with the internationalization and free movement between states, the migration of citizens and extended vacations have contributed in the long run to the formation and development of food preferences for the specifics of cultures other than the innate. So, marketers have developed strategies to promote food, food styles and their benefits

2.3. Food Marketing

Food items regularly include the general advertising approaches and strategies applied the promoting of different sorts of items and administrations. In food advertising, themes, for example, test promoting, division, situating, marking, focusing on, shopper research, and market passage technique, for instance, are profoundly significant. Furthermore, food showcasing includes different sorts of difficulties -, for example, managing a transient item whose quality and accessibility shifts as an element of current collect conditions. The worth chain- - the degree to which successive gatherings in the advertising channel increase the value of the item - is especially significant. Today, handling and new dispersion alternatives give expanding openings accessible to food advertisers to furnish the purchaser with comfort. Marketing, administrations, and preparing included do, be that as it may, bring about essentially greater expenses. In the days of yore, for instance, shoppers may have prepared their own bread from privately developed flour. Today, most family units purchase pre-made bread, and it is evaluated that the rancher gets just some 5% of the cost paid by the shopper for the wheat (Perner, 2008)

For viable showcasing of food, it is significant for a food organization to think about such points as division, situating, test-advertising, focusing on, marking, showcase passage explore and furthermore purchaser investigate. Customer fulfillment is of most noteworthy incentive to any maker or provider. While advertising food, it is likewise imperative to take note of the sort of food, its length period, that is on the off chance that it is one that is transitory and its quality and availability.

Worth chain which is the level to which ordered gatherings in the advertising channel add worth to the item is likewise of extremely incredible importance. To have the option to be serious in the food showcasing, it is significant for a provider to think about segment examining. This involves astute comprehension of factual properties of the populace. This will empower a firm to get a handle on the information on the current commercial center; for example, an organization keen on entering the market for quick nourishments in a specific area ought to consider researching the quantity of individuals between the age of seven to around thirty who are inside that specific vicinity (since such are known to appreciate cheap food suppers).

The diversity of consumers brings with it various preferences for products, so we must pay special attention to many factors when selling a product: culture, religion, orientation towards globalization or traditionalism, the way traders behave and attract buyers, smile, society, behavioral patterns and more.

3. Research methodology

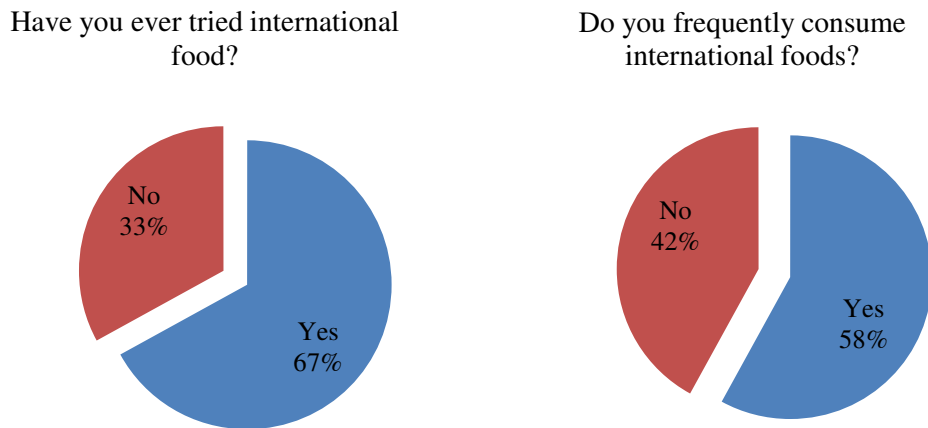
In this article, a quantitative research was conducted among young people in Bucharest (aged between 20-35 years) to identify food intentions and preferences for international foods. It is well known that nowadays some cultures are more appreciated from a culinary point of view than others, but it is important to identify whether this is due to the knowledge of consumers or marketing strategies used to promote and inform about the qualities of types. international food.

As a research tool was used a questionnaire consisting of 20 closed questions, dichotomous, multihotomic and structured on measurement scales designed to identify consumers' intention to try food from other crops, their curiosity or preferences for international foods (eg American specific (American breakfast, American pancakes, American muffins), Asian specific (sushi, noodels, teriaky chicken); Lebanese specific (Lebanese bread, hummus, rose desserts), etc.).

The aim of the research was to identify what was the trigger in the intention to try food-specific foods or even in their test, namely whether the trigger was based on a marketing strategy or accidentally out of curiosity.

After centralizing and analyzing the results we could see that most of the respondents (67%) tried at least once international food, and 58% of them said that they responded favorably, becoming a habit of eating food. with international specificity or even to adopt certain foods and to include them in their own traditions and customs (for example, holiday pannetones, burgers for family reunions).

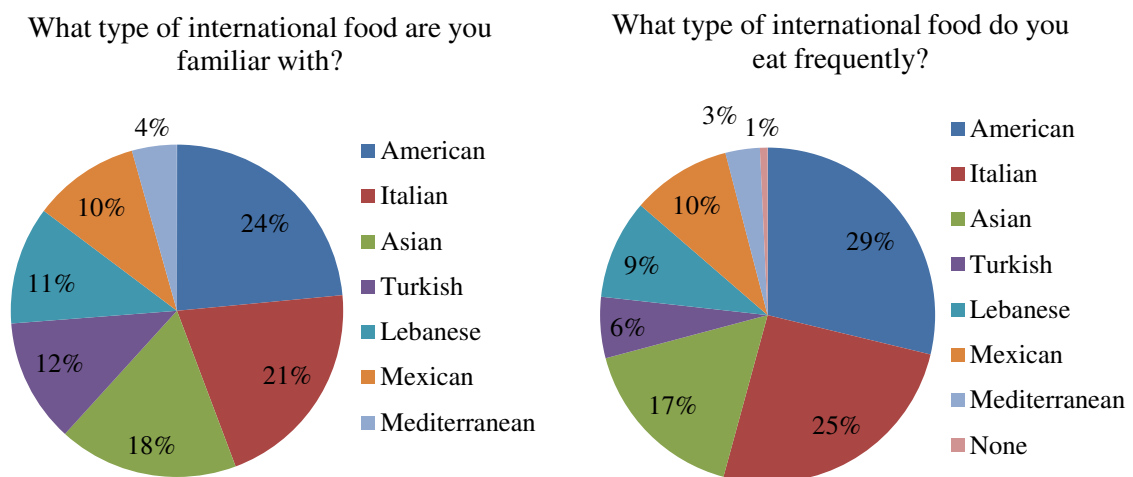
Figure no. 1. Eating habits related to the consumption of international foods



Source: made by authors

Respondents were further asked what type of international specificity they know, and the answers indicated that American specific foods are the best known (24%), followed by Italian (21%), Asian (18%), Turkish specific foods (12%), Lebanese (11%), Mexican (10%) and Mediterranean (4%).

Figure no. 2 International food notoriety and consumption



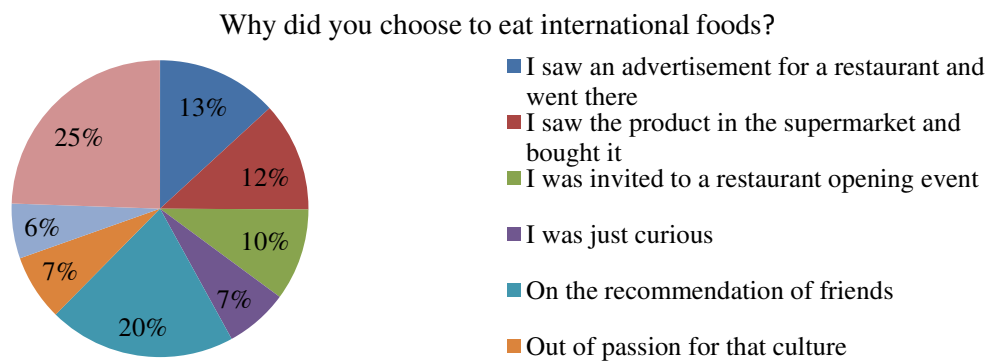
Source: made by authors

However, regarding the frequency of consumption of food with specific food we can see that those with American food are the most consumed by young people in Bucharest (29%), followed by food with Italian food (25%), Asian food (17%) and others.

Another question in the questionnaire referred to the source of information and the triggering factor regarding the consumption of international foods. Marketing strategies, even if they are not always recognized by consumers, have a well-defined role of informing (even if the information unconsciously reaches the consumer, they determine a momentum generated by familiarity at a later time, causing him to do the desired purchase by the marketer) or to promote certain specific products in order to determine the consumer's curiosity (through abundant communication, through price reductions, launch events).

Taking into account all these aspects, in order to highlight and understand the factors that determined the consumption of food with international specificity, in the question asked, answers were formulated without academic specificity so that they could indicate the most appropriate answer.

Figure no. 3 Factors that determined the consumption of specific foods

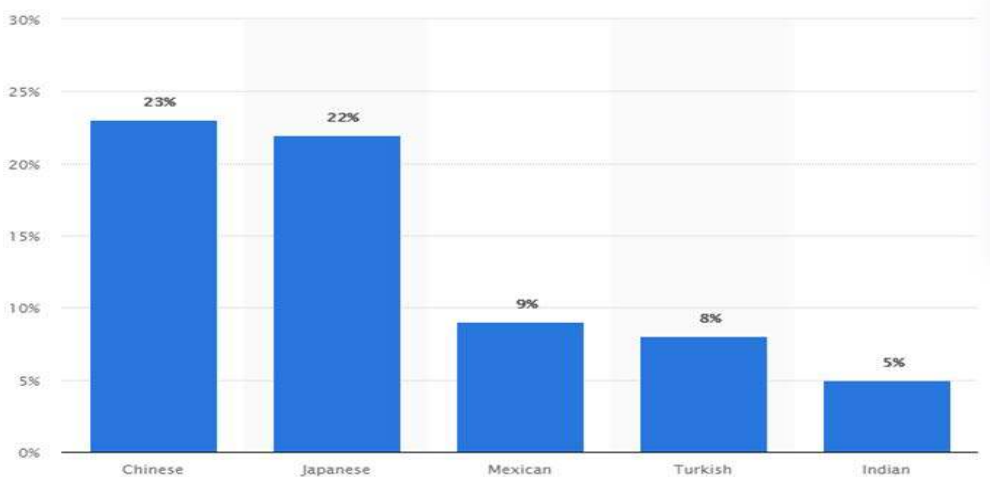


Source: made by author

It can be seen from the results obtained that most of the respondents were curious to try international food after it was consumed (promoted) by a public person. In second place in the case of the triggers of food consumption with international specifics was a recommendation to friends, followed by promoting a restaurant, observing a product in the supermarket and others.

Next, we wanted to identify whether the cultural factor in terms of food style is easily removed only in the case of consumers in Romania or free movement has left its mark on other states, and a trace of identified research we could see that Italians have favorite international cuisines (international foods). These include Asian food (Chinese and Japanese), Mexican food, Indian food and others.

Figure no. 4 Most popular ethnic cuisines in Italy



Source: Coppola, 2020

We can conclude by saying that the impact of marketing in terms of eating habits is major, influencing both consumer purchasing and consumption decisions in terms of traditional products, and in the field of international food, a phenomenon visible both in Romania and in other countries.

4. Findings

Following the outcomes got in the exploration, we can see viewpoints, for example, that the vast majority of the respondents (67%) attempted at any rate once universal food, and 58% of them said that they reacted well, turning into a propensity for eating food. with global explicitness or even to receive certain nourishments and to remember them for their own conventions and customs (for instance, occasion pannetones, burgers for family get-togethers), the majority of the respondents were interested to attempt universal food after it was devoured (advanced) by an open individual. In runner up on account of the triggers of food utilization with global points of interest was a suggestion to companions, trailed by advancing an eatery, watching an item in the store and others and furthermore the effect of advertising as far as dietary patterns is major, impacting both customer buying and utilization choices as far as customary items, and in the field of worldwide food, a noticeable wonder both in Romania and in different nations.

5. Conclusion

In the case of a developed economy, there is a high consumption of food from other crops, this type of purchase being based on economic, ecological and social factors. Their purchase automatically attracts greater costs which in the eyes of most customers is not justified despite the taste or advantages in terms of culinary experience. Good health is seen by some consumers as dependent on the constant consumption of foods considered healthy in other crops, especially fruits, vegetables or other specialties. Thus, we can conclude that vital to consumers at the moment is their education in terms of food and conversion to a lifestyle that requires the correct consumption of international products.

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