THE ANALYSIS OF THE PURCHASE DECISIONS OF HUNGARIAN TRADITIONAL PRODUCTS

ANALIZA DECIZIILOR PRIVIND ACHIZITIA DE PRODUSE TRADITIONALE UNGURESTI

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Abstract: *Sustainability is closely linked to the concept of food sovereignty which in the last decade*

The Hungarian traditional regional products offer wider assortment for the consumer market via their unique features and top-quality images. In the primary research consumers were asked by standard questionnaire which was analyzed by mathematical and statistical methods. Results: the consumers' preferences and attitudes are positive. These products are considered as confidential and Hungarian consumers be aware of the traditional regional products' positive associations. The traditional products contrary to today's fast-paced lifestyle symbolize the slowing-down, searching for the "roots". Conclusion: There is a definite role of marketing tools to repositioning and familiarizing these products.

Key words: *marketing, patriotism, sovereignty*

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the globalisation of commerce it is more and more necessary to measure customer habits and preferences. The ever growing competition requires manufacturers to lay great emphasis on quality (Malota, 2004). They need to ensure steady and reliable quality and it shall be communicated towards customers as well. Image of the country of origin is an important influence on how customers perceive goods from other countries. Researches show that customers evaluated similar and fully corresponding products differently because of their country of origin (Balabanis, 2004). Consumer ethnocentrism is not only interesting because it is a global tendency but also because political influences on customer behaviour are particularly evident. Although, political attitude is one of the most important social criteria, contrary to other similar factors such as age, sex, education and social status its influence on customer decisions - other than patriotic purchase - is hardly detectable. We might say that it is such a

determinant that buyers are not aware of when they make the customer decisions (Hofmeister-Tóth, 2003).

This topic bears special interest as beside its evident economic influences it also has social, psychological and political implications. How it forms a complex and how some of these factors become prominent as a result of various influences have significant actuality in our days (Shimp, 1987). In a world where social issues like sustainable development or fair trade have major impact on forming public attitudes thus economic behaviour of people. Moreover, it characteristically became a political grouping criterion not only globally but also here – or especially here - in Hungary where views on buying local products are often confronting (Vágási, 2007).

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

We made primary examinations in 2010. The sample is almost representative, 862 questionnaires in total. The questionnaires reached all parts of Hungary, and made sure the distribution age, qualification, occupation and residence. The questionnaire is the most important device of the primary market research methods. During our quantitative research we used standardised questionnaires, which suited to give numerical data. The standard characteristic of the questionnaire makes it possible that the answers of different consumers are comparable. We have used SPSS 14.0 program for analysing the data obtained with questionnaire. From the various calculation options of the program we used the followings: descriptive and diagnostic data analysis, cross table analysis, cluster analysis, factor analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICIAL HUNGARIAN PRODUCT

Respondents could chose more than one answer. Figure 1 shows that 28% chose “Made from Hungarian materials”, “Made in Hungary” and “Made by Hungarian manufacturer”, which - we think - characterises the definition of official Hungarian product the best. According to 43% of the respondents the most important characteristic is “Made from Hungarian materials”; this shows that people considers relevant if a product is made from local materials. In this way they support their home country’s economy. Other factors” received, however, the most answers. This made us think that more researches shall be made in order to learn which other

factors are important for customers. Unfortunately, the structure of our questionnaire did not allow respondents to express their opinion in a more detailed manner.

3.2. ANALYSIS OF SHOPPING HABITS

Respondents needed to evaluate factors on a scale 1 to 5 where 1: "not influenced by that at all" and 5: "very much influenced by that". Figure 4 was prepared by averaging. According to Figure 2 customers make insinificant distinction between traditional Hungarian foods and other foodstuffs. The largest difference was found in product prices. Trademarks are more often required for traditional products because such labelling represents excellent quality. However, their availability is not as good as their competitors.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, respondents consider Hungarian products average or good. Customers' ethnocentric behaviour needs to be reinforced; if a customer is satisfied with a Hungarian product he or she will chose locally produced goods. For me it was positive outcome that 82% of respondents replied to be proud of Hungary. In each age bracket nearly same amount of people replied not to be proud of his or her home country. After mentioning the country's successes they reflected positively to the achievements of this small country. 72% of respondents expressed that they would not want to live in other country. The younger generation, however, thinks that their professional knowledge worth more abroad than in Hungary. Therefore, career-starters should be assisted with various grants.

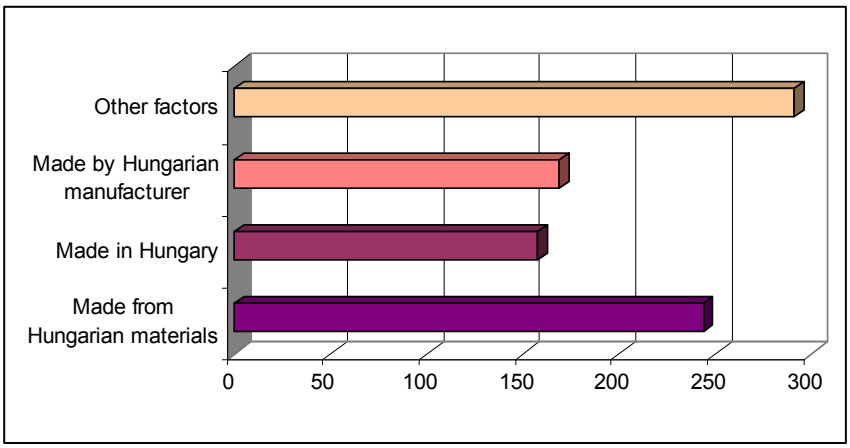


Figure 1. What are the characteristics of official Hungarian product?

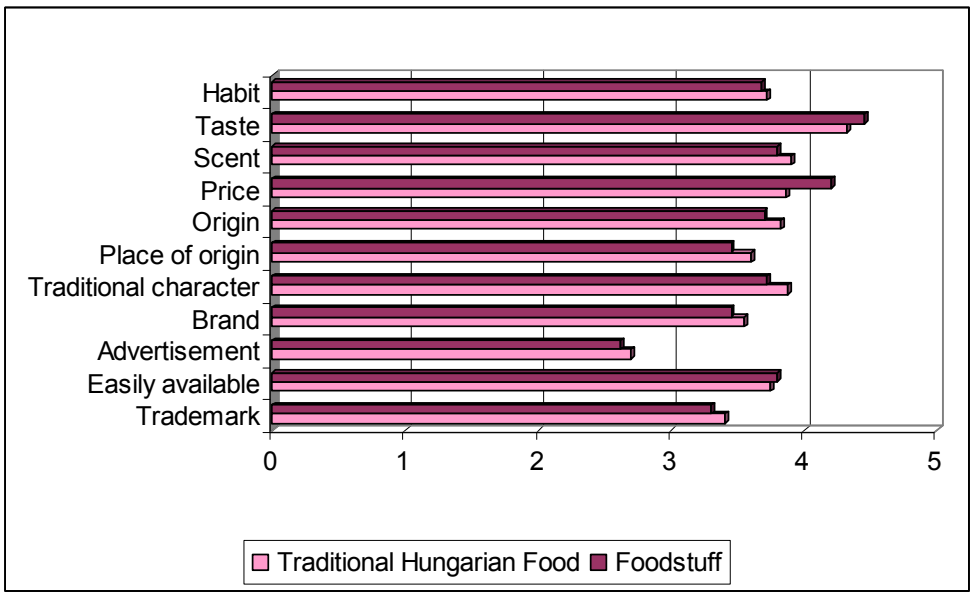


Figure 2. Comparison of traditional food and other foodstuff based on shopping decision

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