NOTES ON THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON VEGETAL FOOD CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR IN THE TIMIŞ COUNTY (ROMANIA)

NOTIFICĂRI ASUPRA IMPACTULUI EDUCAȚIEI ŞI COMPORTAMENTUL CONSUMATORILOR DE MÂNCĂRURI VEGETALE ÎN JUDEȚUL TIMIŞ (ROMÂNIA)

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Abstract: *The moulding of human personality depends a lot on both heredity and education. Education can be carried out in a both physical and social environment, and improving these conditions can have a direct impact on personality. The contemporary consumer is very often faced with the problem of making decisions as quick as possible and as efficiently as possible because the world we live in is a consumer world, and our daily life means consuming money and time. The analysis of the food consumer sample allowed us to build up one-dimensional tables (tables based on a single variable) in which we represent absolute frequency and relative frequency of response incidence.*

Keywords*: consumers, vegetal produce, behaviour, Timiş County*

INTRODUCTION

Defining human personality based on people's features relied on two perennial features that have an impact on an individual's behaviour. The way an individual behaves very much depends on the situation and on the individual's innate features [3].

The way we act when we make a decision related to the purchase of goods and the consumer's response to the message sent through publicity very much depend on well-rooted features, while a different response in different situations define the consumer's individual profile [5].

The personality of each individual, potential buyer of agro-alimentary produce, of great interest in the marketing activity, can be described by such features as self-confidence, dominance, sociability,

autonomy, self-defence, adaptability, aggressiveness, achievement, respect, and creativeness. Individuals that have a positive attitude, that are self-confident (they believe in their actions, ideas, and practices) will take risks and will make bold purchasing decisions, unlike buyers that have low self-esteem and do not trust their own actions. Features are based on motivations that underlie some buying behaviours. Food-related needs determine the agro-alimentary produce purchase; social-related needs determine the purchase of expensive goods or of knowledge-enriching goods. Motivations and features contribute to the decisions individuals make in certain situations. The variety of features and of motivations can engender different character structures and education is the one that can limit this variety through the formative aspect of the teaching/learning process. The instructive-educative process aims at moulding, developing, and changing of attitudes through communication, through the power of one's example, through modelling, and through imitation. Another aspect to take into account is aptitudes, i.e. the features on which successful activities rely. Aptitudes develop on the basis of knowledge and skills, and they play a very important role in acquiring information [4].

Everyday life and changes have made specialists define the notion of "life style". Life style can be defined as the way people live, behave, and influence positively or negatively the course of different events. Life style flexibility is characterised by the consumer's need of observing the values represented by creeds or convictions and the desire of valorising one's own personality. A very important role in perceiving messages is that of communication channels used to change life styles, and that are more successful than the attempt of changing values.

The relationship between personality and life style has determined the birth of a new concept, psychography. If life style is analysed in close connection to actions and values within a social and cultural environment, psychography refers to the psychological analysis of consumers' opinions and attitudes. The way in which the two elements are analysed together determines the description of cultural, demographic, and economic dimensions. Personal values are important for the study of consumer behaviour because they contribute to the acknowledgement of a need in relation to the decision-making process. Different situations identify the role of values in the establishment of brand choice criteria, in the way a message

sent through publicity reaches the target-group, and in the way this message is received by the members of that group. According to different research, we can say that values are characterised by stability, but different situations can change them depending on the goals of the consumers [6].

Life style is an important component related to the nutrition style, supplying information concerning an individual's conceptions and behaviours related to the purchase, preparation, and consumption of the necessary foods [1, 5].

As a conclusion, we can state the definition of life style as supplied by Engle, Blackwell & Miniard [2]: a life style is the result of the actions of multiple forces of the economic, cultural, and social life that contribute to the personalisation of the human quality.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present research aims at diagnosing the structure of vegetal agro-alimentary produce both quantitatively and qualitatively in the Timiş County (Romania). To do so, we applied a questionnaire. The sampling method we have chosen was random, probabilistic, and starting from well-known demographics (age, sex, education, marital status, profession). The samples thus built observe these demographics as relative values. The size of the sample (300 people) is representative for the studied area. The method used to collect quantitative information was the statistical survey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research relied on a descriptive one-variant analysis consisting in the description of the results from a sample. Using the statistic programme SPSS, we generated a series of results starting from the database, that we organised as frequency tables.

Starting from the questions in the questionnaire and from the data we obtained, we could produce the following information concerning the role of education on agro-alimentary produce consumer behaviour in the Timiş County.

Table 1 show that, of the 300 respondents, 178 (i.e., 59.3%) claim they do not buy agro-alimentary produce on a daily basis, while 122 (i.e., 40.7%) respondents responded affirmatively.

Table 1 The habit of buying agro-alimentary produce on a daily basis

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	YES	122	40.7	40.7
	NO	178	59.3	59.3
	Total	300	100	100

Frequency of purchasing cereals and cereal flakes. Of the total 300 respondents, 133 (44.3%) purchase this group of agro-alimentary produce rarer than monthly. Cereals are purchased on a monthly basis by 105 respondents (35.0%), while 59 respondents (19.7%) purchase cereals on a weekly basis. The lowest percentage is that of respondents purchasing cereals on a daily basis, 1.0% (3 respondents). Data concerning the frequency of purchasing cereals and cereal flakes are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Frequency of purchasing cereals and cereal flakes

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	Daily	3	1.0	1.0
	Weekly	59	19.7	19.7
	Monthly	105	35.0	35.0
	More than a month	133	44.3	44.3
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

Frequency of purchasing bread and similar produce. Of the 300 respondents, 184 (61.3%) purchase bread and similar produce on a daily basis, 106 (35.3%) purchase bread on a weekly basis, 5 respondents (1.7%) purchase bread on a monthly basis, and 5 respondents (1.7%) purchase bread at intervals longer than a month.

Table 3 Frequency of purchasing bread and similar produce

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	Daily	184	61.3	61.3
	Weekly	106	35.3	35.3
	Monthly	5	1.7	1.7
	More than a month	5	1.7	1.7
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

Frequency of purchasing vegetables. A number of 51 respondents (17.0%) purchase vegetables on a daily basis, 99 respondents (33.0%) purchase vegetables on a weekly basis, 73 respondents (24.3%) purchase vegetables on a monthly basis, and 77 respondents (25.7%) purchase vegetables at intervals longer than a month.

Table 4 Frequency of purchasing vegetables

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid responses	Daily	51	17.0	17.0
	Weekly	99	33.0	33.0
	Monthly	73	24.3	24.3
	More than a month	77	25.7	25.7
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

Frequency of purchasing fruits. Fruits are bought on a daily basis by 86 respondents (28.7%), on a weekly basis by 83 respondents (27.7%), at intervals longer than a month by 68 respondents (22.7%), and on a daily basis by 63 respondents (22.7 %).

Table 5 Frequency of purchasing fruits

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)
Valid	Daily	63	21.0	21.0

responses	Weekly	86	28.7	28.7
	Monthly	83	27.7	27.7
	More than a month	68	22.7	22.7
	Total	**300**	**100**	**100**

CONCLUSIONS

Data we collected in our survey show that cereals are bought on a monthly basis by 35.0% of the respondents, while 17.9% of the respondents purchase cereals on a weekly basis. The lowest percentage is that of the respondents purchasing cereals on a daily basis, i.e. 1.0%.

As far as bread and similar produce are concerned, 61.3% of the respondents purchase these items on a daily basis, 35.3% of the respondents purchase them on a weekly basis, and 1.7% of the respondents purchase them at intervals longer than a month.

Vegetables and fruits are purchased as follows: 17.0% of the respondents purchase vegetables on a daily basis, while 28.7% of the respondents purchase fruits on a weekly basis.

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