

The Influence of the Cultural Factor in Eating Habits: An International Marketing Case Study

Raluca Giorgiana CHIVU

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
raluca.chivu0126@gmail.com

David-Florin CIOCODEICĂ

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
ciocodeicadavid@yahoo.com

Adrian MOCIU

The Bucharest University of Economic Studies
adrianmociu@gmail.com

Abstract

The phrase "Marketing has always existed" is well known; but not as common is "Marketing exists everywhere in different forms." In this article, I will try to discuss the elements that any marketer must take into account. From geographical and implicitly cultural peculiarities to religious customs, tastes and preferences, any group of consumers has significant differences which, if not taken into account, can lead to failure or, worse, to the application of local legislation. Over the previous decades, our eating regimen has become heavier yet progressively adjusted. The accessibility of solid and nutritious nourishment has expanded across generally industrialized and creating nations, despite the troublesome access to this sort of food in some low-salary zones. Beside food gracefully, the plentiful research writing concerning dietary patterns explores various financial and segment factors. These are progressively hard to gauge as they rely upon numerous factors, including flighty individual conduct. Most fast choices for what item to pick from the rack depending on the transparency and straightforwardness of data gave by brands and retailers, following the supposed clean mark pattern. The introduced article centre around applicable nourishment inclinations and show how customers are keen on dietary habits, albeit just a restricted level of individuals follow a particular eating routine. The article investigates the explanations for the dietary move towards a plant-rich eating routine and what's in question for the world condition and worldwide human wellbeing

Keywords: international marketing, globalization, cultural differences.

JEL classification: M31.

1. Introduction

Nowadays, marketing sells almost more than the quality of goods or services. It is well known that proper promotion and presentation can have significant sales results regardless of any other influencing factor in the market. Marketing is also known as the "art of selling" and thus becomes an indispensable factor in any activity of selling goods or services regardless of the field of business. However, despite this, there are significant differences both between the strategies applied and between the needs and desires of consumers.

2. International marketing

The attention paid to these particularities had as its beginning the internationalization of the markets and until their globalization, due to the almost unlimited communication and the online traffic to the markets of the other countries. "Economic globalization is defined as an evolutionary process of integration of world markets, characterized by the liberalization of economic activities, investment and trade, the free movement of factors of production and

management. This calls for the unification of countries' markets, the elimination of trade barriers. " (Sibao, Huaer, 2009, p. 134) However, regardless of the physical and financial possibilities of distributing goods or services internationally or even globally, as obstacles there are specific factors of each market (geographical, cultural, religious and so on)

Some specialists also approach the idea as mentioned above: "Adherents of the micro-analytical approach have argued that some consumption characteristics influence people's out shopping behaviour. The most frequently used characteristics are demographic factors "(Hui, Lau, 2001, p.94) And this happens precisely because the demographic factor directly influences the cultural factor. For example, "If McDonald's seeks to sell a Big Mac with beef in Nepal, it will be hit not only by residents' refusal to buy it but also by legislation. The Nepalese state not only condemns the consumption of beef but also prohibits the operation of such an enterprise, its managers being assimilated to criminals who have committed a crime "(Pop Coord., 2011, p.15) On the other hand,

It is argued that "The most important cultural dimensions in each country lead to different styles of decision-making; although there are geographical and temporal limitations" (Correia, Kozak and Ferradeira, 2011, p. 39) However, it is well known that it is difficult to understand consumer behaviour, an element influenced by many factors more or less known to marketers, or more or less easy to process, interpret and put into practice. A definition of Consumer Behavior is presented in the book of the same name: "Consumer behaviour can be defined, in an overall approach, as representing all decision-making acts performed at individual or group level, directly related to obtaining and using goods and services. , to meet current and future needs, including the decision-making processes that precede and determine these acts. " (Cătoi, Teodorescu, 2004, p. 14) Indeed "The development of contemporary marketing strategy includes concepts such as segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Determining a viable target market is the first step. " (Harcar, 2005, p. 74) but it is not well defined that segment that is below the minimum number of consumers for a certain good or service. "Specialists have shown that the study of consumer behaviour by taking into account subcultures responds very well to the need to know the differentiation of demand in the territorial profile." (Cătoi, Teodorescu, 2004, p.83) 14) Indeed "The development of contemporary marketing strategy includes concepts such as segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Determining a viable target market is the first step. " (Harcar, 2005, p. 74) but it is not well defined that segment that is below the minimum number of consumers for a certain good or service. "Specialists have shown that the study of consumer behaviour by taking into account subcultures responds very well to the need to know the differentiation of demand in territorial profile." (Cătoi, Teodorescu, 2004, p.83) 14) Indeed "The development of contemporary marketing strategy includes concepts such as segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Determining a viable target market is the first step. " (Harcar, 2005, p. 74) but it is not well defined that segment that is below the minimum number of consumers for a certain good or service. "Specialists have shown that the study of consumer behaviour by taking into account subcultures responds very well to the need to know the differentiation of demand in territorial profile." (Cătoi, Teodorescu, 2004, p.83)

And this does not only refer to a particular sector, such as the food market but all existing markets at the level of a crop. A good example is the U.S. market: "As the population and purchasing power of U.S. ethnic minority customers continue to grow, more and more marketers are using subcultural segmentation and targeted marketing to reach these consumers." (Choudhury, 2002, p.54)) And this is precisely because, in the U.S. market, there are several secondary cultures (Hispanic culture, black population, etc.), some of them larger than many national markets. (processing after Tănase, 2013, p. 97) "In the context of increasing cultural diversity, consumers negotiate their identity and subsequent behaviours in several

cultures and subcultures. Multicultural markets include consumers from various ethnic groups, religious groups, nationalities, people living in certain geographical regions or groups who share common beliefs, values or attitudes. " (Broderick, AJ, et al., 2014, p.1)

However, it seems that the cultural factor does not only influence the consumer goods market but also makes its mark in almost any area of activity. For example, in the tourism services market, "Different cultures influence tourists in decision-making. Multi-structural models are used to assess the extent to which cultural traits can influence tourists' style of decision-making" (Harcar, 2005, p.74). And this happens precisely because they carefully choose their destinations; both according to preferences and according to individual parameters (skin colour, culture, religion, temperature resistance, etc.)

3. The impact of culture on eating habits

As part of the exogenous factors influencing consumer behaviour, cultural factors exert a high level of influence on their decisions and preferences. A comprehensive definition of culture indicates that it is the sum of material and spiritual values created by the approaches of social-historical practices, as well as the entities and institutions responsible for shaping and transmitting these values (Georgiu, 2001, p.20). Depending on the culture and innate habits, a consumer may have a specific type of behaviour towards certain products or services. For example, culinary habits are strongly influenced by cultural particularities. If in France, cheese is seen as expensive and quality food, as a delicacy, in Japan it is considered "rotten milk" and is very rarely included in the menu. Growing up in a certain way, in a specific culture, the consumer develops habits and habits that he considers fundamental, perceptions and behavioural desires that do not allow making choices and decisions outside his cultural area. Culture can create a consumer need, influence consumer satisfaction, and dictate how an individual meets that need (Lake, 2009, p.135). Culture also fulfils many of the emotional needs of individuals, this being reflected on actions through the effort to protect their beliefs and values.

Based on this fact, marketers have understood that products and services that resonate with the priorities of a specific culture or are more likely to be accepted and used by consumers. The subculture is defined as a group of individuals within a culture who share several identical characteristics. This category can include groups represented by geographical location, religion, nationality or other factors determined by a system of shared values. Besides the fact that both culture and subculture exert a significant influence on the individual's attitude towards certain behaviours, they also play an essential role in the self-regulation of emotions and maintaining harmony within the group.

For example, in 1964, a grown-up living in living in an industrialized nation expended on regular 2,947 calories for every day. The sum was somewhat over the caloric admission suggested by the World Wellbeing Association and expanded further to 3,380 out of 2015. Local contrasts caused noteworthy contrasts in eats less, information from the Nourishment and Horticulture Association appeared: Higher livelihoods, urbanization, and improved nourishment accessibility added to worldwide sustenance progress which thus caused overweight and weight rates to increment consistently. The higher nourishment utilization accompanied a more extensive assortment of nourishments, yet the most striking increment could be found in the admission of domesticated animals items. Since the start of the 60s, the populace in the creating and East Asian nations has phenomenally supported their day by day caloric utilization of meat and dairy items.

Over the last decades, the per capita caloric intake increased worldwide. This mirrors the stable growth of the share of overweight adults across the four countries. In China, this happened at a much faster pace, as individuals more than doubled their calories. The drastic

change was due to the steady economic growth, urbanization, and the increasing per capita income levels. Additionally, the rapidly improved economic conditions lowered the undernourishment rates, which went from 23.9 per cent in 1990 to less than ten per cent as of 2015.

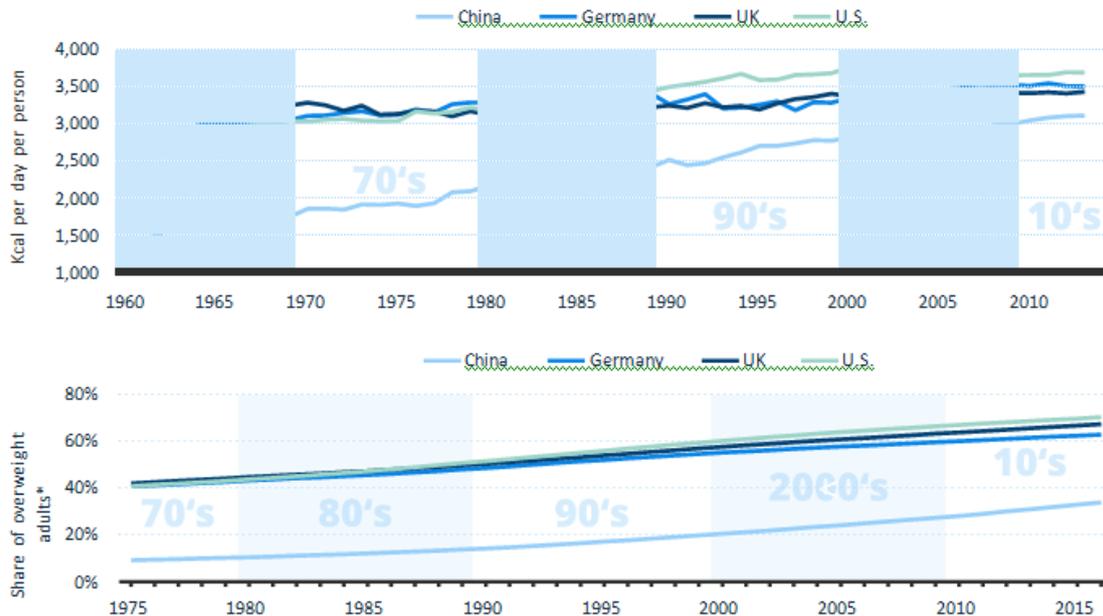


Fig.1. Daily per capita caloric intake and share of overweight adults in China, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S.

Source: Coppola, 2020

The expanding measure of calories taken from creature sourced items is one of the impacts of sustenance progress. The term demonstrates the huge dietary move from a conventional fibre-and oat-based to a western-like nourishment utilization which incorporates increasingly handled and creature-based nourishment items. The change was because of the improved nourishment security alongside commercial development. The nourishment change was less intense in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the utilization of domesticated animals' items stayed stable. The East-Asian nations, including China, and other creating countries, encountered a more honed increment in the caloric admission of meat, eggs, and dairy items. This mirrored their fast financial upswing and quickly expanding degrees of pay.

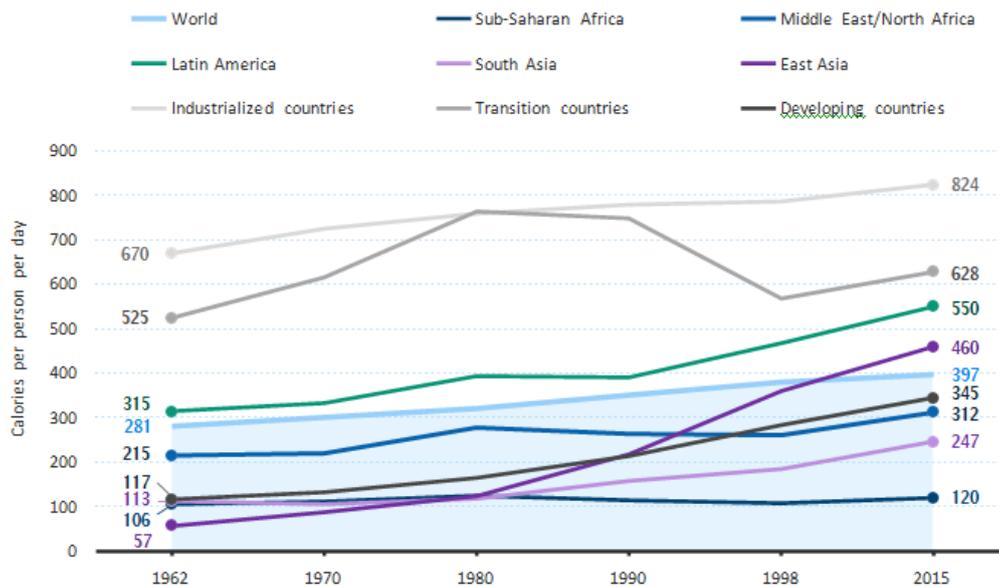


Fig.2. Availability of calories from the intake of livestock products* worldwide from 1962 to 2015
 Source: Coppola, 2020

Food consumption patterns change over time and are primarily influenced by regional differences. The graphs show the composition of the daily diet in grams per capita (since 2013, but still representative of current food patterns). For several regions of the world. Thus, we notice that Americans eat the most, about 2,747 grams a day, while the Chinese diet seems a little more frugal (only 2,458 grams in 2013, but less than about a thousand grams in 1961), but with content larger than vegetables.

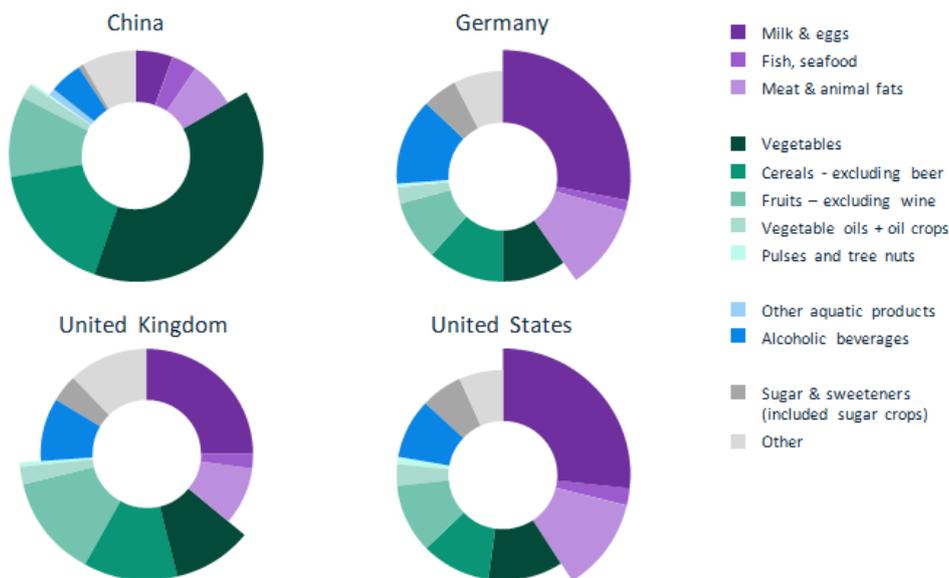


Fig.3. Breakdown of daily diets in grams per capita per day
 Source Coppola, 2020

In terms of alcoholic beverages, it can be seen that Germany is the largest everyday consumer, with about 350 grams per capita. In our days, Young U.S. consumers are more aware

of the environmental impact of food and can adapt their diet accordingly. The Millennials and Generation Z are less keen to associate meat consumption with their national culture.

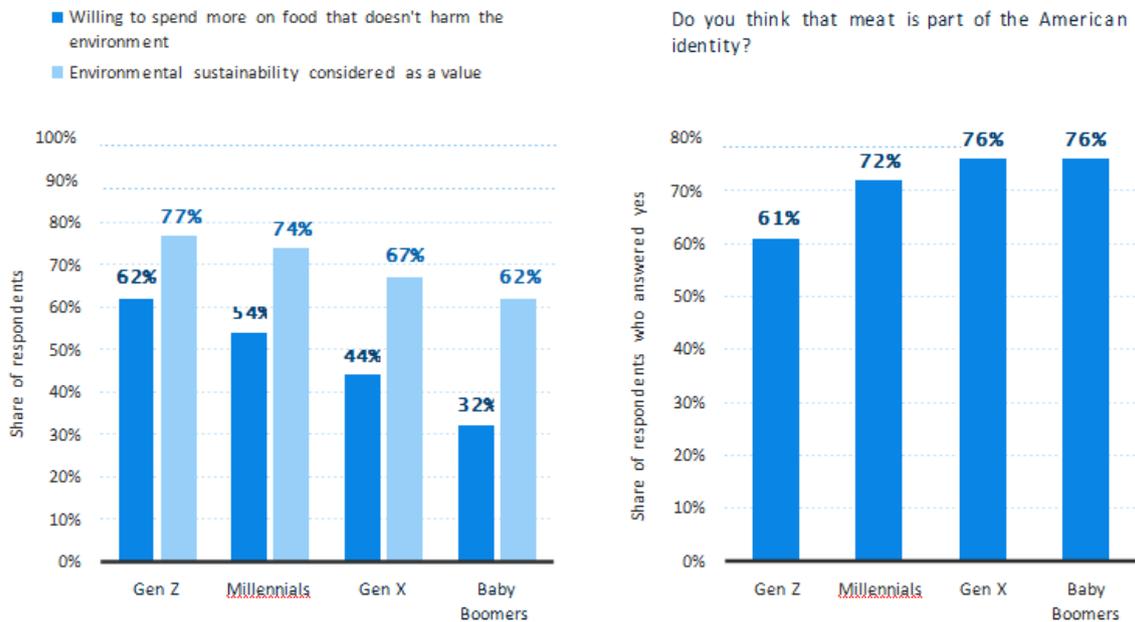


Fig.4. Opinions on the environmental impact and cultural implications of food in the U.S. 2019, by age group
Source: Coppola, 2020

Conclusion

We can thus conclude by saying that the cultural fact has a significant role in determining and forming eating habits, acting both on the food consumed and on the way food is perceived. With the internationalization there was a cultural exchange that allowed the trying of new and new products by different categories of consumers, thus overcoming in some areas cultural barriers and allowing a transfer of experience and tastes (for example, the emergence of a specific food in certain countries). However, culture still plays an essential role for marketers as one of the main factors to consider when trying to describe the behaviour and habits of some consumers.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Research and Innovation, UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.2-PCCDI-2017-0800 / 86PCCDI/2018 - FutureWeb, within PNCDI III.

References

- BRODERICK, AJ, DEMANGEOT, C., ROSS, NA, et al., (2011), Consumer Empowerment in Multicultural Marketplaces: Navigating Multicultural Identities to Reduce Consumer Vulnerability, *Journal of Research for Consumer*, (19): 1-13 [Available online at:http://jrconsumers.com/Academic_Articles/issue_19/Multicultural_academic5.pdf]
- CATOIU I., TEODORESCU N., (2004), "Consumer Behavior, 2nd edition, revised and added" Uranus Publishing House, Bucharest
- CHOUDHURY, GCP, (2002), "Marketplace diversity and cost-effective marketing strategies", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 19 (1): 54 - 73, [Available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/07363760210414952>]

- COPPOLA, D, 2020, Eating habits - DossierPlus on changing nutritional trends and their global impact, Food & Nutrition, Article number: did-71806-1.
- CORREIA, A., KOZAK, M., AND FERREIRA, J., (2011), "*Cross-Cultural Heterogeneity in Tourist Decision Making*" Tourism Sensemaking: Strategies to Give Meaning to Experience, 3: 39-61, [Available online at [http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S1871-3173\(2011\)0000005005](http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S1871-3173(2011)0000005005)]
- GEORGIU, G., 2001. Philosophy of culture. SNSPA.
- HARCAR, EKTD, (2005), "American consumers' attitudes towards commercial banks", International Journal of Bank Marketing, 23, (1): 73 - 89 [Available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/02652320510577375>]
- HUI, TK, LAU, HF, (2011), "The Behavior of Hong Kong Cross-Border Shoppers: A Nonparametric Approach" Advances in Hospitality and Leisure, (7): 89-108, [Available online at:[http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S1745-3542\(2011\)0000007009](http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/S1745-3542(2011)0000007009)]
- POP NA, coord, (2011), "International Marketing, Theory and Practice" Uranus Publishing House, Bucharest
- LAKE, L., 2009. Consumer behaviour for dummies. John Wiley & amp; Sons.
- MICHAELA, W., 2009. Social Psychology of Consumer Behavior. Psychology Press.
- SIBAO, S., AND HUAER, C., (2009), "Economic globalization and the construction of China's corporate social responsibility", International Journal of Law and Management, 51 (3): 134-138, [Available online at:www.emeraldinsight.com/1754-243X.htm] (Accessed on 15.12.2015)
- TĂNASE, A., (2013), Consumer Behavior, Economic Publishing House, Bucharest.