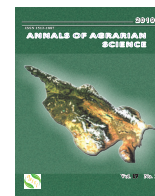




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Food consumption influenced by television advertisements among generation-Y young consumers living in Budapest

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ABSTRACT

Considering Generation-Y, television has become part of their lives from early childhood. Television provides a possibility of recreation, with the aim to entertain or to provide everyday information. Consumers are surrounded by advertisements that appear on television. Advertisement professionals are aware that consumers do not watch television primarily to see advertisements, therefore they must create interesting, clever advertisements for companies that grab the viewers' attention. Several feelings appear in advertisements for foods: emphasis is on the liveliness of youth, on friendships, family ties and other idyllic emotional states. Young people would like to resemble to the persons in the advertisements for the given foods. In our study, we examine the attitudes of Generation-Y youths in Budapest towards television advertisements, and we try to establish how traditional TV advertisement spots can influence them beside other advertising communication tools.

Keywords: Influencing, Generation-Y, Food consumption, Television advertisements, Consumers, Buying food.

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1. Introduction

Consumers are surrounded by a constant flow of advertisements whether they like it or not, but the evaluation of advertisements varies. Consumers in various age groups have different attitudes towards these ads. Young persons are the main targets for various TV spots or advertisements present on the internet in social media, as these youths would like to be the way presented to them by these ads. When buying food products, they make decisions based on their positive and negative experiences. However, advertisements can have a distorting effect on young people as well.

Television as an advertising medium, along with BTL tools, still has a significant role – reaches a great number of people, cost effective, draws viewers' attention, has an effect on consumers' senses. Kárpáti and Lehota differentiates between 3 advertising goals: providing information, convincing and reminding. Messages of the ads can be moral, rational and emotional [1].

In our study, we were curious to know the attitudes of Generation-Y towards food advertisements traditionally appearing on TV besides the advertising techniques of various marketing tools.

The study involved a questionnaire that was used with Generation-Y youths in Budapest.

2. Food consumption of Generation-Y today

According to Tari young people who belong to Generation-Y were born between 1980 and 1995, and are often referred to as millennial or first digital generation. They have been exposed to the influence of advertisements from their childhood. They are the children of Generation-X, being part of a transition from the world of offline to online communication tools. Young people of this generation are characterized by flexibility and independence, but they also manifest a hunger for information and an urge to fulfill their needs immediately [2]. Young

consumers today are typically material, critical and they glorify products. Based on a study in Hungary there are significant differences in consumer attitudes in the country and in the capital [3]. Although the difference has existed before, now it is clearly divided regarding the way of thinking and the attitude towards new things, as well as regarding consumption. By today, product brands of companies not only provide a guarantee for quality, but they have become a symbol of status, and they appear as an entity linked to young consumers [4-7].

Researching the factors that determine food consumption in relevant literature, we can come across numerous findings [8, 9]. Food consumption megatrends include recreational values, comfort values, health values, ethical values. Part of the recreational value trend is mood food – food that makes you feel better, wellness food – food that supports well-being for body and soul, sensual food – food that stimulates various senses, slow food – traditional food, ethnic food – foods of other nations, and retro food – food that is nostalgic [10, 11]. In several countries of the world, like in East- or Southeast Asia, changing lifestyle, increasing purchasing power and international openness brought about not only growing demand but also significant changes in the food consumption habits, like demand for protein-rich foodstuffs (e.g. meat products) has significantly grown [32, 33]. Comfort trend incorporates foods that are easy to carry and to store, cheap foods, foods of higher and lower quality [12]. Health appears as a trend, made up of foods with beneficiary effects and functional foods, allergic-free and curative foods [13]. Along with those mentioned, foods representing environmental and social responsibility also appear [14, 15].

According to Lehotka the most important motivational types of food consumption can be:

- Nutritional motivations: consumption of fat, carbo-hydrates, protein and vitamins based on gender, age, climate and nature of work
- Health motivations: evaluating the combination of nutrients based on their effect on one's health
- Recreational motivations: it tastes good, it is enjoyable, delicious
- Comfort motivations: storage life, length of preparation
- Safety motivations: evaluating risks and safety of foods
- Pleasing certain social groups: snob effect, acceptance of group behavior

- Motivations of prestige: expressing one's place in society by food consumption
- Natural and environmental motivations: waste handling and protection natural resources
- Political motives: emotions against producers and processors or against commercial groups [16]

3. The relationship between consumers and advertisements

Advertisement is a form of communication during which signal transfer occurs between the giver and the receiver. Looking at it from the consumer's side, advertisement in itself means an input of information, and the communication message can reach them through the media that carries any advertisement. The incoming advertisement message is decoded by individuals according to their own memories, earlier experiences and values. Advertisements affect the consumers' senses through diverse communicational channels with written words, pictures, sounds and combination of these. Based on advertising media, we can differentiate between:

- Visual advertisement (printed press)
- Auditive advertisement (radio)
- Audio-visual advertisement (TV, internet)

Reception of the advertising message may be distorted by several sources of noise, moreover, reception may be influenced by the consumers personal motive just as well [17]. Today, the content and the form of the advertisement is shaped by the vendor, the customer, and other persons in the environment all together. On top of all this, an advertisement is also a cultural phenomenon that infiltrates consumers' everyday life, is part of the news, of mass media and of everyday speech. Various advertising slogans become a part of common talk. The advertisement as a communicational message finds consumers in different situations. The message of the advertisement itself may have various reception with the consumers, depending on whether the consumer is open to the information or is just experiencing it as general noise. Consumers are exposed to a great number of impulses and stimuli, out of which selection is made by a characteristic mechanism. The information given out by the advertisement results in a change of behavior either directly, or by changing the attitude. This can be explained by the fact that the person receiving the ad consciously researches information regarding foods, which may form their attitude towards food, and may change their relationship to food. On the other hand, shaping

and changing the attitude may be possible without thoroughly deliberating the advantages and disadvantages of product characteristics. In this case, the key words of advertised foods triggering association will do the convincing, or factors such as music, visual effects and humor. These factors are tied to the affective structure and contribute to attaining attraction towards foods [18].

3.1. The influencing effect of advertisements

Tools of marketing communication can be basically divided into two groups: ATL (above the line), and BTL (below the line) tools. The ATL group is characterized by the use of classical tools that reach great masses of people and employ different mass media. They usually carry a message advertising a product or a service. On the other hand, BTL tools include everything that ATL does not. Characteristically, they do not address great masses and they hit a more personal tone. Today, among the ATL tools television is still able to reach a great spectrum of consumers [19].

Influencing consumers can be divided into six factors that aid and increase the power of convincing:

1. Reciprocity: advertisements ask for consumers' time and attention, and in return they offer an opportunity, feeling, happiness.
2. Commitment: consumers stick with their own choices, because they would appear to be inconsistent should it turn out that they made a mistake with their previous decision.
3. Social reinforcement: they have a strong desire to be accepted by society, and this is how they try to fulfill it.
4. Professional expertise, authority: they are obedient to different convincing expert opinions appearing in advertisement.
5. Attractions: products advertised by well-known people, celebrities, influencers will become attractive to consumers.
6. Scarcity: consumers' fear of missing out by not being able to purchase the given product [20].

The success of the advertisement lies in promising experiences and desires in a convincing way to potential consumers, so that they actually believe that by purchasing the advertised product, they can get these emotions along with it as well. This success requires showing patterns that reflect all of these emotions. Groups or persons are represented in food adverts with whom consumers can identify with and would like to become like them [21].

3.1.1. Characteristics of television advertisements

The advantage of TV as an advertising medium is that all consumer groups can be reached by it and it affects different senses at the same time such as the hearing and vision of the consumer. In TV ads, desired lifestyle patterns appear, with which consumers wish to identify [22]. The primary objective of advertisements is to influence consumers' attitudes towards food and thus to convince them that selecting the given brand of food was a suitable decision for them. Their blatant goal is to convince consumers to switch between brands and buy the food advertised by them. This effect of the advertisement must be achieved in a couple of minutes [23]. Convincing in TV ads is conscious, since consumers share the culture, so it is easier to convince them to purchase the foods. Knowing the brands of advertised foods makes purchasing them more attractive, because the emotions seen in the ad in a purchasing situation induce different reactions in consumers [24]. Television advertising spots should always aim for grabbing the attention of viewers [25].

Inflicting emotions is the central strategy of televised advertisements. Makers of the ads offer different combinations of emotions to TV viewers, promising that, if they purchase their products, they will feel the same way as people in the ad [26]. Advertisements not only create needs, desires, but also a life philosophy among young people. However, many times advertisements show idealized pictures to youths. And while others promise happiness by purchasing the product, so they will buy these advertised foods so that they can catch up with them by food consumption [27]. Music appearing in TV spots, besides grabbing attention, also has an emotional effect on consumers [28].

Research by Olsson and Larsson sheds light on the importance of a sense of humor in advertisements. A sense of humor makes the TV ad worthy of attention for young consumers, and will urge them to stay in front of the TV to watch the ads. Thanks to a sense of humor, the advertisement imprints into the memory of young consumers, and thus has a positive effect regarding the advertised foods [29,30].

Today, the media have become a most important socializing tool that shapes young people's attitudes along with that of other social groups. The material attitude of Generation-Y is also influenced by TV spots. As research by Oprea et al. proves, the more

advertisements young people are exposed to, the more material they become [31].

Old and new media exist together, and this must be taken into consideration by companies that plan to engage in advertising activities. Using BTL marketing tools, the greatest scene of advertisements will be social media and video sharing portals.

4. Objectives and methods

In our research, our primary objective was to examine the effect of food advertisements through the communication channel of television on Generation-Y youths in Budapest. We conducted primary data collection based on a non-representative sample, with the central element of asking Generation-Y youths in Budapest. The collected data were analysed and evaluated by statistical methods.

In our study, we conducted a survey research, using random sampling, with the city of Budapest as sampling point. Generation-Y young people were interviewed in Budapest using random sampling. During random sampling, the choice of individuals one after the other without repetition, $n < N$ in number, in which case at each selection from the pool, selecting an already existing element has the same probability. Our questionnaire was filled out by 188 persons, so the sample size to be statistically analysed is 188.

During statistical data processing we did a cross table processing with the aid of SPSS program package. We have done the correlational study of dependent and independent variables.

We have put forward two hypotheses in our research. According to our first hypothesis, out of the

communication channels affecting food consumption, TV will have a greater influence than other communicational advertising tool in the case of young people in Budapest whose highest education is elementary school. In our other hypothesis we suppose that the more income Generation-Y youths in Budapest have, proportionately the advertisements channelled through the television will have a lesser effect among all factors influencing food consumption.

5. Results and analysis

In order to prove the first hypothesis presented above, we have conducted a cross table examination in the SPSS system, which contains the highest education of young people interviewed, and also the advertising effect of different communicational channels on food consumption. In the table below we are examining the possible correlations between these two factors.

Based on the data represented in Table 1 we can state that there is a significant correlation between the examined data and questions, thus the results can be evaluated. (The level of significance is of a value lower than 0.001, which is lower than 0.005). Cramer’s V value is 0.484, which shows a weak-medium strength correlation. The value of Gamma is 0.753, which indicates a medium-strength, one-direction correlation.

Table 1 shows that most young people in Budapest whose level of education does not surpass the 8th grade, 58.1% of them believes that TV ads have the most influence on them when shopping for food. 64.4% of those who finished elementary school,

Table 1. Correlation between advertisements of communicational channels affecting food consumption and highest education

Crosstab-analysis						
		Impact of advertising communication channels				
		TV	Internet, social sites	Acquaintanceship, friends, dietitian	Total	
What is your highest level of education?	Less than elementary school education	Count	18	13	0	31
		Percent	58,1%	41,9%	0,0%	100,0%
	Elementary school	Count	16	29	0	45
		Percent	35,6%	64,4%	0,0%	100,0%
	Vocational worker, vocational school	Count	6	47	8	61
		Percent	9,8%	77,0%	13,1%	100,0%
	Graduation and College/University degree	Count	4	19	28	51
		Percent	7,8%	37,3%	54,9%	100,0%

Symmetric Measures					
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,684			,000
	Cramer's V	,484			,000
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	,753	,057	9,583	0,000
N of Valid Cases		188			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
 b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	87,966 ^a	6	,000
Likelihood Ratio	89,497	6	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	62,572	1	,000
N of Valid Cases	188		

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The

Source: our own research (N=188), 2020

and 77% of graduates of vocational and technical schools believe that advertisements of the internet and of different social media have an effect on them in their food purchases. Out of those with at least a secondary education judged that testimonials of their acquaintances, friends and dietiticians have a great impact on them, and in 37.3% the advertisements of the internet and of different social media.

Based on the information gathered, our hypothesis can be said to have been proven right, as the data above reflect well that TV as an advertising tool in-

fluencing food consumption is most effective in the case of young people of Budapest with the highest education as elementary school.

In testing our other hypothesis, we also used a cross-table examination. During the cross-table analysis we examined whether there is a correlation, and if there is, what is the direction of it between the income of Budapest youths and the influential effect of TV spots. The data from the results of the cross-table analysis derived with the help of the SPSS program are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlations between monthly income and food advertisements seen on TV

Crosstab-analysis						
			When you buy food, do the ads you see on TV affect you?			
			Yes	Neutral	No	Total
What category would you classify your monthly income?	Under 150 000 Ft	Count	7	10	7	24
		Percent	29,2%	41,7%	29,2%	100,0%
	Between 150 000 Ft and 200 000 Ft	Count	0	28	61	89
		Percent	0,0%	31,5%	68,5%	100,0%
	Between 200 000 Ft and 250 000 Ft	Count	4	12	37	53
		Percent	7,5%	22,6%	69,8%	100,0%
	Over 250 000 Ft	Count	0	4	18	22
		Percent	0,0%	18,2%	81,8%	100,0%

Symmetric Measures					
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,451			,000
	Cramer's V	,319			,000
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	,379	,111	3,209	,001
N of Valid Cases		188			

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38,233 ^a	6	,000
Likelihood	34,907	6	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	13,237	1	,000
N of Valid	188		

Source: our own research (N=188), 2020

Based on the data in Table 2, it can be stated that there is a significant correlation between the examined data and questions, so the correlational study can be evaluated. (The level of significance value is lower than 0.001, which is lower than 0.005) The value of Cramer’s V is 0.319, which indicates a weak correlation, and the value of Gamma is 0.379, which shows a weak, one-direction correlation.

Based on the data in Table 2, it becomes obvious that, among young people in Budapest having a monthly income higher than HUF250,000, 81.8% believes their purchasing decisions are not influenced by different food advertisements seen on TV. Among those Budapest, Generation-Y youths with a monthly income between HUF200,000 and HUF250,000, 69.8% also believes that they do not make their decisions relying on advertisements when buying food. The figures are similar in the case of interviewees with a monthly income between HUF150,000 and HUF200,000 – 68.5% of them answered „no” to the question regarding the influence of advertisements.

According to the findings above, we can conclude that our hypothesis was not proven right, because, except for the youths interviewed with the

lowest monthly income, in further income categories we cannot observe the significant influencing effect of TV as a communications channel. It is clearly visible from the data obtained that, apart from the lowest income category, in all the other income categories TV spots were not indicated as a tool to influence food consumption by the interviewees. So food consumption of participants in the survey is not influenced by advertisements communicated on TV.

6. Conclusion

We can see that our sample was not representative, so no general and important conclusions can be drawn. However, this study may serve as a suitable basis for the extended application of a quantitative research later on. Our first hypothesis supposing that of the communications channels affecting food consumption, TV has a more influential effect than other advertising tools among young Budapest people with 8th grade as highest education, has been proven right, as TV spots have the most influence on them when purchasing food. Generation-Y uses different technical tools daily, so advertisements

on the internet and on social media have a great effect on them in their food purchases. An interesting finding was that, Generation-Y youths in Budapest with at least a secondary education rely more on the opinions of acquaintances and friends regarding different foods than on the advertisements of the internet. In our other hypothesis we assumed that as the income of Generation-Y youths in Budapest increases, advertisements on TV among all other channels of advertisement influencing food consumption will have a decreasing effect on them proportionately. This hypothesis could not be proven right, as only with Generation-Y youths in Budapest with the lowest monthly income showed to be influenced significantly by ads on TV. The food consumption of those of all other income categories was not significantly influenced by ads communicated through the television. Reason being that today's world is characterized by turning over to the internet, and youths preferring BTL marketing tools as opposed to ATL marketing tools.

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