

SOME ASPECT OF CONSUMERS' HABIT BY FERMENTED MILK PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

In our modern world everybody rush and has not got enough time for him/herself. The role of the nutrition has changed. It does not mean the quiet action, it means a snatching. So people like foods which not only beguile hunger, but save the health. The functional food looks like this meal. In our work we used questionnaire, and then we analysed the habits of the consumers related to the fermented milk products. Moreover, we made structured interview with 3 experts.

Keywords: healthy food, probiotic, consumers' habits

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays the enterprises emphasize the production of the products which are connecting to the health-preservation. Because of the growing of the demand, more and more factories appear functional food. They are not only against the hunger, they have another function too, protect the human health. The most known of them are the probiotic products. In our country not too big the number of the healthy – conscious consumer, so the role of the media is important to change the habits (Szakály et al, 1997).

The probiotic means the all human-friendly bacterium, which has good effect for the health of the owner. The probiotic are all *lactic acid* and *bifidobacterium*. The most famous of them the *Lactobacillus* and the *Streptococcus* clan. They are different from the common lactic acid bacterium, because they can survive the effort of the acid in the stomach. So they can get to the large intestine, where they can multiply and to stick its wall. In the dairy products the number of this bacterium should be $10^8/g$. The best products for this probiotic are: the fermented milk products, as cottage cheese, cheese, butter, butter-like products, ripened cheese (Fondén et al, 1999, Hawrelak, 2002).

Why these bacteria healthy for us?

- They are produce β -galactosidase, so people who suffer from lactose-intolerance can eat yogurt,
- They can digest the big part of cholesterol of milk,
- They are protected against the colon-cancer (Szakály, 2001).

2. MEANS AND METHODS

In our work we made a qualitative and quantitative research as well. We interviewed 3 experts, who had valuable knowledge related to the probiotic milk products. The 3 experts were:

1. a manager of a mercantile trade (Pribomeat),
2. a regional manager of a dairy firm
3. a manager of a TESCO market (in Budapest)

After the structures interviews we collected the main questions, and made questionnaire. This questionnaire was uploaded to Internet, so the answerers could fill by electronic way. We touched 3 main themes

- the habits of the purchasing
- the buying of the healthy food
- the influence factors of the purchasing.

3. RESULTS

The main thought of the 3 interview are the follows. The interviewed experts were agreed in these opinions:

- The main information-source of the Hungarian people the media, especially the advertisement on TV. They see a food and they try it. Healthy foods are important only for sick consumer. The most important factors for the people were: the price, the convenience, the actions and the fresh product.
- The market of the probiotic milk products is in decreasing, but the experts hope that this trend will change, because of the fear from the illness, and the increasing of the healthy-conscious consumer. The traded amount of mentioned probiotic yogurt (Activia) – in the Pribomeat is presented on the table 1. Because of the decline the Tesco drop the choice of this product, it keep only the economic items.
- The role of the marketing is very important, because people want to know the reasons, why they need to eat this kind of product. The second important factor is the increase of the solvent demand. We have to sell our product for less and less consumer. Not only the ATL tools are important but to use of the BTL tools are also important.

Table 1. The traded quantities of probiotics yoghurts (Danone Activia) in the Pribomeat (cup)

Source: Pribomeat Ltd.

Year	Number
2007	175179
2008	238712
2009	250324
2010	231895

We asked 100 people during the qualitative research. From these people there were 43 women and 57 men; the average age was 33,4 years. The economic status of asked consumers was different. 26% from all the asked people had income than the average, 58% of them had less than the average and 16% of them had more income than the average. The average net income was 140.000 Ft in Hungary in 2011 (www.hvg.hu)

In the next part we show some questions and answers.

The first question is: “how important is the healthy nutrition for you?” The answer is demonstrated on fig. 1.

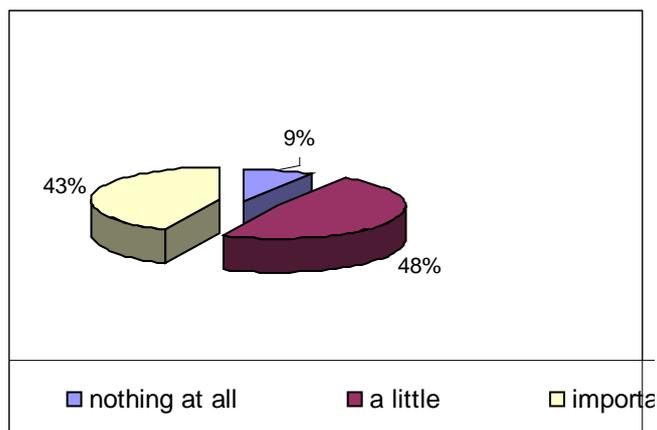


Fig. 1. The division of the answerers by the importance of the healthy nutrition (n=100)

As we can see, the most people (48%) think a little about the healthy nutrition. Sometimes they eat healthy food (fruit, vegetables and dairy-product) but often eat what they like. This theme was important for 43% of asked people. They care about their food (they are woman between 25-40 years old), and only 9% of them said they do not matter with it. They are usually 18-25 years old men. It is good news for the dairies, because there is a part of the consumers who can be a potential consumer.

The next question is about the frequency of purchasing of healthy foods (fig. 2.) The answers support the previous ones, as the most of people (36%) only weekly buy healthy foods. However only 9 people from the all said that the healthy nutrition is no aim for them, but this answer is not really true. They are more than double of who rarely buy healthy food.

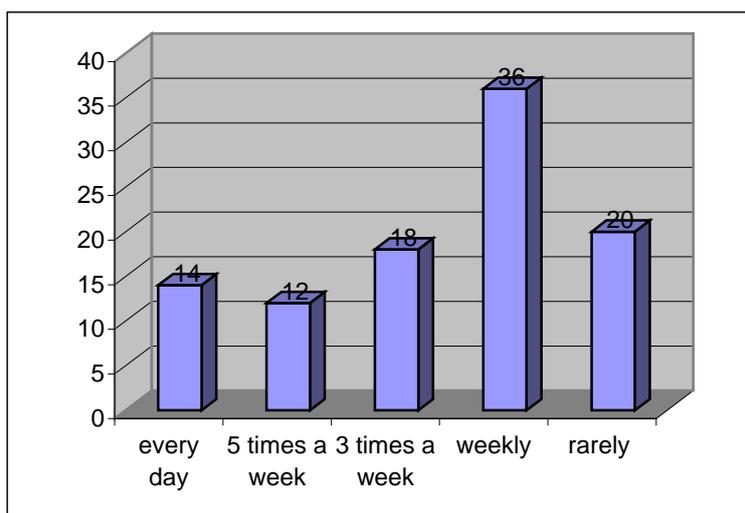


Fig. 2. The division of the answerers by the frequency of the healthy food-purchasing (n=100, %)

Sometimes the reason of the rarely purchasing is the poverty. Healthy foods are more expensive than the mass-produced (for example premium ham, or TESCO economic wiener). So we was wondered, if buyer had more money they would purchase more healthy food. The answers are shown on the 2nd table.

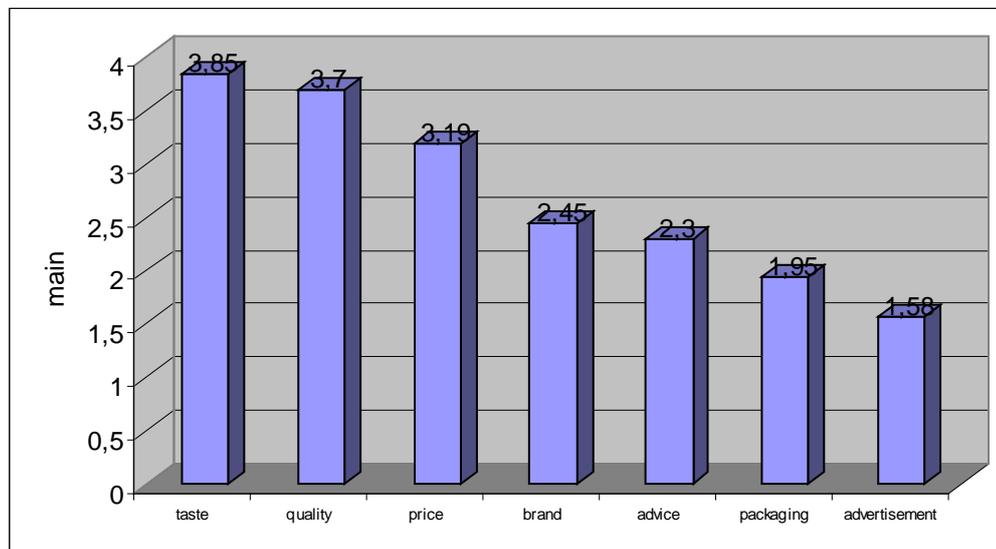
Table 2. The division of the answerers by the opinion of purchasing – if they have possibility (n=100)

Opinions	Sharing (%)
Yes	40
No	23
Maybe	37

We can see, 40% of them think, healthier food should be bought. They are from the group who answered “weekly”. People who said “rarely” stood to their opinion.

In the following question we asked consumers about their general purchasing habits. They had to range from 1 to 4 the following factors: price, packaging, local product, brand, advertisement, taste, quality and other people’ advice. On the figure 3 we can control ourselves, so we can see what kind of factor is the most important (for the asked people, and what our opinion is).

The most average is for the taste, close to it the quality. The price is again in the 3rd place. We have to notice, that our measuring was not representative. In Hungary – unfortunately – the most important factor is the price of foods.) The packaging and the advertisement are not important for the consumers. However we know that dairy firms spend a lot of millions for the advertisements and nice packaging.

**Fig. 3. The average points of the factors - influence the purchasing (n=100)**

The other question is about the purchasing of special milk products. The answerers could tell me they usually buy yogurt, kefir and sour cream or not. The frequency can be read from Figure 4. We can see the yogurt and the sour cream is important for the people, 37% of them buy these products. Kefyr hasn't got important role, it has a special taste, and so only every 10th answerer purchase it. The people who buy yogurt are mainly woman, aged 25-40. We can find out, that there was big part from answerers who should be a potential yogurt-buyer. Furthermore, – of course – not only those people eat yogurt that do the shopping, but woman usually buy for their husband, and for their children too.

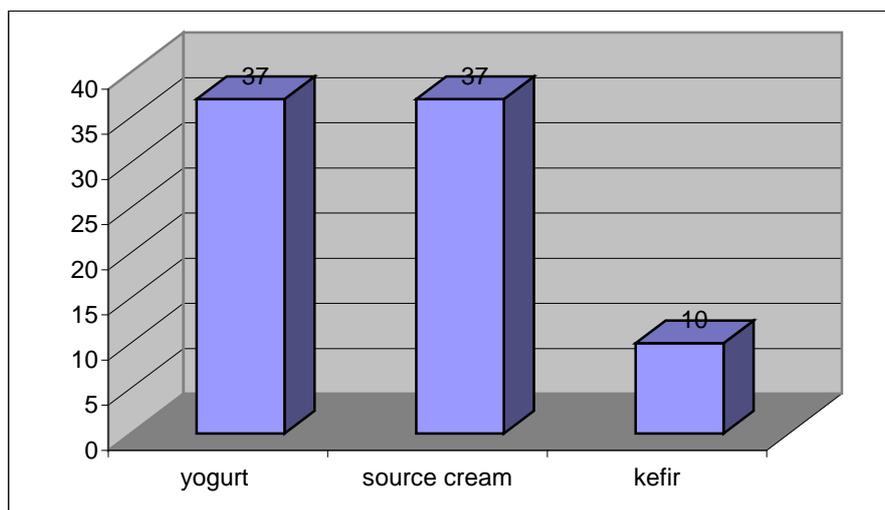


Fig. 4. The division of the answerers by the purchasing of special dairy product (n= 100, %)

At last we were looking for the answer for the reason of the purchasing of special milk product. We set out some factors (taste, price, health) and people had to choose one of them. The results are presented on the table 3. As we can see, the most important factor was the taste of the product for the half of the questionnaire-filler person. We think that it is normal result, because we will eat the selected item with good taste. Good thing is the 2nd important factor; people (26%) were thinking from products as healthy foods. The price is only on the 3rd place. The mission is clear: to ensure the remaining consumers, to aware of the importance of healthy food.

Table 3. The most important reason of the purchasing of the special milk product (n=100)

<i>The reasons</i>	<i>%</i>
The taste of the product	49
I think it's a healthy product	26
The price of the product	15
Other	10

4. SUMMARY

In our examination we made a qualitative and quantitative research too. Our aim was to take an analysis about the situation of probiotic milk product, and to know the consumers' habits. Our main results are:

- The market of this product is decreasing,
- The most important factor for people the price and the convince (by interview)
- The number of sold yogurts is dropped,
- Healthy nutrition is not too important for the most part of the answered people ,
- The taste, the quality and the price of foods were the most important factors in the choice of customers.
- Advertising is not an important factor in purchasing, as opposed to the opinion of experts.

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