

RESEARCH ON CONSUMER AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE PURCHASE OF MILK AND DAIRY PRODUCTS IN NORTH EAST DEVELOPMENT REGION (CASE STUDY S.C. ILVAS S.A. VASLUI)

Elena GÎNDU¹, Roxana-Ramona FLOREA¹, Benedicta DROBOTĂ¹, Gabriela POPESCU²

e-mail: egindu@uaiasi.ro

Abstract

In human nutrition, milk and dairy products play an important role together with products like meat, eggs, vegetables, fruits and bread, which make up the "daily food basket". The production and, hence, the consumption of milk and dairy products registered a constant increase at world level, but especially in the USA and in the European Union Member States. The global milk production is estimated presently at over 560 million tones, of which Europe realizes about 25%. The capitalization of milk produced in Romania is done differently. According to current estimates, the biggest share of the milk production is capitalized in people's household (through self-consumption) or it is delivered on the free market. The consumption of milk and dairy products is different, depending on habits, but also on the realized production, which is different by areas. The study of the consumer's behavior in the milk and dairy products purchasing process has become a concern for marketing specialists because they can find out which are the criteria for choosing a product, respectively which are the stimuli and factors that influence their option. The consumer's purchasing behavior, as a recent marketing research domain, refers to the behavior of final consumers, which purchase goods and services for personal consumption through which they satisfy current needs or indicate their role in society. In general, the behavior is an ensemble of external reactions through which the individual responds to stimuli. From a *sociological* point of view, the behavior is the subject's activity in a given social situation. Marketing deals with the notion of consumer behavior both in a *narrowly* and *broadly* sense, but most specialists are placed between the two extremes. On the basis of the purchasing behavior of consumers, producers and retailers, several items that should be taken into account have resulted: *the consumer's reaction to the company's marketing strategy, which impacts its success on the market;*

o the company marketing mix, which must satisfy the consumers; the possibility of predicting the way in which consumers will respond to the company's strategies; the high cost of this research, the difficulty of realizing it and the risk of obtaining incorrect information. After the research of Ph. Kotler on the consumers' behavior, the factors that influence this process are grouped in four categories: 1 - *cultural factors* – represented by culture, subculture and social status; 2 - *social factors* – which include reference groups, family, roles and statuses; 3 - *personal factors* – which refer to age and the stage of the life cycle, occupation, lifestyle, economic circumstances, personality and self-opinion.

4 - *psychological factors* – represented by motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes. To respond to these aspects, the authors have realized a case study at S.C. ILVAS S.A. Vaslui, which has as a main activity the processing and marketing of milk and dairy products.

Key words: nutrition, consumption, milk and dairy products