

STUDY REGARDING THE PURCHASE AND CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR FOR BREAD OF IAȘI COUNTY POPULATION (CASE STUDY)

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Abstract

In order to study the consumer buying behavior for bakery of Iasi county population (purchasing criteria, favorite brands and types, quantities purchased and consumed) a statistical survey was conducted in 2012 by the survey method with the written questionnaire. *The main objectives* of the study were represented by: highlighting acquisition criteria and factors influencing consumption of bakery products; revealing the varieties of bread consumed in terms of quality and quantity; identify the main bakery brands acquired; specifying the buying motivations and determinants of bread consumption pattern from the consumer's point of view; determine the conditions of the purchase in grocery stores and buyer satisfaction. *The main reason for buying* certain bakery was given by the product quality (54.90%) while the products influence on health was the main motivation for 22.22% of the subjects. A particular pattern of consumption for bakery products can be determined mainly by consumption behavior of the family (especially parents) in view of 26.8 % of respondents, household income (29.41%), food needs and/or diet (27.45%). Consumers targeted by the undertaken survey are loyal to a certain brand of bread products (44.4%), most rural people stating that the brand is not one of the main criteria of choice. *Information on the label* are considered to be *very important* in the process of purchasing for 31.4% of respondents, *quite important* for 28.8 %, while 9.8 % said they are *unimportant*. In the Iasi County, the supermarkets develop their own brands, offering fresh and a wide range of products, generally disposed in a specially designed bakery space and with an attractive visual layout, while maintaining and diversifying local or regional manufacturers brands. The quantities of bread and bakery products bought in Romania by a household decreased during the analyzed period (2007-2012), at nation level registered successive declines, ranging in 2012 at 7.66 kg/month/person, respectively at 91.92 kg/year/person, the highest consumption being in rural areas.

Key words: bread, purchase, consumption, strategies

Bakery products by ensuring food needs at the bottom of Maslow pyramid form a segment of the food industry that requires attention, especially as most consumer models are based on the consumption of bread and other bakery products (Alecă and Constantin, 2009).

The demand for bakery products in general and for bread in particular is inelastic, manufacturing companies must move towards diversification assortment and increase quality while focusing on the potential benefits to the consumer health (Chiran and all., 2004; Ionescu Bigioi, 2005; Săseanu, 2005; Viziteu, 2011).

World food security situation coupled with population growth causes the grain and bakery products to be essential neuralgic on global market segments, each fluctuation causes structural and psychological disturbance for both producers and consumers (Ionete, 2005; Săseanu, 2005).

New guidelines on sustainability and the conditions imposed by the European Union in order to ensure consumer protection are required to be integrated into policy establishments producing to a better positioning as compared to the competitive environment that manifests on the national or local market (Bibiri, 1992; Gîndu, 2006; Vișan, 2006).

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study was conducted in the county of Iași and was based on statistical survey.

The survey was based on a written questionnaire that included 28 questions (of which 8 questions for identification) with 56 variables.

Target market consisted of bread consumers with temporary or permanent residence in Iași County, with a minimum age of 18.

Validation answers allowed the selection of 153 questionnaires (out of 171 administered) which

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included completed data according with the questions.

Information processing was performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Summary results were presented in tables and charts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

67.97 % of respondents are living in urban areas and 32.03 % in rural areas. Among the subjects, 54.2% were female and 45.75 % male.

The weight of the largest in the structure of the sample by age was 26-35 years category (33.99 %), followed by the category 18-25 years (29.41 %).

The income respondents were differentiated as follows: below 500 lei (31.3 %); 501-1000 lei (28.8 %); 1001 - 1500 lei (19.6 %); 1500 lei (20.3 %).

For 31.37 % of total respondents, the place where the bread is purchased most frequently is the mini/convenience store, while specialized food stores (only bakery) is the place of purchase only for 12.42 %.

The histogram of the degree of satisfaction with products and how there are traded in the store shows a slight asymmetry to the left, over 70 % of respondents indicating values of 3 or 4 (out of a maximum of 5) (*figure 1*):

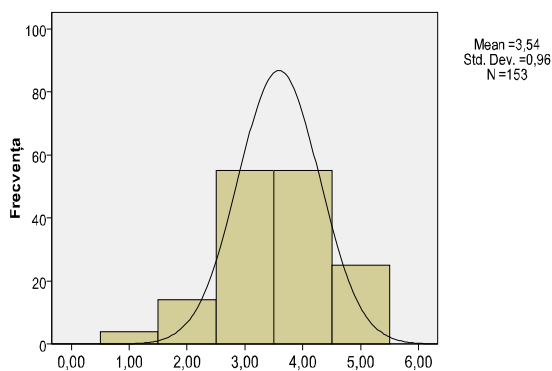


Figure1 The degree of satisfaction with the products and how are traded in store (from 1 to 5)

Brand of bread the most frequently purchased by respondents was VEL PITAR (30.72 %), followed by PANIFCOM (33.99 %). Responses indicated that the most frequently purchased brands, also two supermarket own trade marks (Auchan, Kaufland and for each 1.31 % of total responses) (*figure 2*).

Other brands of bread known and purchased by respondents were mainly, alternatively to the main option (from previous question) PANIFCOM and VEL PITAR, the brand PANIFICAȚIE MOLDOVA also recorded 6.5% of total responses (question being with multiple answers) (*table 1*).

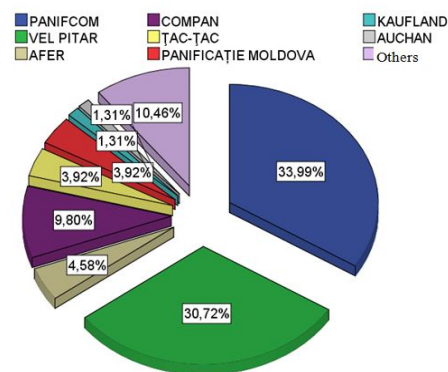


Figure 2 Brand of bread the most frequently purchased

Table 1
Other known and purchased brand of bread

The brand	Frequency	% of total answers	% of total respondent
PANIFCOM	57	37.3	26.76
VEL PITAR	67	43.8	31.46
AFER	33	21.6	15.49
COMPAN	35	22.9	16.43
AC-AC	11	7.2	5.16
PANIFICAȚIE MOLDOVA	10	6.5	4.69

Regarding the choice of the bread brand, 58.17 % of the respondents stated that they choose the usually acquires one and a percentage of 17.65 % notes the appearance of produced product as an essential criterion for selecting (*figure 3*):

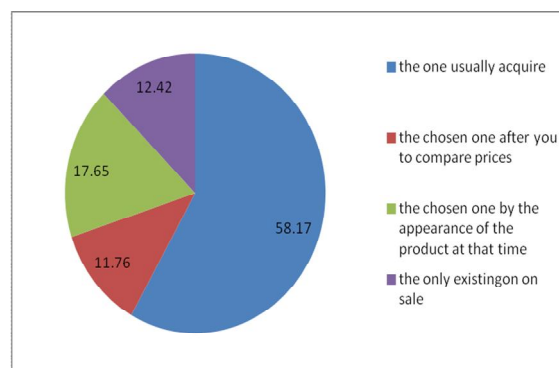


Figure 3 How is chosen the brand of bread (%)

Among the varieties of bread which takes the first place in consumer preference targeted in survey, white bread has the highest percentage (36.60 %) followed by whole wheat bread (22.88 %), which indicates a increasingly stronger consumers change (especially in urban areas) to the finest products with a higher nutrient value, even if their price is slightly higher (*figure 4*).

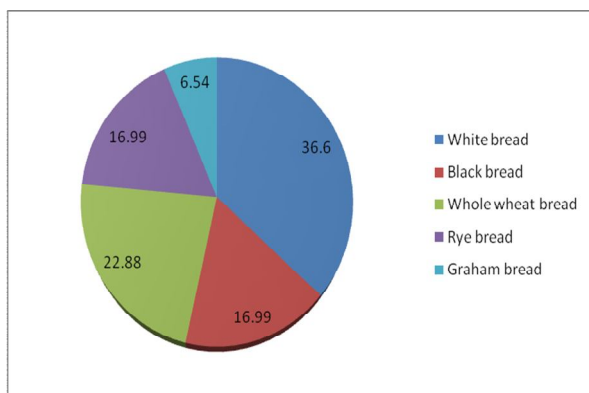


Figure 4 Assortment of bread that takes the first place in consumer preferences (%)

After the presentation type, the type of bread most frequently purchased is packaged sliced bread (60.78 %), following the global and national trend, more pronounced orientation towards packaged products.

The bread most often purchased by respondents weighs 500 g (47.06 %), usually sliced packaged. The bread with a basis weight of 400 grams is preferred by 28.10 % of the respondents (figure 5).

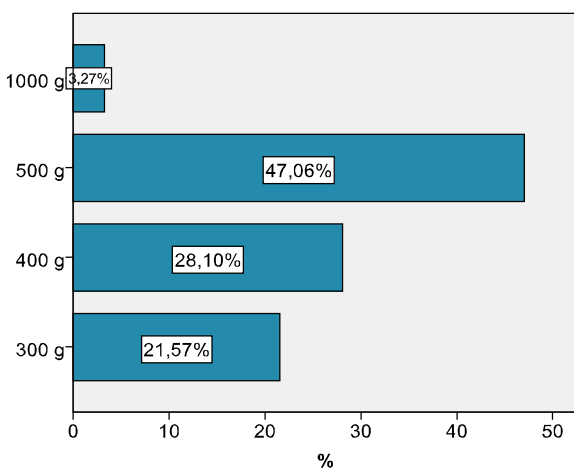


Figure 5 The bread weight which is the most frequently acquired

From the special varieties of bread consumed, most people mentioned the consumption of bread with seeds (45.8 %), while 2.6 % consume bread without salt and 2 % consume hypoglucidic bread (table 2).

The average quantity of bread purchased one time in the buying process is one for 54.25 % and two for 32.68 % of the respondents. More than three breads are bought once by 4.58 % of the respondents.

The rate of purchase of bread varies depending on the amount purchased and the analyzed number of the families members, being

once a day for 39,87 % of the respondents and once at two days for 27.45 % (figure 6).

Table 2

Special types of consumed bread			
Other special types of bread consumed	Frequency	%	% cumulative
Without salt	4	2.6	2.6
With seeds	70	45.8	48.4
Hipoglucidic	3	2.0	50.3
With potatoes	20	13.1	63.4
Others	1	0.7	64.1
Do not consume other special assortment	55	35.9	100.0
Total	153	100.0	-

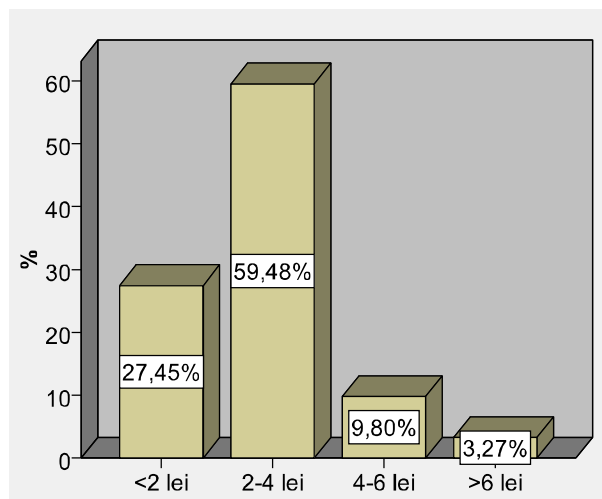


Figure 6 The average amount spent to one purchase of bread

The main reason for buying certain bakery products was given by the product quality (54.90 %) while the influence of products on health was the main motivation for 22.22 % of the subjects.

A particular pattern of consumption on bakery products can be determined mainly by consumption behavior of the family (especially of parents) in view of 26.8 % of respondents, by household income (29.41 %) and by food needs and / or diets (27.45 %) (figure 7).

Product diversity in store in terms of bakery products is *very important* for 23.53 % of the sample and *important enough* for 38.56 %, while 4.58 % notes that this element is *unimportant* in purchasing process.

Interior ambience of the store where the bakery products are purchased is *very important* for 10.46% of the sample and *important enough* for 41.83%, while 3.92% notes that this element is *unimportant* in the purchase (figure 8).

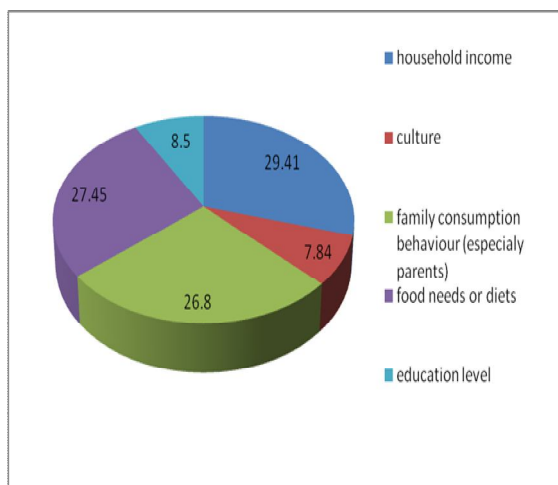


Figure 7 Determinants of a particular model of consumption for bakery products (%)

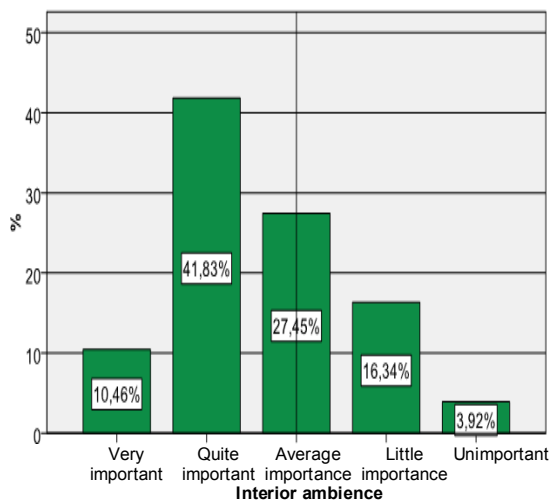


Figure 8 Importance given to the interior ambience of the store

Regarding the visual identification of the products in the store where the bakery products are purchased, this item is *very important* for most of the respondents (43.14 %) and *important enough* to 33.99 % while 6.54 % mention that this element is *unimportant* in the buying process (figure 9).

Promotional activities in stores do not have much relevance for consumers, given that in the bakery sector especially in the case of bread such situations are just a few. Criterion "*brand*" in the buying process is considered of *medium importance* for 27.45 % of respondents, while only 15.03 % of them characterized it as *very important* (figure 10).

The criterion "*price*" is considered *very important* for 27.45 % of the subjects in the buying process, for 33.33 % *very important*, while only 2.61% characterized it as *unimportant* (figure 11).

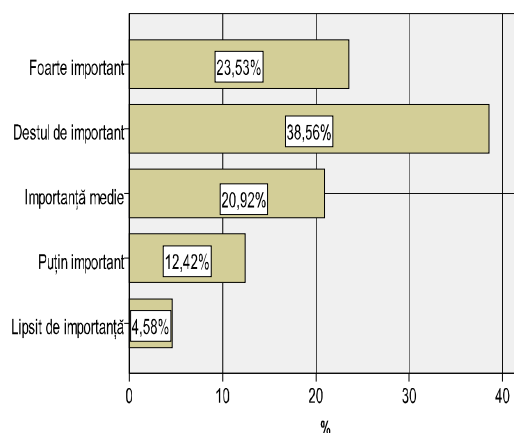


Figure 9 The importance given to visual identifying of the bakery products in store

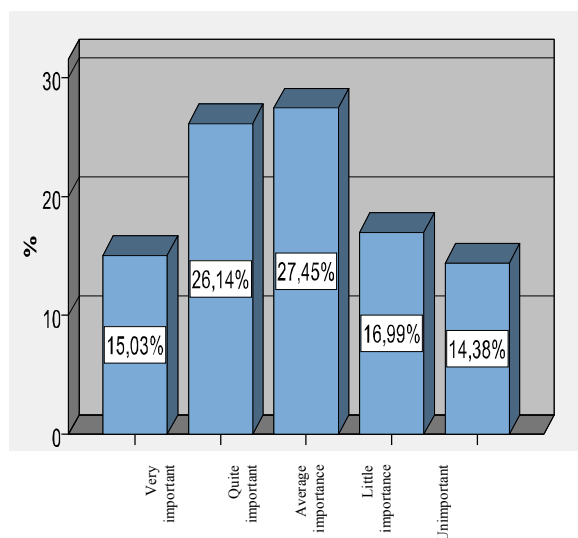


Figure 10 Importance of the criteria "brand" in the purchasing process

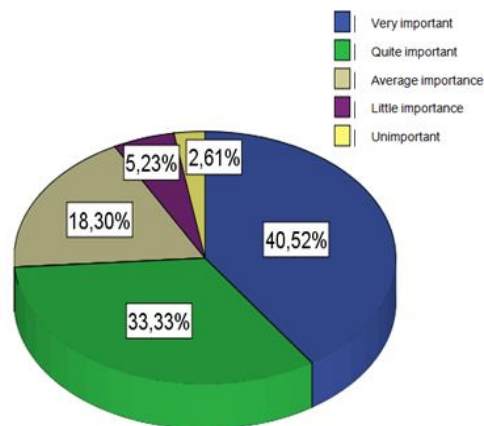


Figure 11 Importance of the criteria "price" in the purchasing process

The freshness is very important criterion for the majority of respondents (73.20 %) and for 20.92 % *quite important*.

In the process of buying criterion "appearance" is considered *very important* for 49.7 % of the respondents, for 32.03 % *quite important*, while only 2.61 % characterized it as *unimportant*.

Also packing criterion indicates a nearly perfect distribution around the median. For 33.33 % of the respondents it is considered as having *medium importance* and only 10.45 % stated that it is *very important*, considering the fact that this criterion is valid only for that segment of the population who choose packaged bakery.

Consumers targeted by the undertaken survey are loyal to a certain brand of bakery products (44.4 %), most rural people stating that the brand is not one of the main criteria of choice.

Information on the label are considered to be *very important* in the process of purchasing for 31.4 % of respondents, *quite important* for 28.8 %, while 9.8 % said they are *unimportant*.

In the Iasi county, the supermarkets develops their own brand, offering fresh products and a wide range of products generally disposed in a specially designed space for bakery products and with an attractive visual layout while maintaining and diversifying local regional manufacturers brands.

CONCLUSIONS

Market policies for bakery products follow the food policy principles and require increased attention given the direct correlation with grain market for bakery.

It highlights the direct correlation between the implementation of strategies based on marketing mix (with emphasis on product quality, promoting efficiency and intensity distribution) and the market shares holds by the companies, affecting the achieved turnover respectively, the made profits.

Quality bakery products and diversification are the main points of interest for consumers, also recorded an orientation towards products that are "healthy", the companies adapting to new trends.

Currently, bakery products consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the market and food hygiene; that the products to be safe for consumption, they must respect both technological and sanitary standards.

By analyzing the main coordinates of the bakery products, is observed that the market aspires to a determination and assignment to a functioning market economy, characterized by the existence of a developed competition with a growing relative purchasing power for all types of competitors.

Quantities of bread and bakery products bought in Romania by a household decreased during the analyzed period (2007-2012), nationwide was registered a successive declines, ranging from the year 2012 to 7.66 kg / month / person, respectively at 91.92 kg / year / person, the highest consumption being in rural areas.

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