

Effects of Advertising on Dairy Purchasing Behavior

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Abstract

In a strong competitive environment, differentiation from other manufacturers is essential to ensure the flow of sales and the increase of turnover. Advertising can differentiate the offer of the economic organization from similar products obtained by competitors. The objective of the paper is to identify the effects of advertising on the purchasing behavior of dairy products, based on the data obtained from a questionnaire conducted on a sample of 206 respondents. The research question is: what are the effects of advertising on dairy buying behavior? In order to achieve this objective, the answers of the analysis carried out are analyzed. The results of the research show that advertising has a significant impact on dairy buying behavior. Effective advertising campaigns increase the notoriety and attractiveness of dairy products, contributing to consumer loyalty. In general, consumers are more likely to choose intensively promoted dairy products, demonstrating the importance of advertising in the marketing strategy of producers.

Keywords: advertising, buying behavior, dairy products, advertising effects

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1. Introduction

In this paper, the topic of advertising on the purchasing behavior of dairy products is addressed, aiming to answer the question: "What are the effects of advertising on the purchasing behavior of dairy products?"

The research starts from the hypothesis that advertising is a decisive factor in the purchasing behavior of dairy products.

The objectives of this research are to define the terms advertising, purchasing behavior, identifying advertising methods, identifying consumers perception of advertising in purchasing behavior.

In the era of globalization, advertising has become an imperative due to the current context of the economic environment, being indispensable for the success of companies (Pelău et al., 2020).

As the economy is dominated by competition, and consumers are exposed to information flows and choices, advertising has become an imperative for economic agents who want to maintain their strong brands and influence

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consumers purchasing decisions, in order to strengthen brand loyalty and differentiate themselves from the competition (Keller, 2018).

Given the dynamics of business, the promotion policy is vital to guarantee the success of any company. It involves a series of actions and strategies to attract customers, increase sales and increase the visibility of companies (Pelau et al., 2022).

It is necessary that the promotion policy is integrated into the company's marketing strategy and adapts to the characteristics of the target market, using various methods and/or techniques, such as: advertising, through the use of media channels (internet, radio, television), sales promotion (free samples, discounts, loyalty), public relations (sponsorships), direct marketing (e-mail, SMS), digital marketing, merchandising (placing products in stores strategically) or through sales (Solomon, 2020).

The role of advertising is to convey information about the products/services of certain companies, striving to convince consumers to purchase them. Thus, it uses promotion strategies, which have a clear effect on the system of values and beliefs, on the behavior of consumers, both in terms of purchase and consumption. Therefore, advertising, through the information sent to consumers, manages to simplify the purchasing decision-making process (Manole et al., 2011).

Considering how quickly consumers switch from one brand to another and the rapid changes in their needs, advertising becomes an easy method to keep the market and company offerings in touch (Milord, 1977).

Advertising establishes a direct link between consumer requirements and companies' offers. Often, information about the latest versions or products on the market, as well as how to use them and where they can be found, remains unknown to many consumers (Phillips, 1997).

The value and impact of advertisements become immeasurable, and their results can be positive or negative in the long term, in relation to the way the market receives, appreciates and reacts to the offers presented (Piquet, 1983).

The results of advertising campaigns may not be immediately visible in the market because some products take longer to be appreciated or assimilated by consumers. Advertising is effective in exposing new products, but success is not guaranteed, as the costs associated with the entire process can only be recovered through the actual sale of the product (Mohan, 1989).

Consumers may also feel overwhelmed by the numerous advertisements, given the constant exposure to the media.

This phenomenon is due to the presence of televisions, radios, reading various magazines and newspapers, billboards, direct emails, as well as new innovations through websites and text messages. Effective advertising succeeds in convincing the customer to make a purchase and motivating them to take a certain action by the end of the process (Kenneth & Donald, 2010).

Therefore, advertising plays an essential role in the contemporary business landscape. It not only encourages the buyer to purchase, but also gives them

options to consider when making a purchase, thus helping to differentiate products from the existing multitude (Rădulescu, 2022).

The purchasing behavior of consumers of agri-food products refers to the manner in which consumers decide on the purchase and consumption of agricultural products and food products (Manole et al., 2003).

This behavior refers to the mental, emotional, and physical activities that people engage in when selecting, buying, using, and disposing of products and services to satisfy their needs and desires (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2009).

The economic factors that can influence consumers' purchasing behavior can be: income, expenses, product prices, prices of complementary products, substitute goods and elasticity of demand (Kotler et al, 2001).

Psychological factors that can intervene on purchasing behavior, such as perception, attitude, and learning, as well as social and cultural factors, may also occur (Kotler et al, 2001).

The paper consists of five parts. After the introduction, there is a literature review on the topic of advertising and consumer behavior. Following this, the data and methodology used for researching the impact of advertising on buying behavior are presented. The research results are then analyzed and discussed, and finally, conclusions are drawn.

2. Bibliometric review of publications on impact advertising on purchasing behavior

The bibliometric study on advertising and consumer behavior of agri-food products was carried out using the information database. The criteria according to which the study was carried out are the category of the journal and the year of publication.

At the initial query of the database, the search was carried out by the keyword "advertising", the platform reporting a number of 61,253 results. Subsequently, the search was refined, as the results were very numerous, adding two keywords, namely "behavior" and "consumers", with 3,809 results being reported. The restriction was made in order to make the analysis carried out relevant.

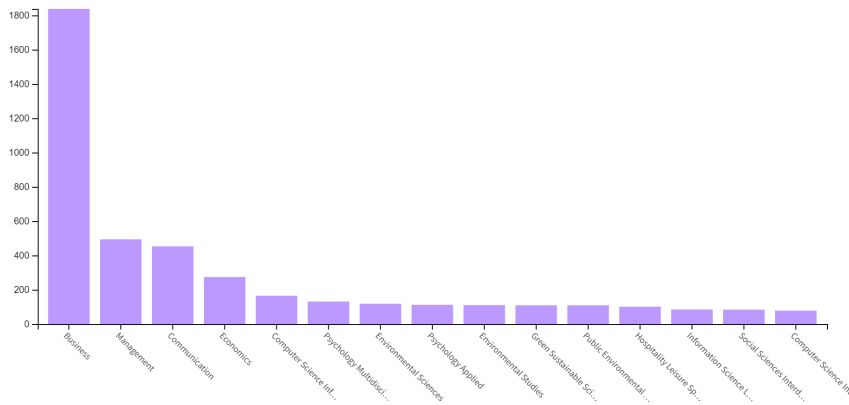


Figure 1. Main areas of journals in which articles on advertising, behavior, consumer topics have been published

Source: Enformation data processing

Most of the works are found in the field of business, respectively, a number of 1838, followed by fields such as: management, communication, economics. The fewest scientific papers are written in the field of interdisciplinary applications in computer science (Figure 1).

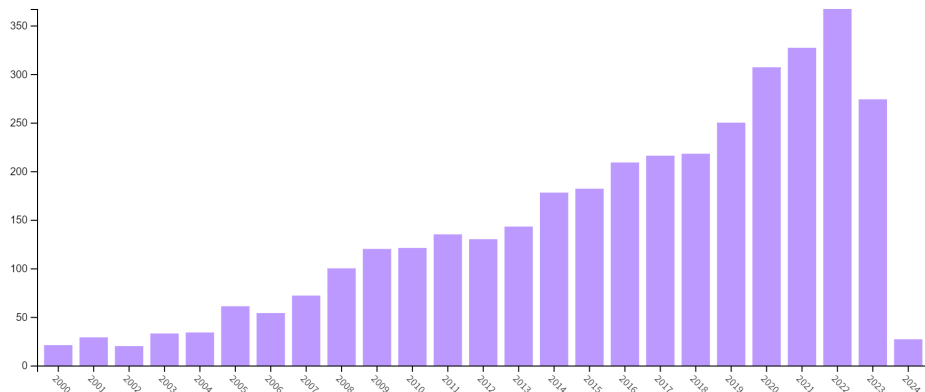


Figure 2. Dynamics of publishing articles on advertising, behavior, consumer topics

Source: Enformation data processing

The concerns for the terms: advertising, behavior and consumers, which essentially want to encompass the effects of advertising on the purchasing behavior of dairy products, began in 2008, visibly increasing from 2000 to 2008, and since 2016, the number of publications has increased even more.

3. Material and Method

In this paper, which analyzes the impact of advertising on purchasing behavior, dairy products were considered, as they are essential within the food industry, due to both nutritional value and versatility in consumption. They are essential for the health of teeth, bones, the nervous system, etc., being key ingredients in many processed foods, such as cheeses, pastries or yogurts.

At the same time, the dairy industry generates jobs, contributing to the National GDP, with farmers, processors or distributors having essential roles in the supply chain (FAO, 2024).

Advertising in the dairy industry plays an important role in increasing demand, in promoting dairy products, but also in strengthening loyalty to existing brands.

Advertising significantly influences the purchasing behavior of consumers of dairy products, and its effectiveness varies depending on the communication channel used and the demographics of the target audience.

This hypothesis suggests that there is a correlation between advertising exposure and consumers' purchasing decisions in the agri-food industry. It is assumed that different forms of advertising, such as TV and online advertisements, have a distinct impact on purchasing behaviour, and this impact can be influenced by the demographic characteristics of consumers, such as age, gender, education level, etc.

By testing this hypothesis, the aim is to provide a better understanding of how advertising can be used to influence and shape buying behaviour in the agri-food industry.

In order to validate this claim, a survey entitled "Effects of advertising on dairy purchasing behaviour" was carried out.

The objective of this research is to investigate and understand more deeply the impact of advertising on dairy buying behaviour.

The study aims to highlight the differences and similarities between various advertising channels, as well as to identify the credibility of advertising in consumers' purchasing decisions.

The study was conducted on a sample of 206 respondents from various regions of Romania. Data were collected through an online questionnaire. The analysis included demographic factors, the types of media used, and the frequency of exposure to advertising. The questionnaire was launched on 04.25.2024 and was open until 05.29.2024, being structured in 4 sections.

In the first section, consumers and non-consumers of products are divided dairy. The second section is addressed to non-consumers, in order to identify the reasons for non-consumption. The third section is aimed at consumers of dairy products, where there are questions about the frequency of consumption, the quantity consumed, other preference criteria of dairy products, brand awareness, etc.

Section 4, presented below, is designed to assess in detail the impact of advertising on the purchasing behaviour of dairy consumers. Thus, through this section it is intended to: identify whether advertisements are perceived as a means of promotion, evaluate the degree of influence of advertising on purchasing decisions, which are the most influential advertising channels, the frequency of exposure to advertisements and much more.

The questionnaire ends with the socio-demographic section, these data being extremely useful in ensuring the representativeness of the sample, to maximize the impact of advertising campaigns and to improve the satisfaction of dairy consumers.

4. Results and discussions

Following the restriction of access to the initiated form, a representative sample of 206 respondents was registered. Of these, 181 respondents, respectively, 75.2% are female, and the remaining 25% and 24.8%, respectively, are male (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Distribution of respondents by gender and place of residence

Source: Results of the questionnaire

From the point of view of the residential environment, 130 of the respondents live in urban areas, and 76 of them live in rural areas (Figure 3).

Regarding age, 5.8% of respondents are under 18 years old, 27.2% fall into the 18-25 age category, most of the respondents, respectively 37.4% are between 25 - 40 years old, 25.2% of them fall into the 40-65 age category, and only 9 respondents, respectively 4.4% are over 65 years old (Figure 4).

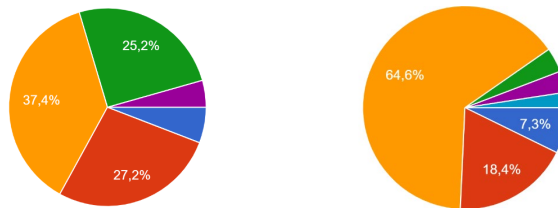


Figure 4. Age categories and labour market status of respondents

Source: Results of the questionnaire

The labor market status of the respondents is represented in the graph below, which shows that most of the respondents, 64.6% are employees, 18.4% are students, 7.3% are students, 3.9% are self-employed, 3.4% are retired and the remaining 2.4% are unemployed (Figure 4).

Figure 5 illustrates the category of monthly income in which each of the respondents falls, thus, 96 of them, respectively, 46.6% have a monthly income above 4000 lei, 71, respectively, 34.5% have a monthly income between 2000 - 4000 lei, and 39 of the respondents, respectively, 18.9% have a monthly income below 2000 lei.

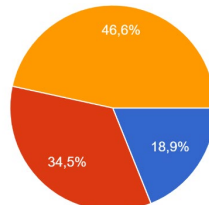


Figure 5. The monthly incomes of the respondents

Source: Results of the questionnaire

The results of the question on the informative role of advertising indicate that it is largely perceived as having an informative role by the majority of respondents, more precisely, by 91.7% of them. 8.3% of respondents believe that advertising does not have an informative role (Figure 6).

However, in order to further improve the perception and effectiveness of advertising, it is recommended to improve the content of messages and personalize campaigns according to the specific needs of different consumer segments. These measures can help to increase awareness and improve the perception of advertising.

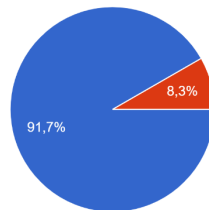


Figure 6. Opinions on the informative role of advertising

Source: Results of the questionnaire

To the question "How much does advertising influence you?", 43.6% of respondents are indifferent, 17.7% said that advertising influences them a lot, 14.4% are influenced very little, 12.2% are influenced a lot and 12.2% are slightly influenced by advertising (Figure 7).

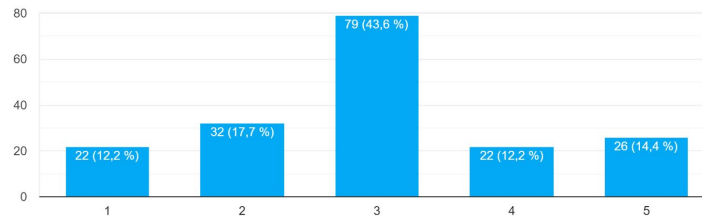


Figure 7. Making a hierarchy of the mentioned criteria

Source: Results of the questionnaire

Figure 8 shows which are the most influential advertising channels in the decision to buy dairy products. According to the results, the most influential advertising channel is the Internet, with 50.3% of respondents indicating this channel. The second advertising channel considered influential by respondents is television, being chosen by 42% of them. Traditional channels such as radio and magazines have less influence compared to digital ones, with a percentage of 3.9%, showing the change in consumer preferences towards online media.

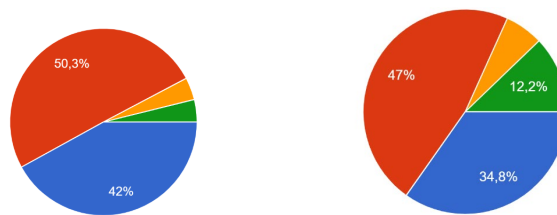


Figure 8. Determine the most influential advertising channels and frequency of exposure to dairy ads

Source: Results of the questionnaire

Regarding the frequency of exposure of respondents to advertisements for dairy products in the aforementioned environments, the results of the questionnaire show that a large part of the respondents, respectively 47% are exposed weekly to advertisements for dairy products and 34.8% are exposed daily, which indicates a strong presence in the media. Of the respondents, 12.2% are rarely exposed and 6.1% monthly, this low exposure suggesting the adjustment of advertising strategies in the dairy industry to increase the frequency of exposure (Figure 8).

To the question "How much do you trust the information presented in advertisements for dairy products?", 41.4% of respondents trust a little in the information presented in advertisements for dairy products, 34.3% trust a lot, while a similar percentage, of 12.2%, trust very much and not at all in that information. Therefore, through the semantic differential calculation method, the score of 2 was obtained, which shows that most of the respondents of the questionnaire have little confidence in the information presented in the advertisements for dairy products (Figure 9).

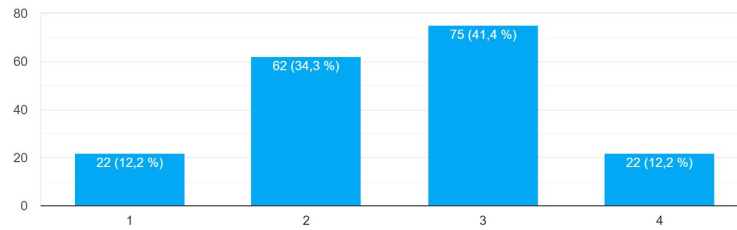


Figure 9. Confidence in information in dairy ads

Source: Results of the questionnaire

According to the results of the question "Do you consider that advertisements for dairy products positively or negatively influence your decisions? majority of respondents, 51.4%, perceive the influence of dairy advertisements as positive in purchasing decisions, however, a close percentage of 47% is not influenced by dairy product advertisements. Only 3 of the respondents, respectively 1.7%, claimed that advertisements for products negatively influence their purchasing decisions (Figure 10).



Figure 10. The influence of dairy ads on purchasing decisions and the willingness to try new dairy products promoted in ads

Source: Results of the questionnaire

Following the collected answers to the question "Are you more likely to try a new dairy product if it is promoted in an advertisement?", it is observed that the majority of respondents, respectively 60.2%, are open to trying new dairy products if they are promoted, suggesting that advertisements can have a positive effect in stimulating interest in innovations in the dairy industry. However, a significant percentage of respondents, 39.8%, are not predisposed to try new dairy products promoted in an advertisement, which may suggest a reluctance to change (Figure 10).

The results of the questionnaire show that 100 of the respondents, which means a percentage of 55.2%, looked for more information about a dairy product presented in an advertisement, while 44.8% of them were not tempted to do the same. In order for advertisements to encourage more consumers to seek additional information about the products being promoted, it is very important that the information provided is clear and relevant (Figure 11).

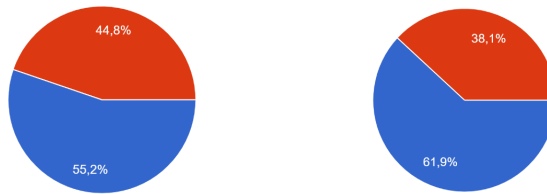


Figure 11. Searching for additional dairy information after viewing ads and discrepancies between dairy ads and actual consumer experiences

Source: Results of the questionnaire

To the question "Have you ever noticed a discrepancy between what is presented in dairy advertisements and your experience? with these products?", 61.9% of respondents answered with "Yes", this answer suggesting that the advertisements offered unrealistic images of the dairy products being promoted, with consumer experiences being different in terms of quality, taste, or appearance of the dairy products. The other respondents, 38.1% who chose the answer option "No". suggests that their experience with the dairy products featured in advertisements and consumed was consistent (Figure 11).

The analysis of the results of the last question of the questionnaire, namely "How do you think exposure to advertising for dairy products will affect you in the near future?" shows that a significant percentage of respondents, 64.6%, believe that exposure to advertising for dairy products will not have a significant effect in the near future, so advertisements fail to change their buying behavior (Figure 12).

A number of 54 respondents, respectively 29.8% of the sample of 181 respondents, will have been determined to buy more dairy products following exposure to advertising, suggesting that advertisements can arouse their interest and motivate consumption.

However, 5.5% of respondents will be determined to purchase fewer dairy products, this choice being related to previous unfavorable experiences.

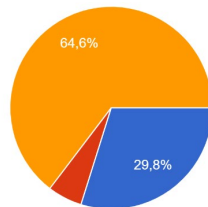


Figure 12. Anticipated impact of dairy advertising on consumer behaviour

Source: Results of the questionnaire

5. Conclusions

Following the analysis carried out on the effects of advertising on dairy purchasing behaviour, relevant conclusions were drawn from the answers provided by the questionnaire participants, which can also be used in a wider spectrum.

Most of the respondents are female, live in urban areas, fall into the age category 25-40 years, being employees, and having a monthly income of over 4000 lei.

Advertising is perceived by the majority of respondents as a means of information, highlighting the essential role that advertising has in educating consumers and increasing awareness of the products on the market. Although it is considered a means of information, respondents showed some indifference to how much they are influenced by advertising. Thus, regardless of their exposure, they are not always aware of the impact of advertising messages on their purchasing behavior.

The results of the study show that the most influential advertising channels for dairy products are television and the internet, the daily and weekly exposure to this type of advertising shows the importance of marketing strategies.

The level of confidence in the information presented in dairy advertisements varies, from a lot (34.3%) to a little (41.4%), suggesting that a good design of advertising campaigns can have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing behavior.

Advertising positively stimulates consumers' predisposition to try new dairy products, with the majority of respondents being more likely to try a new product if it is promoted in an advertisement, showing, again, the effectiveness of advertising. Also, a significant number of respondents, 109, searched for more information about a dairy product after viewing an advertisement for it, emerging the idea that advertising not only attracts attention, but also manages to motivate consumers to seek information before making the purchase decision.

There were also unpleasant experiences of the respondents, many of whom noticed discrepancies between the information provided in the advertisements and the real experience with the respective dairy products, and it is important that the advertisements are real and authentic, so that they reflect the characteristics and quality of the products faithfully promoted.

Although dairy advertising has a positive impact in the short term, exposure to advertising in the future is not expected to have a significant effect. This may indicate a saturation of consumers for existing advertising messages, requiring innovation in marketing strategies to spark long-term interest.

In conclusion, advertising is a powerful tool in influencing the purchasing behavior of both dairy and agri-food products. It is very important that advertising messages are credible and that communication channels preferred by consumers are used. At the same time, it is recommended that the information presented in the advertisements is real and that there are no discrepancies between it and the real experiences of consumers, in order to maintain loyalty to the brand in the long term.

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