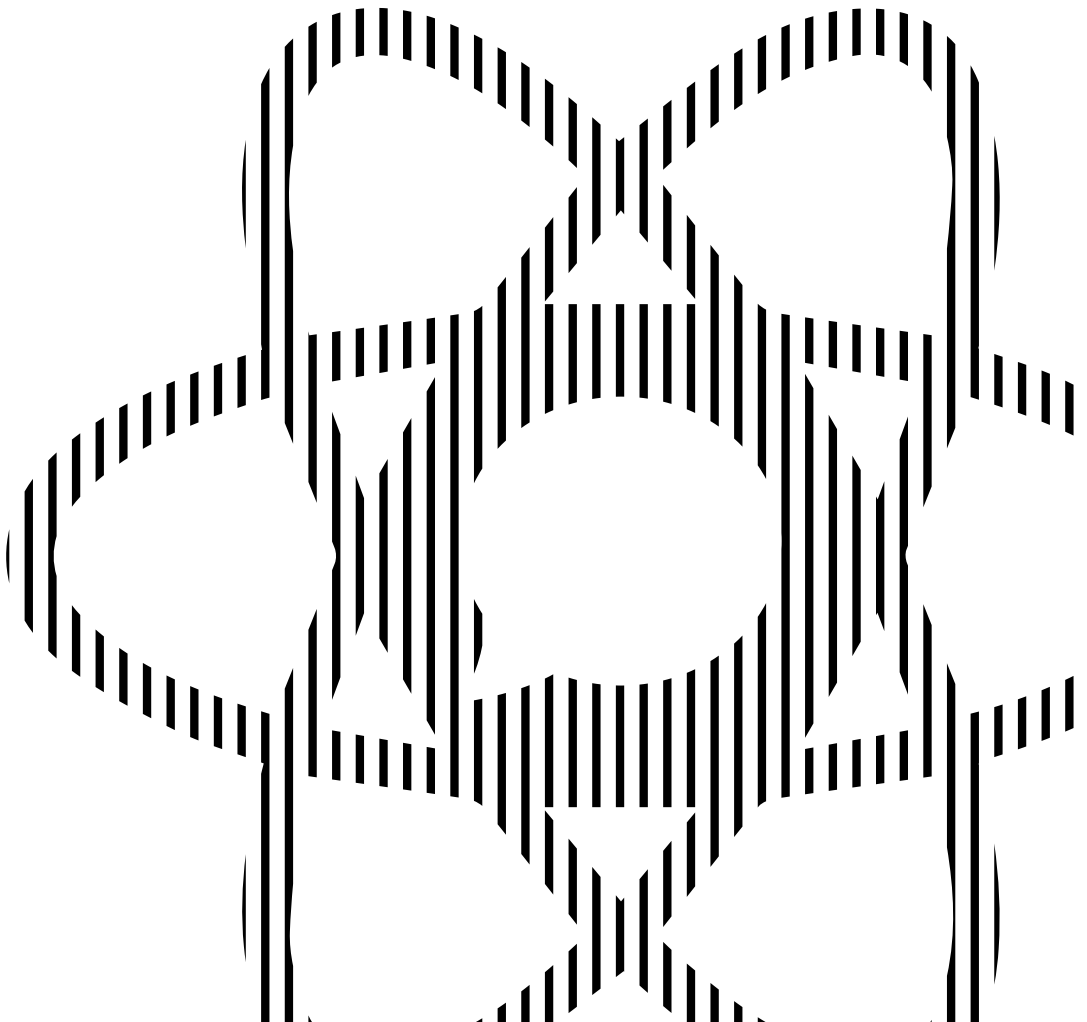


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OBSAH | CONTENT

VÝSKUMNÉ PRÁCE | RESEARCH PAPERS

- 2 Joachim Riedl, Stefan Wengler, Marcin Czaban, Simon Steudtel
Sexism in advertisements – a cross-cultural analysis
Sexizmus v reklame – medzikultúrna analýza
- 17 Monika Březinová
Factors affecting the communication mix of small businesses in the selected industry
Faktory ovlivňující komunikační mix malých podniků ve vybraném odvětví
- 25 Emel Yarimoglu, Iremsu Cebisli, Ali Riza Levent, Talha Tesik, Melisa Ozan
A descriptive study on Turkish young consumers' soft drink buying behaviors
Deskriptívna štúdia nákupného správania tureckých mladých spotrebiteľov nealkoholických nápojov
- 36 Lamia El Mokretar, Méliá Adman
Developing a growth marketing approach to B2B customer retention: Case Algeria
Vývoj rastového marketingového prístupu k udržaniu B2B zákazníkov: Príklad z Alžírsko
- 47 Vasilii Ostin
Maximizing business potential: The symbiotic relationship between employee training and business success
Maximalizace podnikatelského potenciálu: Symbiotický vztah mezi školením zaměstnanců a úspěšností podnikání

MARKETING BRIEFS

- 56 Pavel Štrach
X Factor: Mastering the mystery of successful customer connections
X faktor: Jak zvládat tajemství úspěšného spojení se zákazníkem

ZAÚJALO NÁS | SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

- 58 **Súťaž FLEMA Media Awards 2023**
FLEMA Media Awards 2023

RECENZIE | REVIEWS

- 60 Štefan Žák
Štarchoň, Peter, Pšenák, Peter a Miklošík, Andrej: Medzigeneračné rozdiely v správaní slovenských spotrebiteľov

DICTIONARY OF USEFUL MARKETING TERMS

- 62 Dagmar Weberová

SEXISM IN ADVERTISEMENTS – A CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS

This paper examines the evaluation of advertising with particular reference to possible sexism and the differences in response among individuals of different religious affiliation, religiosity, and origin. Religion, religiosity and migration background make small explanatory contributions to the evaluation of advertising in four relevant dimensions, but in the overall picture prove to be less significant than sociodemographic and psychographic criteria beyond religion and origin.

1 Introduction — In 2016, Germany experienced a hefty public discussion on sexism in advertisements. Despite an enormous public outcry and the federal governments’ strong determination, the political parties were unable to pass a new federal law due to rather controversial positions. Instead, selected regulations were enacted at the state and local level to prevent any display of content deemed sexually discriminatory on public advertising spaces. Along the discussion, all stakeholders argued rather emotionally, largely based on their political values and beliefs. Real data on the population’s perceptions, experiences and expectations on sexism in advertisement were missing. Accordingly, we decided to bring more light into the emotional debate and provide empirical data on which contents are really perceived sexually discriminatory by the German population and which not.

2 Conceptual framework

Discrimination occurs almost everywhere and can refer to a wide variety of personal characteristics like sex, age, origin etc. Sexism includes all gender-related forms of discrimination. For reasons of simplification, in the present studies sexism was examined exclusively in connection with contents perceived as misogynistic. Besides analyzing the interviewees’ general attitude concerning advertisements, the authors also checked for the big five personality traits (Costa and McCrae 1985; McCrae and John 1992; Rammstedt et al. 2004) to get more comprehensive insights on the participants’ media consumption as well as their assessment of specific advertisements.

3 Empirical studies

3.1 Research approach and design

A partially standardized approach was used to collect the relevant constructs. Open-ended questions were used to ascertain whether and, if so, what the respondents had personally been pleased or annoyed about in relation to advertising in the past two years (using the Critical Incident Technique based on Flanagan (1954)). These questions were asked before the issue of sexist or discriminatory advertising had even been raised, so it is possible to read from the sum and distribution of responses the extent to which the population itself has the issue of sexism on its mind. The other questions were quantitative in nature. In the form of rating scales, respondents had to answer the following blocks of items on the following sets of questions:

- extent of perceived annoyance by advertising in the various media (TV, print, brochures, posters, radio, email, internet advertising),
- self-rating on personality type (Big Five in the version of Rammstedt et al. (2004)),

- 11-item battery for the assessment of advertising, which was compiled on the basis of explorative preliminary research,
- media consumption (hours/minutes daily) in relation to TV, radio and digital media, and
- 5 items for assessment (aesthetics, fit to advertised product, degree of erotic charge, degree of associated sexism, desire to ban such advertising).

With the exception of the recording of temporal media consumption, a scale with expressions from 0 (not at all, does not apply, etc.) to 10 (completely, completely applies, etc.) was given for all ratings. The authors decided for this scaling to overcome the arbitrariness of a scale selection, as it is the case with the widely used 5-7 or 9-point Likert scales. Since the respondents are used to thinking in the decimal system from everyday life, no cognitive effort is required to transfer a personal assessment into a numerical response value. This eliminates a possible source of error in the survey, and at the same time there are no refusals to answer due to „cumbersome“ scale specifications. Scaling in the decimal system, in which only the two extremes are labeled and which at the same time dispenses with any further verbalization of gradations, is becoming more and more widespread in empirical research in many disciplines (Osman et al. 1994; Miles et al. 2011), whereby it seems to be irrelevant for the respondents’ ability to provide information whether a scaling from 0 to 10 or 0 to 100 is used (e.g., Lorig et al. 1989), since the subjects mostly answer in increments of ten on the 100 scale. Four further questions served as a summary assessment by the survey participants. The survey concluded with 8 questions about the person (age, gender, school-leaving qualification, location of residence, satisfaction with current living situation, migration background, self-assessment of religiosity, religious affiliation).

3.2 Method and sampling

The authors conducted an empirical study in two waves, the first one ending in Q1 2017 and the second one five years later in Q1 2022. In both waves the same questionnaire was used, but the empirical methodologies were different due to the corona pandemic. While the first wave was conducted as a face-to-face study with 1460 cases, the second wave was an online survey resulting in 900 cases. In both cases, the survey was conducted as a convenience sample, leaving it up to the interviewers to select the respondents, but with quota specifications, thus ensuring that the resulting sample corresponds to the average of the German population in terms of the three characteristics age, gender and level of education. Further quota characteristics were not specified due to the associated increasingly complex search for participants, but it was determined that a maximum of one person per family could be interviewed.

| Table 1 | year (wave) of survey | | contingency coefficient | p |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| | 2017 (n= 1449) | 2022 (n= 900) | | |
| | Crosstabs, percentage | | | |
| Sex | | | | |
| female | 52.0% | 49.8% | 0.062 | 0.011 |
| male | 48.0% | 49.7% | | |
| diverse | 0.0% | 0.6% | | |
| Migration background | | | | |
| yes | 13.4% | 9.9% | 0.052 | 0.011 |
| no | 86.6% | 90.1% | | |
| | mean, variance analysis | | F (Anova) | p |
| Age (Years) | 39.0 | 42.6 | 22.459 | 0.001 |
| Index Education (1 = secondary school - 5 = university) | 2.7 | 2.6 | 4.477 | 0.034 |
| Satisfaction with the situation in life (0=min - 10=max.) | 7.8 | 7.4 | 33.355 | 0.001 |

Table 1: Comparison of the 2017 and 2022 samples
Source: Authors

3.3 Comparison of the two waves of the study

Comparing the two survey dates reveals similarities, but also significant differences in the sample. As Table 1 shows, the proportion of genders is largely identical in both studies, and the same applies to the index of educational qualifications surveyed. In contrast, there are slightly fewer respondents with an immigrant background in the 2022 study; at the same time, the average age is a considerable 3.5 years higher. Life satisfaction is somewhat lower in 2022 than in 2017. The first reason for the differences found here is the change in method. Persons with a migration background have a somewhat lower propensity to participate in surveys. While this can be partially compensated for in the face-to-face survey by friendly follow-up from the personal interviewers, this possibility is missing in the online survey, so that the resulting proportion of people in the sample is lower. Another influencing factor is the covid pandemic existing in 2022. This may partly explain the overall decline in life satisfaction. Parallel unaided surveys also show that younger individuals, often still in education, devoted so much time to online media during the pandemic that any further survey focused on the online sector met with a reduced willingness to participate. In contrast, the willingness of older target groups to participate remained unchanged, so that the result is an increased average age of the sample, even though the quota characteristics specified for contacting potential respondents were identical to those of 2017. In summary, in terms of individual time spent on the survey, gender distribution, and education level, there are good matches between the samples from the two survey dates. There are significant, but nevertheless explainable, differences in the proportion of people with an immigrant background, the average age and satisfaction with the living situation. Overall, under these conditions, the summary and comparative evaluation of the collected data with respect to the central constructs such as attitudes toward advertising, sexist advertising, the Big Five, and others appear justifiable. It will be necessary to clarify in a follow-up survey planned as another online study whether the findings presented below prove to be stable.

3.4 Results and discussion

3.4.1 Personality dimensions

An exploratory factor analysis (principal component analysis with varimax rotation) yields the expected five personality dimensions. KMO is 0.534, and the communalities of all 10 items range from 0.572 to 0.757.

| Compo-nent | initial Eigenvalues | | | rotated sum of squared loadings | | |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | total | % of variance | cum. variance % | total | % of variance | cum. variance % |
| 1 | 1.856 | 18.555 | 18.555 | 1.577 | 15.770 | 15.770 |
| 2 | 1.351 | 13.511 | 32.066 | 1.362 | 13.623 | 29.393 |
| 3 | 1.259 | 12.592 | 44.658 | 1.324 | 13.240 | 42.634 |
| 4 | 1.187 | 11.871 | 56.529 | 1.303 | 13.035 | 55.668 |
| 5 | 1.110 | 11.103 | 67.632 | 1.196 | 11.963 | 67.632 |
| 6 | 0.894 | 8.941 | 76.572 | | | |
| 7 | 0.682 | 6.818 | 83.390 | | | |
| 8 | 0.589 | 5.891 | 89.282 | | | |
| 9 | 0.589 | 5.888 | 95.170 | | | |
| 10 | 0.483 | 4.830 | 100.000 | | | |

Extraction method: principal component analysis
Table 2: Variance explanation by five personality dimensions
Source: Authors

The five factors explain 67.6 percent of the initial variance of the items (cf. Table 2), and the loading matrix largely corresponds to the simple structure and exactly replicates the assignment of the items, as postulated by Rammstedt et al. (2004).

| | component | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 1 extra- version (negative polarity) | 2 open-ness | 3 conscien- tiousness (negative polarity) | 4 neuroti- -cism | 5 agreeable- -ness |
| [3.01] I am rather reticent and reserved | 0.831 | | | | |
| [3.02] I trust others easily, believe in the good in people | | | | | 0.771 |
| [3.03] I am easy-going and avoid effort if possible. | | | 0.800 | | |
| [3.04] I am relaxed, I do not let myself be upset by stress | | | | -0.840 | |
| [3.05] I have rather little interest in art | | -0.834 | | | |
| [3.06] I am sociable and outgoing | -0.827 | | | | |
| [3.07] I tend to criticize others | | | | | -0.697 |
| [3.08] I make a point of completing tasks thoroughly | | | -0.753 | | |
| [3.09] I get nervous and insecure easily | | | | 0.723 | |
| [3.10] I am creative and have an active imagination | | 0.809 | | | |

Method: principle components analysis with varimax rotation
Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Table 3: Loading structure of the five personality dimensions
Source: Authors

For further analysis, sum indices were calculated from the original items in the correct polarity (with two items each representing one dimension), as they are based on the scaling of the original items and are thus easier to interpret than the standardized factor scores of SPSS.

3.4.2 Basic attitude towards advertising

The eleven items assessing advertising were exploratively tested for dimensionality using factor analysis. KMO yields a value of 0.759, the eigenvalue criterion leads to the following four dimensions that together explain 66.15 percent of the baseline variance (see Table 4).

| component | initial eigenvalues | | | rotated sum of squared loadings | | |
|-----------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | total | % of variance | cum. variance % | total | % of variance | cum. variance % |
| 1 | 3.052 | 27.748 | 27.748 | 2.735 | 24.867 | 24.867 |
| 2 | 2.054 | 18.675 | 46.422 | 1.603 | 14.572 | 39.439 |
| 3 | 1.142 | 10.384 | 56.806 | 1.540 | 14.004 | 53.443 |
| 4 | 1.029 | 9.352 | 66.158 | 1.399 | 12.715 | 66.158 |
| 5 | 0.795 | 7.227 | 73.385 | | | |
| 6 | 0.725 | 6.593 | 79.978 | | | |
| 7 | 0.615 | 5.595 | 85.574 | | | |
| 8 | 0.496 | 4.507 | 90.081 | | | |
| 9 | 0.463 | 4.210 | 94.291 | | | |
| 10 | 0.341 | 3.104 | 97.395 | | | |
| 11 | 0.287 | 2.605 | 100.000 | | | |

Extraction method: principal component analysis

Table 4: Variance explanation by four dimensions of attitude towards advertising
Source: Authors

The loadings of the items on the four factors largely correspond to the simple structure, and the assignments of the items to the four dimensions are immediately self-explanatory (Table 5). The four dimensions express:

- degree of rejection of advertising due to sexist and other content,
- positive view of advertising as being useful for purchase decisions, entertaining, etc.,
- perceived annoyance due to the volume of advertising, and
- demand for government regulation of advertising.

| | component | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 Rejection of ads due to sexism | 2 Advertising is useful and entertaining | 3 The amount of adver- tising is annoying | 4 Regulatory control by the state is needed |
| [4.01] There is too much advertising in the media overall. | | | 0.865 | |
| [4.02] I think advertising is informative. | | 0.736 | | |
| [4.03] Too much misogynistic content is shown in adverts. | 0.871 | | | |
| [4.04] Most of the time I find ads just annoying. | | -0.323 | 0.783 | |
| [4.05] Advertising can help you make purchasing decisions. | | 0.672 | | |
| [4.06] There is too much sexist content in advertising. | 0.868 | | | |
| [4.07] The legislature should regulate advertising more closely. | 0.336 | | | 0.713 |
| [4.08] I reject advertising with erotic content. | 0.593 | | | |
| [4.09] When I think of advertising, I think of funny and entertaining content. | | 0.695 | | |
| [4.10] The state should stay out of advertising issues. | | | | -0.865 |
| [4.11] Advertising does not sufficiently respect the dignity of women.. | 0.858 | | | |

Method: principle components analysis with varimax rotation
Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Table 5: Loading structure of the four dimensions of attitude towards advertising (loadings below .3 are suppressed)
Source: Authors

3.4.3 Descriptive analysis of the relationship between migration background, religiosity and religious affiliation

In the descriptive evaluations for the analysis of religious affiliation the three groups „with-out“ (religion), „Christian“ and „Islamic“ can be included. The 32 people distributed among „other“ religions form a heterogeneous sample, with none of the named religions represent-ing a sufficient sample to conduct sufficiently reliable evaluations in this regard. As Table 6 shows, there is a clear and highly significant (Anova, F= 594.43, p<0.001) corre-lation between religious affiliation and self-perceived religiosity.

| [22] religion | mean religiosity | n | std.-dev. |
|---------------|------------------|------|-----------|
| None | 0.62 | 586 | 1.365 |
| Christian | 4.58 | 1667 | 2.706 |
| Islamic | 5.56 | 64 | 2.728 |
| total | 3.60 | 2317 | 2.999 |

Table 6: Self-assessment of religiosity according to religious affiliation
(scale from 0...10)
Source: Authors

The variances of religious affiliation of the groups are inhomogeneous (Levene's test: p<0.001), a posthoc test for groups with inhomogeneous variance (Tamhane T-2) performed subsequently shows that all subgroups differ significantly from each other. It can be stated that members of Islam indicate a higher individual religiosity than members of the Christian religion. In the German national territory, it can be assumed that a large proportion of persons with Islamic religious affiliation have a migration background. Table 7 confirms this relationship; the corresponding contingency coefficient is 0.395 (p<0.001).

| coefficients ^a | | | [19] migration background | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| | | | yes | no | total |
| [22] religion | none | n | 74.0 | 512.0 | 586.0 |
| | | expected | 69.0 | 516.0 | 586.0 |
| | Christian | n | 141.0 | 1526.0 | 1667.0 |
| | | expected | 197.0 | 1469.0 | 1667.0 |
| | Islamic | n | 60.0 | 4.0 | 64.0 |
| | | expected | 7.0 | 56.0 | 64.0 |
| Total | n | | 275.0 | 2042.0 | 2317.0 |
| | expected | | 275.0 | 2042.0 | 2317.0 |

a. dependent: [21] self-assessment of religiosity

Table 7: Crosstabs: Relationship between religion belonging and migration background
Source: Authors

Based on the preceding analyses, it can be assumed that there is also a disproportionate correlation between migration background and self-rated religiosity. As table 8 shows, the self-rated religiosity of persons with an immigrant background (on a scale of 0 to 10) is 3.90, which is 9.2 percent higher than that of persons without an immigrant background. Howev-er, the difference is not statistically significant (Anova, F=3.077, p=0.080).

| [19] migration background | mean | n | Std.-dev. |
|---------------------------|------|------|-----------|
| yes | 3.90 | 283 | 3.154 |
| no | 3.57 | 2066 | 2.977 |
| total | 3.61 | 2349 | 3.000 |

Table 8: Self-assessment of religiosity (scale from 0...10) according to existence of migration background
Source: Authors

Thus, it can be assumed overall that religious belonging has a greater explanatory contribu-tion to the individual's religiosity than the presence of an immigrant background. A multiple regression analysis with the dummy variables migration background (0=no, 1= yes) and religious affiliation (0=none, 1= Christian, 2= Islamic) as independents and religious affiliation (interval-scaled 0...10) as a dependent supports this finding:

| | non standardized coefficients | | standardized coefficients | | Sig. |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| | regression coefficient B | std.-dev. | beta | T | |
| (constant) | 0.120 | 0.328 | | 0.367 | 0.714 |
| [19] migration background | 0.386 | 0.160 | 0.042 | 2.406 | 0.016 |
| [22] religious affiliation | 3.560 | 0.108 | 0.569 | 32.896 | <0.001 |

a. dependent: [21] self-assessment of religiosity

Table 9: Regression analysis: Self-Assessment of religiosity as a function of religious affiliation and migration background

Source: Authors

The beta value for religious affiliation is 0.569, which is about 14 times higher than that for migration background. However, this analysis still yields a significance of $p=0.016$ even for religious affiliation.

3.4.4 Relationship between personality traits and assessment of advertising

We further examined the relationship between the five personality dimensions and the four dimensions of advertising judgment using correlation analyses (see table 10).

| | | extraversion | openness | conscientiousness | neuroticism | agreeableness |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | | | | |
| Rejection due to sexism | Pearson-corr. | 0.063 | 0.149 | -0.010 | 0.095 | 0.087 |
| | p | 0.002 | 0.001 | 0.619 | 0.001 | 0.001 |
| Advertising useful and entertaining | Pearson-corr. | -0.064 | 0.019 | -0.015 | 0.033 | 0.120 |
| | p | | | | | |
| Amount of advertising distracting | Pearson-corr. | -0.026 | -0.014 | -0.005 | 0.050 | -0.050 |
| | p | 0.213 | 0.496 | 0.820 | 0.015 | 0.016 |
| Government regulation called for | Pearson-corr. | 0.014 | -0.024 | -0.016 | 0.123 | 0.048 |
| | p | 0.490 | 0.247 | 0.427 | 0.001 | 0.021 |

Table 10: Correlations between personal traits and the four dimensions of judging ads

Source: Authors

Due to the relatively large number of participants, even small correlations turn out to be significant. In order not to overemphasize arbitrary detailed results, we will limit our interpretation to correlations that are at least in the range of 0.1 or higher. Looking column-wise, we find that the personality trait extraversion has some correlations with the evaluation of advertising that seem plausible, but overall are very weak. In contrast, openness is correlated with $r=0.149$ and highly significantly with rejection of sexist advertising. Openness is thus not expressed by being open to sexist advertising, but by being open to modern anti-discriminatory attitudes such as rejecting sexism. Conscientiousness of individuals does not explain either approving or disapproving attitudes toward advertising. Neuroticism is associated to a relevant and significant extent with persons rejecting sexism and also demanding regulations from the state in this regard. Finally, agreeableness is the only personality dimension positively correlated with the notion that advertising can also be entertaining and useful. Overall, the highly explainable correlations show that the measurement of personality traits with the short scale of the Big Five is also suitable for providing plausible findings for the special case of the assessment of advertising.

3.4.5 Relationship between religion and personality traits

The preceding analysis of the correlations with the advertising evaluation can be seen as a validation of the measurement of the big five. This makes it seem appropriate to use the Big Five also for the consideration of possible religion-related differences in the sample (note [1]).

| [22] religion | | extraversion | openness | conscientiousness | neuroticism | agreeableness |
|--------------------|----------|--------------|----------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| none (n=586) | mean | 2.06000 | 0.26000 | 3.57000 | -1.61000 | 1.77000 |
| | std.dev. | 4.32374 | 3.78166 | 4.04509 | 4.17211 | 4.79161 |
| Christian (n=1667) | mean | 2.32000 | 0.73000 | 4.19000 | -1.45000 | 1.08000 |
| | std.dev. | 4.24384 | 3.70938 | 3.85639 | 4.03637 | 4.84005 |
| Islamic (n=64) | mean | 1.89000 | 0.05000 | 1.99000 | -1.55000 | 1.57000 |
| | std.dev. | 4.40821 | 3.89558 | 3.96762 | 4.28519 | 4.96645 |
| total | mean | 2.24000 | 0.60000 | 3.97000 | -1.49000 | 1.27000 |
| | std.dev. | 4.26880 | 3.73808 | 3.92996 | 4.07688 | 4.83881 |

Table 11: Analysis of personality traits with different religious belonging

Source: Authors

An accompanying analysis of variance shows that there is no significant difference between the „religious groups“ for extraversion and neuroticism. In contrast, openness ($F=4.182$, $p=0.015$) proves to be significant, whereby persons belonging to Islam rate themselves as less open than Christians and persons without religion. Highly significant ($F= 14.056$, $p<0.001$) is the same relationship with respect to conscientiousness. There is another significant difference ($F=4.581$, $p= 0.010$) with respect to agreeableness, but with the opposite direction: here, members of Islam rate themselves as more agreeable than adherents of Christianity. Interestingly, people „without“ religion assign themselves the highest value for agreeableness. In this context, it should be emphasized once again that this is not a reflection of third-party opinions, which may reflect stereotypes about other religious groups, but rather self-assessments. The respondents were not even aware of the fact that the surveys carried out would make distinctions according to religion (or the existence of a migration background) when they submitted their statements.

3.4.6 Relationship between religion and the assessment of advertising

The relationships were tested using analysis of variance, with religion as the independent variable and the four dimensions of advertising as the dependent variables. The four dimensions identified in 3.4.2 were stored in SPSS as factor scores. These are interval-scaled and at the same time standardized, i.e. they have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. In the case of the results shown in Table 12, a value of greater than 0 means that the respective factor applies above average to this group and vice versa. The variances are not homogeneous with respect to „rejection due to sexism“ (Levene test, $p>0.001$) and „advertising useful and entertaining“ ($p=0.014$), but homogeneous with respect to „amount of advertising disturbs“ ($p=0.968$) and „government regulation demanded“ ($p= 0.156$). Visualizing the values for the three groups (no religion, Christian, Islamic) shows: „No-“ and Christian religion strongly resemble each other in three dimensions, only in the dimension „advertising useful and entertaining“ persons with Christian background agree more strongly. Followers of Islam differ from „Christian“ persons in all four dimensions. The assess-

ments of the followers of Islam do not necessarily correspond to expectations. They reject sexism and are more likely than average to call for state regulation, but they themselves feel less disturbed by advertising.

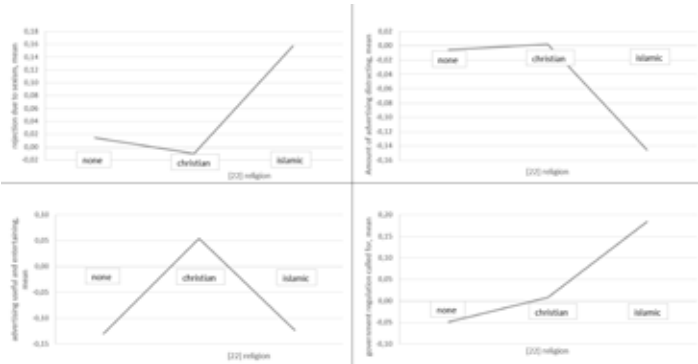


Table 12: Religious affiliation and assessment of advertisement
Source: Authors

Analysis of variance shows that a significant difference between the three groups can only be assumed for the dimension „advertising useful and entertaining“ ($F=7,962$, $p<0,001$); this finding is also true for the corresponding posthoc tests (without picture). In summary, it can be stated that people of different religious affiliations differ significantly only in that adherents of Christianity also attribute more positive aspects („useful and entertaining“) to advertising than do adherents of Islam or people with no religious affiliation. In the other dimensions of the assessment of advertising, there are indications of religion-specific differences, but these are not statistically significant in the present study. In contrast, if we look at the self-rating of religiosity (irrespective of which religion is involved), more significant correlations emerge. With increasing religiosity, sexist advertising is increasingly rejected, but surprisingly advertising is also rated more strongly as potentially useful and entertaining. Completely independent of the degree of religiosity, on the other hand, is the finding that the amount of advertising is perceived as disturbing (see Table 13).

| [21] degree of personal religiosity (n= 2349) | | |
|--|---------------|--------|
| Rejection of ads due to sexism | Pearson-corr. | 0.135 |
| | p | <0.001 |
| Advertising is useful and entertaining | Pearson-corr. | 0.102 |
| | p | <0.001 |
| The amount of advertising is annoying | Pearson-corr. | -0.019 |
| | p | 0.359 |
| Regulatory control by the state is needed | Pearson-corr. | 0.064 |
| | p | 0.002 |

Table 13: Assessment of advertising as a function of the degree of personal religiosity
Source: Authors

Further analyses confirm that people’s religiosity is more significant for their expressed attitudes toward advertising than their affiliation with a particular religion. For this purpose, let us consider a multiple regression analysis with religiosity (0...10) and the dummy variable religion (0=none, 1=Christian, 2=Islamic) as independent variables and rejection of advertising due to sexist content as exemplary dependent. The regression function yields a correlation of $R=0.162$. Both independents are significant influencing factors for the respondents’ judgment, but beta is much higher for religiosity than for religious affiliation (Table 14).

| | regression coefficient B | std.-dev. | Beta (standardi- zed) | T | p |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
| (constant) | -0.060 | 0.040 | | -1.503 | 0.133 |
| [21] degree of personal religiosity | 0.066 | 0.008 | 0.197 | 7.919 | <0.001 |
| [22] religious affiliation | -0.227 | 0.052 | -0.109 | -4.385 | <0.001 |

dependent: rejection of ads due to sexism

Table 14: Multiple regression analysis: Rejection of advertising due to sexism as a function of the degree of personal religiosity and religious affiliation
Source: Authors

3.4.7 Assessment of advertising depending on the presence of a migration background

If we look at the influence of migration background on the assessment of advertising, the picture is different from that for religion as an independent variable: Whereas there was a significant difference in the judgment that „advertising is useful and entertaining“, there is a significant difference (Anova, $F=8,915$, $p=0,003$) here in the rejection of advertising on the basis of sexism 14). There are no significant correlations with regard to the other variables of the evaluation of advertising.

The Levene test consistently yields the result of homogeneous variances. In absolute terms, the differences between persons with and without a migration background are small (Table 15).

| [19] migration background | | Rejection of ads due to sexism | Advertising is useful and entertaining | The amount of advertising is annoying | Regulatory control by the state is needed |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| yes (n=283) | mean | 0.16620 | 0.03580 | -0.01170 | 0.04460 |
| | std.-dev. | 0.98363 | 0.99292 | 0.96868 | 0.93021 |
| no (n=2066) | mean | -0.02280 | -0.00490 | 0.00160 | -0.00610 |
| | std.-dev. | 1.00031 | 1.00110 | 1.00443 | 1.00924 |

Table 15: Mean differences in the assessment of advertising between persons with and without a migration background
Source: Authors

3.4.8 Condensed analysis

Beyond the individual results presented, it is now interesting to see to what extent various independents interact to influence the assessment of advertising as a dependent variable. We selected openness, neuroticism and agreeableness as psychographic independents for the personality traits on the basis of the previous analyses and supplemented this with the

sociodemographic characteristic of age; in addition, religiosity (self-assessment) and the presence of a migration background were included as independents. We conducted the analysis twice, once with the variable „rejection due to sexism“ and a second time with „advertising entertaining and useful“ as a dependent.

| | regression coefficient B | std.-dev. | Beta (standardized) | T | p |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------------|--------|--------|
| (constant) | -0.078 | 0.120 | | -0.649 | 0.516 |
| [21] degree of personal religiosity | 0.021 | 0.007 | 0.062 | 3.022 | 0.003 |
| [14] age | 0.012 | 0.001 | 0.214 | 10.299 | <0.001 |
| [19] migration background | -0.260 | 0.061 | -0.085 | -4.235 | <0.001 |
| openness | 0.149 | 0.020 | 0.149 | 7.565 | <0.001 |
| neuroticism | 0.115 | 0.020 | 0.115 | 5.822 | <0.001 |
| agreeableness | 0.074 | 0.020 | 0.074 | 3.757 | <0.001 |

dependent: rejection of ads due to sexism

Table 16: Multiple regression analysis: Rejection of advertising due to sexism as a function of different personal characteristics
Source: Authors

Regression analysis yields an overall R of 0.311, and a parallel analysis of variance shows a highly significant result ($F= 41.796$, $p<0.001$). As table 16 shows, all the independents make a significant contribution to explaining the dependents. At the same time, it can be noted that the „simple“ socio-demographic criterion age makes a significantly larger explanatory contribution than the other criteria. It is also worth noting that the psychographic personality traits openness and neuroticism are more important influencing factors than, for example, the presence of a migration background or the degree of personal religiosity. The positive judgment dimension „advertising is useful and entertaining“ is far less well explained by the independents selected here than the critical dimension presented earlier. The overall R for all six independents is 0.179 (Anova: $F=12.929$, $p<0.001$). The coefficient table shows that for these dependents, personal agreeableness is the most significant influencing factor, followed by age (Table 17). All other influencing factors provide extremely small and/or non-significant contributions. In particular, it can be seen that religiosity and migration background hardly seem to be of any importance here.

| | regression coefficient B | std.-dev. | Beta (standardized) | T | p |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------------|--------|--------|
| (constant) | -0.149 | 0.125 | | -1.198 | 0.231 |
| [21] degree of personal religiosity | 0.021 | 0.007 | 0.062 | 2.895 | 0.004 |
| [14] age | 0.006 | 0.001 | 0.098 | 4.534 | <0.001 |
| [19] migration background | -0.079 | 0.063 | -0.026 | -1.247 | 0.213 |
| openness | 0.019 | 0.020 | 0.019 | 0.912 | 0.362 |
| neuroticism | 0.041 | 0.020 | 0.041 | 2.027 | 0.043 |
| agreeableness | 0.110 | 0.020 | 0.110 | 5.375 | <0.001 |

dependent: Advertising is useful and entertaining

Table 17: Multiple regression analysis: judgement of advertising as „useful and entertaining“ as a function of different personal characteristics
Source: Authors

4 Conclusion

As a result of two largely comparable partial studies conducted in 2017 and 2022, we were able to determine that the assessment of advertising is based on four factors that can be interpreted well. The topic of potential misogyny or sexism in advertising represents a critical assessment dimension, but the sheer volume of advertising is also addressed and criticized. People also have different views on the demand for state regulation. Furthermore, however, advertising can also be judged positively, as it is seen as useful or entertaining. In order not to myopically focus on the effects of religion, religiosity and migration background, which are of interest in this study, we also examined the respondents with regard to sociodemographic characteristics and, in particular, with regard to the psychographic personality dimensions of the OCEAN model („Big Five“). The survey and factor-analytical evaluation of these personality traits by means of the short questionnaire of Rammstedt et al. (2004) succeeded without any problems. Initial evaluations showed that people assess themselves differently in the Big Five depending on their religious affiliation. For example, members of Islam perceive themselves as less conscientious but more agreeable than Christians. Different religions lead to slightly different judgments with regard to advertising, but overall the self-assessment of religiosity (independent of the religion practiced) is the more explanatory influencing factor for agreeing or disagreeing with advertising. The impact of a migration background is even smaller. In the summarized analysis, age proves to be by far the most important determinant for a potential rejection of sexist advertising. Personality traits such as openness or neuroticism are also significant; religion, religiosity or migration background are only weakly related to a rejection of advertising based on sexism. In explaining a positive judgment of advertising, personal agreeableness plays a role in the first place, followed by the age of the persons. Religiosity makes only a very small explanatory contribution here, and migration background makes no explanatory contribution at all. We see our study as evidence that classical sociodemographic characteristics or well-documented psychographic criteria such as Openness, Neuroticism or Agreeableness have to be considered if one wants to explain the judgment of individuals towards socially relevant topics such as „sexism in advertising“. Religion, religiosity, or the existence of a migration

background may provide significant variance explanations in individual contexts, but in terms of magnitude they are of secondary importance. To put it more drastically: Whether someone is neurotic or not has a greater influence on his views than his origin and his religion.

Poznámky / Notes

[1] We calculated the mean values of the five personality dimensions for the three groups „without religion“, „Christian“ and „Islamic“. The calculation was based on the sum indices formed from the two variables belonging to each dimension (see above). Since these were one negatively and one positively polarized variable with a scale of 0 to 10, the mean values shown range in a scale with theoretical values from -10 to +10.

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Kľúčové slová / Key Words — advertising, marketing communication, sexism, culture
reklama, marketingová komunikácia, sexizmus, kultúra

JEL klasifikácia / JEL Classification — M31, M37

Résumé — Sexizmus v reklame – medzikultúrna analýza

Tento článok skúma hodnotenie reklamy s osobitným zreteľom na možný sexizmus a rozdiely v reakciách medzi jednotlivcami s rôznou náboženskou príslušnosťou, religiozitou a pôvodom. Náboženstvo, religiozita a migračný pôvod majú malý vysvetľujúci príspevok k hodnoteniu reklamy v štyroch relevantných dimenziách, ale v celkovom obraze sa ukazujú ako menej významné ako sociodemografické a psychografické kritériá mimo náboženstva a pôvodu.

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FACTORS AFFECTING THE COMMUNICATION MIX OF SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE SELECTED INDUSTRY

The presented article focuses on the issue of communication mix in small businesses in the brewing industry in Czech Republic, this group is represented by microbreweries. The aim of the research was to analyze marketing mix in this group of companies. They have a very similar parameters and serve a similar market, but there are differences in their communication mixes. Based on a literary research, selected factors were determined, which were investigated as to whether or not they have an influence on the composition of the communication mix. Quantitative research method was used. The data obtained through an electronic questionnaire survey, where the return of questionnaires was 28%. Based on the cluster analysis of the obtained data, it was found that microbreweries can be divided into two groups according to the marketing communication tools used, thus two different communication mixes were identified. Furthermore, factors that influence the composition of the communication mix of microbreweries were identified, namely the year of establishment of the microbrewery and the existence of the microbreweries pub/restaurant.

1 Introduction and literature review — Pickton (2010) defined Marketing Communication as a concept of strategic coordination of all messages, Duncan and Everett (1993) use the same definition. Cooper (1999) says that marketing communication includes all visual, written, audible and sensory aspects of interaction between a company and its targeted market. This communication is mostly commercial, and its goal is to, based on transferred information, influence the cognitive, motivational and decision-making processes of those who we want to affect in agreement with our intentions (Vysekálová and Komárková 2002; Meha and Zegiri 2022). For a systematic division of a wide range of marketing communication techniques and tools, it is possible to use many theoretical supports like a section of 4P taken over by Kotler (1998), a communication mix where classifies: advertisement, direct sale, personal sale, PR and sales support. Peslmackers (2003) classify the communication mix like: advertisement, sales support, sponsorship, PR, communication at the point of sale or purchase, exhibitions and fairs, direct marketing communication, personal sale and interactive marketing. Currently, new communication tools are defined, for example Beránek (2023) mentions configurators. Within the brewing industry in Czech Republic (production in 2020 was 20.32 million hectolitres, microbreweries share was 2%, number of microbreweries 504), all the aforementioned techniques and tools are used. One of the most significant factors that influence the composition of a communication mix is the size of the company, that is, its financial strength and further the specifics of the consumer segment that the company manages (Castilione 2011; Lee and

Shin 2015). From this point of view, it is possible to divide marketing communication of companies in a chosen industry into two categories. A mass marketing communication uses mass communication resources and targets as many potential customers as possible, it is mostly used by industrial breweries (production over 500 thousand hl per year). And targeted, which is used by microbreweries (production up to 10 thousand hl per year) and uses private communication channels and targets a specific group of consumers.

Microbreweries mostly communicate with their customers through their product – beer. Their main asset is uniqueness and locality (Toro 2014; Stocker at all. 2021). Their promotion is therefore secured mainly by word of mouth technique, that is, by verbal information which is spread by content customers and fans of non-traditional beers (Stoklásek 2013). This phenomenon has an even larger overlap in Czech microbreweries and that is within the framework of beer tourism which is, right after wine tourism, the most widespread type of special tourism in the Czech Republic (Duda 2013; Kraftchick 2014; Cortese 2017; Wong 2019).

The most fundamental factor that influences the selection of marketing communication tools in microbreweries are, as already mentioned above, finances (George 2013). For this reason there is no use of mass communication resources and channels (these means would prove more than ineffective in relation to the target group of microbreweries), however the use of personal, targeted marketing channels such as social media and more is more suitable and cheaper for reaching regional or even local markets, in brewery slang we talk about sale „around the chimney“ (Březinová 2019). The paper focuses on the issue of communication mixes of microbreweries and tries to find other factors that influence their composition.

2 Methodology

26 tools of marketing communication used in the brewing industry has been identified (labels, coasters, glasses, table-cloths, signboards, paid and free tastings, discount events and excursions, as well as social media, a good name of the brewery, organizing cultural events, sponsorship of local associations, own website, recommendations of regular customers, competitions, billboards, posters, advertising banners on the internet, advertising in nationwide radio stations, advertising in regional radio stations, advertising in the national press and advertising in regional press, advertising on national TV stations and advertising on regional TV stations), on which then a data collection that took place in 2020 on the entire research sample was focused (504 microbreweries in the Czech Republic). The data obtained through an electronic questionnaire survey, where the return of questionnaires was 28% and thus it was possible to obtain data from 145 microbreweries, was converted into a data matrix and, due to their nominal character, their transformation to binary character was subsequently carried out (0/1). The binary variables created in this way became a foundation for creating a data matrix together with identification variables (monitored marketing communication tools). To calculate the decomposition – solution, the binary matrix which had a dimension of 145 x 26 (145 examined microbreweries and 26 monitored tools of marketing communication) was used.

Based on a literary research, selected factors were determined, which were investigated as to whether or not they have an influence on the composition of the communication mix. These variables were: year of foundation; the number of employees; the region in which the subject operates; whether or not the business subject has its own establishment/establishments (a restaurant, boarding house or a hotel); information of the companies whereabouts (in the centre of the city/town, on the outskirts of the city/town, in the countryside).

With the aim of finding out whether there are different groups among Czech microbreweries that differ in their communication mix, and if so, what factors (from those monitored) have an influence on the differences in the mixes found. For this finding, the cluster analysis method was used according to Dolnicar and Leisch (2014) and Aggarwal and Reddy (2014).

To identify the potential segments a „traditional“ procedure was used, which uses:

1) the calculation of the dissimilarity matrix according to Řezáková and Húsek (2009)

2) the subsequent application of the hierarchical agglomerative cluster algorithm, according to the above mentioned authors Dolnicar and Leisch (2014) and Aggarwal and Reddy (2014).

Ad 1) Due to the binary nature (Gower and Legendre 1986) of the analyzed data matrix, in the first case, before the actual use of the cluster analysis, it was necessary to determine the dissimilarities between the individual subjects/microbreweries, considering marketing tools used. For this purpose, a short script in R language was created, allowing to determine the value of the so-called Hamming distance (Deza and Deza 2013) between individual rows, i.e. subjects/microbreweries of the analyzed binary data matrix. With the help of such defined distances between individual subjects, a square matrix of distances was constructed, which served as input information for the hierarchical cluster algorithm.

Ad 2) In order to find out whether individual microbreweries, or individual rows – objects in the binary matrix – break up into various, relatively homogeneous groups according to the nature of the marketing communication tools used, an agglomerative hierarchical cluster analysis was subsequently performed on the data matrix. During which, the Ward's hierarchical agglomerative approach was used (Murtagh and Legendre 2014). The number of clusters was determined based on the inherent structure of the data through differences in clustering levels. All numerical calculations were performed using a programming environment R version 3.3.3 (R Core Team 2019). For editing the data and their preliminary adjustment, MS Excel was used.

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Research approach and design

The first result is graph number 1 from which it is clear that most microbreweries in the monitored sample use the following marketing tools: their own website, labels, social media, beer glasses and more. It can therefore be said that the monitored group of small enterprises includes in its communication mix, mainly tools that are not demanding on financial resources and fall into the Advertising, Sales promotion and direct marketing group. Todorova and Zhelyazkov (2021) also research marketing communication tools for the small enterprises segment, with a similar result to the present study. On the contrary, none of the monitored microbreweries uses advertising on a national TV station and other nationwide media are used only sporadically.

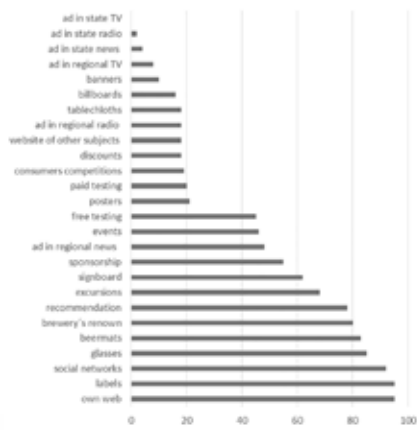


Figure 1: The use of individual marketing communication tools (in %) Source: Author

The following graph number 2 captures the distribution of values, that is Hamming distances determined on the basis of binary data matrix. It is clear that values of Hamming distances vary in a set of values {0,1,..., 18} and the majority of pairs differ roughly in 3 – 11 variables. This fraction (the number of pairs of microbreweries that differ in 3 to 11 variables) makes up 88.17547% of the total number of individual pairs of distances.

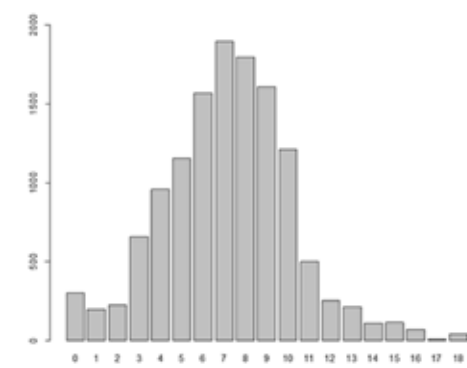


Figure 2: The distribution of individual values of Hamming distances of pairs of objects determined on the basis of analysis of the binary data matrix
Source: Author

Dendrogram (Figure 3) captures the process of clustering which was performed on the analyzed binary matrix while simultaneously using Ward's method. The process of clustering the individual investigated subjects – microbreweries – is visible when looking at the shape, or the course, of the mentioned dendrogram, from which it is obvious that the data can be divided into two to three clearly separated clusters. Identified clusters are highlighted by means of individual rectangles, defining the boundaries of individual clusters.

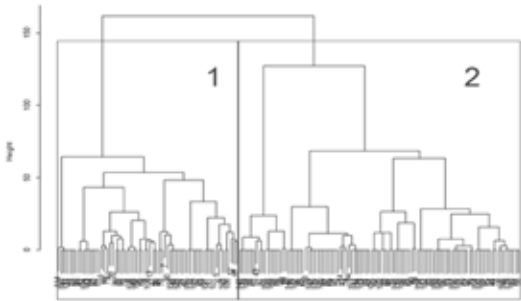


Figure 3: The resulting dendrogram obtained by applying Ward's hierarchical clustering algorithm using the Hamming metric with highlighting the obtained clusters – decomposition into two clusters.
Source: Author

If we focus on the decomposition of the binary data matrix of microbreweries into two clusters, it is clear that the resulting clusters are not balanced in terms of their size/number of included ob-

jects. The first cluster consists of approximately 39% (57 subjects), the second cluster then 61% (88 subjects) of total 145 monitored microbreweries. According to these results it is possible to split the microbreweries in the researched sample according to the structure of their communication mix into two different sized groups.

The differences in the usage of tools of marketing communication are evident when looking at the bar graphs that are plotted for the monitored tools (the graph therefore shows the values of the shares „using“ the given marketing communication tool in the given cluster), see Figure 4.

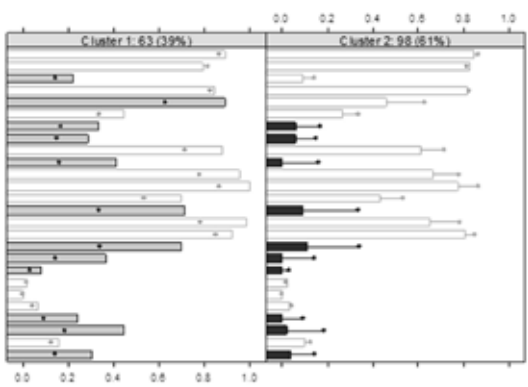


Figure 4: The differences in using individual tools of marketing communication in the case of decomposition of the data matrix into two clusters – highlighting those that significantly differentiate these two clusters.
Source: Author

While dividing the tools of marketing communication into two groups we can see that the tools which divide microbreweries in these different groups according to the communication mix used are tablecloths, signboards, paid tastings, discount events, competitions, organized events, advertising in regional press, advertising in local radio stations, advertising in national press, banners, posters and websites of different subjects. Meanwhile organizing events (cultural, sport) is a factor with the largest difference between both groups as Table 1 shows which determines other tools of marketing communication as well, according to decreasing differentiation.

Individual clusters were evaluated in accordance to other monitored factors such as the age of the microbrewery, the existence of an establishment, the number of employees or location of the microbrewery.

The most prominent feature of the first cluster is the representation of 92% of microbreweries with an establishment and 8% without an establishment, this is the most prominent observed variable, and 80% of the microbreweries in cluster number one were founded between the years 2011 and 2016. The division according to individual regions is not essential, it is only worth mentioning that 23% of all surveyed breweries are from Moravian-Silesian region which is the highest representation. Distribution according to the location of the microbrewery is also not too significant, 46% on the outskirts of a town, 40% in the centre of a town and 14% outside of it. We can therefore say that the composition of a communication mix of microbreweries is influenced by the existence of an establishment. Microbreweries with an establishment use a different communication mix than the ones without an establishment, nevertheless the essential (border) communication tools are primarily not only tools tied to the establishment, but also other tools,

| Marketing tools | Cluster 1 | Cluster 2 | Difference |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| events | 0.71 | 0.09 | 0.62 |
| ad in regional news | 0.70 | 0.11 | 0.59 |
| signboard | 0.89 | 0.46 | 0.43 |
| posters | 0.44 | 0.02 | 0.42 |
| consumers competitions | 0.41 | 0.00 | 0.41 |
| ad in regional radio | 0.37 | 0.00 | 0.37 |
| brewery's renown | 0.98 | 0.65 | 0.33 |
| recommendation | 0.95 | 0.66 | 0.29 |
| paid testing | 0.33 | 0.06 | 0.27 |
| sponsorship | 0.70 | 0.43 | 0.27 |
| excursions | 0.87 | 0.61 | 0.26 |
| website of other subjects | 0.30 | 0.04 | 0.26 |
| banners | 0.24 | 0.00 | 0.24 |
| discounts | 0.29 | 0.06 | 0.23 |
| own web | 1.00 | 0.78 | 0.22 |
| free testing | 0.44 | 0.27 | 0.17 |
| tablecloths | 0.22 | 0.09 | 0.13 |
| social networks | 0.92 | 0.81 | 0.11 |
| ad in state news | 0.08 | 0.00 | 0.08 |
| billboards | 0.16 | 0.10 | 0.06 |
| labels | 0.89 | 0.85 | 0.04 |
| ad in regional TV | 0.06 | 0.03 | 0.03 |
| glasses | 0.84 | 0.82 | 0.02 |
| ad in state radio | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.00 |
| ad in state TV | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| beermats | 0.79 | 0.83 | -0.04 |

Table 1: The usage of individual tools of marketing communication in individual clusters sorted according to decreasing differentiation between clusters 1 and 2
Source: Author

such as the organization of cultural events, competitions, the use of posters, advertising banners on the internet, advertising in regional press or websites of third parties. In the second cluster the most prominent feature is the year the microbrewery was founded, 97% of microbreweries in this cluster were founded between the years 2011 and 2016. Another difference found in the monitored variables is the existence of an establishment. In the second cluster only 45% of microbreweries have an establishment, the differences in other monitored factors are not significant. We can therefore say that the year of establishment of the microbrewery is decisive for belonging to the second cluster and to the communication mix used by the microbreweries in this cluster. The most prominent differences in both clusters are the existence of an establishment and the year of foundation. We can therefore say that these two factors play the most significant role in selecting the tools of marketing communication and assembling the communication mix of microbreweries in the monitored sample.

4 Conclusion

Two groups of microbreweries that differ in their communication mix were identified. The marketing communication tools, that are borderline when dividing into two cluster (39% and 61% of the examined sample), are tablecloths, signboards, paid tastings, discount events, competitions, cultural events, advertising in regional and national press, advertising in regional radio stations,

banners, posters and websites of third parties. Next, factors which influence the composition of communication mixes of monitored microbreweries were identified, it is the year of foundation and the existence of an establishment, other monitored factors (belonging to a region, the number of employees and the location of the brewery) do not affect the communication mixes of the companies in the monitored group. The presented results are limited with regard to the data set, the statistical methods used and with regard to the business sector. In further research, it would be appropriate to focus on all size groups of enterprises implementing their activities in the brewing industry.

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Klíčové slová / Key Words — communication mix, microbreweries, cluster method, tools of marketing communications, groups of communication mix

komunikační mix, minipivovary, cluster metoda, nástroje marketingové komunikace, skupiny komunikačních mixů

JEL klasifikácia / JEL Classification — M31, M37

Résumé — Faktory ovlivňující komunikační mix malých podniků ve vybraném odvětví

Předkládaný článek se zaměřuje na problematiku komunikačního mixu v malých podnicích v pivovarnictví, tuto skupinu představují minipivovary. Cílem výzkumu bylo prokázat nebo vyvrátit, že v této skupině firem, které mají velmi podobné parametry a obsluhují podobný trh, existují rozdíly v jejich komunikačních mixech. Na základě shlukové analýzy získaných dat bylo zjištěno, že minipivovary lze rozdělit do dvou skupin podle použitých nástrojů marketingové komunikace, byly tak identifikovány dva různé komunikační mixy. Dále byly identifikovány faktory, které ovlivňují složení komunikačního mixu minipivovarů, a to rok založení minipivovaru a existence restaurace v minipivovaru. Výsledky výzkumu jsou omezeny jak vybraným odvětvím, tak velikostní skupinou sledovaných podniků.

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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY ON TURKISH YOUNG CONSUMERS' SOFT DRINK BUYING BEHAVIORS

Over the past years, beverages with excessive sugar, caffeine and sodium were consumed more. Today, consumers have been more educated, prefer healthier options, and growing trend of healthy lifestyle have led to an increase demand for natural and healthy products. The aim of the study was to analyze young consumers' soft drink buying behaviors in threefold by explaining reasons of buying soft drinks, factors that affect soft drink buying decisions, and preferences about ingredients in soft drinks. The survey method was used, and the field study was conducted with university students in Izmir City, Turkey by convenience sampling method. The results showed that young consumers buy soft drinks since they like its taste, they can use them as a substitution of water when they are thirsty, and they can find soft drinks easily at every point of sales. It was obtained that the most important factor affecting students' soft drink buying decisions is the brand name of the soft drink. Besides, it was found out that packaging, aroma diversity, and having healthy ingredients also affect their buying decisions. It was revealed that young generation's main concern regarding the ingredients in soft drinks was sugar level. The study contributes to literature by investigating young consumers' soft drinks buying behaviors and showing how health-conscious behaviors may change buying behaviors.

1 Introduction — Soft drinks refer to a non-alcoholic, carbonated, and flavored beverage, including lots of sugar such as non-caloric sweeteners (artificial sweeteners) or caloric sugar (high-fructose corn syrup) (Sheth 2017). The history of the beverage industry goes back to the 17th century. Uzkesici (2018) stated that De Lemonades, which was produced in Paris in 1676, was one of the first products offered to consumers other than water. With the inclusion of carbon dioxide in beverages in 1767, a new product group called carbonated beverage was formed. With the launch of Coca-Cola in 1830 and Pepsi in 1898 in the United States, the first modern carbonated beverage brands were established. The soft beverages can be separated into two main categories as hot and cold, and 86% of all communications in 2018 were made in the cold beverage category whereas hot drinks have a share of 14% (Ucgun 2018). One of the strongest parts of cold beverage category was carbonated beverages. The carbonated beverage industry is the first category among soft drinks, with approximately 37% of beverage consumption in Turkey, however the annual per capita consumption of carbonated beverages in Turkey is lower with 170 cans/bottle, which is 750 boxes/bottles in the USA (Uzkesici 2018).

In every country, there are many national companies that produce soft drinks. There are 993 kinds of soft drinks sold under 195 brands and 101 parent companies in the USA in 2010 (Howard et al. 2010). The most popular companies in the soft drink market are Coca Cola, Pepsi, Red Bull, Monster, GURU, Sprite, Dr Pepper, Fanta, and Reign (Statista Market Insight 2022). The countries with the highest levels of soft drink consumption are Argentine (155

liters per capita), United States (154 liters per capita), Chile (141 liters per capita), Mexico (137 liters per capita), Uruguay (113 liters per capita), Belgium (109 liters per capita), Germany (98 liters per capita), Norway (98 liters per capita), Saudi Arabia (89 liters per capita), and Bolivia (89 liters per capita) (Sheth 2017).

Kregiel (2015) classified soft beverages and showed that soft beverage market has eleven types of soft drink. The types of soft drinks were shown as follows: (1) bottled water (stilled, carbonated, flavored), (2) carbonated beverages, (3) juice, (4) nectars (diluted fruit/vegetable juice and pulp, with sweetening agents, minerals, and vitamins), (5) still drinks (flavored ready-to-drink, noncarbonated beverages, containing fruit or nonfruit flavors or juice content), (6) squash/syrups (concentrations for home consumption), (7) fruit powders, (8) iced/ready-to-drink tea or coffee drinks, (9) sports drinks, (10) energy drinks, (11) bulk/hot water. In Türkiye, soft drinks were separated into five categories as follows: Tea and coffee, carbonated drinks, energy drinks, beverages with milk/fruit/herbal content, and water/enriched water/sports drinks (Uzkesici 2018). Today, with the latest innovations in the market and changing consumer trends, new products have been developed in the soft drink industry. The categories of soft drinks can be explained as follows: Tea and coffee (ready-to-drink or frozen which is a type of specialty foods), carbonated beverages (sodas like cola), non-carbonated beverages (packaged juices and ice teas), mineral water, energy drinks, sports drinks (protein milk). Soft drinks are known for their bad effects on human health due to their excessive amount of sugar. Except soft drinks, healthier drinks can be preferred by consumers such as herbal infusions, fresh vegetable/fruit juices (like celery juice or watermelon juice), fermented drinks (kefir and kombucha), plant-based milk (coconut and soy milk), and non-artificial smoothies made with fresh fruits and vegetables.

In Türkiye, there are many national and international brands that produce soft drinks. Soft drink industry can be separated into two parts as alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverage in Türkiye, and non-alcoholic beverages are the scope of this study which includes coffee, tea, juice, mineral water, iced tea, sport drinks, and energy drinks. There is a decrease in the consumption of carbonated beverages, due to the fact that carbonated beverages are considered as unhealthier because they contain sugar and its derivatives (Ucgun 2018). It was mentioned in literature that types and numbers of beverages consumed can be related to traditions, habits, and social life conditions (Budak et al. 2002).

Previous studies demonstrated that excessive soft drink consumption is harmful and increases the development of obesity (Buscemi 2014; Hasselkvist et al. 2014; Narain et al. 2017). Sugar-sweetened and artificially sweetened beverages are harmful to human health and associated with metabolic syndrome (Narain et al. 2017). Increasing numbers of educated consumers and healthy lifestyle trends make a raising demand for natural, organic, and healthy products. There is a big shift towards healthy eating, and it is expected to increase even more. In today's healthier world, soft drinks are still consumed by consumers even if they are known as a type of unhealthy product (Suter et al. 2019). Especially, young generations, like Generation Z, continue to buy and consume these products. The main aim of the study is to analyze young consumers' buying behaviors of soft drink products. Within this aim, the research question was developed, and survey method was used to collect data. After analyzing data, findings were shown, and suggestions were made. The originality of the research was that the research showed the latest findings regarding young consumers' soft drink behaviors and their perspectives about products in the soft drink industry. The research contributed to literature by investigating young consumers' soft drink behaviors in terms of explaining the reasons of buying soft drink products, determining the factors that affect soft drink buying decisions, and analyzing the preferences about ingredients in soft drinks.

2 Literature review

In recent years, scholars have studied on soft drinks' benefits and consumers' habits of soft drink consumption, therefore little research indicated that soft drinks are unhealthy products for human health (Buscemi 2014; Hasselkvist et al. 2014; Narain et al. 2017; Reppas et al. 2022). It was found out that high soft drink consumption caused unhealthy lifestyle and poor oral health among adolescents (Hasselkvist et al. 2014; Tahmassebi and BaniHani 2020). Consumers have been become more educated in today's social and digital era, and they have been choosing healthier options to maintain a healthy lifestyle nowadays. However, young consumers and adolescents continue to consume these unhealthy and sugar-sweetened soft drinks. Tahmassebi and BaniHani (2020) showed that the greatest soft drink consumption has been among children and adolescents.

Budak et al. (2002) conducted a research among university students in Kayseri, Türkiye and showed that students prefer water and milk since they have high nutritional value and do not contain any additives. Their beverage preferences were ranked as follows: water, black tea, ayran, milk, coffee, juice, mineral water, carbonated beverage, and herbal tea. Their reasons to consume these beverages were also analyzed in the study. Majority of students said that they consume these products because consuming these beverages are their habits, they like the tastes of these beverages, and they think that these beverages are healthy. They have also mentioned that because of higher prices of herbal teas and bad tastes of carbonated beverages, they do not prefer consuming these beverages much. Trends in soft drink and sugar-sweetened beverage consumption were analyzed in Australia and it was revealed that there was a huge decrease in the numbers of adults who consume sugar-sweetened beverages, which is a societal trend among consumers in Australia (Dawes et al. 2020).

Onurlubas and Cakirlar (2017) analyzed brand loyalty in the carbonated beverage industry in Izmir City and showed that 73.5% of consumers always prefer the same brand, which shows the presence of high brand loyalty. In line with this, Bisschoff and Bester (2018) revealed that parents in South Africa care about customer satisfaction and brand loyalty performance. Yarimoglu et al. (2019) showed that parents' intentions to buy unhealthy products such as sugar-added soft drinks, sweetener beverages, and junk food is affected by anticipated regret and perceived risk. Because of the bad impacts of junk foods and unhealthy beverages, Unilever (2022) announced that the company banned promoting of foods and beverages to kids under 16s, which is a good example of responsible marketing for the other food and beverage companies.

According to the IPSOS Consumer Panels results, carbonated beverage is more popular than other soft beverages in Türkiye, and the share of juice in the soft beverage market decreased whereas the shares of mineral water and iced tea increased (Gıda Teknolojisi 2021). Ay et al. (2005) conducted a study in the carbonated beverage market and showed that consumers want new flavors in carbonated beverages such as cherry (36%), lemon (29%) and peach (16%) flavored fruit soda. The share of fruit flavored products in the mineral water market is around 24% and this increased product variety in the market, which provided an opportunity for different age groups to become active mineral water consumers (Mercan 2016). Ucgun (2018) stated that consumers want to try new products, sustainable and ethical production is extremely important, providing harmless and environmentally-friendly product is expected, generation Z will prefer high-quality products, and consumers do not want to consume beverages containing sugar.

In 2015, mineral water consumption per person in Türkiye was 10 liters whereas it was 170 liters in Italy (Mercan 2016). Arslan et al. (2001) conducted a research to determine the factors affecting mineral water consumption, and they collected data from students at four universities in Ankara, Türkiye. More than half of students said that they consume mineral water

at least once a day and they think that mineral water is healthier than other soft beverages. Consumption difference between departments was found to be statistically significant. The students studying in a health-related department know and trust mineral water, and consume it more than other students. The main reasons of mineral water consumption were due to health problems, indigestion, and its lovely taste. In addition, students prefer consuming mineral water in a glass bottle because it is healthier. It was also found out in the study that students take recommendations about mineral water consumption from a family member (26.8%), friends (22.1%), and media such as newspapers and magazines (12.7%). The fact that this rate is very low may be due to the fact that mineral waters are almost never advertised in mass media. On the other hand, advertisements for other beverages are frequently published, and consumption and preference of such drinks were also quite high compared to mineral waters as a result of advertisements.

Babayigit et al (2006) defined the soft beverage consumption habits of young adult men and factors affecting the usage of soft beverages. According to this study, the most consumed beverage was carbonated beverage such as cola and the least consumed was energy drink. The factors that affect their soft beverage consumption were found as follows: income level, place of living, education level, status of tv watching, friends' habits of soft beverage consumption, taste of soft beverages, and food preferences. In India, soft drinks were not consumed as substitute drinks, Indian youths' attitudes towards the utility and nutritional dimensions of soft drinks had a positive impact on the consumption frequency (Kumar and Ray 2018).

It was proven in literature that in the high usage of cola and carbonated beverages increase the frequency of obesity and diabetes (Ebbeling et al. 2007). Saygin et al. (2010) aimed to analyze university students' eating habits and showed that adolescent students in universities have an unbalanced diet, which is a big social problem. Due to the high levels of consuming carbonated beverages and eating fried meals, university students are at risk of obesity, which leads to chronic diseases like diabetes. Today's educated consumers try to buy healthier products. Since consumers have been starting to prefer healthy products without added sugar, soft drink companies are keen on developing healthy products without sugar (Ucgun 2018). It can be said that trends among consumers and raising health-conscious behaviors can affect society's buying decisions and companies' production decisions.

3 Research methodology

The main aim of the study was to analyze young consumers' soft drink buying behaviors. Within this aim, the main research question of the study was formed as below:

RQ: Why and how do young consumers buy soft drink products?

In the study, the aim is threefold. These aims are related to explaining the reasons of buying soft drinks, determining the factors that affect soft drink buying decisions, and analyzing the preferences about ingredients in soft drinks. Within these aims, the research question was divided into three parts and shown below:

RQ1: Why do young consumers buy soft drinks?

RQ2: Which factors do affect young consumers' soft drink buying decision?

RQ3: What are young consumers' preferences about ingredients in soft drinks?

In this descriptive study, a survey method was used, and data were collected from university students. Since the study aimed to analyze young consumers' soft drink buying behaviors, only university students were selected as population. The study was conducted in one university in Izmir City, Turkiye. The questionnaire was formed by close-ended and ranking qu-

estions. The factors that affect buying decisions were taken from previous studies and asked by 5-point Likert type question. There were no scale questions from literature in the survey. Online survey technique was used to deliver the questionnaire to the students studying at university, with convenience sampling technique. Even though the questionnaire was distributed to approximately 300 students, only 181 of them participated to the research. After eliminating the missing questionnaires, a total of 153 questionnaires were held. The field study was implemented in April 2020. Since the COVID-19 Pandemic has been starting in the period of the research in Turkiye, the sample size was small and only one university's students could be reached as sample.

Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics such as cross tables and frequency tables. Since the main aim of the study was to show how and why young generations buy unhealthy soft drink products, the analyses in the study were kept basic and descriptive.

4 Findings

The demographic characteristics of students who participated in the survey were shown in Table 1 below. According to the Table 1, the majority of students were female, aged 23 and over, from Faculty of Business and Department of Business Administration.

| Gender | N | % | Department | N | % |
|------------------|-------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Female | 94.0 | 61.4 | Business Administration | 57.0 | 37.3 |
| Male | 59.0 | 38.6 | Law | 18.0 | 11.8 |
| Total | 153.0 | 100.0 | PR and Advertising | 12.0 | 7.8 |
| Age | N | % | Economics | 8.0 | 5.2 |
| 18 | 3.0 | 2.0 | International Trade and Finance | 8.0 | 5.2 |
| 19 | 2.0 | 1.3 | Architecture | 8.0 | 5.2 |
| 20 | 12.0 | 7.8 | International Logistic Management | 6.0 | 3.9 |
| 21 | 19.0 | 12.4 | Industrial Engineering | 6.0 | 3.9 |
| 22 | 26.0 | 17.0 | Electronic Engineering | 6.0 | 3.9 |
| 23+ | 91.0 | 59.5 | Interior Architecture | 5.0 | 3.3 |
| Total | 153.0 | 100.0 | Psychology | 5.0 | 3.3 |
| Faculty | N | % | Machine Engineering | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| Business | 81.0 | 52.9 | Mathematics | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| Engineering | 21.0 | 13.7 | Food Engineering | 2.0 | 1.3 |
| Law | 18.0 | 11.8 | Software Engineering | 2.0 | 1.3 |
| Architecture | 13.0 | 8.5 | Tourism Guide | 2.0 | 1.3 |
| Communication | 12.0 | 7.8 | Business Engineering | 1.0 | 0.7 |
| Arts and Science | 8.0 | 5.2 | Civil Engineering | 1.0 | 0.7 |
| Total | 153.0 | 100.0 | Total | 153.0 | 100.0 |

Table 1: Demographics of the participants
Source: Authors

After demographic questions, the questions about the consumption of soft drinks were asked in the questionnaire. First, frequency of soft drink consumption was asked. According to the findings, 30.1% of the participants consumed soft drinks a few times in a month, 24.8% of the participants consumed a few times a week, 21.6% of the participants consumed once a week, 13.7% of the participants consumed twice a day, and 9.8% of the participants consumed once a day. Second, the preferred size of soft drinks was asked to the participants. Findings

showed that 65.4% of the participants preferred buying soft drinks in small amounts such as 330 milliliters and 250 milliliters, 28.8% of the participants preferred buying soft drinks in medium amounts such as 1 liter and 1.5 liters, 5.9% of the participants preferred buying soft drinks in large amounts such as 2 liters and 2.5 liters. Third, preferred bottle type of soft drinks was asked. Based on the findings, 51% of the participants preferred buying soft drinks in glass bottles, 30.7% of the participants preferred buying soft drinks in cans, 18.3% of the participants preferred buying soft drinks in plastic bottles.

Next question was asked to analyze RQ1: Why do young consumers buy soft drinks? This question was asked to the participants to analyze reasons of buying soft drinks. The reasons of buying soft drinks were obtained as follows: 1) Taste, 2) A beverage when feeling thirstiness, 3) Easy to buy, 4) Cannot find any substitute products, 5) Habit, 6) Healthy option, 7) Affordable price. It was found out that 52.2% of the participants buy soft drinks because they like the taste, 18.3% of the participants buy soft drinks because they are thirsty, 13.8% of the participants buy soft drinks because soft drinks are easy to buy, 7.2% of the participants buy soft drinks because they could not find the substitute products such as tea or coffee, 3.9% of the participants buy soft drinks because drinking soft drink is a habit, 3.2% of the participants buy soft drinks because they think they are healthy, 1.3% of the participants buy soft drinks because soft drinks have affordable price.

Next question was asked to analyze RQ2: Which factors do affect young consumers' soft drink buying decision? The question about the factors that affect the students' buying decisions of soft drinks were asked by 5-point Likert scale. The findings were ranked below in Table 2 according to the frequency of results for strongly agree (5) and agree (4). According to this, the most important factor that affects students' soft drink buying decisions was the brand name of the soft drink. After that, the package size, aroma diversity, package design, healthy ingredients, advertising strategy, and high-low pricing strategies affect students' buying decisions, respectively.

| | Strongly agree (5) | | Agree (4) | | Neither agree nor disagree | | Disagree (2) | | Strongly disagree (1) | |
|---|--------------------|------|-----------|------|----------------------------|------|--------------|------|-----------------------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Brand name affects my buying decision of soft drinks | 54.0 | 35.3 | 81.0 | 52.9 | 13.0 | 8.5 | 5.0 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Soft drink's package size affects my buying decision of soft drinks | 70.0 | 45.8 | 62.0 | 40.5 | 19.0 | 12.4 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.7 |
| Aroma diversity affects my buying decision of soft drinks | 45.0 | 29.4 | 71.0 | 46.4 | 20.0 | 13.1 | 13.0 | 8.5 | 4.0 | 2.6 |
| Design of packaging affects my buying decision of soft drinks | 35.0 | 22.9 | 59.0 | 38.6 | 39.0 | 25.5 | 13.0 | 8.5 | 7.0 | 4.6 |
| Having healthy ingredients affects my buying decision of soft drinks | 46.0 | 30.1 | 44.0 | 28.8 | 33.0 | 21.6 | 19.0 | 12.4 | 11.0 | 7.2 |
| Advertisements affect my buying decision of soft drinks | 18.0 | 11.8 | 53.0 | 34.6 | 20.0 | 13.1 | 18.0 | 11.8 | 44.0 | 28.8 |
| I believe that expensive soft drinks are healthier, so I am willing to pay higher prices for these products. | 21.0 | 13.7 | 30.0 | 19.6 | 50.0 | 32.7 | 38.0 | 24.8 | 14.0 | 9.2 |
| I switch my brand if there is a same quality product in terms of health with a decreased price in the market. | 10.0 | 6.5 | 36.0 | 23.5 | 39.0 | 25.5 | 36.0 | 23.5 | 32.0 | 20.9 |

Table 2: Factors that affect soft drink buying decision
Source: Authors

Lastly, the preferences about ingredients in soft drinks were asked to the students to analyze the third research question. RQ3: What are young consumers' preferences about ingredients in soft drinks? According to the answer „Yes“, the results were ranked in Table 3 below. The answers showed that the participants prefer soft drinks without sugar and artificial flavoring. They prefer zero-calorie, gluten free, caffeine free, sodium free, and vegan soft drinks.

| | Yes | | No | | Not sure | |
|--|-----|------|----|------|----------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| I worry about the level of sugar in soft drinks. | 109 | 71.2 | 27 | 17.6 | 17 | 11.1 |
| I prefer buying a soft drink without artificial flavoring. | 99 | 64.7 | 33 | 21.6 | 21 | 13.7 |
| I prefer buying a zero-calorie soft drink. | 95 | 62.1 | 32 | 20.8 | 26 | 17.0 |
| I prefer buying a soft drink without gluten. | 71 | 46.4 | 49 | 32.0 | 33 | 21.6 |
| I prefer buying a soft drink without caffeine. | 60 | 39.2 | 58 | 37.9 | 35 | 22.9 |
| I prefer buying a soft drink without sodium. | 56 | 36.6 | 40 | 26.1 | 57 | 37.3 |
| I prefer buying a vegan soft drink. | 41 | 26.8 | 71 | 46.4 | 41 | 26.8 |

Table 3: Preferences about ingredients in soft drinks
Source: Authors

5 Conclusion

The study analyzed Turkish students' soft drink buying behaviors by showing (1) the reasons of buying soft drinks, (2) factors that affect buying soft drinks, (3) preferences of ingredients in soft drinks. Similar findings were shown in previous studies (Arslan et al. 2001; Budak et al. 2002; Ay et al. 2005; Ucgun 2018). Budak et al. (2002) conducted a research with students and suggested that students should be educated to consume affordable soft drinks that contribute their daily energy and nutritional needs, and the production of these soft drinks and their sales should be encouraged in the environments where students frequently exist. In the study, it was seen that young consumers have information about soft drinks, healthy ingredients, and health-conscious buying behaviors. Their preferences were directly affected by gluten-free, natural, healthy, and vegan soft drinks.

In the study, it was found out that the majority of students (60.8%) prefer consuming soft drinks while eating. It is recommended soft drink companies to sell their products in school cafeterias and crowded places with vending machines to provide a convenient place for accessibility to their products. Besides this, it was found out that 65.4% of students prefer buying smaller cans/bottles. It is recommended to soft drink companies to produce smaller cans or bottles, which may also increase out of home consumption. In addition to this, it is recommended to soft drink companies to produce more glass bottles instead of plastics containers. It was found out that 51% of students prefer buying a soft drink in a glass bottle. Because plastics are harmful for nature and human health, consumers who have environmentally conscious behaviors never buy these products in plastic packages.

In the study, the first research question was about to explain why students buy soft drinks. According to the results, first, they said they buy soft drinks due to their tastes. It is suggested to soft drink companies to add some new flavors such as cherry, lemon, and ginger to the existing soft drinks in the market in order to differentiate their tastes. Before adding new flavor, they should not forget to make the concept testing and implement the stages of new product development as well. Second, they said they buy soft drinks when they feel thirsty. Hence, it is suggested soft drink companies to promote soft drinks as a substitute product of water. Water is the healthiest option for thirsty people, so the ingredients of soft drinks must be also healthy to replace it with water. Consumers who have health-conscious behaviors will buy soft drinks instead of water only under this circumstance. Third reason of buying soft drink was their convenient places, which are sold everywhere. Since they are easy to buy for consumers, it is suggested to soft drink companies to use intensive distribution methods, and also automatic vending machines in crowded parts. In the study, the factors that affect students' soft drink buying decisions were also determined. The study showed that students' soft drink buying decisions were affected by factors

such as brand name, package, ingredients (such as aroma diversity and healthy ingredients), promotion (advertisements), and price. These factors are consistent with marketing elements, which are also known as 4Ps, and lead to scholars to think about marketing elements of soft drink companies. According to the results, the first factor that affects soft drink buying decision was the brand name of the soft drink. It shows the importance of manufacturer firm in buying decision. If the firm is a local firm that consumers know well or a leading firm in the industry with a good reputation, it affects its sales volume positively. It is suggested to soft drink companies to increase brand trust, brand loyalty, and brand reliability by using different marketing types and several marketing implementations. First, they should satisfy their consumers with the features of the product such as taste, quality, and price. Second, these satisfied consumers will turn into loyal customers. These loyal customers will show patronizing in time, and this will lead to brand loyalty. The second factor that affects soft drink buying decision was soft drinks' package size. As it was mentioned above, students care about the size of soft drinks, majority of them (65.4%) prefer buying smaller cans/bottles. The optimum amount of soft drink should be examined carefully by soft drink companies. The third factor was aroma diversity. As students care about taste of soft drinks, adding more flavor to the soft drinks is inevitable for companies. It is suggested adding more fresh, non-artificial, and non-preservative flavors to soft drinks.

In the study, the preferences of students about ingredients in soft drinks were asked. It was revealed that having healthy ingredients is important for students. It is suggested to soft drink companies to increase healthy ingredients to differentiate taste and provide unique different aromas and flavors to consumers. Since the majority of students worried about the sugar level in soft drinks, it is suggested to soft drink companies not to use excessive sugar. They should use natural ingredients instead of sugar, in addition avoid using artificial flavoring like sweeteners such as sucralose and aspartame.

6 Limitations and further research

There were some limitations in the study. The first limitation was the sample of the study. The field study was implemented in April 2020, which is the period of COVID-19 Pandemic in Türkiye, and more people could not be found to participate in the survey. Focusing only young consumers was the second limitation of the study. The sample only included university students as young consumers, since they are the main target market for soft drink products. However, adolescents and adults are the other target markets which need to be focused in future research. Especially for adolescents, there is a need to examine their soft drink buying behaviors. The role of their parents and their home environments regarding healthy or unhealthy lifestyle will also affect adolescents' behaviors closely (Gebremariam et al. 2016). The third limitation was related to the methodology of the study. The study gave a narrow perception about consumers living in İzmir, even though quantitative methods were implemented. Qualitative studies should be also employed in future research to understand the insights related to soft drink buying behaviors in terms of reasons of buying soft drinks, factors that affect soft drink buying behaviors, and ingredients preferred by consumers.

When developing future studies, it is important to focus on educating consumers about harmful effects of soft drinks. In practical implications, education about reading labels, caring ingredients, and following up healthy lifestyle should be emphasized. It was found out that young people who have higher education levels would be the future's sustainable segments (Jaderná and Volfova 2022). Another important element is packaging and labelling that affect consumer buying behavior, which was also found as one of the findings in the study. It was proven in literature how packaging and labelling have important effects on consumer attitudes (Sahel et al. 2022). It was obtained that labelling regulation allows for misleading claims

such as big soft drink companies may promote their unhealthy products as healthy on labels within the desire of promotion (Garcia and Proffitt 2021). Besides these, public campaigns related to reducing the consumption of soft drinks should be improved and the importance of public health should be urged upon with different marketing activities since it was found out that public relations activities can be used as a publicity tool by food companies with considering brand reputation (Kadekova and Kosciárová 2020).

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Kľúčové slová / Key Words — soft beverage, buying decision, purchase behavior, Gen Z, health-conscious consumer behavior
nealkoholické nápoje, nákupné rozhodovanie, nákupné správanie, generácia Z, správanie spotrebiteľov uvedomujúcich si zdravie

JEL klasifikácia / JEL Classification — M31

Résumé — Deskriptívna štúdia nákupného správania tureckých mladých spotrebiteľov nealkoholických nápojov

V posledných rokoch sa viac konzumovali nápoje s nadmerným obsahom cukru, kofeínu a sodíka. V súčasnosti sú spotrebiteľia vzdelanejší, uprednostňujú zdravšie možnosti a rastúci trend zdravého životného štýlu viedol k zvýšenému dopytu po prírodných a zdravých výrobkoch. Cieľom štúdie bolo analyzovať nákupné správanie mladých spotrebiteľov nealkoholických nápojov v troch rovinách, a to prostredníctvom vysvetlenia dôvodov nákupu nealkoholických nápojov, faktorov, ktoré ovplyvňujú rozhodovanie o kúpe nealkoholických nápojov a preferencií týkajúcich sa zložiek nealkoholických nápojov. Použila sa metóda dopytovania a terénny prieskum sa uskutočnil s univerzitnými študentmi v meste Izmir v Turecku metódou pohodlného výberu. Výsledky ukázali, že mladí spotrebiteľia kupujú nealkoholické nápoje, pretože im vyhovuje ich chuť, môžu ich použiť ako náhradu vody, keď sú smädní a nealkoholické nápoje ľahko nájsť na každom predajnom mieste. Zistilo sa, že najdôležitejším faktorom, ktorý ovplyvňuje rozhodovanie študentov o kúpe nealkoholických nápojov je značka nealkoholického nápoja. Okrem toho sa zistilo, že ich nákupné rozhodnutia ovplyvňuje aj obal, rozmanitosť vôní a to, že majú zdravé zložky. Zistilo sa, že mladá generácia sa v súvislosti so zložkami nealkoholických nápojov najviac obáva o obsah cukru. Štúdia prispieva k literatúre tým, že skúma nákupné správanie mladých spotrebiteľov nealkoholických nápojov. Poukazuje, ako môže správanie spotrebiteľov uvedomujúc si zdravie zmeniť ich nákupné správanie.

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DEVELOPING A GROWTH MARKETING APPROACH TO B2B CUSTOMER RETENTION: CASE ALGERIA

Today, a new approach is emerging in the field of marketing and business growth: 'Growth Hacking'. This concept, popularised by innovative start-ups, involves applying agile and creative methods to stimulate growth and maximise results, particularly in terms of customer acquisition and retention. However, despite the abundance of resources and information on growth hacking, few studies have looked specifically at its application in the B2B context, and more specifically at how growth hacking can be used to retain customers, using the five phases of the customer lifecycle. This study aims to understand how companies can put growth hacking into practice, by identifying the specific strategies used. Until now, research has focused mainly on the technical aspects of business, leaving aside the necessary promotional strategies and their strategic exploitation. This qualitative study adopts an approach with a constructivist epistemological posture, collecting data through semi-structured interviews with 5 growth hacking experts, based on the analysis of multiple case studies to explore growth hacking strategies. It sheds light on the importance of these strategies and the mechanisms used to highlight the value of companies. The research findings enabled us to understand growth hacking, identify various growth hacking strategies and develop a growth hacking strategy for customer retention in B2B.

1 Introduction — In a competitive economic environment where companies are constantly looking for innovative ways to maintain their competitive edge, customer retention has become a major issue. This issue is all the more pressing in the B2B sector, where companies operate in a complex and demanding environment. Training firms, as key players in the field of professional skills development, are no exception to this reality. Customer retention represents a strategic challenge for these firms, as it guarantees the continuity of their business and enables them to maintain lasting relationships with their business partners. Our customer survey revealed that the main reasons for non-retention of a training firm's customers are a lack of satisfaction, insufficient communication of relevant information, and last-minute actions (customers being informed at the last minute). These findings raise the question:

"How can we develop an effective growth hacking approach to improve customer retention with training firms?"

To address this issue, specific objectives for the development of a growth marketing approach to customer retention were outlined:

- Analyze the various growth hacking techniques used by B2B companies to boost customer retention.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of a growth hacking strategy in retaining customers in a B2B services market.
- Study the key factors influencing the successful implementation of a growth hacking strategy in a B2B services market.
- Identify the challenges and opportunities of implementing a growth hacking strategy in a B2B market.
- Explore the key steps to take, to optimize the success of implementing a growth hacking strategy in a B2B services market.

2 Literature review 2.1 Growth hacking

Many authors have defined it as an ongoing experimental process (Bohnsack and Liesner 2019), involved in all stages of the customer journey. Its main objective is to grow the business by attracting more customers to consume the company's exclusive products and services. This is achieved through the continuous use of creativity, social metrics and consumer-oriented strategies (Holiday 2013). However, according to Sean (2010) growth hacking is more than a business strategy, or an ongoing process, it is above all a state of mind, a philosophy, a way of thinking, which can be adopted by any team or company, whatever its size. In reading the writings of Casanova (2013) we see that he describes growth hacking as a new form of viral marketing, with users' increased engagement increasing their propensity to actively recommend content to their community, be it friends, family members, professional contacts or like-minded individuals. Bohnsack and Liesner (2019) and Feiz et al. (2021) argue that growth hacking involves identifying effective methods for delivering value at scale and developing engagement and trust. The marketing framework most commonly used in growth hacking is the sales funnel, which runs from acquisition to activation, via loyalty, sales and referrals. The aim is to optimize this process by making each stage of the funnel more efficient and increasing the number of conversions (Troisi et al. 2020).

2.2 The relationship between growth hacking and customer retention (KPI)

Retention is at the heart of the growth hacking strategy, and is today more important than ever in the field of business growth. If a company succeeds in retaining its customers, it has a base of regular users who continue to pay for its products and services. What's more, these loyal users are more likely to be satisfied and recommend the company to others, which in turn encourages the acquisition of new customers – it's a virtuous cycle. Growth hackers also recognize the importance of customer retention for business growth. According to a thematic analysis of presentations by 17 speakers at a 2014 growth hacking conference, one of the key elements of a growth hacking campaign is scalable retention/growth. As a result, they have developed approaches focused on customer retention and loyalty, which are reflected in their business approach. Customer loyalty can be measured using specific tools and metrics. When it comes to retention and loyalty, Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) not to be neglected. It designates the net profits expected over the lifetime of a customer for your company, and also determines which customers bring the most value to the company. As a general rule, the loss of low-value customers is less worrying than the repeated loss of customers who generate most of your revenue. Customer lifetime value is a complementary measure to acquisition cost, as it indicates the maximum investment the company can envisage for a given customer to make the effort worthwhile.

In growth hacking, you should avoid using vanity metrics, which are metrics (data) that give a very nice image of the product, but don't allow you to influence growth. These metrics are often the most accessible and easiest to measure.

- Measuring the churn rate: The churn rate is the percentage of customers/subscribers who cancel or do not renew their subscription to your service. It's very important to be able to measure it, even if this metric seems very negative, it speaks for itself.
 - Find the north star metric: It's an objective measure of the real value your product brings to users. This metric won't be sales, page views, subscribers or any other metric that only measures business profit: it's the users who are concerned by the „north star metric“. To promote sustainable growth of your customer base, efforts must be focused on the north star metric. Sean (2010), reminds us that there may be several metrics that answer these questions, but advises us to try and keep to just one for the sake of clarity.
- Here are some supposed examples of north star metrics: Airbnb – the number of nights booked, which captures the value created on both the host and visitor side. Facebook – active time spent on News Feed, or number of active users using the application daily.

2.3 Growth hacking methods for customer retention

Most authors such as Ellis and Brown (2017), Riddersen and Fong (2016), Ries (2011), Currier (2013), Patel (2016), agreed that the data-driven approach is a central element of the growth hacking strategy. The authors also stressed that user retention is a long-term process that requires more time and planning than acquisition growth.

In addition, they proposed different tools and frameworks that should be used for user retention, but differences were observed. Some authors stressed that habit formation and customer engagement lead to significant improvements in user retention rates, while others suggested that tools such as e-mail marketing, drip campaigns and surveys can increase the number of retained customers.

The definition dates back to 2007, created by McClure under the name Pirate Metrics. The funnel is vital to any growth hacker, so the acronym AARRR refers to the terminology chosen to identify the five stages of a customer's (user's) life cycle:

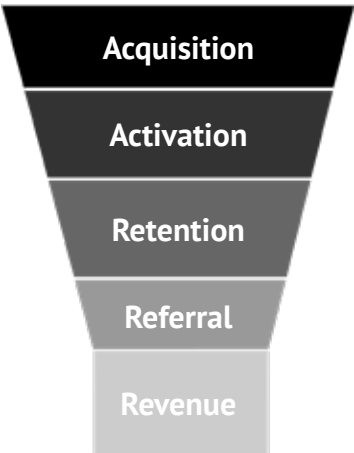


Figure 1: Funnel AARRR
Source: Mc Clure (2007)

Acquisition

Acquisition refers to all the techniques used to attract visitors to a site, using a variety of channels. Social media: social networks (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube), blogs, etc. SEO: optimizing pages and content strategy to attract customers to the product, a strategy that may take time but is very promising in the long term.

Activation

Activation is a crucial step, as it defines whether the prospect has a certain interest in the service. This definition changes according to the level of engagement chosen (number of visitors to the site who are relevant to the company's service). One or more indicators need to be tracked and taken into consideration, which will enable the activation rate to be subsequently measured and optimized using tools like Google Analytics (Brunn 2016). During this stage, the growth hacker tries to gather as much information as possible about his prospect, so that he can contact him again later.

Retention

Retention refers to all the mechanisms that keep users coming back to the site. It's an essential dimension, as it enables us to identify those Internet users who constantly think about and use the service. Indeed, it's essential to keep them coming back to use or consume again, and this is made possible by the implementation of certain mechanisms. The experts explained this well with the example of the pierced seal, where the growth hacker will have to think precisely how to keep a liquid in this seal by plugging the holes as well as possible so as not to lose customers (Brunn 2016).

Revenue

Revenue corresponds to the capital generated by your website. Some experts consider that a user pays after being retained, which is not always true (impulse purchases).

Recommendation

Recommendation corresponds to all the mechanisms that encourage customers to talk about the service or product around them. It's a way of winning new customers for free, since many people are more convinced by a service offered by a friend than by an advertising spot.

3 Methodology

The empirical study was guided by an inductive research strategy consisting first of an exhaustive literature review such as the study by Bohnsack and Liesner (2019) or Feiz et al. (2021), followed by an analysis of the website allowing visualization of the customer journey on the site, the analysis is carried out before and after its redesign, and finally semi-structured interviews lasting an average of one hour, were conducted with 5 experts in the field of growth hacking between 07/05/2023 and 15/05/2023, the main objective was to analyze the growth hacking techniques used by B2B companies to boost customer retention. These interviews enable new explanations and investigations, as well as the development of new forward-looking viewpoints (Matthews and Ross 2010).

Our interview guide is based on that of Tuladhar (2022), who studied how growth hacking could retain customers within e-commerce companies in Nepal. It is structured around 3 main themes:

Theme 1: Growth hacking funnel: this section contains 3 open-ended questions asking experts to explain the application of the customer lifecycle to growth hacking.

Theme 2: Customer retention, based on 5 questions formulated in an attempt to understand the approaches used in growth hacking for customer retention.

Theme 3: Proposal of a growth hacking strategy: this last section will take into account the experts' opinions on the strategy proposed for the training firm.
The analysis method will follow Vernet's (2017) model, which consists of transcription, categorization, coding, quantification and synthesis.

4 Results

The themes structuring our interview guide served as a basis for categorizing the topics discussed, so we have retained only those themes that served as data enabling us to achieve our objective, which is to study growth hacking and its field of application in depth.
With regard to the first theme, „Growth Hacking Funnel“, specialists insist on adapting the AARRR model based on customer segmentation, and optimizing the funnel stages through relevant KPIs, while keeping in mind the success metrics specific to each company. As for the second, „Customer Retention“ loyalty and constant engagement are paramount. The experts suggest testing products, then implementing a solid loyalty strategy, monitoring indicators such as lifetime value, while avoiding superficial metrics. They recommend the use of various techniques such as segmentation, A/B testing and email campaigns to boost retention. Results are evaluated through KPIs and customer feedback, supported by the use of analytical tools such as Amplitude and Google Analytics for continuous optimization.

| Respondent | Information | Answers |
|------------|---|---|
| R1 | Growth hacker, Conducted on: 05/07/2023 Length of interview: 45 min. | Growth hacking is rapid, scalable growth using tricks to increase turnover. In Algeria, companies using this method are rare and finding a real growth hacker is difficult. The strategy depends on the needs of each company, with particular attention paid to customer segmentation. KPIs should reflect the company's overall strategy, and commonly used tools include segmentation, A/B testing, content and data analysis. Growth hacking can be applied to any business. |
| R2 | Growth hacker, Conducted on: 05/08/2023 Length of interview: 75 min. | Growth hacking is the use of digital tools to ensure rapid and exponential growth for a company, particularly start-ups. In Algeria, this is not a common practice, due to the hiring of community managers with broader responsibilities. The expert used tools such as customer acquisition, targeting on social networks and specialised platforms. KPIs are used to measure results, while adapting messages across different channels is essential. The north star metric is considered important, as is customer feedback to resolve problems quickly. Growth hacking can be applied to a variety of sectors, including training firms, focusing on customer retention. |
| R3 | Freelancer in growth hacking, teacher-researcher, Conducted on: 05/11/2023 Length of interview: 34 min. | Growth hacking aims to exploit growth opportunities quickly, using 20% tricks and 80% methodology. It is important to focus on research and to monitor performance by respecting the AARRR funnel. Companies such as Yassir, Heetch and Jumia are increasingly adopting growth hacking. A solid strategy based on an MVP tailored to the market and testing is essential. Customer retention, precise targeting and the use of KPIs such as churn rate and lifetime value are crucial. Understanding customer expectations and adjusting strategy are key. |
| R4 | growth hacker specialist, Conducted on: 05/14/2023 Length of interview: 60 min. | Growth hacking is a method of accelerated growth for start-ups and applications, using original techniques with limited budgets. The AARRR framework is used to acquire, activate, retain, sponsor and generate revenue. Key metrics include CTR, CPC, CPL, CPA and LTV. The aim is to bring users back daily and retain them for as long as possible, using approaches such as gamification and recommendation algorithms based on user preferences. |
| R5 | Growth Hacker, Conducted on: 05/15/2023 Length of interview: 100 min. | Growth hacking is a fast-growth strategy for businesses, using innovative, data-driven techniques. In Algeria, although the concept is new, some companies are adopting it. The objectives and tools vary from company to company, often involving digital marketing methods. The key stages of growth hacking are acquisition, activation, retention, recommendation and revenue. To retain customers, it is important to engage them regularly and respond to their needs. Different factors influence retention, such as trust, price and quality. Specific actions include listening to customers and personalising products. |

Table 1: Results of the experts
Source: Authors

4.1 Proposal of a growth hacking strategy

Following the recommendations collected from the experts in themes 1 & 2, we propose in the following a growth hacking strategy for a professional training firm.

- Website analysis. On the professional training firm's website, several problems were identified, including:
 - inadmissible forms (contact, registration),
 - poor SEO,
 - irrelevant page content,
 - the site was not visually attractive,
 - the site was not mobile-friendly.

A before-and-after analysis was carried out using tools such as Semrush (site audit), Attention Insight (visitor attention and CTA percentage), Hotjar (to see the site's hot and cold spots).

| | Hot zones (The most clicked zones) | The attention of the visitor to the website | SEO Score |
|-----------------------------|--|--|-----------|
| Before the website redesign | not available |  | 69 |
| After the website redesign |  |  | 77 |

Table 2: Comparative table of results
Source: Authors

- Setting up the growth hacking funnel. Based on our survey, observations and website analysis, a growth hacking approach was recommended to the professional training firm. Each step of the AARRR funnel contains well-defined actions, which we have explained as we go along. See Figure 2.

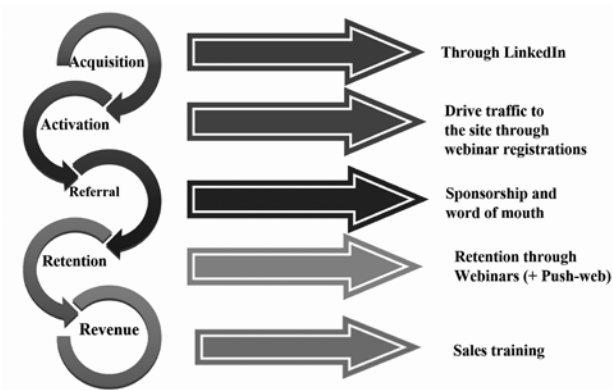


Figure 2: AARRR funnel adapted to the professional training firm
Source: Authors

Acquisition

For acquisition, targeted campaigns on LinkedIn (sponsor message channel) are programmed, knowing that the typical profile of our customers is determined beforehand (building buyer personas). To do this, we have targeted: Human Resources Directors, the Chairman/CEO/General Manager, the Purchasing Director, Training Managers, etc.



Figure 3: Acquisition process (by the authors)
Source: Authors

Activation

Following the retargeting stage, customers who have shown a certain interest are selected according to the KPIs, from which an e-mailing campaign is created and sent out, inviting customers to a webinar. Registration is made on the website using a registration form, so traffic will be generated on the website.

Referral

For referrals, confirmation e-mails are sent to people who have registered for the webinar (mar-

keting automation). This e-mail contains a Call to Action which enables other people to be invited to the webinar, thus creating a kind of word-of-mouth. The professional training firm in question was already offering sponsorship-style discounts to their customers, but as this formula was not adequately promoted by the firm, and to make the most of it, we included it in our growth hacking approach by sending e-mailing campaigns while targeting the least consumed training courses (promotional reactivation e-mail), for which we used the model proposed by Canevet and Gambatto (2017) a W-shaped sales curve.



Figure 4: Promotional sales follow a W curve
Source: Canevet and Gambatto (2017)

Retention

In growth hacking, webinars are actions that promote customer retention and loyalty, just like the white papers or PDF guides that we find on websites. However, the strength of webinars in our case is initially focused on offering customers a webinar on the website (in order to encourage traffic to the site); these training courses on interesting topics are initially free. A push notification program is also implemented on the website, these push web notifications are notifications (that users will receive on their computer or phone depending on the device used when registering for the webinar) sent on day-1 of the webinar as a reminder. Later, push web notifications will be sent to webinar attendees to inform them about upcoming training courses. For our north star KPI metric, we opted to measure the time spent per webinar per person, to see if the content really interests customers.

Revenue

This last point consists of measuring the revenue generated, i.e. the number of training courses sold as a result of this approach, and therefore taking into account the number of customers who have actually converted and consumed one of our services since the webinar.

5 Discussion of results

According to our results, growth hacking focuses on an AARRR funnel, where retention plays an important role in increasing the firm's sales. Unlike traditional marketing, the latter's funnel doesn't focus on customer retention, as the main intention is brand awareness, whereas thanks to growth hacking, all possible ways of growth are taken into account, especially customer retention, it's one of the most effective ways to increase revenue with low investments (Ellis and Brown 2017), this is what ultimately differentiates growth hacking to traditional marketing. After an in-depth analysis of the levers of customer retention (Satisfaction; Quality of service; Customer experience; Price; Personalization; Loyalty program) to find an appropriate tactic or combination of tactics, we began the process of understanding the customer (profile, interest...), for which we designed a buyer persona, a step our experts also deemed essential. We then moved on to the testing and experimentation process, as well as the analysis of website data, we tracked and measured KPIs in order to continue optimizing the site so that results were genera-

ted correctly, as growth hacking requires constantly modifying the offer based on the results of user data analysis (Ellis and Brown 2017). In the end, we were able to develop the approach (see Figure 5 below) with the help of the experts, integrating the website in order to get traffic, our growth hacking approach was approved by the experts, this model aims to attract more visitors to the website, but also, have better visibility on the LinkedIn professional network by sending personalized messages.

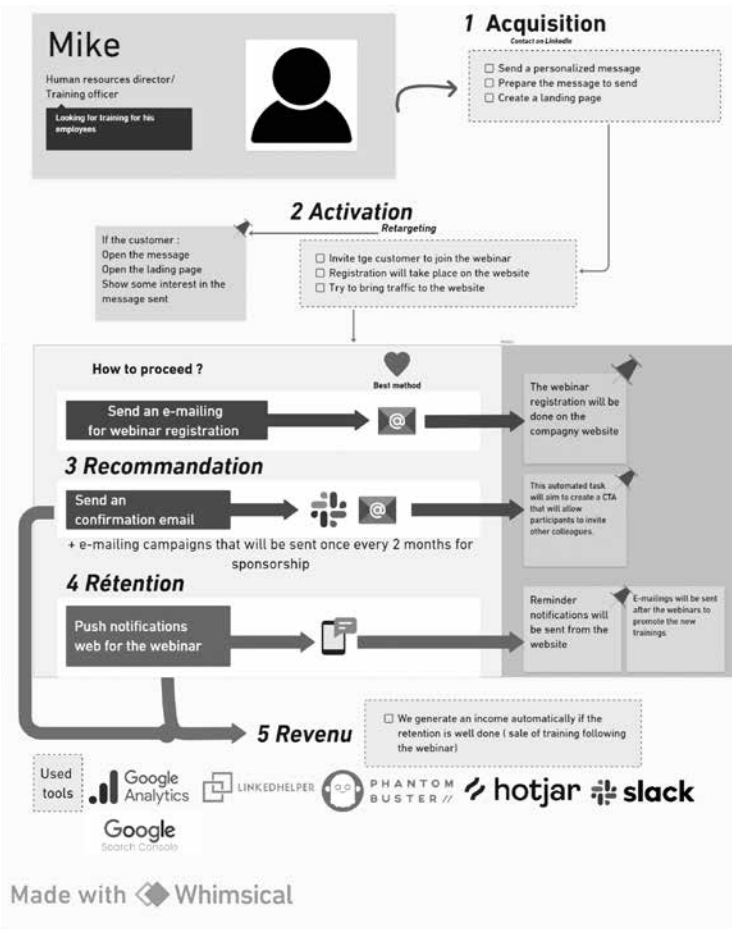


Figure 5: Diagram of the growth hacking approach for the training firm
Source: Diagram made on the website Whimsical by authors

6 Conclusion

The aim of our research was first to understand growth hacking, and then to measure the different techniques used by companies to boost customer retention. To do this, we adopted a qualitative approach, interviewing 5 experts in the field to meet our need to understand growth hacking and measure the feasibility of developing a growth hacking approach within a professional training firm.

The reliability and consistency of the responses collected from the experts interviewed, allowed us to make the modifications suggested by these experts with a view to improving the approach we had initially developed. It's worth noting that this scientific research is the first of its kind to have been carried out in Algeria, and to have studied, explained and developed a growth hacking approach for a company.

The basic concept of growth hacking is to test a marketing idea quickly and on a shoestring budget, analyze the results using data, then iterate, optimize, execute or adjust the experience using A/B testing, and analyze the data using analytical tools such as Google Analytics, Mixpanel and Optimizely.

As a result, and from the above managerial point of view, our results are encouraging for the Training company, as the implementation of this approach enables the company to solve the problem linked to customer retention, following the favorable results we obtained in relation to the company's website.

Finally, our research enables the professional training firm to put in place a promising and innovative strategy to detach itself from the parent company's strategy, as these are two different business sectors, so the professional training firm will be able to outperform its competitors, differentiate itself by offering an innovative formula and ultimately retain its customers. Today, the professional training firm's website is well referenced, but the firm needs to work harder on customer loyalty and retention, which according to our observations in the field is neglected.

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Kľúčové slová / Key Words — growth hacking, customer retention, marketing, growth, B2B rastový hacking, udržanie zákazníkov, marketing, rast, B2B

JEL klasifikácia / JEL Classification — M31

Résumé — Vývoj rastového marketingového prístupu k udržaniu B2B zákazníkov: Príklad z Alžírsku

V súčasnosti sa v oblasti marketingu a rastu podnikov objavuje nový prístup „rastový hacking“. Táto koncepcia, ktorú spopularizovali inovatívne začínajúce podniky, zahŕňa uplatňovanie agilných a kreatívnych metód na stimuláciu rastu a maximalizáciu výsledkov, najmä pokiaľ ide o získavanie a udržanie zákazníkov. Napriek množstvu zdrojov a informácií o rastovom hackingu sa však len málo štúdií zaoberalo jeho konkrétnym uplatnením v kontexte B2B, konkrétne tým, ako možno rastový hacking využiť na udržanie zákazníkov pomocou využitia piatich fáz životného cyklu zákazníka.

Cieľom tejto štúdie je pochopiť, ako môžu spoločnosti využívať rastový hacking v praxi a to prostredníctvom identifikácie konkrétnych stratégií. Doteraz sa výskum zameriaval najmä na technické aspekty podnikania, pričom sa vynechávali potrebné propagačné stratégie a ich strategické využívanie. Táto kvalitatívna štúdia využíva prístup s konštruktivistickým epistemologickým postojom a zbiera údaje prostredníctvom pološtruktúrovaných rozhovorov s 5 odborníkmi na rastový hacking, pričom na základe analýzy viacerých prípadových štúdií skúma stratégie rastového hackingu. Príspevok upozorňuje na význam týchto stratégií a mechanizmy používané na zvýraznenie hodnoty spoločností. Výsledky výskumu nám umožnili pochopiť rastový hacking, identifikovať rôzne stratégie rastového hackingu a vytvoriť stratégiu rastového hackingu na udržanie zákazníkov na B2B trhu.

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MAXIMIZING BUSINESS POTENTIAL: THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND BUSINESS SUCCESS

In the modern business landscape, the symbiotic relationship between employee training and business performance in a form of sales and marketing aspects has become increasingly evident. This research delves into the pivotal role of vocational training within European companies, particularly in the context of their impact on business outcomes of organizations. Through a deep analysis of secondary data from the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) carried out by Eurostat, this paper uncovers the link between effective training practices and their subsequent impact on sales performance as well as interconnection with marketing initiatives. The findings reveal that businesses can significantly enhance its strategies by investing in employee training programs that foster skills demanded by the evolving market. The results underscore that companies adopting a holistic approach to employee training and aligning it with sales activities are better poised to thrive in a competitive landscape. This article serves as a valuable resource for business leaders, HR professionals, sales managers, educators, and researchers looking to understand and harness the interplay between employee development and business success to navigate the dynamic business world effectively.

1 Introduction — Nowadays, businesses face the essential need for employee development, which can enhance efficiency and lead to successful long-term functioning of the enterprise. Employee skills and knowledge support organizations during global and local market circumstances. Vodák and Kuchárčiková (2011) define the employee training process as continuous learning, which may be suspended for a while under outside circumstances. Nevertheless, for developing company competitiveness and expanding into other markets, vocational training and development are imperative conditions for success (Sanchez et al. 2003). As a positive output, it is possible to identify new employee education solutions and innovative attitudes towards vocational training in different companies. Due to stated above reasons, the symbiotic relationship between effective employee training and sales growth became increasingly evident. By equipping their teams with the latest insights and competencies, companies were poised to enhance their sales performance. The interconnectedness of employee education and sales growth is a critical determinant of success in this challenging era. Organizations that embraced this holistic approach not only ensured the continuous development of their workforce, but also fortified their market position. The evolution of vocational training and education emerged not merely as a reactive measure, but as a proactive strategy to drive sales excellence, foster effective sales performance, and adapt to dynamic business landscapes (Zehetner 2019; Katsikeas et al. 2018; Cespedes 2014; Daniel 2018).

This paper undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the interplay between employee development, contemporary trends utilization through the training (VR, AI, Intelligent Learning), and their poten-

tial influence on sales growth and the effective sales performance of the companies. In addition to this, the study delves into the pivotal role of vocational education and training within European companies, particularly in the context of their impact on sales outcomes. By leveraging contemporary trends, the paper showcases how these enterprises can leverage educational initiatives to bolster the efficiency of employee training, thereby directly enhancing their ability to drive sales strategies. Through a deep analysis of secondary data, the research aims to uncover the link between effective training practices and the subsequent impact on sales growth. Ultimately, this paper weaves a compelling narrative that underscores the symbiotic relationship between employee training and related sales activities. It demonstrates how organizations that strategically align these components are better poised to thrive in a competitive landscape, leveraging trends to cultivate a workforce capable of driving revenue.

2 Methodology

The research paper was conducted based on the detailed literature review, previous observations, and quantitative data analysis from the Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) carried out by Eurostat. The CVTS is part of the EU life learning statistic database. The survey's primary goal is to collect data and information about the development of employees' continuous vocational trainings within European enterprises. Furthermore, the CVTS investigates the enterprise's total and partial investments in its employees' training and development activities. The CVTS is always conducted and grouped based on predefined topics focusing on Continuing Vocational Training (CVT) strategies, characteristics of CVT courses, assessment of training activities, total time spent, courses related costs, participants' information, and factors. For the purpose of this paper, detailed analysis will mainly observe two last contacted surveys. The CVTS 5 was conducted in 2015 with a total number of 30 involved markets (EU 28, Norway, and North Macedonia). The CVTS 6 was conducted in 2020 in 30 countries (EU 27, Norway, North Macedonia, and Serbia). The statistical population was structured based on enterprises with ten or more employees belonging to specific NACE sectors. The total number sample size of CVTS 5 was 111,000 enterprises. The total number sample size of CVTS 6 was 113,000 enterprises. For the purpose of this paper and better visibility, the author decided to apply and analyze data from Central European markets, specifically Germany, Czechia, and Slovakia. The methodology used in this research paper primarily involved a detailed literature review, analysis of secondary data, and a comparative study of available information from various sources. The specific methodological methods utilized in this article are as follows:

- 1. Literature review: The author conducted a comprehensive literature review to understand the existing research in the field of CVT and its impact on sales performance. This involved an in-depth examination of academic papers, reports, and studies related to the topic.
- 2. Secondary data analysis: The primary research method used in this paper is the analysis of secondary data. The author examined data collected by Eurostat related to CVT in European enterprises. This data was collected from European countries, including Germany, Czechia, and Slovakia, and spanned the years 2015 and 2020.
- 3. Comparative study: To answer the research questions, the author compared the data from different countries and years to identify trends and patterns related to CVT expenditures and types of training.

The results and key findings of this research paper were based on the secondary data analysis, specifically examining the interactions between training and sales performance. The primary data source was Eurostat, and the author analyzed data related to the cost of CVT courses and the types of training provided by enterprises. To answer below research questions, the author conducted a detailed literature review of observed topics, identified previous research in the field of CVT / Sales Performance and compared available secondary data. Analysis of defined inputs served as a foundation to answer research questions to support the conclusion of this paper.

- RQ1: How can the experiences of different Central European countries, in terms of skills development, their impact on sales performance and marketing strategies, inform best practices for enhancing sales directions?
- RQ2: Which specific employee skills, developed through contemporary CVT trends, directly translate to more effective Sales performance?

3 Results and key findings

This chapter represents the main findings from the secondary data analysis in answering two stated research questions about primary interactions between three utilities – training, sales performance and the company marketing potential. For the purpose of this paper and to confirm critical findings from the literature review and answer research questions, the author used secondary data from Eurostat related to CVT in European enterprises. Table 1. represents data on the cost of CVT courses in European countries. All related charges have been converted to Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) to compare price levels in different countries. Based on Eurostat's data, the average CVT course expenses were 1,441 PPS per participant. In 2020, the lowest average expenditures per country were identified in the Czech Republic (320 PPS) and the highest costs in Ireland (2,315 PPS). However, for this paper, it was determined to choose three central European countries with the average highest expenditures (Germany – 1,678 PPS), the average lowest expenditures (Czechia – 320 PPS), and one additional central European country (Slovakia – 628 PPS). The cost differentiation between mentioned countries is highly varied. In Germany, CVT is based on mixed financing by different private and public stakeholders. The enterprises are covering a considerable part of training costs for individual employees. Nevertheless, government representatives are also involved in the CVT processes within organizations. The federal government and state contribute to financing training based on the preparation programs for the employees in different ministries. The same situation is visible in Slovakia, where four main elements and their combinations fund CTV. The Slovakian government involves public finances and EU funds to support the CVT process in the republic. Nevertheless, the learner and the employer also cover the major part.

| Country / Area | 2015 | 2020 |
|----------------|-------|-------|
| EU 27 | 1 484 | 1 441 |
| Czechia | 426 | 320 |
| Poland | 724 | 624 |
| Slovakia | 660 | 628 |
| Slovenia | 1 425 | 1 022 |
| Austria | 1 229 | 1 197 |
| Hungary | 1 746 | 1 324 |
| Germany | 1 663 | 1 678 |

Table 1: Cost of CVT courses per participant
Source: Author based on data from Eurostat (2015, 2020)

Due to the worldwide epidemiological situation related to COVID-19, it is possible to identify the decrease in the average in investigated countries. The main reason was the unacceptability of providing CVT courses in a standard „in-person“ participation way. Nevertheless, Table 1 is visible to define the exception (Germany), where 15 PPS increased the average costs. Besides the decreasing expenditures in most countries, standard on-the-job and partly off-the-job forms of em-

ployee training can be considered cost inefficient. Due to those reasons, contemporary VR, AI, and intelligent learning trends may support enterprises nowadays. According to the PwC 2022 metaverse survey, the training process via the VR tool can be more cost-effective than other forms. Based on the results from the survey, VR training should achieve cost parity with eLearning in the case of 1,950 successfully trained participants. Furthermore, the PwC survey confirms employee effectiveness during the training. Based on the results, the average time to complete VR training took approximately half an hour. However, the same task in the eLearning environment took time and more employee capacity. Other analyses from Eurostat can support the above statements. Based on the data, the most frequent limitations for providing CVT within enterprises were lack of employee time (36.8% of respondents) and high costs of CVT courses on the market (23.4%). Hence, as a positive measure, VR reality can be evaluated to support enterprises with the barriers mentioned above.

Table 2 demonstrates findings about enterprises providing CVTs to their staff through different types of employee training. The below information includes off-the-job training methods and represents transformations in time. Table 2. indicates the dramatic changes in the results of CVT at conferences, trades, and fairs, as well as CVT in the form of external courses during 2020. The most dramatic decrease in providing CVT at conferences and fairs can be identified as a result of a 12.3% decrease compared to 2015. Relatively, a similar condition was acted in the case of CVT in the form of external courses in Slovakia, where the difference between the researched periods constitutes a decrease of 16.1%. Comparatively equable percentages demonstrate the Czech Republic in the case of CVT at conferences and fairs (6.7% decrease) and Germany in CVT in the form of external courses (2.7% decrease). As mentioned earlier, one of the significant influencers was an epidemiological circumstance in the form of COVID-19. However, due to the mentioned worldwide issue, enterprises moved up to new digital formats and solutions for training. Despite the decrease of CVT at conferences and in the form of external courses, there was an increase in self-directed learning within the training environment. The highest level demonstrated Germany with a 15.3% increase in 2020 compared to 2015. A relatively positive growth was identified in Czechia (6.8%) and Slovakia (4.6%).

| Country | CVT at conference | | CVT external courses | | Self-directed learning | |
|----------|-------------------|--------|----------------------|--------|------------------------|--------|
| | 2015 | 2020 | 2015 | 2020 | 2015 | 2020 |
| Czechia | 21.5 % | 14.8 % | 79.4 % | 69.6 % | 11.7 % | 18.5 % |
| Germany | 59.3 % | 50.3 % | 55.8 % | 53.1 % | 26.4 % | 41.7 % |
| Slovakia | 40.7 % | 27.0 % | 57.4 % | 41.3 % | 24.5 % | 29.1 % |

Table 2: Enterprises providing training by type of training
Source: Author based on data from Eurostat (2015, 2020)

Nowadays, European enterprises actively develop their CVT strategies (Yan et al. 2021; Laureti et al. 2022). Dynamic changes and the global digitalization of processes radically influence employee skills and knowledge in Central Europe (Brodny and Tutak 2022). To identify primary skills needed for the development of central European enterprises, the author prepared Table 3 based on available secondary data from European Centre for the Development and Vocational Learning (CEDEFOP). The information below demonstrates relevant significant skills demanded by companies in the year 2021.

| Mainly demanded skills | Czechia | Germany | Slovakia |
|---|---------|---------|----------|
| Accessing and analysing digital data | 10.0 % | 21.8 % | 27.0 % |
| Using digital tools for collaboration, content creation and problem solving | 8.8 % | 18.1 % | 22.3 % |
| Creating artistic, visual or instructive materials | 3.1 % | 11.7 % | 4.3 % |
| Solving problems | 7.0 % | 8.3 % | 9.9 % |
| Communication, collaboration and creativity | 5.1 % | 8.0 % | 4.4 % |
| Programming computer systems | 2.6 % | 4.8 % | 9.0 % |

Table 3: Enterprises providing training by type of training
Source: Author based on data from CEDEFOP (2021)

The leading position within demonstrated requested skills is „Accessing and analyzing digital skills“ and „Using digital tools“. In all researched countries, the secondary data indicate the highest percent share compared to other employee skills. The highest results (27% and 22.3%) were identified in Slovakia. Following different studies, such a fast demand may be caused by the automotive industry development in this country. The automotive industry is one of the primary drivers in the national economy of the Slovak Republic. According to the CEDEFOP, more than half of total job openings till 2023 will require a high level of qualification, including digital skills. Sostero and Tolan (2022) prepared a technical digital skills report, where the authors confirmed that high-skills occupations are highly affected by the AI skills demand. Hence, following a study, using AI solutions in businesses can positively influence digital skills development. At the same time, the authors are alerting to deeply reconnoitre the digital level of employees and their occupational placement within the enterprise. The following remarkable results demonstrated Germany's relatively high demand (11.7%) for „Creating artistic, visual or instructive materials“ skills compared to other involved countries. One of the primary sector in Germany (after manufacturing) are wholesale and retail trade. Hence, the creative abilities of employees may positively influence the development of this sector in the future and entice new consumers. The Czech Republic demonstrated the lowest proportional share regarding „Programming computer systems“ skills even though the highest demand for digital data analyzing skills was identified in all researched countries. According to CEDEFOP, medium-qualified employees will be required for the majority in the nearest future in Czechia.

Analyzed secondary data and studies demonstrate a wide area for utilizing selected contemporary trends for developing demanded employee skills. The author Adhikari conducted research in 2020, aiming to identify the dependency between the utilization of AI solutions, Gamification, and employee development. The study confirmed a positive dependence between variables. According to Adhikari (2020), AI use in a combination of intelligent education environment (Gamification) may support businesses to solve issues, develop employees' creativity, and extent the business potential. Hence, other related and most demanded employee skills, such as „Solving problems“, „Communication, collaboration, and creativity“ can be developed by utilizing AI solutions with a combination of the involved intelligent education environment.

The skills mentioned in Table 3 bring a fresh energy to the world of sales operations. Abilities like „Accessing and analyzing digital skills“ and „Using digital tools“ fit seamlessly into sales and marketing, making a big impact. In the sales context, these abilities become even more important. Salespeople who are good at handling digital data can easily adjust their approaches, figure out current market trends, and predict what customers might like. This skill helps them have conversations with clients that really understand their needs, building trust (De Jong et al. 2014; Bowen et al. 2021).

4 Discussion

The framework introduced in this paper and the results based on an in-depth literature review enable to identify the potential utilization of contemporary trends in the business environment, specifically in continuous vocational training and described business areas. This paper explores the situation in selected central European markets to identify enterprise attitudes towards the CVT process and its importance within their businesses and following sales as well as marketing activities. This paper examines Eurostat's CVTS and investigates data from 2015 and 2020. Based on the results and subsequent analysis, the author evaluates supplied CVT courses, their types, and related costs. Through this analysis, it was possible to compare related costs with initial investments in case of contemporary trends implementation. The examination of the cost-effective capabilities inherent in virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) enhanced training methods reveals a significant implication for business strategies. Businesses that implement these contemporary trends to optimize their employee development processes inadvertently enhance their ability to flexibly adjust their various processes within the organization (Uberwimmer et al. 2021; Teklehaimanot et al. 2017; Pomarici et al. 2017). This dynamic approach arises from a highly skilled workforce that smoothly incorporates market intelligence and comprehensive product familiarity, thereby enabling the creation of focused and well-informed marketing attitudes towards the surroundings. To illustrate, the newfound efficiency of VR-enabled training accelerates learning and fosters an immersive understanding of products, services, and customer needs among employees. This, in turn, translates into sales strategies that resonate deeply with consumers and drive engagement (Tollin et al. 2014). The alignment of CVT trends with sales strategies equips businesses with the flexibility to respond adeptly to shifting market dynamics and evolving customer demands. Moreover, the surge in self-directed learning, largely propelled by pandemic-induced constraints, carries profound implications for marketing strategies. Enterprises fostering a culture of continuous learning nurture employees who remain finely attuned to ever-evolving market trends. This intricate interplay between training, sales activities and marketing attitude necessitates a deeper calibration, where each element informs the other, orchestrating a harmonious symphony of business success.

The research demonstrated that the skills encompassed by „Using digital tools for collaboration, content creation, and problem solving“ and „Programming computer systems“ represent a valuable thread that intertwines both the sales and marketing domains. These skills can serve as a pivotal bridge, effectively bringing together two seemingly separate facets of a company and harnessing their combined strengths to enhance overall efficiency and productivity. Consider the scenario where a company invests in training its employees in these digital skills. These newly acquired proficiencies can be instrumental in the creation and dissemination of engaging marketing content. For instance, employees trained in content creation can produce compelling visuals, videos, and written materials that resonate with the target audience. By collaborating efficiently with the marketing team, they ensure that the company's message is not only clear but also creatively presented. In the context of programming computer systems, these skills can be used to design and maintain a responsive and user-friendly company website. This digital presence, combined with marketing strategies, can effectively attract potential customers, creating a seamless and appealing online experience. Moreover, the ability to develop customized software solutions can significantly improve customer relationship management and sales tracking systems, contributing to enhanced sales performance. Tabiat's research (2022) underscores the substantial impact of digital marketing activities on the sales performance of specific organizations. By equipping employees with the skills to navigate and utilize digital tools effectively, a company can capitalize on this interconnection. These skills can facilitate the implementation of data-driven marketing strategies, allowing for precise audience targeting, personalized customer interactions, and real-time performance analysis.

For a more tangible perspective, let's consider the situation in Slovakia with regard to these competencies. In an economy closely intertwined with the automotive industry, digital tool proficiency

transcends a passing trend – it stands as a pivotal factor in facilitating effective sales interactions and marketing strategy formations (Lopez-Vega and Moodysson 2023; Sihi 2018). Company's sales and marketing teams well-versed in these proficiencies can steer discussions with technical precision, articulating intricate automotive solutions in ways that resonate with their clientele. Furthermore, Germany's conspicuous demand for skills related to „Creating artistic, visual, or instructive materials“ introduces a unique dimension to the discourse on sales performance. Furthermore, the integration and development of these skills offer a plethora of opportunities for expanding the marketing sphere and its associated activities. Pourhosseini and Shahrokh (2013) support this notion through their research, which underscores that an effective marketing strategy significantly enhances a company's sales performance. In light of the insights provided above, it becomes evident that the development of these skills will exert a positive impact on both areas, fostering growth and success. As wholesale and retail sectors thrive, personnel endowed with creative capabilities have the potential to invigorate these domains. The ability to craft compelling narratives with artistic finesse holds the power to sway prospective clients and infuse sales activities with dynamic vitality.

The findings presented in this research paper are consistent with other research that underscores the positive impact of employee training on overall sales performance as well. Thomas (2021) identifies six primary areas where sales staff training exerts a positive influence, with the first three pillars intricately connected to the employees themselves. As per the author, training plays a pivotal role in fostering company culture, enhancing salesperson motivation and satisfaction in their daily work, and maximizing overall output. Moreover, staff training has a positive impact on the agility of enterprises, which demonstrates an organization's ability to swiftly manage and adapt to unexpected changes. In a year characterized by rapid and unforeseen changes, it is evident that sales training contributes to greater agility. Salespeople capable of adapting to new selling situations become invaluable assets to their respective companies. Furthermore, another author, Vanthournout (2009), as well confirms the benefits of investing in training. The author's estimation suggests that for every dollar a company invests in training, they receive approximately \$4.53 in return, resulting in an impressive 353% return on investment (ROI). Additionally, the CSO Insights Sales Enablement Optimization Study conducted in 2017 further corroborated the increased effectiveness of training programs. Notably, effective training initiatives, particularly in areas such as onboarding, social selling, and sales methodology, resulted in significantly higher quota attainment, with double-digit improvements. Social selling, in particular, emerged as a standout, associated with an impressive increase of 33%. According to the findings from the report, the development of sales managers plays a pivotal role in enhancing performance metrics, including quota attainment, revenue attainment, and win rates. The data revealed that even relatively modest investments in employee development, such as little as \$500, yielded a remarkable 46.1% improvement in win rates. A slightly larger investment of \$5,000 resulted in an even more substantial gain, with a 51.4% increase in wins for the company (CSO Insights 2017).

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has delved into the vital symbiotic relationship between employee training and the business performance. In an era where dynamic market conditions and evolving customer expectations define business landscapes, organizations that invest in the continuous development of their workforce emerge as the true trailblazers. Employee training is no longer just a reactive measure; it has evolved into a proactive strategy for driving sales excellence and marketing success. In summary, the methodology employed in this research involved literature review, secondary data analysis, and comparative study to provide meaningful insights into the relationship between employee training, sales performance, along with the potential of contemporary business trends as marketing. The findings presented here are corroborated by a wealth of research, emphasizing the positive impact of employee training on business performance. It is evident that training plays a pivotal role in creating a motivated workforce, enhancing company culture, and increasing overall

output. The return on investment (ROI) for training initiatives speaks to its undeniable value. This research paper offers valuable insights that can be applied by a diverse audience. Business leaders and executives can gain strategic perspective regarding the importance of employee training in enhancing a company performance. Sales managers and teams can derive inspiration from the findings regarding skills directly impacting sales performance, while policy makers and educators can use this research, based on CVTS data, to adapt training programs to meet evolving business needs. Additionally, researchers in fields like human resources, sales, marketing and vocational training can use this article as a foundation for further studies, enriching the collective knowledge in these domains. Nevertheless, this paper acknowledges certain limitations, primarily rooted in its theoretical foundation and the analysis of secondary data. The outcomes presented herein pave the way for future in-depth exploration of the intricate interrelationships among critical facets within enterprises.

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Klíčové slová / Key Words — sales, training, development, employee, skills
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JEL klasifikácia / JEL Classification — M31, M53

Résumé — **Maximalizace podnikatelského potenciálu: Symbiotický vztah mezi školením zaměstnanců a úspěšností podnikání**

V dnešním podnikatelském prostředí se stále jasněji ukazuje vzájemný vztah mezi rozvojem zaměstnanců a jejich výkonností v jednotlivých podnicích. Tento výzkum zdůrazňuje klíčovou roli odborného vzdělávání a školení v evropských podnicích, zejména v kontextu jejich dopadu na výsledky prodeje a marketingového potenciálu. Prostřednictvím důkladné analýzy sekundárních dat z Continious Vocational Training Survey (CVTS) provedeného Eurostatem tato práce odhaluje vzájemné propojení mezi efektivními metodami rozvoje zaměstnanců a následným vlivem na výkonnost prodeje, a zároveň vzájemné propojení s marketingovými iniciativami. Výsledky ukazují, že podniky mohou výrazně zlepšit své prodejní strategie investicemi do programů na rozvoj svých zaměstnanců, kteří rozvíjejí dovednosti požadované v dnešním, rychle se měnícím tržním prostředí. Tato studie zdůrazňuje, že podniky, které strategicky spojují odborné vzdělávání se svými prodejními aktivitami, jsou lépe připraveny konkurovat na dynamickém podnikatelském poli. Tento článek představuje cenný zdroj pro vedení podniků, personální pracovníky, manažery prodeje, trénery a výzkumníky, kteří se snaží porozumět a využít vzájemný vztah mezi rozvojem zaměstnanců a úspěchem v podnikatelském prostředí.

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X FACTOR: MASTERING THE MYSTERY OF SUCCESSFUL CUSTOMER CONNECTIONS

Simon Cowell, a global entertainer, designed a TV show called X Factor some 19 years ago. Since it has scouted rare talents all around the world. X Factor is something noteworthy or special. It is a quality which is hard to describe, yet all of us would like to have it. Letter X has been a powerful weapon in marketing for decades. Words such as eXtra, eXclusive, eXpertise, eXcitement or eXperience have been popular jargon among marketing professionals. Marketers play with the symbolism of "X" to evoke curiosity or intrigue in their branding. Product names containing "X" make them sound modern, innovative, or cutting-edge – just recall iPhone X, Tesla X, or the X box. Generation X is a label for a specific demographic group born between the mid-1960s and early 1980s – the main consumer group in recent times. Connecting with customers is a fundamental aspect of building strong and lasting relationships in business. Effective customer connections lead to loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth referrals. The ultimate goal of marketing is the never-ending search for more effective, innovative and usable recipes for market success.

Lately, marketing dictionary has been frequented with X-containing acronyms such as UX, CX, and BX. User Experience (UX) primarily pertains to the interaction between a user and a specific product or service. It focuses on the technical interface when consuming a (digital) product through a website or an app. Usability and accessibility are key domains of UX. UX designers aim to create intuitive, user-friendly interfaces that provide a positive and efficient experience for users. Key metrics for evaluating UX include user satisfaction, task completion rates, and ease of use. Customer Experience (CX) is a broader concept that encompasses the entire customer journey with all touchpoints and interactions that a customer has throughout their relationship with the business, both online and offline. CX relates to both online and physical interactions with multiple departments within an organization, from marketing and sales to customer support and product development. CX may be assessed through customer satisfaction, Net Promoter Score (NPS) and/or customer loyalty. Brand Experience (BX) focuses on the perception and emotional connection. It encompasses the overall image and values associated with the brand. Brand experience is the emotions, sensations and the impressions that last. BX aims to create a strong and positive brand identity, fostering customer loyalty and advocacy. Key metrics for evaluating BX include brand awareness, brand equity, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty.

UX, CX, and BX are being usually discussed in this particularly misleading order. All three concepts are naturally related and connected through the emphasis on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The broadest, most complex, and possibly most strategic "experience" of all is the BX. BX shall be the primary focus. CX shall ensure delivery of consistent appealing BX along the customer journey. UX is concerned with digital touchpoints on that

journey. One can perhaps argue that big things start from humble beginnings (i.e. that overall brand experience begins with easy intuitive first digital user experience). However, that would mean that a picture is based on a single piece of the entire jigsaw puzzle. Sometimes, individual puzzle elements do not have the same tone, shade, or color as most of the picture. At other times, one or the other puzzle element gets misplaced. However, if there is the big picture, it becomes clear which part of the puzzle is missing and how that part is supposed to look like. Whereas user experience may be more easily emulated and imitated, the entire brand experience is likely to linger around for long without being contested by others.

Résumé — X faktor: Jak zvládat tajemství úspěšného spojení se zákazníkem

X faktor není jen populárním globálním televizním formátem, ale především výrazem, který označuje něco zvláštního, speciálního a tajemného, kvalitu či talent, které je těžké napodobit. Možná i to je důvodem vysoké četnosti písmene X v marketingu a marketingové komunikaci. Poslední dobou se staly populárními akronymy v diskusích UX (user experience), CX (customer experience) a BX (brand experience) jako označení pro přístupy k budování zákaznické spokojenosti. Jak tyto přístupy propojit a kde začít?

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SÚŤAŽ FLEMA MEDIA AWARDS 2023

Tento rok sa odohral osemnásť ročník súťaže FLEMA. Ide o súťaž organizovanú v Českej a Slovenskej republike, ktorá sa zameriava na mediálne kampane a využitie jednotlivých medií. Vďaka tomu umožňuje porovnanie úrovne mediálneho plánovania a inovatívnych komunikačných stratégií v oboch krajinách. Vedecký časopis Marketing Science & Inspirations prináša informácie, ktoré zverejnili organizátori súťaže o jej priebehu a výsledkoch.

Kampane prihlásené do súťaže boli posudzované v piatich kategóriách podľa mediátu: najlepšie využitie TV, najlepšie využitie tlače, najlepšie využitie OOH, najlepšie využitie rádia a najlepšie využitie digitálnych médií. Súčasne boli vyhodnotené aj prierezové kategórie: najlepšia komerčná kampaň a najlepšia nekomerčná kampaň. Zaradená bola aj špeciálna kategória: najodvážnejší počín. V rámci Media & Insight boli zaradené kategórie: najlepšie využitie dát, najlepšie využitie real-time marketingu, najlepšie využitie influencera a najlepšie zapojenie zákazníka. Do súťaže boli zaradené práce, ktoré boli zrealizované na českom alebo slovenskom trhu v období od 1. januára 2022 do 30. júna 2023. Finálne výsledky boli vyhlásené 19. októbra 2023. Víťazmi v jednotlivých kategóriách sa stali:

najlepšia nekomerčná kampaň

(cena udelená nebola),

najlepšie komerčná kampaň

(Kaufland – První volba esportovců/Kaufland Česká republika/OMD, Fuse, DDB FTW (CZ)), spoločnosť Kaufland Česká republika súčasne získala cenu Inovativný zadávateľ,

najlepšie využitie OOH

(Ibalgin Purpose/Opella Healthcare/OMD Slovakia (SK)),

najlepšie zapojenie zákazníka

(Komerční banka – Nejcenější vzpomínky/Komerční banka/PHD, DDB (CZ)),

najodvážnejší počín

(Telekom – #rešpekt/Slovak Telekom/Wavemaker Slovakia, MUW Saatchi&Saatchi (SK)), kampaň súčasne získala ocenenie Grand Prix,

najlepšie využitie influencera

(DNA ERA Návod na použitie k svojmu telu/DNA ERA/Socialists (CZ) (SK)), agentúra Socialists súčasne získala cenu Inovativný autor,

najlepšie využitie dát

(cena udelená nebola),

najlepšie využitie TV

(cena udelená nebola),

najlepšie využitie tlače

(Obálka magazínu Forbes namalovaná robotom ABB/ABB/Marketup (CZ)),

najlepšie využitie digitálnych médií

(Kaufland – První volba esportovců/Kaufland Česká republika/OMD, Fuse, DDB FTW (CZ)),

najlepšie využitie rádia

(Hyundai – Pomalé Vianoce/Hyundai Motor Slovakia/RespectAPP, Unimedia (SK)),

najlepšie využitie real-time marketingu

(Tipsport – známe příští hlavu státu/Tipsport/Tipsport (CZ)).

Všetky kampane prihlásené do súťaže si je možné pozrieť na webovej stránke súťaže www.flemedia.cz.



ŠTARCHOŇ, PETER, PŠENÁK, PETER A MIKLOŠÍK, ANDREJ, 2022. MEDZIGENERAČNÉ ROZDIELY V SPRÁVANÍ SLOVENSKÝCH SPOTREBITEĽOV.

ZLÍN: RADIM BAČUVČÍK – VERBUM. 102 S. ISBN 978-80-88356-09-7.

Spotrebiteľ je jednotlivец, ktorý kupuje výrobky a služby na svoju vlastnú spotrebu, na použitie v rodine, pre člena rodiny, prípadne ako dar pre inú osobu. Vo všetkých uvedených prípadoch sa výrobok kupuje na konečnú spotrebu jednotlivcov, a preto sa aj označujú ako koneční spotrebiteľia. Keď uvažujeme o spotrebiteľskom správaní vidíme spotrebiteľa ako realizuje proces nákupného rozhodovania pod vplyvom faktorov pôsobiach z externého prostredia, formovaný jeho vlastnými individuálnymi špecifikami a konkrétnou nákupnou situáciou. Dôležitým faktorom vplyvujúcim na rozhodovanie spotrebiteľa nie je len jeho vek, či pohlavie, ale na rozhodovanie jednotlivca majú vplyv aj jeho postoje, čiže komplex jeho hodnotenia, čítania a sklonu konať istým spôsobom. Často sú veľmi ťažko popísateľné, ale prejavujú sa v konkrétnom konaní (nákupe alebo vyhýbaní sa nákupe) a preto je formovanie a zmena spotrebiteľských postojov voči produktom kľúčovým cieľom marketingovej komunikácie. A práve poznatky o postojoch generácií spotrebiteľov voči vybraným aspektom rozhodovania sa o kúpe produktov nie sú dostatočne spracované a publikované. S potešením musím preto konštatovať, že recenzovaná vedecká monografia Medzigeneračné rozdiely v správaní slovenských spotrebiteľov tento deficit vedomostí v adekvátnej miere dopĺňa a ponúka čitateľom množstvo poznatkov, ale aj praktických implikácií.

Autori publikácie na základe vlastných odborných vedomostí, štúdia rozsiahlej literatúry, faktografického materiálu a realizovaného výskumu spracovali veľmi cenný titul, zaoberajúci sa problematikou medzigeneračných rozdielov v správaní slovenských spotrebiteľov, ktorý v aktuálnej slovenskej akademickej literatúre nemá doposiaľ v takom rozsahu a zameraní adekvátne zastúpenie. Akademická a odborná verejnosť na Slovensku len s námahou získava ucelené najaktuálnejšie informácie v predmetnej oblasti nákupného rozhodovania. Hoci je recenzovaná publikácia primárne orientovaná vedeckému publiku, bude určite prínosom pre mnohých ekonómov, manažérov a tých, ktorí si chcú rozšíriť obzor poznatkov z výsostne aktuálnej témy.

Publikácia Medzigeneračné rozdiely v správaní slovenských spotrebiteľov pozostáva zo štyroch kapitol, ktoré ponúkajú čitateľovi možnosť oboznámiť sa nielen s aspektami te-

oretického pohľadu na spotrebiteľské správanie a postoje spotrebiteľov, ale podrobne opisujú tiež metodológiu realizovaného výskumu, jeho výsledky a tiež diskusiu možných aplikácií a ďalšieho skúmania.

Prvá kapitola s názvom Vybrané teoretické aspekty vymedzuje základné pojmy viažuce sa na problematiku spotrebiteľského správania a postojov spotrebiteľov voči domácim a zahraničným produktom. Autori si kladú v tejto kapitole za cieľ nielen pojmové vysvetlenie, ale aj charakteristiku vývoja a významu skúmania spotrebiteľského správania s ohľadom na charakter jednotlivých generácií spotrebiteľov. Autori neopomenuli prezentovať ani psychologické faktory a špecifiká vplyvajúce na tvorbu postojov spotrebiteľov k domácim produktom nielen na Slovensku, ale aj v zahraničí. Prvá kapitola je vhodným vstupom do problematiky, ktorú autori rozpracovali v realizovanom výskume.

Druhá kapitola je logickým pokračovaním predchádzajúcej kapitoly a podrobne zoznamuje čitateľa s metodológiou, ktorú si autori zvolili pre realizáciu výskumu a analýzu jeho výsledkov. Osobitne oceňujem využitie programovacieho jazyka R, s ktorým autori majú bohaté skúsenosti. Kapitola zároveň vysvetľuje princípy modelovania a profiláciu respondentov. Možno konštatovať, že autori zvolili adekvátne metodologické postupy, ktoré zabezpečili vysokú presnosť a hodnovernosť získaných výsledkov výskumu.

Tretia kapitola ponúka prehľadne zoradené výsledky realizovaného výskumu na vzorke 1000 respondentov. Kapitola je logicky rozčlenená na 7 častí, ktoré postupne oboznamujú s výsledkami v oblastiach ako kritéria výberu produktov, postoje voči domácim produktom, postoje voči zahraničným produktom, povedomie o význame krajiny pôvodu produktov, informovanosť o spotrebiteľských právach, vývoj v správaní slovenských spotrebiteľov a zmeny v ich postojoch. Osobitne zaujímavá je klastrová analýza unimodálnych premenných.

Vyústenie úsilia autorov vedeckej monografie je pretavené do štvrtej kapitoly, ktorá formou diskusie a porovnania viacerých domácich a zahraničných výskumných štúdií s autormi realizovaným primárnym výskumom poukazuje na praktické implikácie získaných poznatkov. Zámerom autorov vedeckej monografie bolo identifikovať aktuálne postoje slovenských spotrebiteľov pri nákupe produktov a identifikovať medzigeneračné rozdiely vo vzťahu ku kritériám výberu produktov, postojom voči domácim a zahraničným produktom, povedomiu o význame krajiny pôvodu produktov a informovanosti o spotrebiteľských právach. A práve štvrtá kapitola potvrdzuje, že autorský zámer bol v plnej miere splnený. Publikácia je napísaná prehľadným a pútavým spôsobom, na úrovni najnovších poznatkov vedy a praxe. Autorský kolektív ju obohatil množstvom faktografického materiálu. Monografia zaujme logickosťou výkladu, prehľadnou metodológiou a uceleným prístupom k problematike spotrebiteľského správania a jeho skúmania, čo ju predurčuje byť adekvátnou pomôckou nielen pre vedeckú a akademickú obec, ale aj pre odbornú verejnosť. Svoju recenziu by som rád zakončil presvedčením, že napriek tomu, že táto publikácia bola napísaná primárne pre vedecko-akademické účely ako výstup z výskumného projektu, má potenciál osloviť aj manažérov pôsobiach v oblasti marketingu a obchodu.

DICTIONARY OF USEFUL MARKETING TERMS

M

multi-purpose | viacúčelový — This room is multi-purpose – we use it for meetings, interviews, and taking breaks.
Táto miestnosť je viacúčelová – využívame ju na stretnutia, rozhovory a prestávky.

multiple | viacero — They usually give you a discount if you buy multiple pieces.
Pri kúpe viacerých kusov vám väčšinou dajú zľavu.

multiple-choice question | otázka s možnosťou výberu z viacerých odpovedí — A multiple-choice question is one in which you are given a list of answers and you have to choose the correct one.
Otázka s možnosťou výberu z viacerých odpovedí je taká, v ktorej dostanete zoznam odpovedí a vy musíte vybrať tú správnu.

multiple correlation | viacnásobná korelácia — Multiple correlation (sometimes called multiple regression correlation or multiple linear correlation) is an extension of linear correlation that enables researchers to correlate a set of independent variables with a single dependent variable.
Viacnásobná korelácia (niekedy nazývaná viacnásobná regresná korelácia alebo viacnásobná lineárna korelácia) je rozšírením lineárnej korelácie, ktorá umožňuje výskumníkom korelovať súbor nezávislých premenných s jednou závislou premennou.

multiple pricing | viacnásobná cena — Multiple pricing determines more than one price for the same product.
Viacnásobné ceny stanovujú viac ako jednu cenu za rovnaký produkt.

multitasking | multitasking, multitaskingový — To succeed, they will need strong multitasking skills.
Aby uspeli, budú potrebovať silné multitaskingové schopnosti.

multitude | množstvo — The company has a multitude of problems, from finding employees to making profits.
Spoločnosť má množstvo problémov, od hľadania zamestnancov až po dosahovanie zisku.

mysterious | záhadný, tajomný — The whole acquisition has been very mysterious.
Celá akvizícia bola veľmi záhadná.

mysteriously | záhadne, tajomne — "Perhaps, and perhaps not," their CEO answered mysteriously.
"Možno a možno nie," odpovedal záhadne ich generálny riaditeľ.

mystery | záhada — The company never cleared up the mystery of the missing money.
Spoločnosť nikdy neobjasnila záhadu zmiznutých peňazí.

mystery shopper | mystery shopper — Most companies want mystery shoppers to check the staff's knowledge of what they are selling.
Väčšina spoločností chce, aby si mystery shopperi overili znalosti personálu o tom, čo predávajú.

mystery shopping | mystery shopping — Many large chain stores, restaurants, hotels and banks engage in mystery shopping in order to increase the quality of their services.
Mnohé veľké obchodné reťazce, reštaurácie, hotely a banky sa zapájajú do mystery shoppingu s cieľom zvýšiť kvalitu svojich služieb.

N

name | meno, názov — Please write your full name on the form.
Do formulára prosím napíšte svoje celé meno.

nation | národ — The debate about food quality engaged the whole nation.
Debata o kvalite potravín zaujala celý národ.

national | národný — National public health campaigns often promote behavior that improve health or prevent diseases of the population.
Národné kampane v oblasti verejného zdravia často podporujú správanie, ktoré zlepšuje zdravie alebo predchádza chorobám obyvateľstva.

national bank | národná banka — The national bank is responsible for the currency and monetary policy of the country.
Národná banka je zodpovedná za menu a menovú politiku krajiny.

national brand | národná značka — The retail company became a national brand with retail outlets across the country.
Maloobchodná spoločnosť sa stala národnou značkou s predajňami po celej krajine.

nationalism | nacionalizmus — The document deals with the rise of nationalism in the country.
Dokument sa zaoberá nárastom nacionalizmu v krajine.

nationality | národnosť — What is his nationality?
Aká je jeho národnosť?

nationalization | znárodnenie — The politician's plans include nationalization of energy companies.
Plány politika zahŕňajú znárodnenie energetických spoločností.

nationalize | znárodniť — If a government nationalizes industries, it becomes the owner.
Ak vláda znárodní priemysel, stane sa jej vlastníkom.

nationwide | celonárodný, celoštátny — His family owns a nationwide chain of fast food restaurants.

Jeho rodina vlastní celoštátnu sieť reštaurácií rýchleho občerstvenia.

natural | prírodný — Floods, forest fires, and earthquakes are serious natural disasters.

Záplavy, lesné požiare a zemetrasenia sú vážnymi prírodnými katastrofami.

natural resources | prírodné zdroje — Even though the region is rich in natural resources, it has been suffering of under investment.

Aj keď je región bohatý na prírodné zdroje, trpí nedostatkom investícií.

nature | príroda, povaha, charakter — It is not in her nature to behave aggressively.

Nemá v povahe správať sa agresívne.

naval | námorný — The town has a long history as a naval port.

Mesto má dlhú históriu ako námorný prístav.

navigate | navigovať — It is still not easy to navigate the plane through fog.

Stále nie je ľahké navigovať lietadlo v hmle.

navigation | navigácia — The company improved its websites for easier navigation.

Spoločnosť vylepšila svoje webové stránky pre jednoduchšiu navigáciu.

necessarily | nutne, nevyhnutne — The fact that a product is cheap, does not necessarily mean that it is of low quality.

To, že je produkt lacný, nemusí nutne znamenať, že je nekvalitný.

necessary | potrebný, nutný, nevyhnutný — Unfortunately, she lacks the necessary skills for the job.

Žiaľ, na túto prácu jej chýbajú potrebné zručnosti.

Literatúra / List of References

[1] Cambridge Business English dictionary. 2023. [online]. [cit. 2023-06-13]. Dostupné na: <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>>, [2] Collins Dictionary. 2023. [online]. [cit. 2023-06-13]. Dostupné na: <<https://www.collinsdictionary.com>>, [3] Multiple regression correlation. 2023. [online]. [cit. 2023-06-13]. Dostupné na: <<https://methods.sagepub.com/book/communication-research-statistics/n13.xml>>

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10