

STEREOTYPE AND TRADITION OF DINNER AND PREFERENCES AMONG YOUNG CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

Tradition plays an important role in many cultures, nations or religions. Some eating habits are changing, and function as stereotypes. The aim of this study was to examine the preferences of dinner in a group of students. The study was performed by direct survey among 188 students of Tri-City. It has been shown that young people enjoy traditional Polish dishes, but they are willingly reach for the dishes of other nations. Students choose dishes which do not require a large amount of time to prepare. You cannot say that the opinion about the Pole who likes pork chops, bigos and dumplings is a cliché. It is still alive in the nation culinary tradition.

INTRODUCTION

Tradition plays an important role in many cultures, nations or religions. Cultivating a tradition passed down from generation to generation and is a kind of national heritage. Traditional customs, food, dress, music, crafts are increasingly seen as a relic. The development of civilization and progressive globalization are causing the acquisition and dissemination of the behavior of other cultures and at the same time flattening the importance of native values and traditions. This situation has led to pay attention to its threats. It resulted in the creation of new concepts, activities and organizations that promote traditional behavior in a given country, region (ethnocentrism, Slow Food, „Dobre, bo polskie”). The concept of a traditional product was created. It is defined as a traditional food product protected by Polish and European Union law, made from traditional materials, have traditional composition or method of production [1, 2]. In Poland, the traditional products can be found on the List of Traditional Products created by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (1151 products at the beginning of September 2013). Examples are: czernina, sausage Lisiecka, kartacze, wodzionka, zalewajka and many others. In addition to the traditional products there are many Polish cuisine dishes which can be credited as the classics and are commonly associated with Poland. These include bigos, kotlet schabowy (pork chop), pierogi (dumplings), and favourite drink - vodka.

Typical for us is still the fact that we eat greasy and hearty. Some eating habits are changing and functioning, not only in Polish society as stereotypes, mean usual belief but not always consistent with the current state of knowledge [3]. The stereotype has often negative association, but some are positive. Stereotypes are common and occur in all cultures of the world. Generally they relate to gender (stereotypes of men and women, their social and professional roles, blonde stereotype). Some are national stereotypes (the stereotype of a German, Jew, Pole, etc.), the stereotypes of the elderly persons, moral stereotypes (the bride in a white dress). Cultural perception of different nations also relates to diet and traditional dishes. German cuisine is associated with sausage and potatoes, French eat frogs, Italians prefer pasta and Turks kebab. Polish cuisine is mostly associated with the above mentioned chops, dumplings and bigos, but also recognizable and very characteristic are pickled cucumbers, broth, żurek, cold soup, minced cutlet. Such “delicacies” as aspic with meat, knuckle, tripe appear on many Polish tables. Meat with fruit, like prunes is something unique to Poland. Sour taste dominates in our kitchen.

Food habits of Polish consumers are constantly monitored and since the early 90s last century continuously examined. The main stress is on the study of preferences, acceptance of products, factors determining their choice or frequency of consumption. Preference is a selection of one product from the group of products of the same type [4]. Meiselman defined preference as a general predisposition to specified product, independent of the situation in which it is consumed [5]. Górska-Warsewicz determined it as a preferring the purchase of some goods above the others [6]. Issues of preferences, as one of the determinants of consumer behavior on the market, received a lot of researches. Preference is associated with the sensory characteristics of the product and its acceptance. One aspect of the study are dietary preferences, including preferences of dinner dishes.

The aim of the study was an assessment of the preferences of dinner dishes in a group of students.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The study was performed by direct survey among 200 university students of Tri-City. Due to the lack of responses just 188 questionnaires was used in the analysis. Purposeful sampling was exploited because of research theme. The population consisted of 96 women and 92 men (classified surveys). They were students from the first to the fifth year of full-time studies, having from 19 to 25 years. Gender and place of residence (home, student’s hostel) were differentiating factors.

The questionnaire consisted of seven questions out of which three of them were presented in the form of positional scale. These were the frequency of consumption of various lunch dishes, student’s preferences for selected dinner dishes (positional

scale, which is used as an ordinal scale seven - verbal scale with the terms of 'do not like' (1pt.) to 'really like' (7pt.)) and frequency of consumption. In order to divide the product depending on the degree of liking, the following ranges determining the average value were used:

- 1,00 to 1,85 – do not like much
- 1,86 to 2,72 – do not like
- 2,73 to 3,57 – rather not like
- 3,58–4,43 – do not care
- 4,44 to 5,29 – rather like
- 5,30 to 6,14 – do like
- 6,15 to 7,00 – really like

In addition, closed-ended questions were used both single and multiple selection. The results were expressed as the percentage of responses and the average of which was used to produce a ranking of preferences. The significance of the gender impact on the diversity of preferences dinner dishes demonstrated by the student's t-test with a confidence level of $p = 0.05$.

PREFERENCES OF DINNER DISHES – RESULTS

Lunch is the meal, which is consumed by the majority of the population. Common is not eating breakfast or dinner, but lunch, no matter the time of day, is nearly always eaten. More than half of the students declared dinner daily consumption (nearly 60% of women and 80% of men). At the same time students living in family houses more frequently ate a hot meal (71% of women and 89% of men).

The aim of the next question was to determine the frequency of consumption of each dinner dishes. Traditionally, the dinner should consist of a soup, a main course, salad and sometime dessert. In Poland, it is often limited to eating only one of them: either soup or main course. Various combinations of dinner dishes were presented to students. As shown most young people eat the main course only ($\bar{x} = 4,45$, $SD = 0,55$) or soup only ($\bar{x} = 4,21$, $SD = 0,54$), or sole salad ($\bar{x} = 3,92$, $SD = 0,53$). Combination of meals indicated in the next ranks were: main course and salad, main course and dessert, soup and second course (6th rank), soup and dessert, soup and salad. Full meal dinner consisting of all the dishes was in the last position ($\bar{x} = 2,65$, $SD = 0,57$). Women declared sporadic consumption of a full set (37%) or not at all (56%) and men 52% and 30% accordingly. There were significant differences noted in the opinions of men and women and people living in the home or outside the home (roommate, dormitory). Young men eat the main course with salad daily (42%) or several times a week (37%), soup several times a week (33%) or weekly (37%). Other results were obtained in the group of women. Female students eat soup occasionally (38%) or several times a week (32%). Similarly, the second dish is eaten by them

several times a week only (66%). The second dish and salad are eaten by both women and men several times a week (38% and 42% of responses), or once a week (as indicated by 29% of women). Men consume such set occasionally (27%). Very popular in both groups was set containing in its composition the main course and dessert. Respondents declared eating it several times a week (25% of women and 35% of men), and occasionally (32% of women and 27% men).

In order to determine the preferences of the dinner dishes proposed 16 dinner dishes popular in modern Polish cuisine. There were two soups (vegetable and fruit), six meat dishes (stuffed cabbage, fried fish, fricassee of chicken, pork chops, beef stew and slips – these courses include all types of meat: beef, pork, poultry, fish). Also shown one pot meals: dumplings, leczko, pasta, risotto, pancakes, casserole, potato pancakes. In addition, students were asked about the degree of liking more and more popular in Poland sushi. The basis for this choice of dishes was carried out earlier pilot studies conducted by in-depth interview, and these products evoked the strongest emotions. Omitted in the analysis of test products which evoked negative attitudes among the respondents. These included czernina, tripe, dishes with spinach. Research has shown that young consumers strongly prefer one pot meals, usually flour products (Fig. 1). The first place in the ranking were spaghetti, then pancakes, chicken stew and dumplings. They were followed by pork chop, stuffed cabbage, fried fish, risotto.

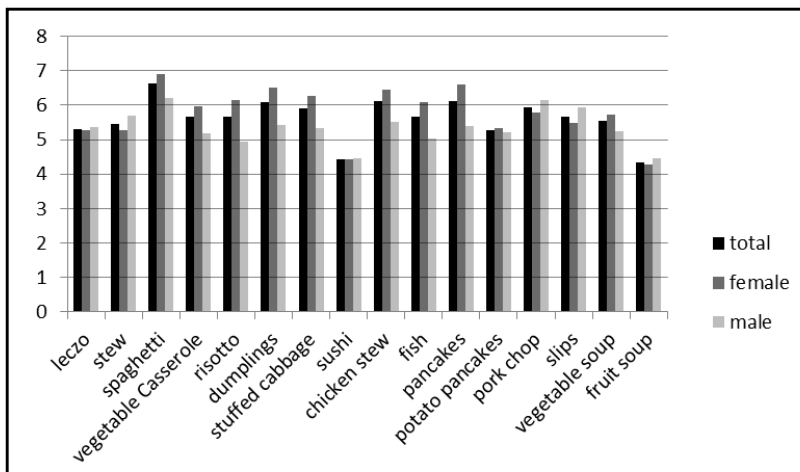


Fig. 1. Preferences of dinner dishes by gender of respondents (\bar{x})

The least popular dishes included potato pancakes, sushi and fruit soup. Statistically significant differences in the opinions of young women and men was observed in this study. The latter strongly prefer meat (pork chop, slips, stew, chicken stew were respectively on 2, 3, 4 and 5 place in the ranking). The least popular dishes in this group included fruit soup (last place in the ranking), sushi, risotto, fried fish. Similar tastes of young men confirmed in other studies [7]. Female students had significantly different preferences. In this group of respondents the most popular were pancakes,

dumplings, chicken stew, stuffed cabbage, risotto (2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 place respectively in the ranking of preferences). At the same time the least preferred dishes pointed fruit soup (like the men same the last place in the ranking), sushi, leczo, stew. Reviews for men and women were similar only for three courses: spaghetti, which in both groups was in the first place and located on the bottom fruit soup and sushi (15 place). Place of living differentiated opinions of respondents, but in this case the difference was not statistically significant (Fig. 2). The highest ranked was spaghetti and the last were sushi and fruit soup. Regardless of the preferences menu the high frequency of consumption can vary and depends on many other factors other than the degree of liking (such as availability, price, convenience, ease of preparation).

It was concluded that the surveyed students liked proposed dishes and none of them was identified as disliked. Only fruit soup was included in neutral range. As 'really like' dishes showed spaghetti only. Sushi, leczo and potato pancakes were 'rather like'. Other dishes were liked by consumers.

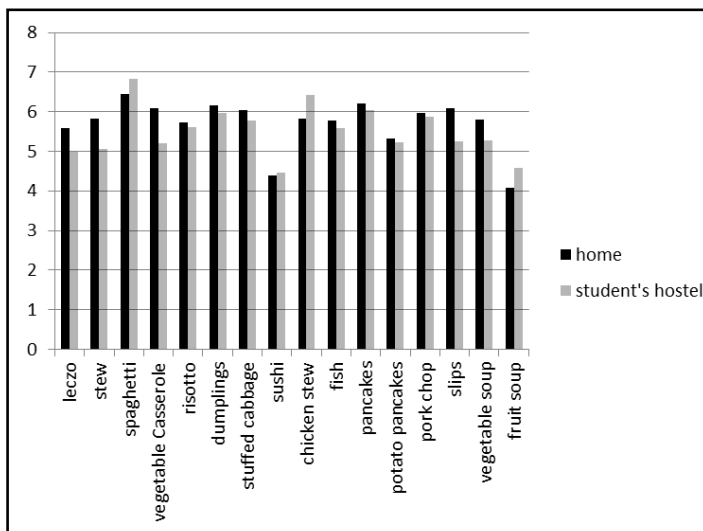


Fig. 2. Preferences of dinner dishes including the place of living of the respondents (\bar{x})

The next question, students were asked about preferences of starch additives they choose with meat dishes (Table 1). According to the tradition of Polish cuisine potatoes were in the first place. This was followed by the rice and noodles. Both of these products are easy and quick to prepare, which is an important factor in today's world. Definitely disturbing fact is a low uptake of groats in the diet. These products, because of their nutritional value and the impact on the functioning of the gastrointestinal tract are recommended by nutritionists and dieticians.

Table 1. Preferences of starch additives chosen with meat dishes

	Total		Female		Male		Home		Student's hostel, roommate	
	\bar{x}	R	\bar{x}	R	\bar{x}	R	\bar{x}	R	\bar{x}	R
Potatoes	6,10	1	5,90	2	6,40	1	6,11	2	6,09	2
Rice	6,06	2	6,00	1	6,15	2	6,23	1	5,90	3
Pasta	5,89	3	5,80	3	6,04	3	5,52	3	6,25	1
Vegetables cooked	4,89	4	5,27	4	4,31	4	4,89	4	4,88	4
Bread	4,68	5	4,97	5	4,23	5	4,52	5	4,84	5
Groat	3,77	6	3,85	6	3,65	6	3,56	6	3,97	6
Noodles	3,25	7	3,13	7	3,44	7	3,36	7	3,15	7
I do not eat	1,84	8	1,89	8	1,77	8	1,81	8	1,87	8

\bar{x} – mean value, R – rank (place in a number of preferences)

The results confirm the immutability of national traditions with respect to potatoes, pork chops and dumplings liking. These results were obtained in previous studies carried out in 2003 [7, 8]. It has been shown that the most preferred course then was poultry dishes (roasted chicken, de volaille and chicken stew), stuffed cabbage, and pork chops, which came in 4th position in the overall ranking of preferences. Beef stew was on the penultimate 12th (for 14 possible). Pork chop in a group of men was much more popular than among their classmates (respectively 2 and 6 places in the ranking). The soups were liked by the young. The first places were tomato soup, borscht and broth, which is again confirmation of the culinary traditions. While the least popular was fruit soup (last place in the ranking, and like today, neutral attitude of consumers). Vegetable soup was included in the popular and was on the 6th place in the rankings. Similarly, in the case of starch additives and main courses preferences of young people have not changed. Ten years ago fries, rice, pasta and potatoes were the most popular. While groats (buckwheat and barley) and the noodles were on the lowest positions in the rankings.

CONCLUSIONS

Tradition is an important part of culture for national identity and sense of belonging to it. It is necessary to care and pass national heritage to future generations. Research shows that today's young people continue to put up in the hierarchy liking dishes which host on Polish tables for a long time. However, they are also open to foreign nations kitchens. Very popular among young are dishes which do not require a large amount of time to prepare. You cannot say that the opinion about the Pole who likes pork chops, bigos and dumplings is a cliché. It is still alive in the nation culinary tradition.

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