

## **ABSTRACT**

# **DYNAMICS OF EATING HABITS OF SWEETS: GERMAN, POLISH, AND RUSSIAN CONSUMERS ON THE CONFECTIONERY MARKET**

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The major purpose of this work is to fill the research gap in the previous studies on consumer behavior in the food market, or more precisely - in the confectionery market. The research was international in nature because it was carried out in three countries: Germany, Poland, and Russia, and was completed with the analysis and interpretation of data in January 2022. Moreover, so called mega-segments of consumers were considered, in which the criterion of division is buyers' age. The focus was on the following generations: Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Generation Z. To achieve the assumed aim, desk and field research was carried out, while in the case of own empirical research, an online survey was used as a measurement method. The obtained data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and analysis of variance. The differences detected by the analysis of variance were refined with Tukey's *post hoc* test. When verifying the hypothesis about the sustainable nature of the product, which leads to increased consumption, two grouping factors were adopted: country and generation, for which pairwise comparisons were made. Owing to the conducted research, it was discovered that among the attributes of sweets, valued by buyers, the sustainable nature of a specific product is of no importance to them, and they do not seek such information. Consumers pay attention to sustainable methods of conducting business activity by producers.

The results of the studies provided the conclusion that the eating habits of consumers in the three above-mentioned countries are similar, are not characterized by strong dynamics, have a traditional character, and buyers prefer conventional products, the form of which has remained essentially unchanged for numerous years. Consumers appreciate the stability of this market understood in this way. The purchase of a given product is mainly determined by its taste as the basic selection criterion. On the other hand, some differences were noticed in the habits of

representatives of different generations, identifying categories of products preferred only by younger market participants. In addition, it was found that a very diverse assortment of sweets, especially many substitute products, complicate consumer decisions, which can lead to a feeling of cognitive dissonance.

*Keywords: Consumer choice, cognitive dissonance, confectionery market, sustainable market processes*