

A Research Proposal on the Psychological Marketing of the Meat Industry and How it Effects Consumer Behaviour.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

To fully understand the background surrounding psychological marketing and its link to consumer buyer behaviour as well as how it relates to the meat industry. This dissertation will identify the main theme as well as look at research in similar industries, such as the High Fat, Sugar, Salt (HFSS) foods. As well touching on recent upset within the meat industry in western culture.

Kunkel, Castonguay and Filer, (2015) identify ongoing issues specifically related to the marketing strategies commonly used in the food industry, with the Advertising Standards Agency, (2019) reinforcing this point, mentioning recent restrictions specifically implemented on televised advertisements as well as marketing to an audience that is made up of more than 25% children. Forcing organisations to become more transparent with marketing within the food industry. Kunkel, Castonguay and Filer, (2015) also highlight the direct link that food industry marketing has to the obesity epidemic, stating that it is crucial for people to not be targeted with such psychological advertisements.

It is widely known that most people in the western world are willing to eat the meat of a few select animals, this was particularly evident in the United Kingdom during the 'Horse meat scandal' In 2013'. Stanciu (2015) highlights that the line between domestic animals and meat acceptable for consumption differs between cultures; Stanciu (2015) continues that the 2013 scandal changed consumer behaviour, making consumers more conscious as to what meat they are picking up off of the supermarket shelves. However, it is arguable that this particular change in consumer behaviour was temporary.

1.2 A SUMMARY OF CURRENT LITERATURE

Blythe's (2013) theory states the main theme of Psychological marketing in reference to consumer buyer behaviour, this theme is as follows: 'Psychology is the study of mental process, psychologists study the way people think, which is of course basic to understanding how people think about the products they buy'. Continuing Blythe's (2013) theory on the effects of psychological marketing on consumer behaviour states that an individual's perception of products is influenced by psychological marketing, as well as the perception of how those products fit within the world, this then allows for an

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insight into the basic drives that encourage people to pursue ‘solutions for their needs’. These drivers are illustrated below in Figure 1.2.



Figure 1.2 - Contributions from Psychology

Blythe (2013) has further supported Foxall and Goldsmith (1994) theory that Psychological marketing is a strategy that has been used successful within marketing for some time, across all industries and disciplines, the ability to predict what a consumer is going to do and why, is unarguably a useful tool to any organisation. Blythe (2013) continues by highlighting the significance of neuroscience within marketing, stating that a sub-branch of the neuroscience discipline focusses on unravelling some crucial information relating to consumer buyer, and economic behaviour using the brain's Psychology. In simpler terms, Blythe (2013) believes that Neuroscience is the key to predicting what a consumer is going to do, not by using numbers and or purchase history; However, by understanding why the consumer does what they do.

It is important to note that a thorough literature review will be carried out in entirety as part of this dissertation.

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1.3 RATIONAL

After carrying out background research on the psychological marketing of the meat industry and how its effects consumer behaviour, it quickly became evident that there is a copious amount of research into how Psychological marketing effects consumer buyer behaviour. It also became clear that there is also research into Psychological marketing in the food industry generally and how it impacts upon consumer buyer behaviour. However, what was most evident was the academic paucity directly relating to the psychological marketing of the meat industry and how it effects consumer behaviour, this academic paucity is the main rationale for the dissertation.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

2.1 AIM

The overarching aim of the dissertation is to identify and analyse how the Psychological marketing strategies commonly used in the meat industry impact upon consumer buyer behaviour. It is essential for the dissertation to achieve this aim; it must also meet the following objectives.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

2.2.1 OBJECTIVE 1

Using secondary data identify what psychological marketing strategies the meat industry is currently implementing, as well as their potential effects on consumer behaviour, this objective should be achieved by December 1st, 2019. See appendix A

2.2.2 OBJECTIVE 2

Using primary research to investigate individuals, experiences, views, and perceptions of the meat industry this will first be done through surveys and then further explored using interviews, ultimately identifying; How the strategies identified in objective one impact upon consumer behaviour. All to be completed on or before February 1st, 2020

2.2.3 OBJECTIVE 3

Analysing the data found when completing objective 1 and 2, determine if the use of Psychological marketing within the meat industry has an impact on consumer behaviour, as well as what that impact is; Are consumers likely to still make the same decisions if such strategies were not used. To be completed on or before March 20th, 2020.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 METHODOLOGY

First it is important to define research: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) agree with Walliman's (2011) definition of research, Walliman's (2011) definition gravitates around two main points the 'Systematic collection of data' allowing the collector and or processor of said data to 'find things out'. All agreeing that the word research is used to too liberally in everyday life, that just watching, and collecting information an individual may see in their day to day life is not enough to warrant falling into the category of research. For information collected to be justified as research it must be collected systematically, allowing the researcher to learn something new.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) developed what is now a widely used and well known effective research strategy, 'The research onion' as shown in figure 3.1.

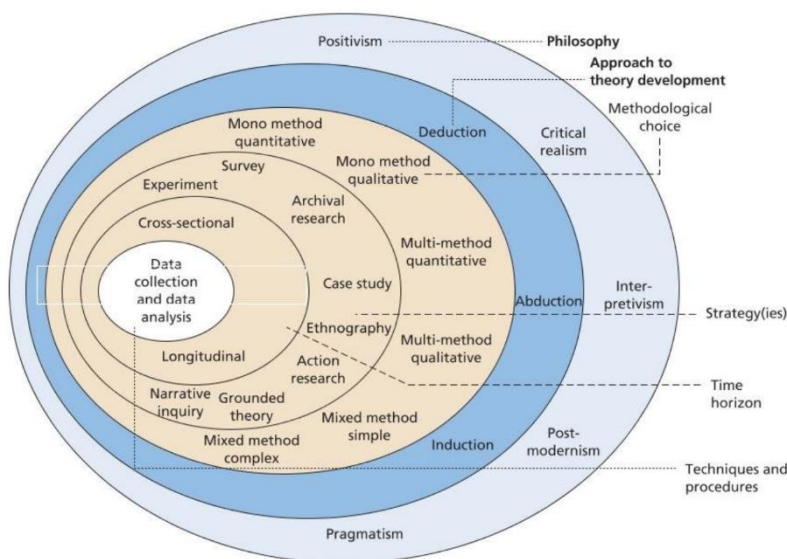


Figure 3.1 - The Research Onion

The research onion as visually depicted in figure 3.1 shows how Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) have broken research down into stages, describing these stages as 'layers' of research; Each stage of research is shown as a layer in the research onion. Arguing that if a researcher pursues each layer through to the centre section of the 'onion', this creates a systematic research approach and allows for an effective research strategy to be achieved. This links back with Walliman's (2011) argument that for

research to be effective it must be systematic. The dissertation will use the ‘research onion’ method developed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) to ensure that no stage of research essential to the project will be overlooked, this creates a systematic approach to the research undertaken, creating the more likely outcome of meeting all the objectives established in the research question.

3.2 STRATEGIES

The Dissertation will use a ‘Mixed method’, ‘sequential exploratory research design; (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). This is the specific term that refers to quantitative data collection followed by qualitative data collection, in order to conduct primary research. The point of this research design is to allow for data to be explored further as opposed to subsequently explained. Eastbery-Smith et al., (2018) argues that the validity and generalisability of results is increased by using a mixed method approach. Continuing however, that sceptics of this method would argue that using too many different research methods/strategies has to bring into question as to the competence of the researcher; This is the reason why only the two methods will be used in the dissertation. This means that, first quantitative research will be carried out in the form of surveys, this will lead to a broad initial understanding of current consumer buyer behaviour, allowing for the next stage of research to be shaped. The next stage of research will be conducted in the form of personal interviews, of between six and ten interviewees, strong relevant questions will have been created using the quantitative research stage.

3.2.1 SECONDARY DATA

This dissertation will look at a variety of secondary data sources, including however not limited to, reports, journal articles, books, advertisement, product packaging as well as online publications, and websites. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) argue that one of the main advantages of using secondary data is the limited cost associated with collecting it, this is particularly relevant to the dissertation as the university has a huge variety of academic sources, both on campus as well as the online tools.

3.2.2 SURVEY

Jankowicz (200) characterises surveys as a type of quantitative research, that can be used with ‘a relatively large group of people’ to investigate issues that exist in the present with the use of direct questions. This dissertation will use transparent, appropriate questioning, participants will be made aware that they are able to omit any questions they wish. The researcher will ensure all participants are over the age of 18, as well as making participants aware that the surveys are voluntary and have no financial gain associated. The participants will have the choice to remain anonymous, however if they wish to be considered for a more in-depth future interview process then participants will be encouraged to leave a contact email address. These surveys will allow for a broad initial understanding of the effects Psychological marketing has on consumer behaviour.

3.2.3 INTERVIEWS

Saunders and Lewis (2012) refer to interviews as an exploratory method that can be used to give a qualitative expansion on data already collected, this is how the dissertation will utilize interviews. The dissertation will conduct individual interviews with between six and ten participants selected from the previously undertaken surveys. The participants will again be made aware of the voluntary nature of the interviews, that they have the option to omit any questions they feel necessary, as well as the choice to terminate the interview at any point. The interviews will be recorded using a Dictaphone, with the participants consent obtained. This will allow for a more focussed interview process as the interviewer will not require to split their concentration while attempting to take notes. The interviews will allow the researcher to probe for a further understanding into question answers.

3.2.3 SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

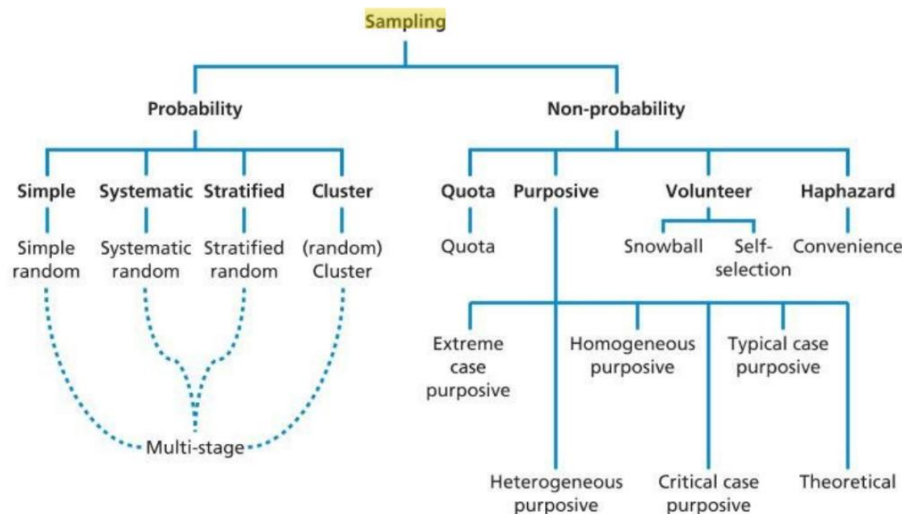


Figure 3.2 – Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill’s Sampling Framework

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) refer to the importance of using a sample population to gravitate around the impracticallity, sometimes impossibility of being able to gather data from an entire population. Continuing that sometimes the entire population can be used, in the case of documents relating to census reports, however in most instances this is more than just impractical. There is as illustrated above numerous sampling techniques, due to the limitations of this proposal not all will be discussed. This disserattion will use probability sampling, sometimes refered to as representative sampling. Probability sampling has a few key stages which Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) highlight to be: First based on the research question and objective selcet a suitable sample frame, secondly an appropriate sample size must be determined, thirdly decide upon the most sutable sampling technique and sample, and finally ensure that the target population is adequitly represented within the sample.

Following O’Gorman and MacIntosh (2015) definition of random sampling, ‘Every unit has an equal chance of being selected’. For the serveys this dissertation will conduct, a probability, then random samling technique, due to the need for general consumer buyer behaviour within the meat industry to be understood, it is irrelevant of the age, gender, wealth of the sample for example, with the consideration of all participants being over 18 years of age. After the surveys finding have been

analysed, then a sampling technique will be decided, if all survey results are consistent, then another probability sampling method may be used, for example systematic sampling could then be used to select participants.

3.2.4 ANALYSIS

Collis and Hussey (2009) introduce the concept of research analysis to be complicated, far more complicated than that of the collection process, stating that careful consideration needs to be taken when selecting the analysis method. Due to this dissertation, using both primary and secondary data, as well as collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, multiple analysis methods will be used.

Starting with secondary data, Collis and Hussey (2009) define this type of data to be the information represented in but not limited to the form of reports, books, advertisements, as well as journal articles. A critical analysis will be used to analyse the secondary data ensuring to take into consideration 'both sides of the argument' as well as the limitations of each specific piece of data. The next Stage will be the critical analysis of surveys, eventually leading to the analysis of interviews.

4. RESOURCES AND PLANNING

4.1 RESOURCES

The resources that are readily available that this dissertation will take advantage of are but not limited to as follows: The university Library facilities, both on campus, as well as the facilities that are online, there is a vast selection of books, databases, online journals as well as peer review articles. The academic staff and student body as the staff and students at UWTSD can be used as voluntary participants within the research, allowing for access to a large volume of individuals with a range of cultural, demographical, and social factors.

4.2 GANT CHART

Due to the limitations of this proposal, the planning stage of this dissertation can not be communicated through text, however a gant chart has been attached to allow a visual representation of both the activities expected to be carried out as well as their given, and expected time scales. It is important to note that these times are stric and must be followed closely avoid unnecessary setbacks. See Appendix A

5. LIMITATIONS AND ETHICS

5.1 Limitations and Risks

It is arguable that a large limitation the dissertation will face is a lack of current literature surrounding the subject area, making it harder to collect and analyse secondary data. Fortunately, this dissertation is reasonably low risk, one consideration that will be made is the differing cultural views of meat consumption, avoiding the risk of causing offence to a specific religion or culture.

5.2 Ethical Considerations

Wilson (2012) highlights the ethical responsibility of the researcher to be that of conducting the research in both an honest and accurate way. Cryer (2006) broadly talks about ethics in research, highlighting the importance of a few main points; That ethics can be a hard concept to define as what can be considered ethical to one culture, or group of individuals may not be ethical to others. Cryer (2006) highlights the importance of viewpoint, and while one person may feel as though they are being ethical, their actions may cause hurt to other individuals. Continuing that this is the reason that most universities, as well as academic bodies have ethical approval processes in place.

The dissertation will follow the correct protocol, submitting an ethics form for approval before any research is conducted, the dissertation will continually stop to consider other groups, as well as individuals' viewpoints on all topics discussed. Particularly ensuring all questions are fully inclusive and unoffensive, this will also help reduce any bias the researcher could have. A consideration the dissertation will keep in mind is regarding religious sensitivity in reference to the consumption of specific meat.

6. REFERENCES

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix A

Activity	Start Task	Duration	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Read Littrature	5th october	8 weeks	5th 20th 1st	10t 26th 1st	10t 20th 1st	1st 10t 20th 1st	10t 20th 1st	10t 20th 1st	10t 20th 1st	10t 20th 1st
Finalise Objectives	1st November	30 Days								
Draft Littrature Review	26th November	3.5 weeks								
Read Methodology	5th october	4 weeks								
Devise Research Aproach	5th october	2 weeks								
Draft research method and Stratagy	20th october	2.5 weeks								
Develop Questionair	10th November	4 weeks								
Conduct Questionair	10th December	10 days								
Analyse data collected in Questionair	1st January	20 days								
Develop Interview Questions	10th January	20days								
Conduct Interviews	1st Febuary	10 Days								
Analyze Interview Data	10th Febuary	30 days								
Draft Findings Chapter	1st March	30 Days								
Update Littrature Review	1st March	30 Days								
Coplete Remaining Chapters	1st April	10 days								
Submit Draft	1st April	30 Days								
Revise Draft on Basis of Feedback	10th april	30 Days								

Activity	Start Task	Duration
Read Littrature	5th october	8 weeks
Finalise Objectives	1st November	30 Days
Draft Littrature Review	26th November	3.5 weeks
Read Methodology	5th october	4 weeks
Devise Research Aproach	5th october	2 weeks
Draft research method and Stratagy	20th october	2.5 weeks
Develop Questionair	10th November	4 weeks
Conduct Questionair	10th December	10 days
Analyse data collected in Questionair	1st January	20 days
Develop Interview Questions	10th January	20days
Conduct Interviews	1st Febuary	10 Days
Analyze Interview Data	10th Febuary	30 days
Draft Findings Chapter	1st March	30 Days
Update Littrature Review	1st March	30 Days
Coplete Remaining Chapters	1st April	10 days
Submit Draft	1st April	30 Days
Revise Draft on Basis of Feedback	10th april	30 Days