Profile and consumer behavior of food originating from Typical Handmade Products (PATs) from the coast of Paraná

Perfil e comportamento do consumidor de alimentos de Produtos Artesanais Típicos (PATs) do litoral do Paraná

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ABSTRACT
The production and trade of Typical Handcrafted Products on the coast of Paraná has taken place since the colonization period, and given its unique characteristics, this group of products currently generates an income for a contingent of more than 400 families in the region. However, despite its relevance, no studies were found to describe the consumer’s preferences, so in order to guide production, this study aimed to investigate the profile and behavior of typical handcrafted products on the coast of Paraná. An exploratory descriptive research was carried out based on interviews with consumers between February and May 2023, with a population sample of 114 consumers interviewed at the time of consumption. The study revealed that the main favorite delicacies were pastel, empadão, empadinha and risolis, and products processed based on shrimp were widely accepted by consumers (75.89%), followed by hearts of palm (28.91%) and products based on crab meat (n=12.25). It concludes that in regard to the marketing mix there
is consumer dissatisfaction regarding the difficulty of finding the desired product more easily, the price considered high and the need to improve the taste of the products.

**Keywords:** tourism, traditional communities, family industry, marketing.

**RESUMO**

A produção e comércio dos Produtos Artesanais Típicos no litoral do Paraná, ocorre desde o período da colonização, e dado suas características únicas, atualmente este grupo de produtos geram renda para um contingente de mais de 400 famílias na região. No entanto apesar da sua relevância não foram encontrados estudos que descrevam as preferências do consumidor, assim visando orientar a produção, este estudo visou investigar qual era o perfil e o comportamento dos produtos típicos artesanais no litoral do Paraná. Realizou-se pesquisa exploratória descritiva a partir de entrevistas a consumidores entre fevereiro a maio de 2023, sendo que a amostra populacional foi de 114 consumidores entrevistados no momento do consumo. O estudo revelou que as principais iguarias preferidas eram o pastel, empadão, empadinha e risolis, sendo que os produtos transformados com base no camarão tinham ampla aceitação dos consumidores (75,89%), seguido por palmito (28,91%) e produtos à base de carne de siri (n=12,25). Conclui-se que relativo ao composto de marketing existe insatisfação dos consumidores no que se concerne dificuldade de encontrar o produto de desejado mais facilmente, no preço considerado elevado e a necessidade de melhorar o sabor dos produtos.

**Palavras-chave:** turismo, comunidades tradicionais, indústria familiar, marketing.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The production and trade of PATs (Typical Handcrafted Products) on the coast of Paraná, occurs since the colonization period, when it was pointed out that the region had products that later began to be sought after by consumers given their unique characteristics, currently this group of products involve a contingent of more than 400 families, (ANACLET0; BORNANCIN, 2018) that have in this activity the only or main source of family income, in addition to being responsible for the commercialization and maintenance of the culture of typical regional crafted products. The studies by Curvelo et al. (2016) states that the trade of these typical craft products represent an important way of generating regional income, however they warn that among the main obstacles it stands out the forms of commercialization, that the desires and needs of consumers are not always considered by those who produce these products.

Production systems that do not have quality, productivity or efficiency tend to disappear, however the search for meeting these issues can be obtained more easily as the production and trade system meets the expectations of consumers. Kotler (2000) describes that the consumer’s satisfaction is a prerequisite for the success of any enterprise and reveals that satisfaction consists
of the feeling of pleasure or disappointment of consumption, when compared to the perceived
performance of a product in relation to the expectations of the one who buys it, or that is,
satisfaction is closely linked to the result obtained in relation to expectations prior to the purchase,
diagnosed by the performance perceived by the consumer. Therefore, satisfaction is the answer
to the consumer's contentment in relation to their pre-consumption expectations (KANO, 1984).
Samara and Morsch (2005) attest that satisfaction is determined by the sensations and post-
purchase attitudes of the consumer, capable of determining whether there will be new purchases
or loyalty to consumption, with dissatisfaction meaning that the consumer was frustrated by the
expectations produced in the act in the pre-purchase phase, therefore, the consumer does not
make new purchases and decides to look for other brands and substitute products, not resulting
in a process of loyalty and consumer loyalty.

Loyalty can be defined as the degree to which the customer has a positive attitude, which
presents a decided commitment as an emotional bond and intends to continue buying in the
future, that is, it’s the behavioral response resulting from an elaborated process on one or more
alternatives options. This situation implies repeated purchases based on cognitive, affective and
evaluative factors, which results in a deep commitment causing repeat purchases. Despite the
relevance of understanding what consumers thinks and wants, specifically for typical handcrafted
products of the coast of Paraná, Anacleto and Bornancin, (2018) report that there are few and
sparse studies on the issue and describe the need to expand research that can be applied to
improve the lives of communities.

The coast of Paraná has a strong tourist vocation, however this opportunity is not always
used efficiently, and in the case of the PATs many are offered to the tourist in a transformed way
by micro family industries, which use the PATs to offer the transformed products as a source of
income.

Thus, in view of this context, this study aimed to identify the PATs’ main produced and
sold by micro family industries, as well as to identify in consumers the factors that influenced
the preference or rejection of these products as a way of guiding family
production.
2 METHODOLOGY

The study on consumer’s profile and behavior, according to what was proposed by Malhotra (2010), a descriptive exploratory research (GHIGLIONE, 2022; ANACLETO; SCHEUER, 2023) was carried out based on interviews with PAT consumers between February and May 2023, with the population sample of 114 consumers interviewed at the time of consumption, and the sampling required that the consumer agreed to participate in the unidentified survey.

Data analysis sought to identify the existence of correlations between the variable consumption of PATs and the variables, level of education, family arrangement, income, age and marital status that were considered as the explanatory factors.

The intensity of the correlation of the variables on consumption levels was performed using the Dunn multiple comparison test, at a significance level of 5% (p < 0.05).

The consumer satisfaction index in relation to the marketing mix (price, place, promotion and product) was evaluated considering the level of consumer satisfaction obtained by the Kano Model of attractive quality and mandatory (KANO, 1984). In this case, the respondent assigned scores to the attributes that he classified as mandatory before consumption, as well as assigning scores from 0 to 5 after consumption:

i) If the pre-purchase expectation scale is greater than the post-purchase satisfaction, the PAT requirements must be improved.

ii) If the pre- and post-purchase attributes are matched, it will only prevent the customer from being dissatisfied (neutral attributes).

iii) If the pre-purchase prerequisites are lower than post-consumption satisfaction, it means that the PAT is at ideal levels in relation to the market (positive attributes) and meets the needs and desires of the consumer.

After this phase, the comparative analysis of the marketing mix was performed with paired samples using the t-Student test at a significance level of 5% (p < 0.05)

3 RESULTS

The main delicacies preferred by consumers were pastel, empadao, empadinha, risolis, coxinhas, puff pastry, dumplings, croquettes, bobó, pies, portions, broths and stew, and in terms
of consumer’s preference, products processed based on shrimp with wide consumer acceptance (75.89%), followed by hearts of palm (28.91%) and crab meat products (n=12.25) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Typical Craft Products preferred by consumers on the Coast of Parana (%)

Source: the authors

The study revealed that the general average of consumption of PATs among interviewed was 6.26 times a year, and among interviewed there was no variation in consumption in the average number of times between genders, and the differences were not statistically significant among themselves (p < 0.001) regarding marital status, age and family composition. However, regarding income and education, significant differences were observed as income increased, the consumption increased (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of the frequency of consumption of Typical Handcrafted Products on the Coast of Paraná by monthly family income and education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family monthly income</th>
<th>Average annual consumption</th>
<th>Schooling</th>
<th>Average annual consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to R$1.349</td>
<td>3.38 a</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>3.01 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From R$1.350 até R$2.249</td>
<td>4.71 b</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>4.35 b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From R$ 2.250 a R$3.999</td>
<td>5.09 bc</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>5.01 bc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From R$4.000 a R$ 7.799</td>
<td>6.59 d</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>6.19 d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above R$7.800</td>
<td>7.41 e</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6.98 e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

abcde There are no significant differences between groups with the same letter: p > 0.05 in the multiple comparisons test using the Dunn procedure.

Income analyzed by Criterio Brasil.

Source: the authors
The analysis of the marketing mix showed that there is dissatisfaction of PATs consumers in the various items analyzed, however, higher levels of dissatisfaction were evidenced with regard to the difficulty of finding the desired product more easily, price, flavor and texture (Table 2).

Table 2. Satisfaction rates of attractive and mandatory quality of the consumer of Typical Handcrafted Products in relation to the marketing mix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerequisite for consumption (average score)</th>
<th>After purchase Satisfaction (average score)</th>
<th>Attribute index</th>
<th>Attribute Index rating</th>
<th>DMS*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>3.12 a</td>
<td>3.09 a</td>
<td>- 0.03</td>
<td>Negative 0.1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment methods</td>
<td>3.06 a</td>
<td>3.06 a</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Neutral 0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find in quantity</td>
<td>3.44 a</td>
<td>3.44 a</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Neutral 0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find easily</td>
<td>3.44 a</td>
<td>3.05 b</td>
<td>- 0.39</td>
<td>Negative 0.1530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food environment</td>
<td>1.81 a</td>
<td>1.82 1a</td>
<td>- 0.01</td>
<td>Negative 0.1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td>2.26 a</td>
<td>2.26 a</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Neutral 0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product appearance</td>
<td>1.57 a</td>
<td>1.80 b</td>
<td>+ 0.23</td>
<td>Positive 0.2611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>1.71 b</td>
<td>1.52 b</td>
<td>- 0.19</td>
<td>Negative 0.1891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavor</td>
<td>3.52 a</td>
<td>3.38 a</td>
<td>- 0.14</td>
<td>Negative 0.1614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smell</td>
<td>2.76 a</td>
<td>2.87 a</td>
<td>+ 0.11</td>
<td>Positive 0.1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasoning of the delicacy</td>
<td>1.66 a</td>
<td>1.66 b</td>
<td>- 0.00</td>
<td>Neutral 0.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*DMS= Minimum significant difference by Student's t-test.

Equal letters do not statistically differ from each other p< 0.05

Source: the authors

4 DISCUSSION

Consumer preference, and relation to the types of PATs, is similar to a research already carried out by Anacleto and Bornancin (2018) and has a greater adherence to artisanal sea fishing products and seafood, mostly from the bays of Guaratuba, Paranaguá, Antonina and Guaraqueçaba.

Seafood has always been related to this region, especially seasonal tourism when the region increases its population by up to ten times during the summer, in this context a large number of families residing in these beach areas make use of artisanal transformation into micro home industries for the production and trade based on these products, however the average annual consumption (6.26 times) is low given that the products reported by the interviewees are related to food and sold in a wide network of street vendors, kiosks and restaurants.

The frequency of consumption of a given product can define the success or extinction of a given productive segment (COBRA, 1992), however if the PATs are related to tourism, despite
the issue of price having emerged as one of the obstacles to greater consumption, it is urgent that it be implemented further analysis of the issue.

The production costs of PATs, especially heart of palm and seafood, are high once the consumer perceives that the cost of the product has broad benefits and provides satisfaction, the influence of the price factor can be reduced, a situation that apparently does not reflect the position of the consumption on the coast of Paraná, given that flavor and texture impose strong limits on consumer satisfaction and purchase loyalty.

Satisfaction comes from the feeling arising from the comparison of the expected performance of a product or service and is associated with the consumer's expectations, it should be a positive feeling, and according to Engel (2000) if satisfied, the consumer makes a new purchase and if not satisfied the product becomes rejected, in both cases viral marketing (word of mouth) can be a factor of influence, according to Kotler (2000) take care of the primordial qualities of your products worrying about the consumer's desires and a relevant strategy in the search of generating income and by establishing a “win-win” relationship with customers, when both parties feel satisfied, resulting in purchase loyalty or a feeling of loyalty to the product.

The quality of the product associated with the type of service at the establishment can generate true loyalty, this perspective considers, in addition to repurchase behavior, the attitude’s antecedents that lead to consumer commitment. But there may also be the so-called “false loyalty”, also called spurious, where the customer purchase is driven by a momentary behavior, but has low commitment to continuity, that is, he has no preference. This means that other factors are influencing this customer's purchase, such as, for example, a lower price or a more attractive substitute product. These people are more likely to switch products as the purchase may have been based on price or convenience. Finally, behavior without loyalty is identified, which refers to individuals who demonstrate a low attitude, that is, there is no preference and the behavior is fragile, as the purchase is not regularly, in these cases Lovelock and Wrigt (2003) point out that the strengthening of the relationship, involving activities aimed at developing economically efficient long-term links, which result in a relationship in the sphere of the win-win negotiations where both parties have the satisfaction of their objectives and the best alternative. If this negotiation is carried out satisfactorily, these customers, according to Kotler (2000), can become regular consumers of the product as well as, transforming themselves into a defender, being that
type of customer who recommends the products to others. Therefore, satisfaction is the result of the approach of an internal reference that is considered intangible, with the benefits acquired.

Specifically with regard to the PATs, the assumptions described must be a premise, and some signaled issues in the present study must be the focus of quality improvement, such as the standardization of production, the maintenance of artisanal characteristics, especially with regard to flavor and texture, facilitate the distribution of the desired product more easily and the price that was considered high.

The relationship between the price considered high and the difficulty of easily finding PATs reported by consumers forms a scenario that facilitates the influence of substitute products. Substitute products according to Porter (2008) can be classified as those that can replace the product target of the consumer's desire in conditions and free market, when most consumers, even if they have a desire for the consumption of a product, there is a price limit they are willing to pay to have access to that product. Substitute products reduce the potential returns of a good to the producer or manufacturer, because the more attractive the price-performance ratio of the substitute product, the pressure will be greater on the profits of products that can replace them in the consumer's purchase decision process. Still according to Porter (2008) a product can be classified as a substitute for another when both can perform the same function, similar function, or even cause an effect similar to the one desired by the consumer and it is urgent to remember that in theory all products offered on the market have a substitute product, which are manufactured or produced by other companies.

The PATs' production and trade actions must consider the assumptions of the marketing mix and prevent customers from seeking substitute products, so firstly the adoption of relationship marketing can be a very viable way of obtaining customer loyalty, it also points to organizations the advantages of keeping their current customers, in view of this situation, Engel (2000) says that one should prioritize the retention of current customers than the conquest of new customers. It usually costs less to keep customers than it does to acquire new ones. The loss of customers can be disastrous in mature markets that are experiencing little real growth, as is the case with PATs. Thus, customer loyalty based on genuine and continuous satisfaction is one of the greatest assets a company can acquire, as reported by Engel (2000).

To implement an effective relationship network in the organization, it is necessary to identify who the consumers of these products are and if it is possible that they are part of an
informal network with people satisfied with the product offered, sequentially it will be possible to identify through research what the customer's need is and how the same can be satisfied. The search for information can be done in a very simple way with forms and ballot boxes at the places of sale and in possession of the information it is possible to identify the needs and desires of the customers as described by Churchill (2000). Furlong (1994) mentions that it is not always possible to meet all the customer’s desires, and describes that it is necessary to direct the focus to the better ones with potential for consumer loyalty, the author recommends that first those who can be a source of influence be identified, either by viral marketing or social networks, and from there it is easier to identify whether the customer is passive in consumption or has more relevant attitudes (Figure 2).

The Furlong customer classification matrix (1994) reveals that the vertical axis is the net price obtained from your customers. The horizontal represents the cost of serving these customers including unique ordering, production, distribution, and after-sales costs.

“Passive” customers are the best: they are willing to pay high and the cost of serving them is limited, in these cases the factors related to the marketing mix identified as negative have little influence on consumption. The “most demanding” come next: they are willing to pay, but expect a high cost-benefit ratio, in this case the quality of knowledge should be considered as a factor.

Source: FURLONG, Carla B. Marketing to retain customers: organizational growth through customer retention. 1994, p.75.
to be mitigated in the production processes given that it was classified as a negative factor by most of the customers. Customers in the “bargaining area” are sensitive to prices, but the cost of serving them is low if this factor has a smaller impact, that is, a price reduction, even a small percentage, can mean an increase in consumption, however the reduction must be careful so that it still guarantees significant profits for production and trade. And finally “aggressive customers” who want the best service and good prices, in this case the non-fulfillment of desire and need implies that customers will promote criticism of the product, making it difficult for it to remain in the market (FURLONG, 1994). In this context, as important as identifying the customer’s desires, the production system must act with planning and organizational adaptability. Without these characteristics involved, it will be more difficult to develop a customer retention strategy, as this retention model must progress from the customer’s desires met by the production and trade system as described by Furlong (1994).

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study revealed that the main favorite delicacies were pastel, empadão, empadinha and risolis, and products processed based on shrimp were widely accepted by consumers (75.89%), followed by hearts of palm (28.91%) and products based on crab meat (n=12.25).

The study revealed that the general average consumption of PATs among the interviewed was 6.26 times a year-1, and among the interviewed there was no variation in the average number of times of consumption between genders, and the differences were not statistically significant among themselves (p < 0.001) regarding marital status, age and family composition. However, regarding income and education, a significant difference was observed as income increased, the consumption increased as well.

The analysis of the marketing mix showed that there is dissatisfaction of PATs consumers in the various items analyzed, however, higher levels of dissatisfaction were evidenced in regard to the difficulty of finding the desired product more easily, price, flavor and texture, and the relationship between the price considered high and the difficulty of easily finding PATs reported by consumers forms a scenario that facilitates the influence of substitute products.

It is concluded that in order to implement an effective relationship network in the production and trade of PATs, it is necessary to identify who the consumers of these products are, as well as to identify through research what the customer's need is and how he can have his
desire satisfied, this model of action can generate non-financial gains for both parties resulting in a “win-win” relationship between consumers, producers and traders of the PATs on the coast of Paraná.

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