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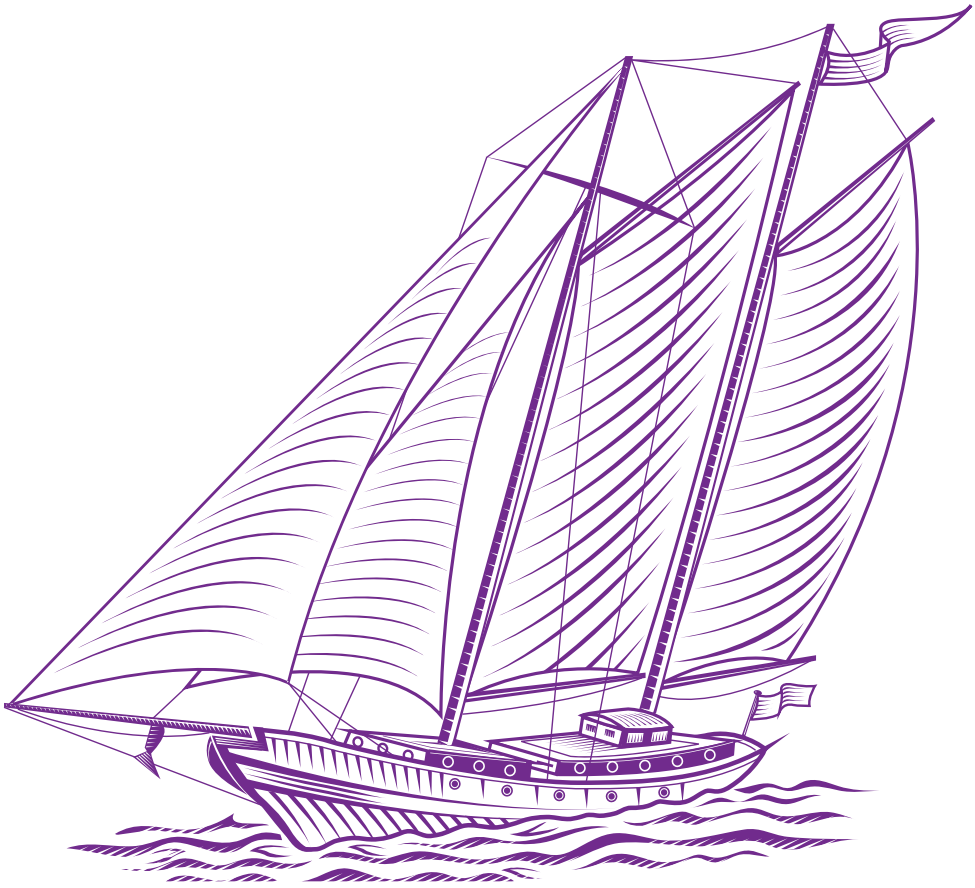

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A DIFFERENT APPROACH OF COMPETITIVE IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS: THE CASE OF YOUNG ROMANIANS' PREFERENCE FOR A LOCAL FAST-FOOD

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ABSTRACT. In a competitive market, if one uses the traditional Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) to evaluate service performance without considering the service level of competitors, misleading results may be obtained for managers responsible for developing improvement strategies. The purpose of this paper is to present a different approach of the Competitive Importance-Performance Analysis (CIPA) in order to evaluate the attributes that explain the preference of young people for a local fast-food in comparison with an international fast-food. The results revealed that the local fast-food is more competitive for only three attributes: the schedule, the low prices and the food consistency. The local fast-food's managers could use these attributes to obtain a unique position on the market and to conceive adequate marketing strategies for the young people's segment.

Keywords: Fast-food, Competitive importance-performance analysis, Attributes, Market

JEL classification: L83, L25

1. Introduction

The world's tendency of globalization and modernization led to rapid changes in the consumption habits and health status of the young people. One of the most important changes over the last 50 years is the development and marketing of the fast-food products. The fast-foods offer has especially affected

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young people (i.e. children and adolescents) (Seubsman et al., 2009). They are talking about the so-called "Fast-food culture" which is considered an emerging trend among the young people (Kaushik et al., 2011). The main features of fast-food products (the ready availability, familiarity with these products, the socializing possibility, the accessibility of the location, the convenience, the opening hours, home delivery, the availability of the menus at any time of the day, taste, low cost), peer pressure and the fast-foods' marketing strategies (maximizing the speed, efficiency and conformity, the menu is kept limited and standardized to minimize the waiting time etc.) are important factors that increase their demand among children and adolescents (Brown et al., 2000; Laroche et al., 2005; Goyal and Singh, 2007; Stevenson et al., 2007; Davis and Carpenter, 2009; Kaushik et al., 2011; Lachat et al., 2011; Stead et al., 2011; Dubuisson et al., 2012; Seliske et al., 2013; Untaru et al., 2013)

In Romania, fast-food restaurants appeared in the 1990s and fell quickly in Romanian landscape, thereby triggering a real phenomenon. Changes in eating habits and on the rhythm of life of big cities' inhabitants, the increase of the purchasing power, the emergence of a middle class may be the main explanation for the rise in consumption of fast-food products. Dining at fast-foods has turned for Romanians into a habit of contemporary lifestyle, obviously, it's an unhealthy eating behavior, but in accordance with capitalist society trends (Voinea, 2011). However, the research on Romanian young people's preference for fast-foods, on decision factors that support the choice of these type of units are of recent date and belong, in particular, to the academic field. Hence, a qualitative research that used semi-directive in-depth interviews with the restaurant managers from Brașov County investigated their perceptions of the quality of products and services they offer to consumers. The results of this research revealed that the young people segment is increasingly attracted to the fast-food restaurants (Untaru et al., 2012). This fact is also confirmed by the results of a previous qualitative research using the focus group method with a sample of 13 students from *Transilvania* University of Brașov. The aim of this paper was to investigate the preferences of the young people for local restaurants and the reasons that support their choices. Collected data analysis revealed the preferences for fast-foods of the young people. The attributes that the young people mentioned as determinant in choosing a fast-food were: the quickness of serving, the low prices, familiarity with these types of products, the socializing possibility, the accessibility of the location, the convenience offered by fast-food, home delivery and take away products, the menus display and the availability of the menus at any time of the day and the convenient opening hours (Untaru and Ispas, 2013). Further on, an exploratory study was conducted in order to identify the fast-foods that

the young people locate on the first two places from their consumption frequency's point of view.

The main objective of the present paper is to evaluate the importance and performance of different attributes of the fast-foods identified in the exploratory study. A different approach of the competitive importance-performance analysis was conducted in four stages (Lai and To, 2010): (1) identifying all the key attributes that define the importance and performance of the two fast-foods, (2) developing and conducting a survey to measure the perceived importance and performance of each attribute on separate Likert-based scales, (3) analysing the survey data collected by pairing the mean scores for each attribute as measured on the importance and performance scales, and (4) plotting the mean scores on a grid to assist management in decision making.

2. Review of literature

2.1. Consumption of fast-food products among young people

The preferences for fast-food among young people and the entering of international chains in almost all countries in the world caused an increase in the number of researches carried out in this field (Kara et al., 1995; Laroche et al., 2005; Goyal and Singh, 2007; Stevenson et al., 2007; Qin and Prybutok, 2008; Davis and Carpenter, 2009; Widome et al., 2009; Chen and Chen, 2010; Woodruff et al., 2010; Lachat et al., 2011; Dubuisson et al., 2012; DiSantis et al., 2013; Seliske et al., 2013). Researches carried out among young people and in connection with their habit to consume fast-food products have revealed significant conditions toward this behavior (Stead et al., 2011): their physical environment, which contains multiple cues promoting the consumption of energy dense foods (Kahn and Wansink, 2004); the superseding nature of factors inherent in foods (i.e. taste, smell, appearance) to instigate consumption in young people (Stevenson et al., 2007); inconsistencies between large portion size, satiation and subsequent energy intake compensation (Ello-Martin et al., 2005). Verma and Yadav (2010) conclude that the effects of other cultures and education were the main reasons of changing food habits.

Beyond the concerns related to the effects of fast-food consumption on the young people's health, considering that it is very difficult to change profoundly their consumption behavior, numerous authors (Brown et al., 2000; Qin and Prybutok, 2008; Palan et al., 2010; Verma and Yadav, 2010; Ariffin et al., 2011; Voon, 2012) have been directed toward studying the importance the young people grant to different attributes of restaurant (when they choose to dine out or to spend time with their friends). Voon (2012) examines the importance of service environment (servicescape and human service), food

quality and price from the youth's perspective. Price or the perceived value for money was generally found to be the most important factor in determining the youth loyalty. Qin and Prybutok (2008) also investigated the role of price/ value in determining customer satisfaction for fast-food restaurants but did not find it to be of significance. This is however believed to be due to the nature of fast-food restaurants in which price is relatively low and therefore not of central importance to consumers compared to other types of establishments such as fine-dining restaurants (Voon, 2012).

Nevertheless, the youth, who are not economically strong, may find that price is important to attract them to the restaurants. Kara et al. (1995) have presented the consumers' perceptions of and preferences for fast-food restaurants in the US and Canada. According to their study, the consumers aged between 12 to 24 years look for variety, price, delivery service and location in US and for price and novelties in Canada.

Kim and Chung (2011) have explored restaurant attributes that customers perceived to be important in their selection and examined if there is any difference in selection criteria between fast-service and full-service restaurants. They concluded that managers should determine which restaurant attributes are more important to their target customers to meet customers' expectations.

2.2. Consumption of fast-food products among Romanian young people

The fast-foods have largely influenced the consumption habits of Romanian people and have become a very profitable business for specific restaurant chains. However, the studies carried out in Romania are very few (ISRA Center Marketing Research, 2007; Unilever Food Solutions, 2011; Andreca and Halanei, 2013) and are focused on providing information about the profile of the Romanian people who dine out most often, what they would prefer to order, how much they usually pay for a meal and what the convenient hours to dine out are. The "Out of home consumption habits" study (Unilever Food Solutions, 2011) was conceived in March 2011 by Synovate Romania for Unilever Food Solutions on a representative sample for the population of 18-64 years in the urban area (891 respondents). The results revealed that the Romanians who dine out with a frequency of at least once in 2-3 months are characterized as having high incomes (more than 300 euro per month), they are full-time employed and graduates from high school and college. When dining out, the Romanians order differently depending on the age group to which they belong, as follows: those between 18-24 years of age choose to eat fast-food most often (pizza, shaorma and burgers), those between 25-34 years of age prefer snacks and seals potatoes, and the Romanians over 35 years of

age prefer traditional food: sour borsch, soups, dishes from meat (chicken snitzel or chicken wings) and deserts (Unilever Food Solutions, 2011).

Because fast-food is a quick meal, more than 70% of the Romanians who live in urban areas choose a fast-food when they go out, according to the results of a survey conducted by ISRA Center Marketing Research (2007). The study was conceived on a sample of 952 respondents aged between 20 and 60 years (from which 679 were eligible, i.e. they use to eat at fast-food) from the urban area. All the respondents asserted that they prefer the quick meals due to their lack of time. The same survey showed that one out of three Romanians consumes fast-food products only during the weekend, and one out of five both during the week and during the weekend. Cleanliness is the main aspect that about half of the respondents take into account when choosing the fast food. About two-thirds of respondents prefer fast-food products because they are a quick meal. The taste of fast food is to the liking of about half of the interviewees, and one-quarter appreciate its variety (ISRA Center Marketing Research, 2007).

Regarding the fast-food consumption among young people, the Romanian academic literature is very poor with respect to the amount of information in this field. According to a survey conducted in 2008 by the National Agency for Supporting Young People's Initiative (ANSIT) and financed by the National Authority for Tourism (ANT), the fast-food consumption is very frequent among young people up to 25 years of age (ANSIT, 2008). 46% of the young people between 20-24 years of age and 44% of those between 14 and 19 years of age frequently consume such products. The option for fast-food products is the most mentioned among pupils and students (45%) in comparison with young people that are active in the labor market (32%) or those inactive (27%). Also, these types of products are much more consumed in the urban areas (41%) than in the rural areas (27%).

At the request of The National Authority for Sport and Youth, Romanian Institute for Assessment and Strategy (IRES), "the public opinion barometer – Youth 2012" was carried out in 2012. It revealed that 21% of the young Romanians eat daily from fast-food and 36% of them 2-3 times a week, while only 14% of the respondents asserted that they did not consume such food products. Many of the young people aged between 18 and 35 years of age declare themselves as followers of fast-foods (IRES, 2012). Although the information provided by these studies are valuable in terms of knowledge consumption habits of young Romanians, they have a series of disadvantages arising from the general nature of the research carried out – from the perspective of their objectives, the respondents included in the sample, the error with which they have been guaranteed results, etc.

2.3. Importance-performance analysis (IPA)

The importance and performance analysis of the attributes that characterize the activity of an organization has been carried out for the first time by Martilla and James (1977), who were the first to introduce IPA for a study of an automobile service dealer. Matzler et al. (2004) noted that IPA has two assumptions. On one hand, attribute performance and attribute importance are independent variables and, on the other hand, the interdependence between attribute performance and overall performance is linear and symmetrical. Martilla and James (1977) conceived an IP matrix which classified the importance and performance attributes on a scale of low to high, making the interpretation of data easier. The first quadrant (*Concentrate here*) means that importance levels are very high for respondents, but performance levels are very low. This suggests that improvement efforts should be concentrated here. The second quadrant (*Keep up the good work*) means that both importance and performance attributes have high levels for respondents. The message here is to keep up the good work. The third quadrant (*Lower priority*) means that both importance and performance attributes have low levels for respondents. However, managers should not be concerned, since the attributes in this cell are not perceived to be very important. This suggests that limited resources should be expended on the attributes in this quadrant. Finally, the fourth quadrant (*Possible overkill*) means that importance levels are very low for respondents, but performance levels are very high. In this situation, managers should reconsider their efforts on the attributes of this quadrant.

The key objective of IPA is thus diagnostic in nature, allowing managers and marketers to identify important attributes where the product or service is under or overperforming (Abalo et al., 2007). IPA method has proven to be a broadly applicable tool which is relatively easy to administer and interpret resulting in extensive use among researchers and managers in various industries (Hosseini and Bideh, 2014). The IPA framework has been widely applied in various fields and contexts including food services (Sampson and Showalter, 1999; Tontini and Silveira, 2007), education (Alberty and Mihalik, 1989; Ford et al., 1999; Kitcharoen, 2004), healthcare (Dolinsky, 1991; Abalo et al., 2007), banking (Matzler et al., 2003; Yeo, 2003; Joseph et al., 2005), public administration (Van Ryzin and Immerwahr, 2004), e-business and IT (Levenburg and Magal, 2005; Hosseini and Bideh, 2014), tourism or tourism destination (Hudson et al., 2004; Deng, 2007).

Despite the simplicity of IPA, its applicability has certain limitations (Matzler et al., 2004). For instance, no definitive standard is available for setting the range of horizontal and vertical axes, measurement scale, and placement of

the crosshairs (i.e. vertical and horizontal lines) in IPA. Measurement biases and placement of the crosshairs both influence the quadrant of the IPA plot to which the service attributes fall into, subsequently affecting the reliability of decisions in terms of improving service quality (Oh, 2001; Taplin, 2012). IPA is also limited in that it considers only its own performance and disregards the relative performance of competitors in a competitive marketplace (Keyt et al., 1994), making it impossible for a business to recognize its market share and ultimately diminishing their competitive edge.

The performance of competitors has occasionally been included in IPA (Dolinsky, 1991; Dolinsky and Caputo, 1991; Yavas and Shemwell, 2001; Kim and Oh, 2002; Kaczyski and Crompton, 2004). This literature typically investigates restaurants or healthcare. While performance is compared between the competing venues, it assumes the importance of each attribute is the same at the two venues. Denga et al. (2008) presented a revised IPA that integrates a three-factor theory and benchmarking. The proposed revised IPA also completes quantitative competitive analysis about the best business competitor. The revised IPA that includes the actual importance of service attributes and a competitive situation assists business managers in resolving service quality management and customer satisfaction management issues.

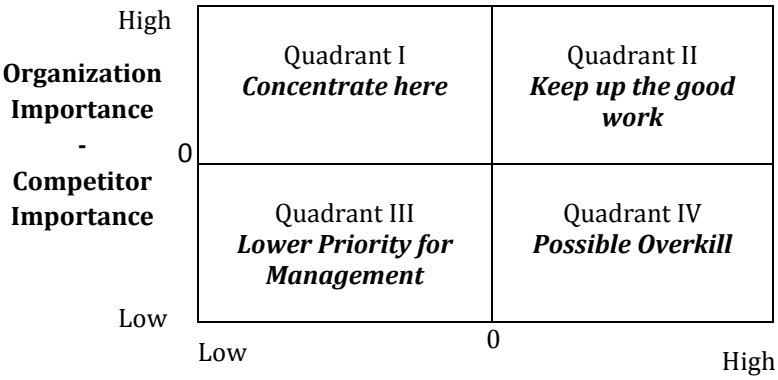

Fig. 1. Competitive Importance-Performance Analysis (CIPA)
Source: based on Martilla, J.A. et al. (1977)

In a competitive market, if one uses the traditional IPA to evaluate service performance without considering the service level of competitors, misleading results may be obtained for managers responsible for developing improvement strategies (Chen, 2014). Therefore, results obtained through a comparison with competitors can more effectively assist managers in devising appropriate improvement strategies and making resource allocation decisions, ultimately helping a business to gain a competitive advantage.

Competitive IPA (CIPA) is an IPA-type analytical method based on two indices: mean difference in performance and importance. To extend the practical applications of IPA, CIPA compares both the importance of each service attribute within the Caversham Wildlife Park and also the importance of each service attribute between the Caversham Wildlife Park and its competitors (Taplin, 2012). By benchmarking against competitors, CIPA determines the placement of crosshairs, reduces measurement biases, and determines the market position. CIPA is applicable not only to tourism, but also to other management or marketing-related areas of a product or service (Taplin, 2012). This comparison with competitors can help businesses to understand more thoroughly their positions in the competitive marketplace (fig.1).

According to Taplin (2012), the competitive importance-performance analysis (CIPA) includes two levels of importance and performance with a view to carry out a comparison between an organization and competition that is an entity typically referred to as benchmarking. CIPA method proposes enhancements to the Importance-performance analysis (IPA) and the corresponding gap (performance minus importance) analysis. This methodological advancement places IPA within the competitive world, eliminates measurement biases and solves a recurring problem in IPA regarding the placement of crosshairs.

3. Method

3.1. A different approach of CIPA

A different approach of CIPA, using a single section of importance (absolute importance), is due to a large number of attributes used in the questionnaire (48 statements for each of the three sections: importance, LFF performance and IFF performance). The use of two levels of importance and performance, in accordance with the method proposed by Taplin (2012) would hinder the process of completing them by the respondents, which may give rise to problems related to the completion of the survey questionnaire (refusal of respondents to participate in the interview, partial completion of the questionnaire etc.).

CIPA can be represented in a two-dimensional plot of performance and importance similar to IPA. The horizontal axis is the mean performance at LFF

minus the mean performance at IFF, with the the mean performance at LFF minus the importance on the vertical axis (fig. 2).

The gap is defined as the mean performance minus the mean importance. Gap analysis typically compares gaps with the benchmark of zero. Positive gaps (performance exceeds importance) are considered satisfactory while negative gaps (where performance is lower than importance) indicate management attention may be required. Gap analysis can be viewed as a reduction of the two-dimensional IPA to a one-dimensional scale. This can be achieved by adding a diagonal line from the lower left to the upper right where performance equals importance. Attributes falling to the right of this line have positive gaps and attributes falling to the left of this line have negative gaps. When two attributes fall on different lines, the attribute with the higher gap lies on the line to the right. Hence gap analysis retains the information concerning which diagonal line the attribute falls onto but ignores the information concerning where on this line the attribute falls. Although this dimensional reduction must involve some loss of information, the assumption of gap analysis is that, by retaining the dimension of most interest to management, little useful information is lost (Taplin, 2012).

In CIPA method, the most important direction is from top left to bottom right because the quadrants "concentrate management here" and "possible overkill" suggest more need for management action that the "keep up the good work" and "low priority for managers" quadrants. The approach used in this research proposes some changes in interpretation of the values falling to the left and to the right of the diagonal line. Thus, the triangle which suggests more need for management action is the one from the top left, because, in this area, the importance exceeds the competitor performance.

Mathematically, the difference in gap values –LFF performance minus IFF performance (G_1), on the horizontal axis, and LFF performance minus importance (G_2), on the vertical axis – is given by:

$$\begin{aligned} G_1 &= P_1 - P_2 \\ G_2 &= P_1 - I \\ G_0 &= G_1 - G_2 = (P_1 - P_2) - (P_1 - I) \end{aligned} \qquad \text{(i)}$$

where, P_1 denotes performance for LFF, P_2 is performance for IFF, I is the importance, and G_1, G_2 and G_0 denote gaps. One sample t-tests were used to test whether the differences in gaps (G_1, G_1 and G_0) differ significantly from zero. The statistical software SPSS 16 was used for all calculations.

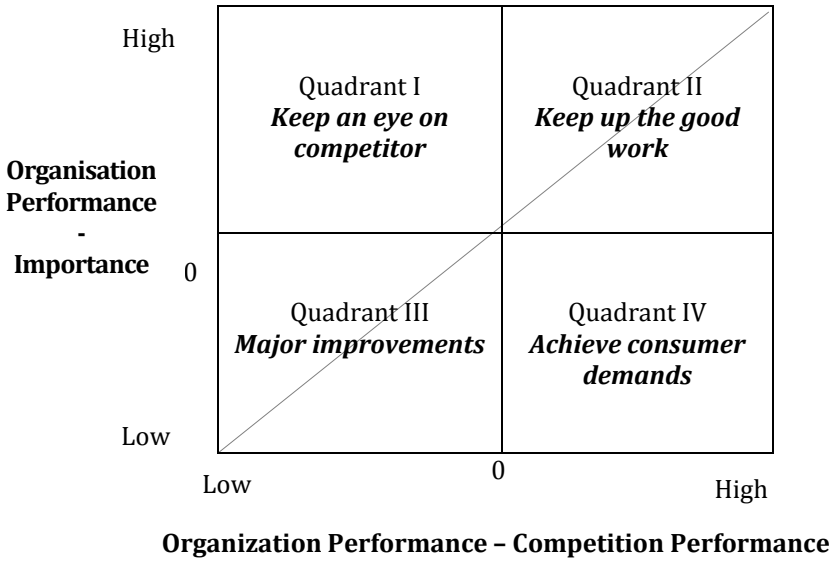

Fig. 2. A different approach of CIPA

When plotting these differences (as in fig. 2), crosshairs can logically be placed through zero as it compares LFF performance with the importance (on the vertical axis) and with IFF performance (on the horizontal axis), "comparing the importance and performance at this venue with these crosshairs is equivalent to comparing differences in importance and performance with zero" (Taplin, 2012, p. 32).

Positioning attributes in the four quadrants requires some changes in the interpretation of results, but also in labeling quadrants I, III and IV (fig. 2). Negative values on the vertical axis indicate that the LFF performance is lower than the importance, meaning that LFF management should be required to submit significant efforts to improve the performance of the attributes in quadrants III (*Major improvements*) and IV (*Achieve consumer demands*). For the attributes in quadrant III, LFF should make substantial efforts to achieve the level of importance as well as the level of IFF performance. For the attributes in quadrant IV, the LFF performance exceeds the IFF performance but is lower than the importance, wherefore the management of LFF should improve those attributes to achieve the level of importance.

The attributes in quadrants I (*Keep an eye on competitor*) and II (*Keep up the good work*) have positive values on the vertical axis (LFF performance exceeds importance). For the attributes in quadrant I, the management of LFF

should allocate resources to improve them up to the level at which its performance is equal to that of the competitor. On the other hand, for the attributes in quadrant II, where the LFF performance exceeds importance and IFF performance, the management of LFF should use those attributes to achieve a competitive advantage on the market. For the values in quadrant II, to the left of the diagonal line, G_2 is higher than G_1, which means that LFF allocate too many resources for those attributes. For the values in the triangle to the right of the diagonal line, G_2 is lower than G_1, which means that LFF allocate an adequate quantity of resources for those attributes and should use them to obtain a unique position on the market.

3.2. Survey methods

The questionnaire which we have used as a basis for the application of the CIPA method included four sections. The questionnaire was pre-tested among a group of students familiar with this subject, for the purpose of checking whether the statements have been formulated clearly, correctly and without ambiguities. The first section included questions related to the demographics of young people, and the other three sections were taken into account by 48 statements concerning the attributes which young people considered important in the choice of a fast-food. As can be seen in table 1, the 48 statements refer to the exterior and interior facilities of a fast-food (1-3), the comfort (4-5), the cleanliness (6-7), the employees (8-20), the fast-food's image (21), the dishes (22-37), the fast serving (38-39), the products supply (40), the consumption's safety (41), the brand trust (42), the promotions/ discounts (43), the information's visibility on available products (44), the atmosphere (45), the price (46-47) and the schedule (48). Table 1 presents the results from SPSS program: mean importance (I), mean performance for the local fast-food (LFF Perf.), mean performance for the international fast-food (IFF Perf.), differences in the mean performances (G_1= LFF Perf. - IFF Perf.), difference in the local fast-food mean performance and importance (G_2=LFF Perf.-I), difference between G_1 and G_2 (G_0), with significantly levels for G_1, G_2 and G_0 (sig. 1, sig. 2 and sig. 3).

Tabel 1.

IPA and CIPA results

Attributes	LFF Perf.	IFF Perf.	G_1	Sig.1	I	G_2	Sig.2	G_0	Sig.3
1. Fast-food has a convenient location.	4.49	4.78	-0.277	0.000	4.44	0.055	0.201	-0.334	0.000
2. Fast-food has an attractive exterior.	4.11	4.59	-0.472	0.000	4.32	-0.212	0.000	-0.263	0.000
3. Fast-food has an attractive interior.	4.11	4.61	-0.496	0.000	4.55	-0.439	0.000	-0.059	0.128
4. Fast-food makes me feel comfortable.	4.02	4.51	-0.478	0.000	4.46	-0.425	0.000	-0.051	0.169
5. Fast-food offers consumers adequate seats and spaces.	4.14	4.52	-0.385	0.000	4.53	-0.392	0.000	0.006	0.868
6. Facilities are clean.	4.20	4.59	-0.383	0.000	4.90	-0.694	0.000	0.303	0.000
7. Toilet is clean.	4.23	4.61	-0.381	0.000	4.91	-0.680	0.000	0.297	0.000
8. Employees behave properly.	4.18	4.60	-0.410	0.000	4.73	-0.536	0.000	0.124	0.000
9. Employees have an adequate apparel.	4.30	4.72	-0.416	0.000	4.37	-0.082	0.061	-0.341	0.000
10. Employees have a pleasant appearance.	3.96	4.46	-0.503	0.000	4.02	-0.064	0.169	-0.441	0.000
11. Employees' apparel is clean.	4.21	4.67	-0.450	0.000	4.76	-0.545	0.000	0.093	0.004
12. Employees respond quickly to my questions and requirements.	4.21	4.57	-0.356	0.000	4.47	-0.254	0.000	-0.104	0.007
13. Employees are polite.	4.12	4.49	-0.374	0.000	4.73	-0.609	0.000	0.237	0.000
14. Employees' behavior is trustworthy.	3.96	4.39	-0.427	0.000	4.34	-0.385	0.000	-0.051	0.251
15. Employees have the competence to answer my questions.	4.05	4.42	-0.370	0.000	4.30	-0.239	0.000	-0.126	0.002
16. Employees smile.	3.90	4.32	-0.414	0.000	3.96	-0.062	0.154	-0.363	0.000
17. Employees use simple language.	4.23	4.40	-0.172	0.000	4.19	0.037	0.394	-0.210	0.000
18. Employees are friendly.	3.93	4.31	-0.376	0.000	4.16	-0.226	0.000	-0.148	0.001
19. Employees apologize quickly if they are wrong.	3.93	4.37	-0.445	0.000	4.20	-0.268	0.000	-0.177	0.000
20. Employees shall provide the order as it was made.	4.29	4.53	-0.239	0.000	4.79	-0.485	0.000	0.241	0.000
21. Fast-food communicates a young image.	4.15	4.48	-0.325	0.000	3.86	0.277	0.000	-0.612	0.000
22. The dishes' quality meets consumer needs.	4.24	4.39	-0.150	0.000	4.70	-0.458	0.000	0.301	0.000
23. The dishes' variety meets consumer needs.	4.26	4.40	-0.139	0.002	4.53	-0.270	0.000	0.126	0.004
24. The dishes are permanently in the menu.	4.30	4.46	-0.164	0.000	4.40	-0.102	0.020	-0.062	0.151
25. The dishes are fresh.	4.20	4.41	-0.197	0.000	4.92	-0.711	0.000	0.507	0.000
26. The dishes are prepared hygienically.	4.20	4.41	-0.208	0.000	4.92	-0.722	0.000	0.510	0.000
27. The dishes have a pleasant aroma.	4.36	4.58	-0.212	0.000	4.78	-0.412	0.000	0.197	0.000
28. The dishes are well prepared.	4.32	4.54	-0.219	0.000	4.82	-0.505	0.000	0.279	0.000
29. The dishes are visually attractive.	4.35	4.64	-0.288	0.000	4.55	-0.208	0.000	-0.086	0.021
30. The ingredients are of good quality.	4.06	4.28	-0.215	0.000	4.84	-0.762	0.000	0.545	0.000
31. The dishes have a low number of calories.	4.04	4.10	-0.053	0.208	4.19	-0.139	0.003	0.084	0.089
32. Fast-food provides information about the number of calories.	4.21	4.21	0.013	0.765	4.19	0.017	0.721	-0.026	0.580
33. The dishes' and beverages' temperature is adequate.	4.17	4.40	-0.221	0.000	4.54	-0.370	0.000	0.150	0.000
34. Fast-food offers the possibility to add additional ingredients.	4.49	4.50	-0.017	0.640	4.49	-0.008	0.824	-0.006	0.873
35. The dishes are tasty.	4.46	4.64	-0.175	0.000	4.82	-0.361	0.000	0.181	0.000
36. The dishes are full.	4.37	4.33	0.046	0.242	4.41	-0.039	0.332	0.082	0.059
37. Fast-food offers the possibility to customize the menu.	4.18	4.40	-0.208	0.000	4.35	-0.155	0.001	-0.053	0.222
38. Fast-food supplies the order in time.	4.23	4.51	-0.277	0.000	4.70	-0.465	0.000	0.188	0.000
39. The waiting time at the cashier is short.	4.05	4.25	-0.206	0.000	4.42	-0.370	0.000	0.172	0.000
40. Fast-food permanently adds new dishes in the menu list.	3.80	4.26	-0.445	0.000	3.92	-0.117	0.008	-0.348	0.000
41. I feel safe when I eat fast-food's dishes.	4.04	4.18	-0.130	0.002	4.66	-0.618	0.000	0.483	0.000

42. The fast-food's brand is recognized and I trust it.	4.10	4.40	-0.292	0.000	4.37	-0.270	0.000	-0.031	0.491
43. Fast-food has promotions/discounts.	4.00	4.36	-0.343	0.000	4.18	-0.166	0.001	-0.184	0.000
44. Information on dishes is visible to consumers.	4.12	4.38	-0.263	0.000	4.55	-0.414	0.000	0.159	0.000
45. The atmosphere is pleasant.	4.11	4.50	-0.381	0.000	4.44	-0.330	0.000	-0.055	0.171
46. The price is in accordance with that communicated.	4.51	4.54	-0.033	0.336	4.79	-0.279	0.000	0.248	0.000
47. The price is low.	4.10	3.97	0.130	0.003	4.11	-0.011	0.796	0.139	0.002
48. The schedule is convenient.	4.59	4.41	0.177	0.000	4.56	0.022	0.567	0.155	0.000

Mean performance for LFF (LFF Perf.), mean performance for IFF (IFF Perf.), differences in the mean performances (G_1= LFF Perf. - IFF Perf.), difference in the LFF mean performance and importance (G_2=LFF Perf.-I), difference between G_1 şi G_2 (G_0), with significantly levels for G_1, G_2 and G_0 (sig. 1, sig. 2 and sig. 3), mean importance (I).

The semantic differential scale was applied for the assessment of the upper attributes, as follows: for the section relating to Importance, the value 1 means that the attribute is "unimportant", the value 2 means that the attribute is "relatively unimportant", the value 3 means indifference of the young people toward the attribute, value 4 means "relatively important" and the value 5 means "important". Similarly, the Likert scale was applied for the sections related to the local fast-food Performance (LFF) and the international fast-food Performance (IFF), value 1 meaning the total agreement with the statement, value 5 meaning the total disagreement and value 3 meaning indifference towards that attribute.

Data collection has been taken into account using a cluster sampling combined with a systematic sampling. Out of the 29 high schools, vocational schools, post-secondary schools and the existing craftsmen in Braşov County, a number of 10 units were chosen at random, and out of the 7 universities, a number of 2 were chosen at random. Then, using a systematic sampling, a number of 200 pupils and 251 students were selected, in proportion to the percentage each category has in the total number of pupils and students from Braşov County –23,502 pupils and 26,267 students (Statistical Yearbook, 2012). The young people were selected to participate in an interview only if they had consumed the products of the two fast-foods at least once in the last month. Reliability assessment demonstrated acceptable Cronbach's alpha for all scales (0,963) based on Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

4. Results

4.1. Young people's profiles

Out of the 460 questionnaires distributed in the educational establishments, 9 have been rejected since they have not been entirely completed, thus obtaining a number of 451 questionnaires. 44% of the total numbers of respondents are pupils and 56% students. 35% of the subjects

aged between 14-18 years of age, 36% were between 19-21 years of age and 29% between 22-24 years of age. Approximately 64% of the total subjects are females and 36% are males. As regards the income, it should be specified that there were used two types of questionnaires, one for pupils and another for students. The difference between the two types of questionnaires lies in the fact that, in the case of pupils (14-17 years old), the question related to income has been left out, as they do not know how to answer this question. The question relating to income indicates that 38.6% of the students have an income of up to 227 Euro per family member, 13.9% have an income ranging between 228 and 341 Euro per family member and 9.4% of more than 341 Euro per family member. With regard to the source of income, 72.4% of the students declared that they are supported by their parents, 21.6% of them work and 6% have scholarships or other sources of income.

4.2. IPA results

Table 1 includes the LFF mean performance (LFF perf.), the mean importance (I), the mean difference (G_2) and the statistical significance (sig. 2), which indicates that G_2 differs significantly from zero. These values are used to perform importance-performance analysis (IPA) – fig. 3. These are typically displayed in a two dimensional plot with importance on the vertical axis and performance on the horizontal axis (Martilla and James, 1977; Ryan and Cressford, 2003).

Figure 3 is the plot of importance-performance analysis. We can notice that the most attributes are located in quadrants II (*Keep up the good work*) and III (*Lower priority*) – sixteen attributes for each of the two quadrants. This placement of the attributes confirms the results obtained by Ryan and Huyton (2002), who found positive correlations between the performance and importance assigned to attributes and suggested performance is a function of importance.

Out of the sixteen attributes in quadrant II, only the attribute 48 ("The schedule is convenient.") has positive differences, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating a higher performance of LFF than importance (table 1). For the attribute 34 ("Fast-food offers the possibility to add additional ingredients."), the LFF performance is equal to importance (G_2 is zero). The other fourteen attributes – the cleanliness (6, 7), the employees (11, 20), the dishes (22, 23, 25-29, 35), the fast serving (38) and the price (46), have negative differences, statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), when the LFF performance is lower than the importance. The latter attributes are close to quadrant I (*Concentrate here*) and require substantial efforts from the LFF's management to improve them to achieve the importance level.

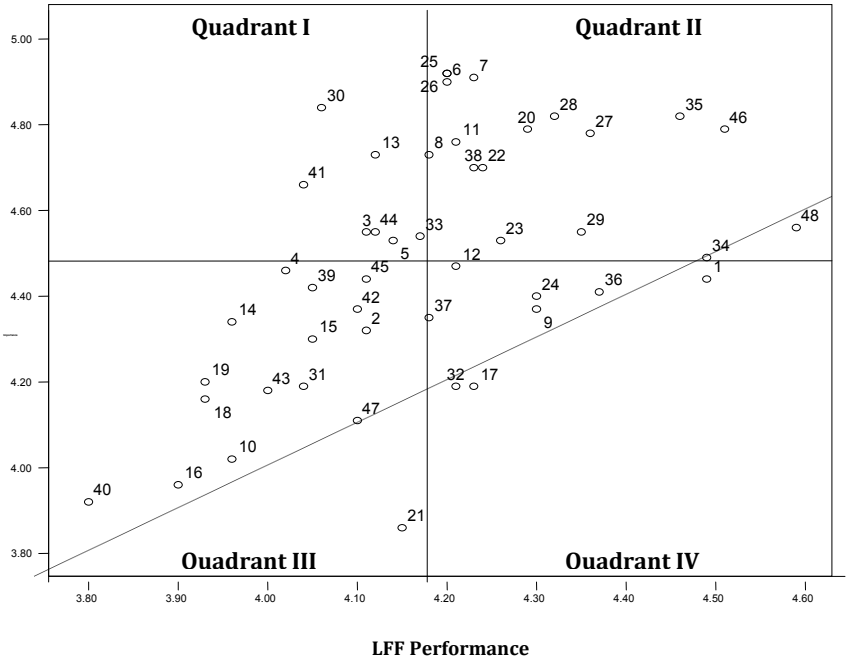

Fig. 3. Importance-performance analysis (IPA) for LFF

Quadrant III (*Lower priority*) includes attributes with lower levels of importance and performance; an improvement should not represent a priority for LFF. Table 1 indicates that only the attribute 21 ("Fast-food communicates a young image.") has a positive difference, statistically significant, and the LFF performance exceeds importance. Also, the attributes 47 ("The price is low."), 10 ("Employees have a pleasant appearance.") and 16 ("Employees smile.") have negative differences, but they are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$); the LFF performance is, therefore, closer to the importance. Quadrant I (*Concentrate here*) includes the attributes 30 ("The ingredients are of good quality."), 41 ("I feel safe when I eat fast-food's dishes."), 13 ("Employees are polite."), 3 ("Fast-food has an attractive interior."), 44 ("Information on dishes is visible to consumers."), 33 ("The dishes' and beverages' temperature is adequate.") and 5 ("Fast-food offers consumers adequate seats and spaces."). Table 1 indicates that the differences in G_2 for the upper attributes are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$); the LFF efforts should focus on their improvement. The attributes in quadrant IV (*Possible overkill*) have lower importance levels but higher performance levels. Table 1 indicates that the attributes 32 ("Fast-food provides information about the number of

calories.”), 17 (“Employees use simple language.”) and 1 (“Fast-food has a convenient location.”) have positive differences in G_2 but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). On the other hand, for the attributes 12 (“Employees respond quickly to my questions and requirements.”) and 24 (“The dishes are permanently in the menu.”) the differences in G_2 are negative and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

4.3. CIPA results

Table 1 includes the LFF’s mean performance, IFF’s mean performance, the differences between LFF’s mean performance and IFF’s mean performance (G_1) and the statistical significance (sig. 1) for G_1 that the gap differs from zero. Figure 4 indicates the results of CIPA, with the difference in G_1, on the horizontal axis, and in G_2, on the vertical axis, with horizontal and vertical crosshairs placed at zero.

Quadrant II (*Keep up the good work*) includes the attribute 48 (“The schedule is convenient.”), to the right of the diagonal line. For this attribute, the difference in G_2 is positive, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), and the difference in G_1 is positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) – table 1. Thus, G_2 is lower than G_1 and the difference in G_0 is positive and statistically significant. For this reason, the attribute 48 could be used by LFF to obtain a competitive advantage on the market. The attribute 32 (“Fast-food provides information about the number of calories.”) is located in quadrant II, on the vertical axis, close to the origin, and the difference in G_1 and G_2 is positive, but it is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). The attributes 36 (“The dishes are full.”) and 47 (“The price is low.”) are located in quadrant IV (*Achieve consumer demands*), but close to quadrant II (*Keep up the good work*), with positive differences in G_1 and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), and negative differences in G_1 and statistically not significant ($p > 0.05$). The attribute 34 (“Fast-food offers the possibility to add additional ingredients.”) is placed between quadrant I (*Keep an eye on competitor*) and III (*Major improvements*), the difference in G_2 is equal to zero and the difference in G_1 is negative, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

The attributes 21 (“Fast-food communicates a young image.”), 1 (“Fast-food has a convenient location.”) and 17 (“Employees use simple language.”) are located in quadrant I (*Keep an eye on competitor*), with the LFF’s mean performance exceeding the importance, but lower than the IFF’s mean performance. The differences in G_2 are positive, but they are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), and negative, but statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) in G_1 for the attributes 1 and 17. Also, the differences in G_2 are positive, but not

statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), and negative, but statistically significant in G_1 for the attribute 21. LFF should focus on improvement of the attributes in quadrant I to achieve the IFF's performance.

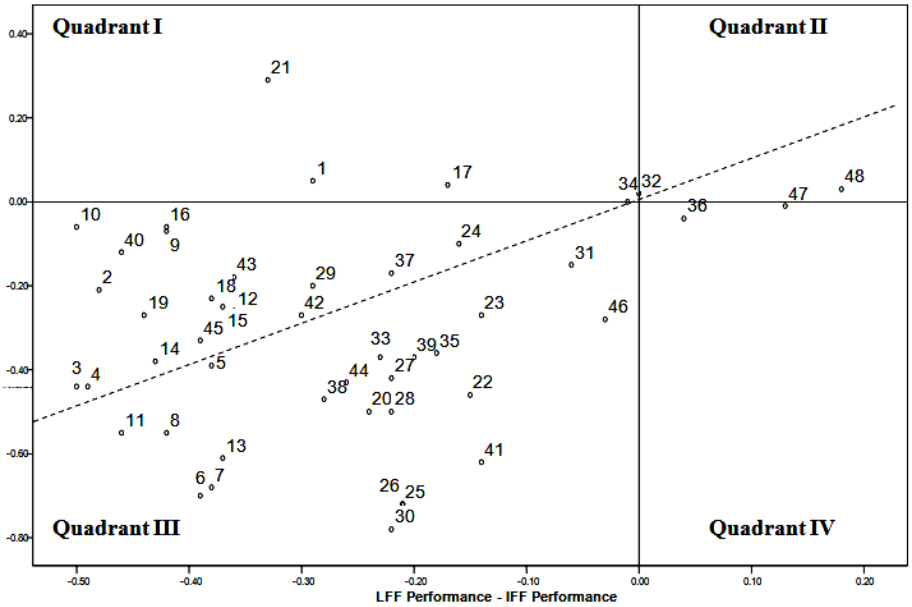

Fig. 4. Competitive Importance-Performance Analys

Most attributes (forty out of forty-eight) are located in quadrant III (*Major improvements*), where the LFF's performance is lower than the importance and the IFF's performance. We can notice that the attributes 9 ("Employees have an adequate apparel."), 10 ("Employees have a pleasant appearance.") and 16 ("Employees smile.") have negative differences in G_2, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), while for the attributes 31 ("The dishes have a low number of calories.") and 46 ("The price is in accordance with that communicated.") the differences in G_1 are not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). The differences in G_1 and G_2 are negative and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) for all other attributes in quadrant III: exterior and interior facilities (2, 3), comfort (4, 5), cleanliness (6, 7), employees (8, 11-15, 18-20), dishes (22-30, 33, 35, 37), fast serving (38, 39), products supply (40), consumption's safety (41), brand trust (42), promotions/discounts (43), information's visibility on available products (44) and atmosphere (45).

5. Discussion

IPA method has been used by a large number of specialists due to the advantages offered to the company's management. According to Sampson and Showalter (1999), while consisting of two dimensions and four quadrants based on evaluations of performance and importance of the attributes, IPA is an effective means of prioritizing attributes. Oh (2001) cited the variety of literature using IPA and concluded the main reasons for its wide acceptance included its ease of application and ability to present strategic recommendations together with data. In addition to facilitating a matrix-based evaluation of how the quadrants differ from each other, IPA allows managers to identify areas in which they must reallocate resources (Matzler et al., 2004). On the other hand, using the competition is useful for a company's management as to evaluate and determine the best improvements of performance by benchmarking against the service levels of competitors, allowing businesses to gain a competitive edge (Keyt et al., 1994; Taplin, 2012).

The different approach of CIPA in this paper has used the difference between LFF's mean performance and importance, on the vertical axis, and the difference between LFF's mean performance and IFF's mean performance, on the horizontal axis. The advantage of this method is the possibility to observe simultaneously the LFF's performance in comparison to the importance and the IFF's performance. On the other hand, the method's disadvantage is that it uses a single section of importance. According to Oh (2001), two competing companies are the same in terms of importance of service attributes. Such an assumption is irrational because, in a competitive marketplace, each company is unique, explaining why different companies assign different levels of importance to various service attributes. On the basis of the observation according to which consumers tend to rate the importance by using high values, placing most attributes in quadrant II (Garver, 2002; Wade and Eagle, 2003; Gustafsson and Johnson, 2004; Abalo et al., 2007), the proposed method eliminates this disadvantage by using the difference between LFF's performance and importance, on the vertical axis.

The method IPA highlighted that the LFF's performance exceeds the importance for the attributes 1, 17, 21, 32 and 48 (table 1). The attribute 48 ("The schedule is convenient.") is located in quadrant II (*Keep up the good work*), to the right of the diagonal line (performance exceeds importance) and the attribute 34 ("Fast-food offers the possibility to add additional ingredients.") is placed on the diagonal (performance is equal to importance), so that they could be used by the LFF's management to obtain a competitive advantage on the market.

Introduction to the analysis of the main competitor (IFF) changes the positions of the attributes in the plot (fig. 4). Thus, quadrant II (*Keep up the good work*) includes the attributes: 48 ("The schedule is convenient.") – as in the IPA plot – and 32 ("Fast-food provides information about the number of calories.") – in quadrant IV in the IPA plot. The difference in G_2 is positive, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$) and the difference in G_1 is positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) for the attribute 48; the LFF's management should use this attribute to obtain a competitive advantage on the market. Also, the differences in G_1 and G_2 are positive, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). We can also notice that the attribute 47 ("The price is low.") is located in quadrant III (*Lower priority*) in IPA plot, but in quadrant IV (*Achieve consumer demands*) in the CIPA plot. One sample t-tests indicates that the difference in G_2 is negative, but not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), and positive, but statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) for the attribute 47. Therefore, LFF's management could use the low prices to obtain a competitive advantage on the market. The attribute 36 ("The dishes are full.") is in quadrant IV (*Possible overkill*) in the IPA plot and in quadrant IV (*Achieve consumer demands*) in CIPA plot. One sample t-tests indicates that the differences in G_2 are negative, but not statistically significant, and the differences in G_1 are positive, but not statistically significant. The attribute 34 ("Fast-food offers the possibility to add additional ingredients.") is located in quadrant II (*Keep up the good work*) in the IPA plot and between quadrant I (*Keep an eye on competitor*) and III (*Major improvements*) in the CIPA plot, but the differences are not statistically significant for G_1 and G_2. The LFF's performance is lower than the IFF's performance for the attributes 1 ("Fast-food has a convenient location."), 17 ("Employees use simple language.") and 21 ("Fast-food communicates a young image."), which are in quadrant I (*Keep an eye on competitor*) in CIPA plot, although they were placed in quadrant III (attribute 21) or IV (attributes 1 and 17).

6. Conclusions and future research

The different approach of CIPA used in the present paper highlighted that IFF has a higher performance than the LFF's performance. Figure 4 indicates that LFF has a higher performance for the attributes 48 ("The schedule is convenient."), 32 ("Fast-food provides information about the number of calories."), 47 ("The price is low."), 36 ("The dishes are full.") and 34 ("Fast-food offers the possibility to add additional ingredients."). These results could be correlated with those from a previous research which has established that information relating to price and quality has a bearing on

consumers' evaluations of fast-food brands (Laroche and Toffoli, 1999). Although IFF has a higher performance than LFF, the young people prefer the latter one as it achieves to a greater extent their demands – to dine out any time of the day and to have full and cheap dishes. The results are also confirmed by the respondents' answers concerning the consumption's frequency at the two fast-foods. Hence, 44.3% of the total respondents chose LFF and 38.8% chose IFF at least once a week. Similarly, 55.7% of the total respondents chose LFF and 61.2% chose IFF at more than once a month. A similar situation was detected in other countries. Hence, although young Japanese consumers have wholeheartedly adopted foreign brands like McDonald's, their loyalty to national brands such as Mos Burger remains unwavering (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1997).

To successfully compete, the LFF should inform the young people segment about their schedule, low prices and the satiety of dishes and adopt niche marketing (Kotler, 1994; Laroche and Parsa, 2000). This is especially important in the Romanian fast-food industry, which is in the early maturity stage of its life cycle. The results of this research could be used by the LFF's management to obtain a unique position on the market and to conceive adequate marketing strategies for the young people's segment. Also, using the competition to evaluate the LFF's position on the market is an useful information for the management in order to determine the best improvements of its performance. A different CIPA helps different organizations to identify those attributes that differentiate them from the competitors and that could be used to position them in the consumers' minds. These attributes could also be used in conceiving adequate marketing strategies, with emphasize on the components of the marketing mix that differentiate the LFF from its competitors.

One limit of this paper is the fact that the research was carried out only among young people from Brașov County. Therefore, the results cannot be extended to the whole population of young people in Romania. Moreover, the research was carried out in a single area in Romania, so the results cannot be extrapolated to the whole country.

Future studies among adults and elders could highlight different attitudes and behavior in relation to fast-food consumption, the preference for other fast-foods, but also different claims as regards the supply of the preferred fast-food. In addition, further studies should consider a comparison between different consumers' segments as regards their preferences for some fast-foods, their consumption habits, but also for the importance and performance of two competing fast-foods.

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GLOBAL CRISIS' IMPACT UPON THE EMPLOYED NUMBER IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT. The globalization, complex interconnection process of the economies of states, is a reality of the XXI century. However, at the end of the first decade of this century, besides the positive effects of this process, due to the economic interconnections created, it has favored also a rapid propagation of a negative economic phenomenon: the global economic crisis. Its impact significantly influenced the hospitality industry, important component of modern economies. This paper examines over a period of six years, the impact of the economic crisis on the employment in the hospitality industry as well, their weights in the total employed population, in some countries with tradition in the field such as Greece, Spain, France, Italy and Austria, as well as in some former communist countries including Romania.

Keywords: global crisis, employment, hospitality industry,

JEL classification: L83, F66

1. Introduction

The hospitality industry is dependent on global markets that are highly sensitive to global economic crisis and the research question, which can be put, is how strong the effect of the crisis on tourism is? One of the effects of crisis would be to reduce in tourism demand from various significant tourist markets for a destination that would implicitly lead to decreasing the number of employees in this industry. This study makes an statistical analysis which was focused on a period of six years in some European countries such as Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Romania and it examining how the economic crisis had impacts on tourism industry, in terms of employment.

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Creating jobs is an important objective for macroeconomic policy effectiveness and the hospitality industry help in achieving this objective. Tourism, of which the hospitality industry is a principal element, is now claimed to be the world's fastest growing industry and also one of the leading earners of foreign currency. (Boella and Goss-Turner, 2013).

This industry is a generator so direct occupations (e.g. employees in hotels and restaurants) but also of indirect occupations (e.g. transport drivers, tourist guides, gift shop employees, etc.). In the last years, the contribution of Tourism & Travel industry to generated jobs is more and more significant; in 2012 this industry generated over 260 millions jobs (WTTC, 2013).

As a result of the global economic crisis, the hospitality industry is experiencing numerous challenges. Thus, the decrease in population income and unemployment are two determining factors with negative impact on employment in the hospitality industry. However, the impact of the economic crisis on the hospitality industry varies from country to country and is linked by legislation, competitiveness, various corporate structures and business methods and therefore the effects may be different.

A recent study (Guizzardi and Mazzocchi, 2010) concludes that "cycles in tourism are mainly determined by the delayed effects of the overall business cycle''. From this point of view, the awareness of a crisis and the actual economic effects of a crisis don't have to coincide. Another research (Papatheodorou, Rosselló and Xiao, 2010) concludes that in recent years, economic crises and recessions have become more frequent and emerged with greater force.

The recent crisis has been further affected by substantial economic dislocation in some countries, such as Greece and Iceland, in which tourism is seen as a potential solution to the crisis. (Hall, 2010)

The crisis has particularly strong impact and negative consequences in Greece. The country is undergoing a serious political crisis, as well, and it seems that the forthcoming elections are the only solution for the restoration of stability and social peace. In addition, tourism can be the driving force behind Greece's economic recovery. However, for its achievement the country's policy makers should take several measures towards restructuring and improving the sector. (Kapiki, 2011)

The employment in the hospitality industry is strongly influenced by seasonality, so it requires an analysis of this phenomenon because high rates of employment are likely to be a result of temporary contracts, casual, seasonal or part-time domestic and regional tourism growth.

The main data sources used in this study were the databases of the European Commission (Eurostat, 2014) and the National Institute of Statistics (NIS, 2014), which were processed by statistical and econometric techniques (Florea, 2003; Pecican 2007) using Excel (Oprea and Zaharia, 2011) and EViews.

2. Evolutions of annual indices of employed persons in ten EU countries

The global economic crisis that started at the end of 2008 has had significant implications on employment in most states UE28, as well on the all industries with implications for the living standards of the population.

To highlight these aspects were chosen, along with Romania, another nine European countries, of which five are old members of EU (France, 1952, Greece in 1981, Spain in 1986, Portugal in 1991 and Austria in 1995) and four are former communist countries (Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary and Bulgaria). The indices of total employed persons – (All NACE activities) and of the total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in the period 2009 – 2013 (2008=100) are presented in table 1.

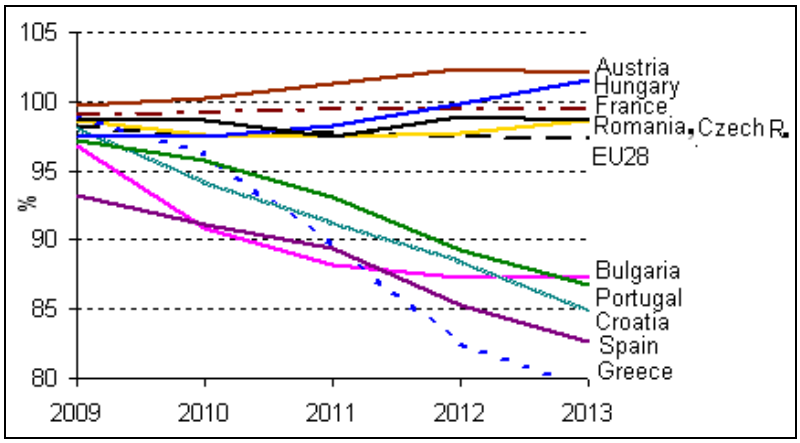
Table 1.

Indices of total employed persons – All NACE activities - and of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities (2008=100)

GEO/TIME	All NACE activities					Accommodation and food service activities				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
EU28	98.2	97.5	97.7	97.5	97.3	100.97	102.13	103.52	103.93	103.32
Bulgaria	96.8	90.8	88.2	87.3	87.3	100.00	94.67	94.08	90.53	86.39
Czech Republic	98.6	97.6	97.4	97.7	98.7	105.08	107.34	104.52	100.00	101.13
Greece	98.9	96.3	89.7	82.5	79.3	99.68	96.83	93.65	86.67	82.86
Spain	93.2	91.1	89.4	85.3	82.7	97.80	94.29	95.80	90.98	90.85
France	99.0	99.2	99.4	99.5	99.5	102.73	109.56	111.49	111.04	107.39
Croatia	98.1	94.2	91.2	88.4	84.9	97.75	98.88	89.89	92.13	95.51
Hungary	97.5	97.5	98.3	99.9	101.5	97.53	98.15	102.47	103.09	100.62
Austria	99.7	100.2	101.3	102.3	102.1	101.59	100.80	100.00	105.58	97.61
Portugal	97.2	95.8	93.1	89.2	86.8	92.48	91.22	90.91	88.09	91.85
Romania	98.7	98.6	97.5	98.9	98.7	107.14	116.88	120.13	120.78	125.97

Source: authors' compilation based on data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity (NACE Rev. 2) [tour_lfs1r2]" retrieved on July 28, 2014.

The onset of the economic crisis has led, in 2009, a reduction in the number of employed persons in all states analyzed. The reductions ranged from -6.8 percentage points in Spain, and -0.3 percentage points in Austria. Starting from 2010 the evolutions of of employees in relation to the values recorded in 2008 differs significantly from one country to another. These trends are shown in Figure 1.



Source: authors' calculus and construction based on data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity [tour_lfs1r2]" retrieved on July 28, 2014.

Fig. 1. Evolutions of indices of total employed persons in all NACE activities, in 2009 – 2013 period (2008=100)

As can be seen, it highlights two trends. In a first group of countries there is a tendency for recovery. In Austria, since 2010 is reached the number of employees from 2008, and in 2012 the level of employees is with 2.3% higher than in 2008. Also, Hungary returns since 2011 at the level reached in 2008; in 2013 the number of persons employed in all NACE activities is with 1.5% higher than in 2008. The positive evolutions, which exceed UE28 average, of the countries studied, there is in France, Romania and the Czech Republic.

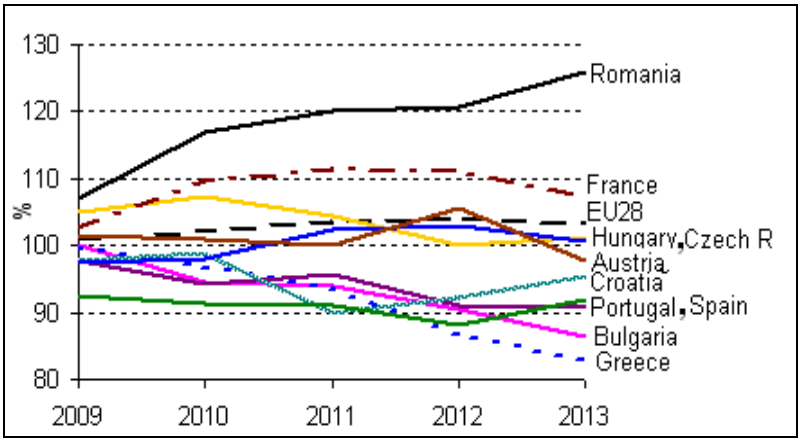
A second group of countries is composed of Portugal, Croatia, Spain and Greece. In their case, the decline is significant and occurs throughout the period. Thus, in 2013, employment in all NACE activities in relation to the number recorded in 2008 was lower by 20.7 percentage points in Greece, by 17.3 percentage points in Spain, by 15.2 percentage points in Croatia and 13.2 percentage points Portugal. Although initially, in Bulgaria manifests the same trend (in 2011 recorded the negative-record with 11.8 percentage points), from 2012 begin to recover.

The economic crisis has had different implications for total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities (Figure 2). While in some countries there have been setbacks in the number of people employed in accommodation and food service activities, they did not exceed -17.14 percentage points value recorded in 2013 in Greece.

Analyzing the data from Table 1 and evolutions presented in Figure 2 shows that significant trends of decline in the number of people employed in accommodation and food service activities, for the entire period are recorded

in Greece and Bulgaria. However, it must be emphasized, that the impact of the economic crisis on accommodation and food service activities was lower than other industries. While in Greece, total employed persons - All NACE activities was in 2011 with 10.3 percentage points lower than the 2008, all employed persons in accommodation and food service activities fell by only with 6.35 percentage points. However, in Bulgaria, in contrast to the trend of recovery of other industries, in accommodation and food service activities the decline continues, employment reached in 2013 to 86.4% from the level recorded in 2008, with 0.9 percentage points below the level recorded in national level.

The group of countries composed of Croatia, Portugal and Spain, although until 2011 also recorded a decline in the number of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities, after 2012 are beginning to recover fits on a upward trend, but without significant influence of indices of total employed persons in all NACE activities, which continue to fall.



Source: authors' calculus and construction based on data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity [tour_lfs1r2]" retrieved on July 28, 2014.

Fig. 2. Evolutions of indices of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in 2009 – 2013 period (2008=100)

An important observation is highlighted by the fact that the UE28, throughout the period under review, the indices of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities had a positive evolution ending in 2012 at 103.94% compared to 2008, while the indices of total employed persons in all NACE activities recorded only 97.5%.

Evolutions of indices of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities over the values recorded in 2008 in the entire analyzed period were also recorded in the Czech Republic (107.34% maximum being recorded in 2010) and France (the maximum is 111.49% registered in 2011).

In Hungary, after a slight decrease in 2009 (-2.47 percentage points) and 2010 (-1.85 percentage points), in 2011 the number of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities exceeds the level from 2008 (+2.47 percentage points). Regarding Austria, after an upward trend of the indices of total employed persons in the accommodation and food service activities which in 2012 reaches the value of 105.58% to 2008, in 2013 recorded a decline the number of employed persons in this sector decreased by 2.39 percentage points below the value recorded in 2008.

Regarding Romania in the period under review, the number of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities increased significantly, in 2013 being 25.97% higher than the level recorded in 2008. However, should be noted, that Romania is on the last place of countries analyzed in terms of the share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in total employed persons in all NACE activities (table 2).

Finally, analyzing the implications of the economic crisis on the share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities noted that in the first year of the crisis, with the exception of Croatia and Portugal, in all other analyzed countries the share of employed persons in accommodation and food increased, and in the case of the Czech Republic and Romania reached 6.6% and 9.1%. Even 2009 year don't bring significant changes, the trends of growth while maintaining.

Table 2.

The share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in total employed persons in all NACE activities

GEO/TIME	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
EU28	4.22	4.34	4.42	4.47	4.49	4.48
Bulgaria	5.03	5.19	5.24	5.36	5.21	4.97
Czech Republic	3.54	3.77	3.89	3.80	3.62	3.63
Greece	6.91	6.96	6.95	7.21	7.25	7.22
Spain	7.17	7.52	7.42	7.69	7.65	7.88
France	3.40	3.52	3.75	3.81	3.79	3.67
Croatia	5.44	5.42	5.71	5.36	5.67	6.12
Hungary	4.18	4.18	4.21	4.35	4.31	4.14
Austria	6.14	6.25	6.18	6.06	6.33	5.87
Portugal	6.14	5.84	5.85	6.00	6.06	6.49
Romania	**1.64**	**1.79**	**1.95**	**2.02**	**2.01**	**2.10**

Source: authors' compilation based on Eurostat data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity (NACE Rev. 2) [tour_lfs1r2]", retrieved on July 28, 2014

During the entire period, in seven of the ten countries analyzed there were increases in the share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in total employed persons in all NACE activities ranging from 2.5% in the Czech Republic to 28.0% in Romania, decreases registered in Bulgaria (-1.2%), Hungary (-1.0%) and Austria (-4.4%).

In conclusion, the hospitality industry, analyzed in terms of the number and share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities is an industry that has in some countries, so can have and in Romania an important role in economic growth and overcoming the crisis periods due to, on the part its ability to adapt to consumer demands and secondly because it aims at highlighting the natural and human resources, characterized by high stability.

Another conclusion concerns the low level of Romanian tourism development, as evidenced by very small percentage of employed in accommodation and food service activities with repercussions on the ability to attract local and foreign tourists and fructification of Romania's tourism potential.

3. Aspects of the seasonality of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service activities

The accommodation and food service activities are characterized by seasonal amplitudes significant developments. They influence, in their turn, the number of employed persons. Based on these observations, in this chapter are considered some aspects of the economic crisis on seasonal full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service activities.

Considering, on the one hand that in most statistics concerning the performances of EU countries, Bulgaria and Romania are usually in the bottom of the standings, and on the other hand that the tourism supply in the two countries are similar both in terms of natural and anthropogenic, of the ten countries analyzed in this chapter, we will refer to them by taking as reference, a country with rich traditions in the tourism industry, namely France.

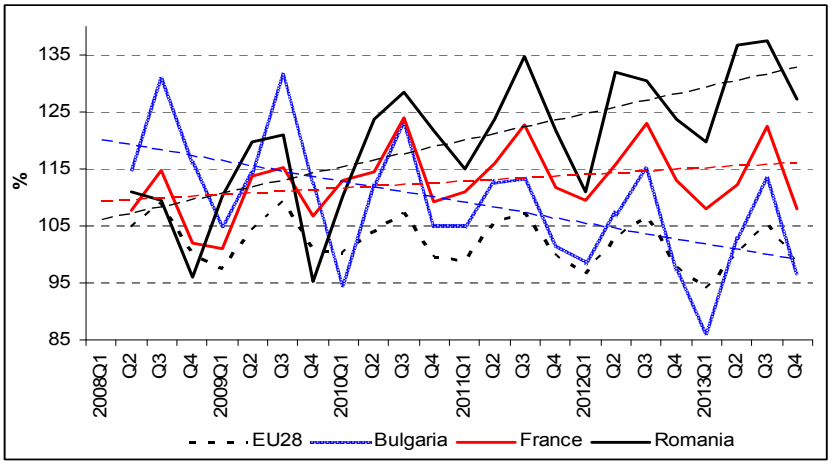
The evolutions of quarterly indices of total employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in 2009-2013 period, in Bulgaria, France and Romania, compared to the values recorded in the first quarter of 2008 are illustrated in Figure 3.

The evolution of quarterly indices at the level of EU28 lies on a roughly steady trend, and the cases of Romania and France, the seasonal oscillations is situated on upward trend given by the equations

$$I_{R\_AF}(t) = 1.1683 \cdot t + 104.84 \quad (1)$$

and respectively

$$I_{F\_AF}(t) = 0.2925 \cdot t + 109.03 \tag{2}$$



Source: authors' calculus and construction based on data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity [tour_lfs1r2]" retrieved on July 28, 2014.

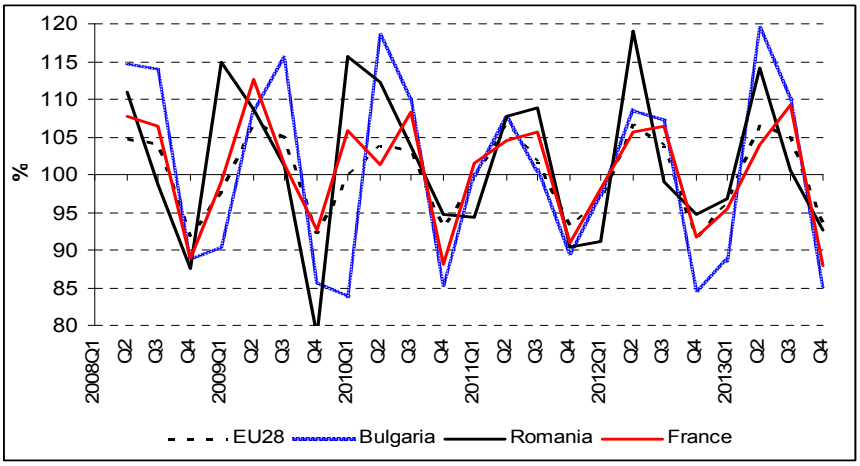
Fig. 3. Evolutions of quarterly indices of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in 2009 – 2013 period (2008Q1=100)

In the case of Bulgaria, the general trend is downward and can be represented by the equation:

$$I_{B\_AF}(t) = -0.9073 \cdot t + 120.79 \tag{3}$$

The general tendencies of indices full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service activities don't differ from those shown in Table 1 and Figure 2 by the fact that, in this case are not considered part-time employed persons. The differences are relatively small and due to the three countries the number of people from this category recorded much lower amplitude fluctuations, their weights are also small.

From the analysis of evolutions, shown in Figure 3, in the case of Bulgaria and Romania, show that seasonal amplitudes are much higher than in France, and those recorded at UE28 level. To highlight this fact in Figure 4 are represented the evolutions of relative quarterly change of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service activities.



Source: authors' calculus and construction based on data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity [tour_lfs1r2]" retrieved on July 28, 2014.

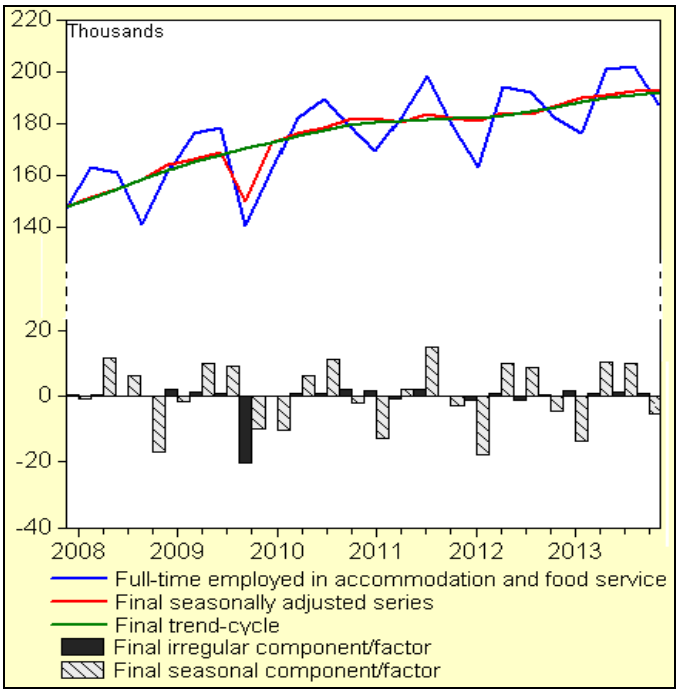
Fig. 4. Evolutions of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service [previous quarterly = 100%]

As can be seen, although the level of UE28, during the economic crisis, seasonal oscillation amplitudes are not significantly different, in the case of three countries recorded differences.

The first difference is that in 2009 and 2010 recorded large fluctuations. Thus in Romania, between the values recorded in Q1 and Q4 of 2009, the difference is 36.4 percentage points, and between Q4 2009 and Q1, 2010, the difference is 37.2 percentage points, while the UE28 the highs differences recorded in 2009 were 14.6 percentage points.

The second difference is recorded in the quarters in which there are extreme values. While in 2008, 2009 and the first half of 2010 in Romania the maximum values were recorded in Q1 in Bulgaria, they were recorded in Q3 2008 and Q2 2009. The second semester of 2010 and 2011 brought a significant decrease of quarterly fluctuations fulltime employed persons in accommodation and food service very close to the average UE28. This may be a consequence of the intensity of tourist flows decrease as a result of having taken two years of crisis.

After 2011, the quarterly fluctuations increase and amplitude without ever touching extreme values recorded in the early years of the crisis. Note that in Romania the maximum amplitude moves from Q1 to Q2 and 3, while continuing to record lows in semester 4.



Source: authors' calculus and construction based on data series "Employed persons by full-time/part-time activity [tour_lfs1r2]" retrieved on July 28, 2014.

Fig. 5. The components of the evolution of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service in Romania

It must be emphasized, however, that the period under review includes the economic crisis triggered in 2009. To highlight its possible influences on the development of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service in Romania, we broken down the original data series into four components (Figure 5) highlighting both the trend (Final trend-cycle) and seasonality (Final seasonal component /factor), and adjusted time series (Final seasonally adjusted series) and the component that highlights the influence of other factors (Final irregular component / factor).

The decomposition results of the initial series using TRAMO ("Time Series Regression with ARIMA Noise, Missing Observations and Outliers") and SEATS ("Signal Extraction in ARIMA Time Series"), are shown in Figure 4. The obtained data series are valid, fact underlined by the residuals analysis (Table 3). Both Jarque-Bera test and Durbin-Watson test lead to the adoption of the null hypothesis that highlights both the normality and absence of autocorrelation of the residual variable.

As can be seen (Figure 5), the entire period under review, the seasonal component (Final seasonal component / factor) evolves with a period of one year, maximum levels being recorded in quarter two or three, with the values between 9780 persons in the second half of 2009 and 14830 persons in the third quarter of 2011, and minimum levels between -10340 people registered in the first quarter of 2010 and -17700 persons in the first quarter of 2012.

Table 3.

Test-Statistics on Residuals

Normality test H0: Residuals have a normal distribution $\varepsilon \sim N(0, \sigma_{\varepsilon}^{2})$ H1: Residuals have not a normal distribution				
Skewness	-0.1855	Kurtosis	1.8301	
Jarque-Bera	1.0669	$\chi^{2}_{0.05,2}$	5.99	H_0 accepted
Durbin-Watson test for autocorrelation H0: Residuals are not autocorrelated H1: Residuals are autocorrelated				
Durbin-Watson statistics	1.959	(ds, 4-ds)	(1.38,2.62)	H_0 accepted

Taking into account these adjustments, the evolution of the component "Final seasonally adjusted series" should have been to tend toward the trend of analysis period, highlighted by the series "Final trend-cycle". We ascertain, however the emergence in late 2009 of a disturbance that can not be explained only by taking into account the seasonality. The disturbance is given by the evolution of the series "Final irregular component / factor", of those values should have been be small (close to zero) than the values recorded by other series, and which in the 4th quarter of 2009, recorded a negative value extremely high (-20,390 persons). It is the impact of the economic crisis on full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service in Romania.

However, the impact of the economic crisis on the industry was short. Starting from the following quarter, the values of "Final irregular component series" have a insignificant influence on the evolution of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service.

4. Conclusions

The global economic crisis that started at the end of 2008 has had significant implications on employment in most UE28 states, as well on the all industries, with implications for the living standards of the population, and of course on the hospitality industry.

Analyzing the implications of the economic crisis on the share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities noted that in the first year of the crisis, with the exception of Croatia and Portugal, in all other analyzed countries the share of employed persons in accommodation and food increased. During the entire period, in seven of the ten countries analyzed there were increases in the share of employed persons in accommodation and food service activities in total employed persons in all NACE activities ranging from 2.5% in the Czech Republic to 28.0% in Romania, decreases registered in Bulgaria (-1.2%), Hungary (-1.0%) and Austria (-4.4%).

During the economic crisis, in terms of the seasonality full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service activities, the evolution of quarterly indices at the level of UE28 is situated on an approximately constant trend. In the case of Bulgaria and Romania seasonal amplitudes are much higher than in France, and those recorded at UE28 level. After 2011, the quarterly fluctuations increase and amplitude without ever touching extreme values recorded in the early years of the crisis.

Seasonality, although it is a normal phenomenon in the accommodation and food service can have negative effects on the full-time employed persons and implicit on the quality of service offerings. As consequently, the managers in the hospitality industry must find solutions, often specific to reduce the amplitude of seasonal fluctuations and retain personal so that the stability and satisfaction at work are a premise of providing a high quality services.

An important conclusion is that, in Romania, the impact of the economic crisis on the number of persons employed full time in accommodation and food service, has manifested significantly in 4th quarter of 2009, when aggregated with the seasonal component, corresponding to that quarter, it results a reduction in the number of full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service over 30 thousand persons less than the normal trend of the period.

It is significant also that the economic crisis has had on the full-time employed persons in accommodation and food service in Romania, an impact of about a quarter, after which, the specific seasonal evolutions of this industry were located on an ascendant trend.

The final conclusion is that the hospitality industry plays an important role in supporting economic growth and employment, not only in periods of economic growth but also and especially in times of economic crisis because in this industry, on the one hand, the share of human resources is very high, and on the other hand influences the economic crisis are much lower.

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PASTRY CONSUMER PROFILE: AN INVESTIGATION ON CLUJ-NAPOCA MARKET

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ABSTRACT. Among other producers and (re)sellers of snacks and fast-food, bakeries and pastry shops are some of the most dynamic enterprises that have developed both at national level and at the level of Cluj-Napoca during the recent years. Given the great variety of such snacks, the authors aim at sketching the profile of the pastry consumer on the market of Cluj-Napoca. The results of two quantitative studies conducted online and face-to-face in 2013 and 2014 are analyzed. These results are considered to be relevant for the characterization of the local consumer. Another aspect that is covered by the present paper is that one concerning the supply side.

Keywords: pastry, bakery, fast-food, Cluj-Napoca, secondary data, quantitative research.

JEL Classification: L83

1. Introduction and Literature Review

The fast-food industry is one of the big winners of the global economic crisis. This fast-food phenomenon affects the entire world. For example, nearly 3,000 French restaurants and coffee shops went out of business and closed down in 2010. According to Bernard Picolet (the owner of a restaurant in Paris): "today's French people do not eat anymore like the French but like the Americans. Today's youth does not understand the traditional cuisine, or does not care about it. They prefer sandwiches and chips and when they go out they

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opt for clubs instead of restaurants. They have the most sophisticated phones but they have no clue how a *courgette* looks like. They know everything about the Internet but they do not know how to eat fish." [Negrescu, 2011]. Similar situations have occurred in countries like: Spain, Great Britain, Germany and Italy, where traditional restaurants were replaced by fast-food units. Even the Americans have begun to return to their old preference, despite their behavioral shift towards healthy foodservices, as national campaigns promoting healthy food have advised them [Negrescu, 2011].

According to the report published by GIA (Global Industry Analysts Inc.) cited by The Bakery Network [2013], the global market of bakery products is expected to reach the value of $ 447 billion by 2017; among the triggering factors of this forecast there are:

- the new consumer preferences, obviously oriented towards conveniently portioned and easy-to-consume bakery goods;
- the increasing migration from the rural to urban areas causing an increase in demand for convenience foods such as breads, pastries, cakes, and biscuits;
- the growth of deli and in-store bakery;
- the consumers' shift away from meat and packaged goods;
- donuts, specialty breads, pizza and gourmet pastry are among the fastest growing product categories;
- the manufacturers' focus on displaying and dressing their bakery products in order to increasingly attract today's discerning consumers.

The European Market

According to the most recent Gira Report [*Bakery Performance*] "bread holds a sovereign leading position on the European bakery market", accounting for around 80 % of all bakery products consumed within the EU and Turkey (which adds up to one third of the EU bread consumption). Moreover, the same report [*Bakery Performance*] reveals that an important share of the fresh bread consumption in countries such as Romania and Turkey still relies on daily deliveries of fresh industrial products to small stores.

The European supply of bakery and pastry products is quite well described by Verite Reily Collins [2013] who refers to the Bakers' Federation report: one third of the entire production (8 million tons) is produced by major producers, located mainly in Germany and in the UK (accounting for 60 % of the total plant production); France, the Netherlands and Spain produce another 20 % together; while the rest of the production is spread across other European countries. In Britain and Ireland 80 % of the supply

comes from industrial bakeries. Craft bakeries still have the major proportion of the market in the other European countries, although this situation is about to change. According to the same source, the supply consists of a very wide and rich range of products, such as: classic breads, specialty breads, artisanal bread, gluten-free foods and other catering products for consumers with allergies, whole grain products, frozen and ready-made pastry, ethnic breads, in-store bakery products, dinner party/catering extras, Christmas and/or Easter bakery products, etc.; the range extends to other segments, for example biscuits and crackers but also cereals and cookies.

Gira [2013, pp. 3-4] offers a more detailed classification of the bread, bakery and pastry products; thus, the following classification categories are taken into consideration:

- bakery products' differentiation at consumer level:
  - bakery products: *bread* (baguette, stick, rustic bread, buns, etc.), *viennoiserie* (croissant, chocolate rolls, Danish pastries, donuts, etc.), *patisserie* (cakes, muffins, tarts, cream pastries, etc.), *savory pastry snacks* (to be consumed hot: savory puff pastries, sausage rolls, baguette with topping, mini savory tarts), *biscuits* and *cereals* (the last ones excluded from Gira's reports);
  - production technology: *fresh* (un-packed or packed at the point of sales, shelf-life 1-2 days), *pre-packed long-life* (packed at industrial level, branded, shelf-life over 2 days) and *pre-packed for home-baking* (needs final baking/thawing at home);
- production methods:
  - *artisanal scratch production/on the premises* (mainly to be found at bakers' shops and in-store baking units in hypermarkets but can also be found in restaurants for patisserie);
  - *industrial production* (pre-packed long-life and home-baking, fresh finished, bake-off);
- distribution circuits:
  - *retail distribution* (artisan bakers, modern retail (including hard-discount stores), bakery chains (more than 10 sales outlets), "other retail": convenience stores, petrol stations and small grocery stores);
  - *catering sectors* (commercial catering: restaurants and hotels – independent and chains, transport, and social catering: education, workplace, health/welfare).

The same Gira report [2013, pp. 5-8] presents the consumption preferences of the European states (EU-27) registered in 2011 as it follows:

- the entire consumption of *bakery products* was of 40.1 million tons, adding up to € 126.4 billion;

- in terms of volume, *bread* accounts for 79 % of all bakery products consumed; the remaining percentages are split among: *patisserie* (10 %), *viennoiserie* (8 %), and *savory pastry* (3 %);
- consumption is dominated by *fresh* products, which represent 68 % of the entire market volume, followed by: *pre-packed long-life* products (28 %), and *pre-packed home-baking* products (4 %); *pre-packed* products and *savory pastry* are expected to lead to market growth until 2016;
- *industrial supply* provided accounted for 66 % of the consumed bakery products, distributed per categories[4]: *pre-packed long-life* products (28 %), *fresh-finished bakery* (19 %), *bake-off* products (14 %), and pre-packed home-baking (5 %); the remaining 34 % of the demand was covered by *artisanal providers*, being dominated by *artisan bakers* (30 %), followed by *in-store retailers* (3 %) and *other retailers & caterers* (1 %);
- ***the Romanian market*** is characterized by the following aspects:
    - ***bread*** accounts for nearly 80 % of the consumption, while ***other bakery products*** represent a little over 20 % of the market;
    - ***fresh products*** add up to a bit over 70 % of the market, while the remainder is covered by ***pre-packed products***;
    - ***industrial supply*** seems to account for around 70 % of the consumed volume, while ***artisanal manufacturers*** cover about 30 % of the market.

Frozen bakery represents an important part of all provided pastry and bakery products. In this respect, a closer look at its market provides interesting facts. Thus, according to the specialists of Euromonitor [Nieburg, 2012]:

- manufacturers can seize upon the underdeveloped frozen bakery market in Eastern Europe, the market being forecast to rise nearly 28 % by 2016, reaching € 80.2 million but they should keep in mind that economic development is the most important factor for frozen bakery;
- among the countries that generate high opportunities for such investments, there are: Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Croatia and the Czech Republic; according to the cited source, these markets present better prospects because consumers are aware of frozen bakery, most women work and, consequently, do not have time to bake at home, and, therefore, sales are higher; on the other hand, these markets present the disadvantage of being saturated and of having powerful market leaders;

[4] Percentages refer to cooked weight [Gira, 2013, p. 8].

- Serbia, Macedonia and Hungary represent three other attractive countries for frozen bakery producers, as their population is known for its high consumption of baked goods;
- still, bread consumption is in decline in countries like Belarus, Hungary or Slovenia, where healthier bread substitutes are preferred;
- some European countries, such as Russia, Ukraine and the Caucasus nations, have a low penetration of retail chains, and, therefore, are less attractive, due to the reduced capacity of storing frozen food products;
- the Baltic countries, Belarus and Russia are well-known for their peoples' preference for dark/black/rye breads;
- throughout Europe, the small, local producers are the ones who dominate the market, as they manage to best understand the local consumers' needs and preferences.

Consumption Trends of Pastry and Bakery Products in Romania

If eating out (especially at a fast-food) was a luxury, today it has become more or less a need, especially during the lunch break; this is how Mohamed Murad [Negrescu, 2012], the owner of the fast-food chain, Spring Time, describes the Romanian market.

Romania has always been one of Europe's most important grain producers, and at the same time one of the countries with high demand for bread and pastry products. According to the data provided by the National Institute of Statistics [*România liberă online*, 2013], a Romanian consumes daily: over 500 grams of cereals (breads[5], bakery and pastry products being here included), nearly 300 grams of potatoes, 200 grams of vegetables, over 170 grams of fruits and nearly 50 grams of fats; these add up to a yearly consumption of: 200 kilograms of bread, nearly 100 kilos of potatoes, over 70 kilos of vegetables, around 60 kilos of fruits, and 18 kilos of fats, while they eat around 33 kilos of pork meat and only 4 kilos of fish.

Moreover, Viorel Marin considers that: "Romania is still a blessed country with its more than 12 million hectares of top-quality flatland. […] This potential combined with the constant high Romanian appetite for bread, bread specialties and pastry products can drive Romania to become quite a heaven for the milling industry" [Sosland, 2008].

Euromonitor's study "Global Consumer Foodservice: How the World Eats" revealed that, in 2009, food street sales registered the highest increase, by 9 % at global level, compared to the fast-food sector, that increased by 7 %, to the full-service restaurants which gained 5 %, to coffee shops and bars

[5] Of which, 400 grams are considered to be consumed as bread-loafs [*România liberă online*, 2013].

which advanced by 3 % or to the delivery/take away businesses which gained only 2 %. Although food street sale points only represented 21 % worldwide in terms of numbers of fast-food units, worldwide street-kiosk sales added up to $ 88.4 billion, placing them on the 4th rank in the global top of food-service operators [*Foodandbar.ro*, 2009]. The same institution, Euromonitor, revealed that during the same year, on the Romanian market there were 6,854 fast-food serving units, of which 832 (around 12 % of the total, almost 10 % of which belonged to Fornetti) were chain-affiliated and accounted for sales of $ 82.5 million, while 6,022 were independent and brought sales of $ 645.5 million [*Foodandbar.ro*, 2009]. Psychologists and doctors explain that fast-food consumption has increased as a consequence of the economic crisis, which has lead to the decrease of wages, and therefore to the consumers' need to reorient towards providers they perceived more convenient from the perspective of the price paid; moreover, fast-food products are associated with a higher level of trust granted to the products' quality [Negrescu, 2012].

Overall, during the past years, the fast-food industry has registered a positive development in Romania, despite the harsh consequences of the most recent global economic crisis. Due to their optimized quality/price ratio, to the quick serving time, and to the easy consumption, international chains and brands such as McDonald's, KFC, Fornetti or the simple standard bagel and donut shops, respectively the shawarma producers have managed to raise profits [Negrescu, 2012].

For example, in 2011, € 140 million entered the pockets of McDonald's, KFC and Burger King only on the Romanian market, these three restaurants having around 180,000 clients per day, with an average spending of € 2-3 per person [Negrescu, 2012]. Today, bagels seem to be just as profitable, because around 11.7 million Romanians, living in 213 towns and cities, eat bagels worth of approximately € 160 million per year [Kolbay, 2014].

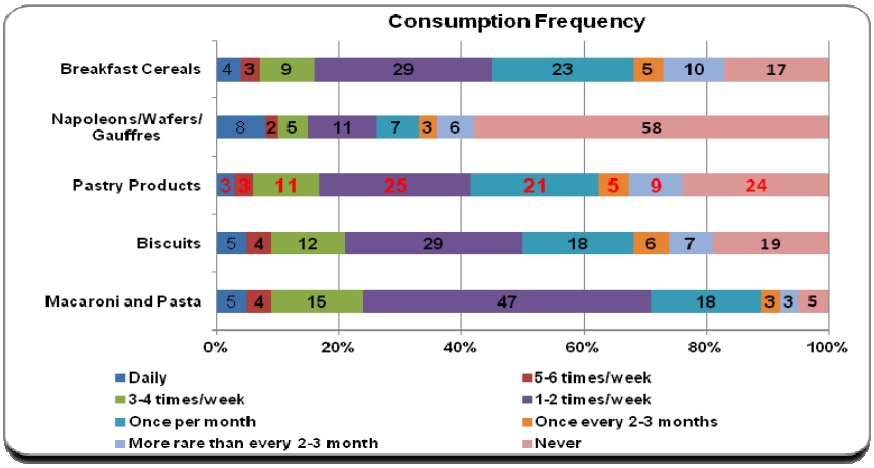
The main factors that determine Romanians to buy fast-food products do not differ from those well-known at global level: quickness, familiarity/ popularity, and price-convenience; to these, one may always add occasional whims or impulse products, respectively, pleasure foods [*Foodandbar.ro*, 2009].

Briefly, the Romanian pastry and bakery market can be described just like the international press perceives the one in Bucharest [F. N., 2014]. Thus, there are several options for a quick snack, which manage to satisfy the need for food in a similar way to the traditional fast-food serving units, although they differ from the concept. Among these, there are: bagel shops (Petru, Delissima, Gigi, Luca, etc), donut shops (Gogoaşa Înfuriată, Fiţoşica, etc), pie shops (yeasted oven-baked pies like Palaneţ, Plăcintă Codrenească or oil-baked pies – Lángos), Kürtős kalács or Chimney cakes shops, pancake or

crêpes shops, bakeries and pastry shops (Fornetti, Panemar, etc.), sophisticated high-end/upper scale pastry shops (inspired by French products but more expensive); fast-food restaurants (Mc Donald's, KFC, Pizza Hut, Subway, Spring Time, etc), kebab and shawarma producers, pizza places, etc. They are either independent or chain affiliated, local and international brands enjoying similar popularity levels; some can be mobile units; the franchising system enjoys high popularity among the entrepreneurs in this food sector. Supermarkets and hypermarkets have also entered the fast-food sector, providing a wide range of products, from pastries and bakeries to cooked meat: basically everything that can be eaten on the spot, or taken away. Many of the providers manage to attract and capitalize tourist flows, too (this being the case of Romania's main tourist destinations, from seaside, spa and mountain destinations, to the country's main cities, as well: Bucureşti, Sibiu, Braşov, Cluj-Napoca, Timişoara, Iaşi, etc).

According to the data provided by NIS, 41 % of the Romanian's expenditures are destined to the food and beverage sector; further on, GfK Romania reveals that during the first quarter of 2014, nearly half of this amount (namely 48 %) was spent on *fresh food*; more exactly, food consumption was split as it follows: raw meat and meat products (35 %), milk and dairy products (20 %), vegetables (16 %), *bread, bakery and pastry products* (14 %), fruits (11 %), and eggs (3 %). Regarding the pastry and bakery products, Romanians tend to be more conservative, 69 % of the sales being made in traditional retail units/proximity stores/marketplaces/bakeries/pastry shops/specialized stores boutiques/kiosks/food stores (appreciated for: accessible prices, many and varied Romanian products, freshness and quality, respectively for the close and friendly relations established by the vendors with their customers), and only 31 % of the consumption occurring in modern retail units/supermarkets/hypermarkets [Vaschi, 2014]. Health related issues have begun to influence Romanian customers but they have not yet managed to contribute significantly to the decrease in demand for pastry and bakery products. Moreover, it seems that Romanians tend to be concerned about health-related problems only at a declarative level, rather than switching their eating behavior [Ionescu, 2014].

One of the most important researches dedicated to understanding the behavior of the Romanian bread and pastry consumers was conducted by RomPan in 2009, on a sample of 1,281 adults, making use of direct, face-to-face home-based surveys; the study had an acceptable margin of error of ± 2.8 %. The most relevant findings are presented in Graph 1, and in the lines below [RomPan, 2009, pp. 1-3]:



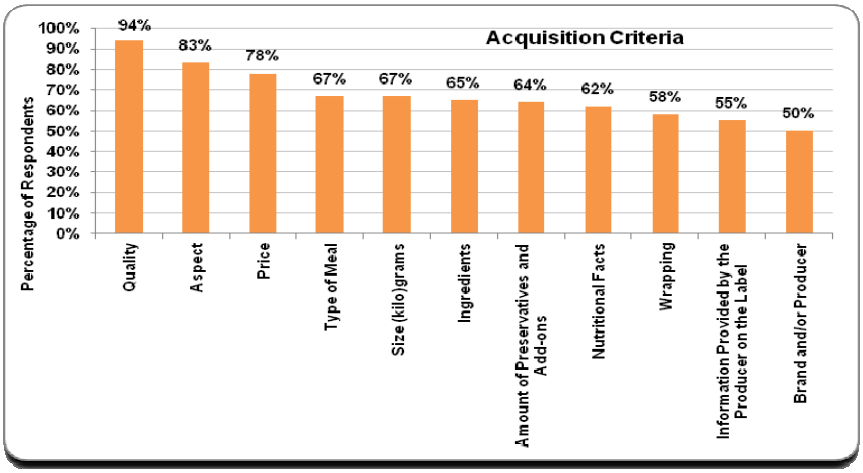
Source: RomPan, 2009, p. 3.

Graph 1. The Consumption Frequency of Pastry and other Granaries

- the most sought products are as follows[6]:
    - *pasta and macaroni* are consumed on e regular basis (by around 70 % of the adult population); split per categories, the preferred products are: spaghetti (70 %) and macaroons (68 %), followed by vermicelli (57 %), noodles (52 %), and snail-shaped pasta (49 %);
    - *biscuits* are also regularly consumed by 50 % of the adult population; among the preferred types, there are: plain/ simple biscuits (69 %), biscuits with filling (48 %), salty biscuits/crackers (43 %), and biscuits with frosting (29 %);
    - *bakery and pastry products* are consumed on a constant basis by a little over 40 % of the adult population; the most frequently bought products include: coffee cake made with a sweet yeast dough[7] (61 %), *fresh pastry (59 %)*, cakes and sweet rolls (46 %), pound cake[8] (39 %);
    - *breakfast cereals* regularly appear in the breakfasts of somewhat 40 % of the adult population; consumers turn towards: cornflakes and oat flakes, etc (34 %), expanded cereals (salty corn fluffs or sweet rice fluffs, etc (31 %);

[6] The underlined categories are the most relevant ones from the perspective of the undertaken research.
[7] The Romanian product is "cozonac".
[8] "Chec" in Romanian.

- the least desired products (bought by *less than 10 %* of the respondents) include:
    - tortellini, lasagna, penne, ravioli, cannelloni, and pasta with add-ons;
    - cereal candy-bars (simple or mixed with fruits);
    - *frozen pastry*;
- *home-made products* represent an important segment of the pastry supply; the respondents mentioned that they make at home their own:
    - *noodles* (37 % producing a monthly average of 1.3 kilos of noodles);
    - *coffee cake made with a sweet yeast dough* (55 % producing yearly about 7.8 kilos per household);
    - *pastry and bakery products* (60 % preparing 3 kilos/ month/house–hold, with a higher percentage in rural areas, of 66 %, compared to the urban residencies, 55 %);
- *acquisition habits* prove that most consumers opt for packed/wrapped goods;
- *the most important criteria considered when buying bakery and pastry products, respectively granaries* are: the quality (94 %), the aspect, the price, the type of meal, the size, the amount of preservatives and add-ons, the ingredients, the nutritional facts, the wrapping, the information provided by the producer, the brand and/or the producer (50 %), etc; a detailed presentation appears in the graph below (Graph 2);



Source: RomPan, 2009, pp. 4-5.

Graph 2. Criteria Considered for Pastry and other Granaries Consumption

- *among the main reasons why consumer buy low quantities of bakery and pastry products or refuse to buy them* (Table 1), there are: the fact that the consumer does not like the product; he/she cannot afford to consume such products or that the product is not healthy, respectively the consumer is not used to the product, or he/she has health problems that lead to the impossibility to consume certain products.

Table 1.

Main Reasons for Consumption Refusal

	Personal Health Issues	Lack of Money/Too Expensive	Not Healthy/Too Many Calories/Lead to Gaining Weight	Do Not Like the Products	Not Used to Consuming Such Products
Macaroni and Pasta	6%	5%	5%		
Biscuits		10%	11%	27%	
Pastry Products		**20%**		**11%**	
Wafers/Napoleons/ *Gauffres*	8%		13%	29%	
Breakfast Cereals		13%	25%		15%

Source: RomPan, 2009, pp. 2-3.

The City of Cluj-Napoca

Located in the North-West Region of Development, Cluj-Napoca/ Klausenburg/ Kolozsvár is often described as "The Heart of Transylvania". The modern city with ancient roots is one of Romania's most important municipalities, along with Bucharest, Timişoara, Iaşi, Braşov and Constanţa. According to the local authorities [Primăria Cluj-Napoca, *Cluj Business.ro*], Cluj-Napoca is a cosmopolite European city and a key business destination in South-Eastern Europe, a city with a remarkable potential for foreign investments. Moreover, just like in Transylvania's case, the medieval history has enriched the city with multiculturalism, one of its most important cultural features. Today, the municipality aims and attempts at becoming the second Romanian European Capital of Culture (after Sibiu, in 2007).

With a stable population of 309,136 persons (of which: 163,408 women and 145,728 men), the Cluj-Napoca is Romania's largest city, after the capital, Bucharest [NIS, 2011, *Census*].

The students enrolled at the 11 universities (more exactly, 6 public and 5 private ones) provide the city with a special sense of youth. Actually, it is considered to be one of the best places to study in, from this part of Europe

[Primăria Cluj-Napoca, *Cluj Business.ro*]. The students add up to roughly 80,000 persons, contributing to the local economy with nearly € 400 million [Oros, 2013], as they try to take advantage of the local highly diversified educational services aiming to prepare them for the matching career opportunities available to them. Obviously, authorities focus on transforming the city in one of the most welcoming cities in Eastern Europe, a great place to live and especially a great place to visit [Primăria Cluj-Napoca, *Cluj Business.ro*]. The well-developed academic environment also supports the provision of highly qualitative medical services that determine many Romanians to head towards its clinics in search for appropriate treatments and cures. While at national level, international arrivals generated by medical tourism are assumed to account for 6,500 arrivals (in 2013), accounting for expenditures related to medical purposes of around € 20 million [Stanciu, 2014], data concerning internal medical tourism are not available; still the number of medical tourism arrivals is significant.

Generally speaking, the local business environment is open and friendly and the community actively contributes to the city's growth. The local population, along with the large communities of students, combined with the important arrivals of patients together with their families and friends, constitute, for sure, a significant triggering factor for the consumption of pastry-related products, and, consequently, to the further development of this business sector at local level.

Thus, the decision to analyze the behavior of the pastry and fast-food consumers on the local market of Cluj-Napoca was taken based on the city's socio-economic characteristics, and on all of its distinctive features. Another reason that has determined this choice is the fact that there have not been identified any significant researches concerning neither the national market, nor the local one. Given the dimensions of this sector of the foodservices, the need for such a study was considered. The topic provides several future research directions, linked both to the pastry supply and demand sides, respectively to many management-related aspects that may and should be investigated.

2. Material and Methods

As pastry businesses are scarcely researched in Romania, and consequently in Cluj-Napoca, too, there are very few available data sources and researches concerning the behavior of consumers on this particular market.

Both the supply and the demand sides are researched in this paper. Thus, in order to be able to characterize the local pastry market, several official data sources were identified and consulted with the purpose of understanding this complex industry at global, European, national and local

levels. For this first analysis, the research method relied on secondary data analysis and interpretation. The supply side was described by processing the enterprises registered and verified by the Cluj County branch of the National Sanitary-Veterinary and Food-Safety Authority (NSVFSA), which authorizes the functioning of all the units that sell food (starting with kiosks and convenience stores, street-sellers, bakeries, pastry shops, specialized stores, super- and hypermarket food-court areas, respectively on-site bakeries, and ending with all the specialized public food-serving units, such as classic or specialized restaurants, bars and coffee shops, bistros, pastry shops and confectionaries, etc). The adopted work procedure consisted of merging all the available relevant lists, of successive crossings of enterprise names and addresses, respectively of verification dates, and, consequently, of excluding double occurrences or businesses that do not function anymore. The National Authority for Tourism is responsible with the registration and classification of all specialized food-serving units. Bakeries and pastry shops, together with confectionaries, are included in the fast-food category by NAT. The analyses have revealed an obvious gap in the official registration process. More exactly, despite the fact that according to the data provided by the Cluj County branch of the NSVFSA, regarding pastry shops and other specialized public food-serving enterprises, the number of such businesses is quite high, that of the registered and classified units is surprisingly low. Obviously, the responsible official public servants ought to be more thorough when verifying such units nation-wide.

Regarding the demand side, the present paper has been elaborated relying on two survey-based researches conducted in the late spring-early summer periods of 2013 and in 2014 at the level of Cluj-Napoca. The samples were non-probabilistic ones, determined based on statistical methods. The questionnaire elaborated in 2013 was also used in 2014; it included a number of 18 closed, multiple or single choice questions and 5 identification questions.

The two samples included 290 persons in 2013 and 321 subjects in 2014; both samples were by far dominated by women. This aspect is not considered an altering factor, as the other existing researches (few ones) that have covered similar problems have not indicated different behaviors among the two gender-related categories. Both samples are also consistent with the identified researches, in the sense that the large majority of the questioned subjects are adults. Once again, both samples are dominated by one category, in this case, that of the young students and pupils, who represented 66.2 % of the sample in 2013 and 54.2 % in 2014. Combined with the current occupation of the investigated sample members, the domination of the young generation and that of the pupils/students and employed students, respectively young

bachelor graduates in the second case, are perfectly consistent with the demographic situation of Cluj-Napoca, students included. Referring to the level of the last graduated educational institution, just like in the previous cases, two categories are dominant (the high-school graduates, due to the large number of students, and the bachelor graduates). The sample structure by incomes registers an interesting change from 2013 to 2014. It seems that the financial situation has changed in the case of the investigated persons, who more or less are similar in what concerns other features.

Moreover, in order to be able to properly characterize the demand side, and to, eventually, present a profile of the local fast-food, pastry and bakery consumer, statistical tests were run on the two databases built after the researches from 2013 and 2014. The Multifactor ANOVA test was run in order to determine if any of the next three factors (features of the respondents): their age, their occupation, and their monthly income determine any influences upon several consumption behaviors. The Appendix comprises the main results obtained. Further, for the cases in which influences occurred among the tested variables, cross-tabulations were run with the purpose of determining which intervals of the analyzed factors determine significant consumption patterns; their main findings are briefly described in the Conclusions section. Finally, the consumer's profile is described in the final lines of the paper.

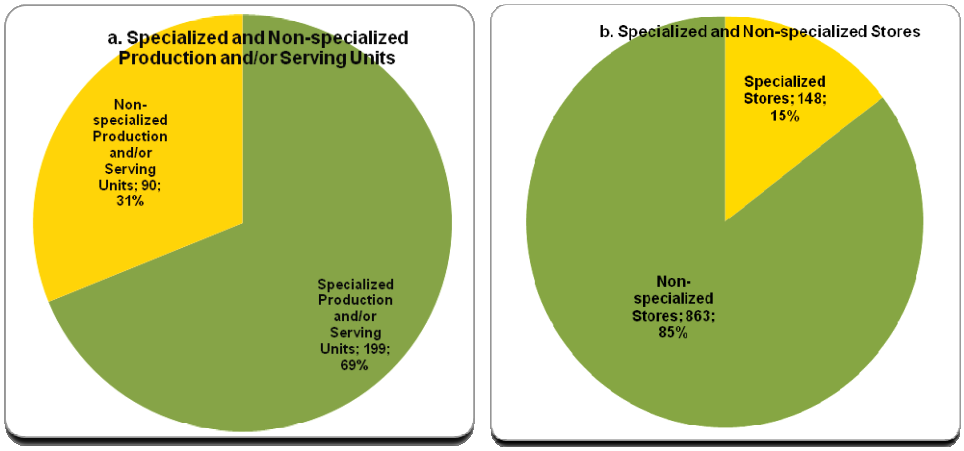
3. Results and Discussions

The Supply Side

The first part of this section is dedicated to the presentation of the bakery and pastry providers available in Cluj-Napoca. The analysis is carried out relying on the data gathered by the Cluj County branch of the NSVFSA, and according to how this institution has grouped the verified enterprises. The supply side is represented by two large categories of enterprises. On one hand, there are the producers of breads, bakery and pastry products, respectively of sweets. On the other hand, there are the resellers. Both categories can either be specialized or non-specialized units. A total number of 289 such units were identified in Cluj-Napoca.

Among the first type of providers (see Graph 3a for further details), one can identify a wide range of production units, of which, only those mainly focusing on pastry and bakery products were assimilated to the specialized category (totaling 199 businesses, and 69 %); this group consists of: units preparing and serving frozen pastry products, including bagels (57 units) and fresh pastry, breads and cookies (31), confectionary and pastry laboratories (59), pastries and bakeries (35), fast-food units serving pastries and/or

sweets, including mobile units (9) and pancake shops (8). The non-specialized production units (90 firms or 31 %) include those units primarily offering breads and bread specialties, and only secondary pastries (35 firms), the confectionaries and ice cream producers which, among other types of products, also offer pastries and bakeries (55 firms).



Source: Own calculations based on: NSVFSA, 2014.

Graphs 3a and b. Specialized and Non-specialized Production and/or Serving Units, Respectively Specialized and Non-specialized Stores

The second large category consists of the specialized and non-specialized resellers. Although much larger in terms of numbers of units, only a low percentage of all hyper- and supermarkets, general, mixed and convenience stores are, in fact, relevant from the perspective of pastry and bakery consumption. The chart above (Graph 3b) presents their distribution at the level of the city, where function a total of 1,150 stores, of which 139 are not relevant at all.

Obviously, the most relevant category is that of the specialized stores, comprising 148 units and representing 15 % of the analyzed units. Among these, there are stores specialized in the commercialization of bread and bread specialties, of pastries and bakeries (55 units), followed by: general stores, serving breads, bakeries and pastries (49 units) or serving fast-food (12 units); mixed stores (11 units); and confectionaries, sweets and pastries (9 units); there are also 12 kiosks. The largest category is that of non-specialized stores (with 863 units, representing 85 % in the total number of considered stores. Still, most, if not all, general food stores (792 units) and

supermarkets/food stores that also provide meat (18 units[9]), respectively mixed food stores (53 units), have at least their own bread section, if not a pastry and/or confectionary within the store; therefore, they may also account for some of the local pastry sales.

The analyses have led to the identification of several special cases among the most important (in number and size) pastry and bakery providers on the local market. The fact that the same company opens several stores (basically identical ones from the point of view of the provided goods and/or services) but registered under various more or less relevant categories makes it rather difficult to properly identify all of the pastry and bakery specialized providers active on this local market. Table 2 comprises the most relevant examples in this respect; Panemar and Agropan stand out by far; the upper-scale supply comes from businesses, such as the pastry shop Delice de France (located in Iulius Mall).

Table 2.

Special Cases of Breads and Pastry Providers

Company	Type(s) of Store(s) as Officially Registered	Number of Units
Agropan ProdCom	breads and pastry store, food store, specialized store for breads, specialized store for pastries and breads, bread store, and bread and bakery store;	22
Bewami Pan Expert	mixed store, bread and pastry store, and food store;	4
Brutăria Caromar	bread store, bread and pastry store, specialized store for breads and bakeries;	5
Dartim	food store and breads store	10
Panemar Morărit și Panificație	food store, food store with fast-food, specialized food store with pastries and bakeries, specialized food store with pastries, mixed store, breads and pastry store, respectively, bakery and pastry store	23
Pîinea pe Vatră	food store	2
Șapte Spice	food store	4
Gas Stations (Lukoil România, OMV Petrom Marketing, and *Rompetrol Downstream*	gas station store: food store, mixed store, and food store with fast-food	16
TOTAL		**86**

Source: Own calculations based on: NSVFSA, 2014.

[9] Unicarm supermarket is one of the most relevant examples.

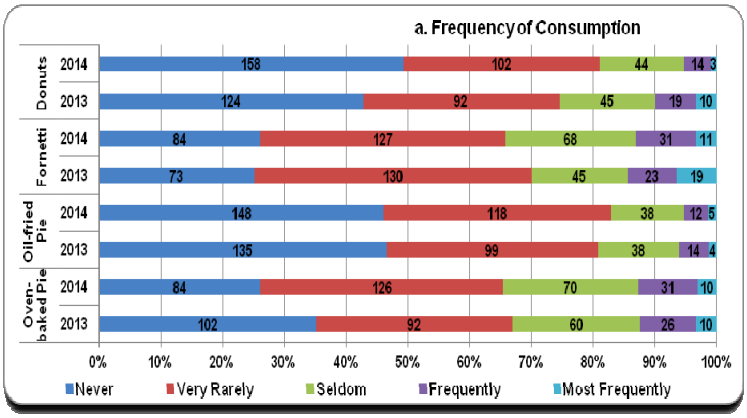
Moreover, the recent rebranding, and, consequently, the refurbishing of its stores, has also brought Napolact (a traditional dairy producer and provider) among the resellers of pastries and bakeries, somewhat aiming at competing against Panemar or La Casa, and, perhaps, trying to bring back to life the old concept of Miorița and Dorna stores.

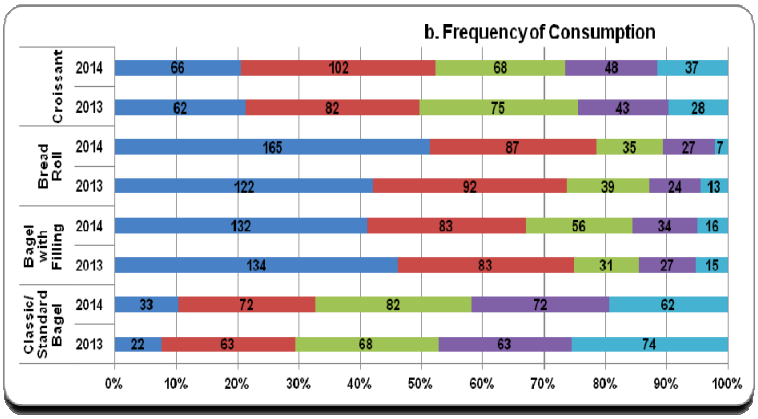
Another relevant aspect related to the provision of pastry and bakery food-services is closely linked to the units authorized to function in this sector on the local market. By processing the data available in June 2014 [NAT, *Ranked Units*] a quite peculiar situation was discovered: the number of officially authorized units is very low compared to that determined based on NSVFSA [2014]! Thus, 217 fast-food units were identified but there seem to be no confectionaries and no pastry shops at all, only one fast-food with pastries and a single pastry-bar, although these two units are subject to official authorization by the National Authority for Tourism…

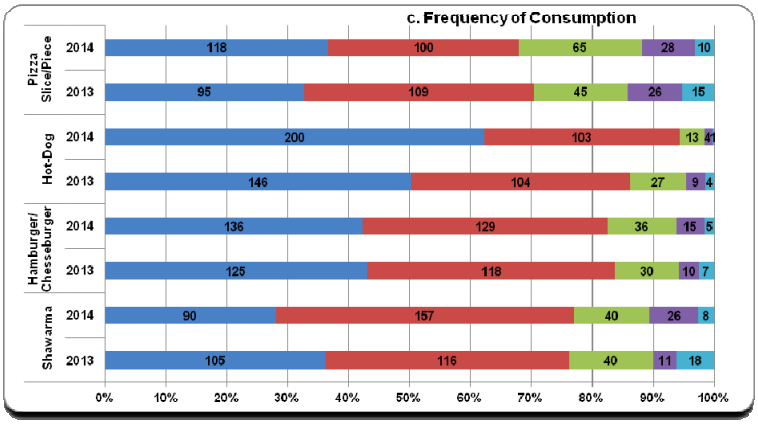
The Demand Side

The answer to the question "Do you consume fast-food or cold/hot snacks (pastry and bakery, donuts, sandwiches, Fornetti, pies, pizza or other such products)?" has constituted the starting point of the research. As expected, the percentage of snacks and fast-food consumers is very high, of over 90 % in both years (dropping from almost 98 % in 2013, to nearly 91 % in 2014). Still, although, the remainder declared that they do not consider themselves fast-food consumers, they continued by answering the questionnaire[10], proving that they do not necessarily associate pastry products to fast-food; clearly, they perceive these products to be snacks, and treat them as such. The respondents, who provided a negative answer to the first question, also declared that they never or almost never buy shawarma, hamburgers and cheeseburgers, hot-dogs, and even pizza slices but that they buy more or less often pies (oven-baked or oil-fried, donuts, bagels, rolls, Fornetti and croissants). Thus, they made it clear that they make a difference between pastry and what they consider to be fast-food products (for more details see Graphs 4a, b and c).

[10] These respondents were expected to quit fillining aut the questionnaire, as they had this possibility.







Note: the legend in graph a) is also valid for graphs b) and c).

Graphs 4a, b and c. Frequency of Consumption

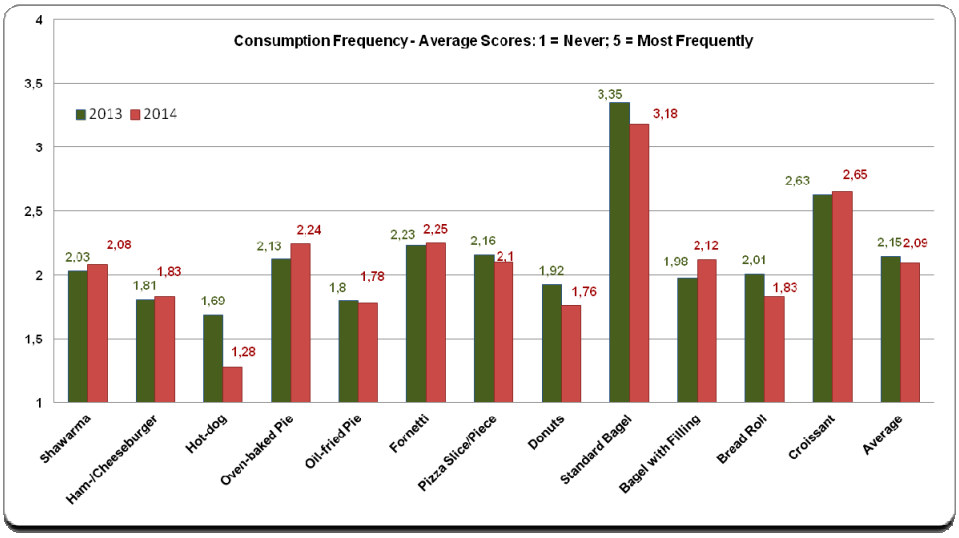
A brief analysis of the data presented in the set of three charts from above (Graphs 4a, b and c and Graph 5) leads to the following conclusions regarding the investigated samples:

- hot-dogs, hamburgers and cheeseburgers, respectively shawarma seem to be the least popular products among the respondents; these three categories register in both years the highest percentages in the cases of: never, very rarely and seldom consumed; in fact, only few of the respondents have declared that they buy such products frequently and very often;
- pizza slices/pieces are consumed somewhat more often but still the cumulated percentages of the relatively regular consumers is still low;
- obviously, it seems that pastry products are more popular among the respondents, being daily snacks;
- oil-fried pies and donuts (including pancakes, too) are the least frequently consumed pastry products, registering, in the case of relatively regular consumption, cumulated percentages pretty close to those of the pizza slices/pieces, although there obviously are different consumption motivations for the two types of products;
- oven-baked pies[11] seem to be consumed a little more often, compared to the previous types of products;
- similar consumption frequencies are registered for the classic or standard bread rolls, with poppy or salt, and for the bagels filled with olives, mushrooms, walnuts, chocolate or sausage;
- Fornetti products are among the pastries that used to enjoy a very high popularity in Romania, and which continue to be consumed relatively frequently; still, one may note the declining trend registered by their consumption frequency;
- somewhat more often, the respondents mentioned they buy croissants;
- finally, standard or classic bagels, with salt, poppy, sesame or with other seeds, are by far the most frequently consumed pastry products.

[11] This category includes the relatively new-market-entry, "palaneţ"; a popular yeast dough pie with various salty and sweet fillings, starting with the classic cabbage or cheese, and finishing with plums or apples etc.

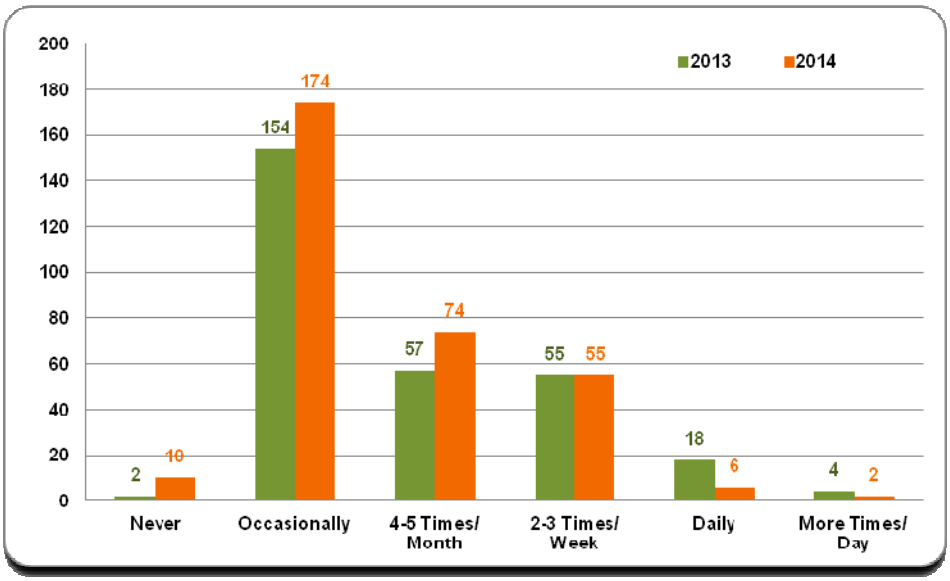
Graph 5.

Consumption Frequency of Fast-food Products (Average Scores)



Graph 6.

Frequency of Fast-food and Pastry Consumption

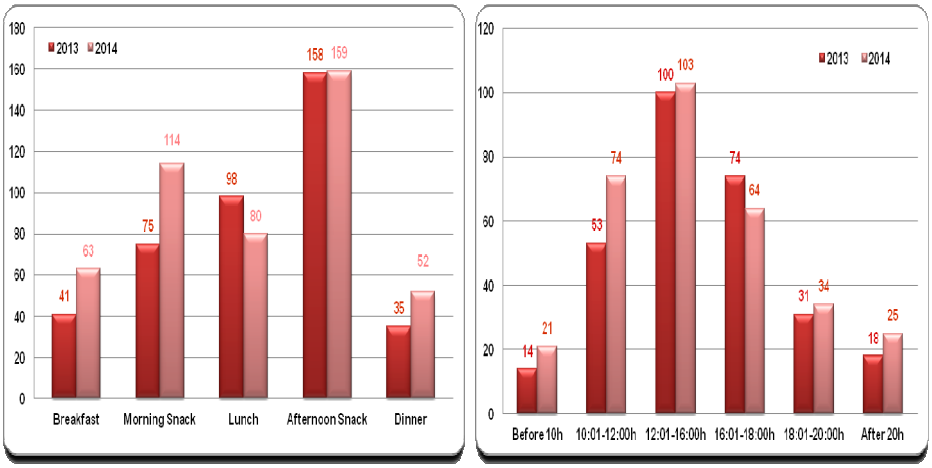


When asked how often they buy hot/cold snacks and pastry (Graph N° 6), most of the respondents declared that they consume such products occasionally (53 % in 2013 and 54 % in 2014) or 4 to 5 times per month (nearly 20 % in 2013 and 23 % in 2014); there is an important percentage of relatively regular buyers, who consume such products 2 to 3 times per week (almost a fifth of the questioned subjects in both years); the number of persons who buy daily, once or more times per day is not very high; at the same time, there has also occurred an increase in the number of non-buyers in 2014, compared to 2013. Altogether, it seems that these products are pretty much impulse-based consumed.

It is relevant to determine whether the products are consumed alone or together with complementary products. The analyses have led to the following findings:

- compared to the previous year, the percentage of respondents who are interested in consuming just the product itself has increased from 35 % to around 43 %;
- a constant segment of around 20 % of the consumers buy mineral water (still or with bubbles) together with their snack; this situation occurs during both of the analyzed years;
- a decline from 25 % in 2013 to around 19 % in 2014 can be observed in the case of the respondents who consume their snack together with soda or juice;
- tea and/or coffee are taken along with their product(s) by a constant percentage of the interviewed respondents (8 % in each year);
- finally, another constant quota of the consumers (some 12-13 %) take their product(s) with yoghurt or other dairy products. One of the future directions of research shall investigate the role of these products from the perspective of the consumers in the context of delaying or, even, replacing their breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Another significant aspect from the perspective of the consumers' profile is the preferred moment of consumption. Two questions were addressed in this respect. The first one invited the respondents to provide at most two answers concerning how they perceive their snack: a breakfast substitute, a morning snack, a lunch substitute, an afternoon snack, or a dinner substitute. The second question forced them to pick only one time-span, the one that describes best the moment when they usually buy pastry and fast-food products.

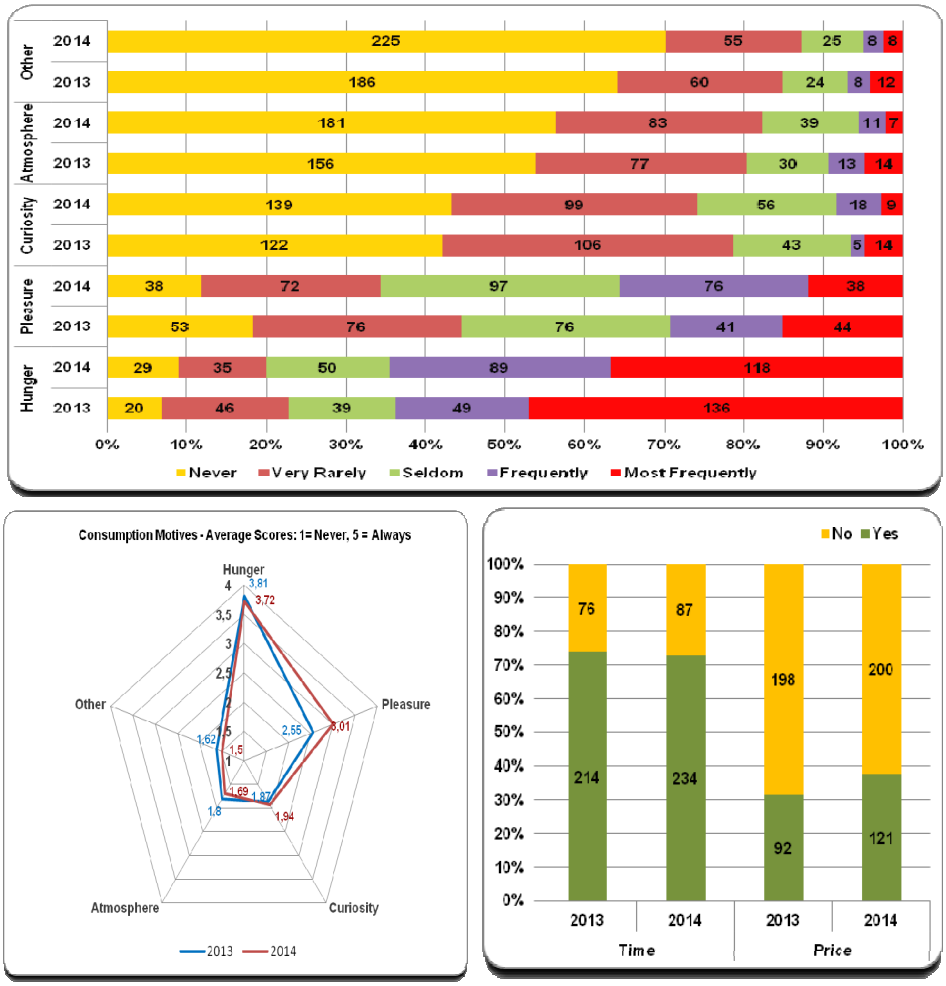


Graphs 7a and b. Preferred Moment of Consumption

The processing of the responses (Graphs 7a and b) has lead to the conclusions given below:

- most of the respondents (a constant number in both years) opt for buying and consuming such products in the afternoon, they perceive them as afternoon snacks and consume them especially after lunch and before 6 PM;
- a relatively high number of respondents assimilate these products to their lunch meals and morning snacks;
- an increasing number of persons skip breakfast at home, and opt for buying a take-along on their way to work;
- the number of consumers who buy such products for dinner is not to be neglected either. In this case, too, further researches shall investigate the role of these products from the perspective of the consumers' habits regarding their breakfasts, lunches or dinners.

Obviously, the decision of buying and eating fast-food and pastry products is taken as a consequence of certain triggering factors; and their determination is essential for establishing the profile of the consumer. Three different questions were addressed in order to determine the main motives for which the respondents opt for such products (Graphs 8a, b and c).



Graphs 8a, b and c. Triggering Factors of Consumption

It becomes clear that the most important factor that determines the respondents' consumption is hunger, with a constant average score of almost 4 points (3.81 in 2013 and 3.72 in 2014). Pleasure also plays an important role in the decision to buy such products, as most consumers tend to buy snack just because they enjoy eating them; compared to the previous year, the average score has increased by half of a point. Curiosity, the atmosphere and other factors do not seem to be high consumption determinants. The lack of time (with a constant percentage of 73 % in both years) seems to be another very

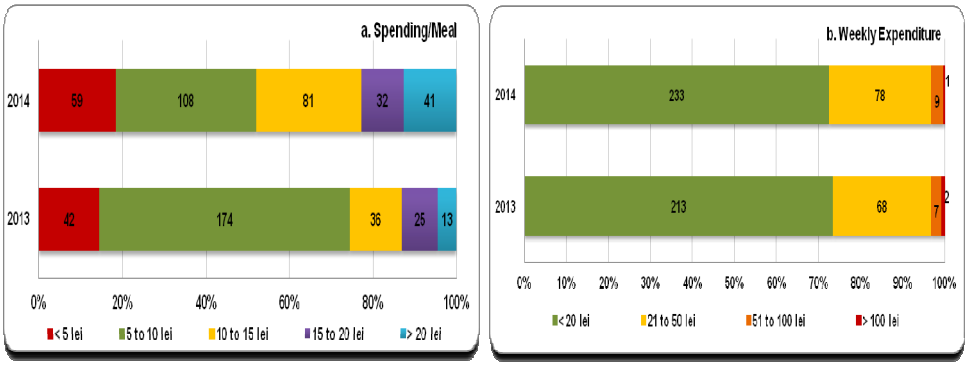
important triggering factor of fast-food and pastry consumption. Moreover, despite the general assumption and opinion that fast-food products are bought because people believe that they are cheaper; the interviewed persons have denied this idea in high proportions of nearly 70 % in 2013 and some 62 % in 2014. Altogether, the quickness of the service seems to be more important than the price.

When it comes to the preferred tastes, there do not occur any changes from one year to another. Thus, nearly 40 % of the respondents buy salty products; another 40 % opt for both salty and sweet products (usually buying both types); a lower percentage of the respondents do not seem to care if their snack is salty or sweet (16 %); and only a very low quota of the respondents (some 4 %) only buy sweet snacks.

Other two questions were designed with the purpose of finding out if the consumers are loyal to a brand or if they are rather convenience-oriented, respectively to determine where they purchase their snack from. Around 35 % of the respondents are convenience-oriented and, therefore, buy their snacks from providers who are on their way to work/faculty/school/home; to these, one may also add those more than 20 % of the interviewed persons who buy the products from locations placed nearby their offices/workplaces/faculties/ schools (25 % in 2013, slightly declining to some 21 % in 2014). A significant percentage of 35 % in 2013, increasing to almost 40 % in 2014 of the respondents are brand-loyal. The rest of the respondents consume whatever product they run into, without caring much neither about the brand, nor about the place of acquisition. Related to the type of provider, preferences have changed in 2014, compared to 2013, in the sense of an increased orientation towards specialized units and pastry shops located in down-town areas (increasing from 45 % in 2013 to 63 % in 2014), while all of the other providers have registered decreases. Thus, specialized producers and pastry shops located in malls, hypermarkets and supermarkets represent the second preferred acquisition place. Food kiosks and other similar units just like general food stores seem to be least preferred among the investigated samples.

A constant percentage of some 85 % of the respondents buy the products for themselves, followed by other 8 % who buy the products to be consumed later, with their families (perhaps at home); the rest of the persons are split among buying for their children or for other persons. Further on, with few modifications, most of the respondents either consume the products on the spot (with a slight decline from nearly 62 % in 2013, to close to 58 % in 2014 for the considered samples) or at their workplace/at the faculty/at school (with a moderate increase from almost 26 % in 2013, to nearly 30 % in 2014). Only some 10 % consume the products at home in 2014 (compared to 11 % in 2013). The rest indicated other situations.

Allotted budgets are essential in any attempt to sketch the consumers' profile. The two charts from below (Graphs 9a and b) provide information regarding both the customers' spending per meal, respectively the budgets they allot on a weekly basis.



Graphs 9a and b. Budget Allocations

A brief analysis of the data available reveals that, despite the fact that for the investigated samples weekly budgets have not suffered significant changes from 2013 to 2014, when it comes to the respondents' spending per meal there occur some noticeable modifications:

- an increase in the quota of the persons spending up to 5 lei per snack (by 3 %, compared to 2013);
- a visible decrease of the persons who allot amounts between 5 and 10 lei per meal, from 60 % in 2013 to 33 % in 2014;
- at the same time, a significant increase has also occurred in the percentage of the people who spend 10 to 15 lei per snack (from a little more than 12 % in 2013 to over 25 % in 2014);
- altogether, the cumulated percentage of the persons spending more than 15 lei per meal has increased from 13 % in 2013 to nearly 23 % in 2014.

The further development of the market is closely linked to two aspects: the expectations of the consumers, on one hand, and the capacity of the providers to innovate and to accordingly respond to their customers' needs, on the other hand. Having this in mind, two last questions were addressed. The first question concerns the respondents' opinion regarding the providers' capacity to positively surprise them with one or more appealing products(s). The answers received are quite peculiar, in the sense that the very large majority replied "yes" (80 % in 2013 and 90 % in 2014), while – as

already shown above – curiosity has proven not to be an important triggering factor for the investigated consumers. Finally, regarding what other types of fast-food and pastry products they would like to find on the market, the respondents seem not to be consistent from one year to another, their desires being more or less linked to market-"fashion". While muffins together with bagels (both, with various fillings) seem to have been the hit of last year, it looks like this year taco and tortilla, together with oven-baked pies with different fillings, would manage to raise the interest of potential customers. On the other hand, oil-fried pies and pancakes, donuts and Fornetti with other fillings and flavors seem to be on a declining trend. Moreover, although not very educated in this sense, the respondents seem to be more health-aware, and also tend to look for what they call healthier food, namely – salads and fruit.

An analysis of the results obtained for the multivariate ANOVA tests run on the available responses (Appendix) leads to conclusions such as:

- *the age*, as a factor, influences the consumption frequency of shawarma, hamburgers/cheeseburgers, hot-dogs and of croissants; moreover, the cross-tabulations run on the data collected have also revealed that the age groups of 20-25 years and 26-35 years are the most influential in this respect, these being the most important consumers of this type of products; still, one should note that there is an important segment of non-consumers, too;
- *the age* also seems to influence the perception upon two potential triggering consumption factors: lack of time and reduced costs; in this sense, once again the same age groups (20-25 years and 26-35 years), completed by that of the 36-45 year old persons determine:
    - on one hand, the highest number of respondents who consume such products due to their lack of spare time;
    - and, on the other hand, it is interesting to note that the same respondents are responsible for the denial of the association consumption due to a presumed low cost; moreover, not even the 14-19 years old respondents, who have limited budgets, do not agree with such associations;
- *the occupation* is correlated to the consumption of oven-baked products, in the sense that the category pupil/students is the most representative one, registering the highest rates among the respondents who *never consume* or who *consume very rarely* this kind of product; they also have the highest occurrences in the cases of the *occasional and frequent* consumers; the employees working in private enterprises constitute the most important segment of *very frequent* consumers;
- *the monthly income* generates influences upon the consumption of: hamburgers/cheeseburgers, Fornetti and croissants; in this respect,

lower income levels are associated to high percentages among *non-consumption* or *very rare consumption* in the case of hamburgers/ cheeseburgers as opposed to the situation of Fornetti, where: higher budgets are associated to low levels of consumption, respectively low budgets lead to frequent consumption; in the case of croissants, low budgets determine low levels of demand, and higher budgets lead to increased consumption;

- *the monthly income* also influences the budgets allotted per meal; in this respect, once again, lower and average income levels generate the most influences upon consumption behaviors; thus, the first three income groups (< 350 lei/month, 351-750 lei/month and 751-1.000 lei/month) are associated to most of the budget groups allotted per meal (< 5 lei, 5-10 lei, and 10-15 lei).

4. Conclusions

A brief summarization of the main findings of the conducted research may lead to the following conclusions, valid for both of the analyzed years:

- pastry and bakery products, respectively fast-food, are very popular among the permanent and temporary population of Cluj-Napoca;
- from the perspective of the consumption frequency:
    - the most commonly bought pastries and bakeries are: classic or standard bagels (the most popular) and croissants;
    - these products are followed by: filled bagels, Fornetti products, and oven-baked pies;
    - finally, among the least preferred bakery and pastry products, there are: oil-fried pies, donuts, and bread-rolls;
    - fast-food products, such as: mini-pizzas or pizza slices/pieces enjoy a higher consumption rate compared to that of shawarmas, hamburgers/cheeseburgers and hot-dogs (which are by far the least consumed products);
- for most of the respondents, pastries and fast-food products are *occasionally* consumed, being perceived as impulse food, respectively relatively regularly, but with low frequency (*once a week* to at most *2-3 times per week*);
- usually, the respondents (in almost half of the cases) consume only the product, without associating it with anything; around a fifth of the consumers also buy mineral or still water with their snack; the combination with dairy products or with soda, tea or coffee occurs in relatively constant quotas of no more than 10 % of the population;

- it looks like such products are most commonly consumed as lunch-time or afternoon snacks;
- hunger is the main triggering factor of consumption; it is followed by pleasure, which again allows the association with impulse-based consumption; another important factor is the lack of time, and thus the need to consume something that is not sophisticated and which does not involve a lot of time; on the other hand, the relatively low prices associated to these products do not increase consumption frequency;
- most of the respondents (the large majority) opt for salty products, respectively for salty and sweet products, consumed together;
- consumption is rather associated to convenience (in the cases of some 55 % of the respondents) but, at the same time, nearly 40 % seem to be brand-loyal;
- regarding the preferred type of provider, most customers (nearly 65 % in 2014) orient themselves towards specialized units and pastry shops located in down-town areas, followed by the ones opened in shopping centers (around 25 % in 2014);
- for the large majority, pastry products and fast-food are bought with the purpose of self-consumption (some 85 % of the respondents); moreover, these products are either consumed on the spot (about 60 %) or at the workplace/in school/at the faculty (close to 30 %);
- the average allotted budget per meal is between 5 and 15 lei for most of the respondents; there is also an important number of consumers who spend less than 5 lei per snack; the figures are consistent with the preferred products;
- finally, although curiosity does not motivate very much the respondents to consume, very many of them (nearly 90 % in 2014) have mentioned that they would be interested in tasting new products; one of the further developments of this market may be found in the area of the "healthy food segment".

The distribution of the results reveals that the largest age group (26-35) is also the most visible when it comes to the general consumption frequency of fast-food and pastry products. They are by far the most representative group among the persons who consume fast-food and pastry products: *occasionally*, *4 to 5 times per month*, *2-3 times per week*, and, even, *daily* in 2013, respectively *occasionally*, *4 to 5 times per month*, and *2-3 times per week* in 2014. This is also how the respondent's age influenced the consumption frequency of fast-food and pastry products. All other age groups contribute to the *occasional* consumption of this kind of food products, respectively to a relatively regular consumption of *4-5 times per month* (or *once a week*) among the respondents belonging to the 26-35 years interval.

The analysis of the results obtained for the multivariate ANOVA tests and for the cross-tabulations run on the responses obtained leads to several conclusions. A first one reveals that age influences the consumption frequency of shawarma, hamburgers/cheeseburgers, hot-dogs and croissants, two age groups (20-25 and 26-35 years) being the most influential in this respect. Further, the respondents' age also influences the number of consumers who buy such products due to the lack of spare time but at the same time, the same consumers do not associate the low price to consumption triggers (three age groups being most relevant in both cases: 20-25, 26-35 and 36-45 years). Pupils and students seem to be the most important representatives of the non-consumers or low-frequency consumers of oven-baked products, while the employees of private enterprises are the most frequent consumers of such products. Regarding the influence of the income levels upon consumption, the analyses revealed that lower income levels are associated to high percentages among non-consumption or very rare consumption in the case of hamburgers/cheeseburgers as opposed to the situation of Fornetti, where: higher budgets are associated to low levels of consumption, respectively low budgets lead to frequent consumption in the case of croissants, low budgets determine low levels of demand, and higher budgets lead to increased consumption. Finally, the monthly income of the respondents also influences the budgets allotted per meal, in the sense that the lower the monthly income, the lower the allotted budget for cold/hot snacks and pastries.

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Appendix

Results Obtained for Multivariate ANOVA Tests Run on the Data of 2013 and 2014 (*P*-Values)

Years	2013			2014		
Independent Factors / Dependent Variables	*P*-values			*P*-values		
	Age	**Occupation**	**Monthly Income**	**Age**	**Occupation**	**Monthly Income**
1. Consumption Frequency of Fast-Food and Pastry Products	0.0026	0.8117	0.2130	0.0707	0.7824	0.7678
2. Consumption Frequency of:						
Shawarma	0.0001	0.4517	0.2713	0.0310	0.9474	0.9552
Hamburger/Cheeseburger	0.0003	0.3944	0.0154	0.0403	0.7449	0.6010
Hot-dog	0.3075	0.7821	0.3828	0.0230	0.8059	0.1618
Oven-baked Pie	0.1545	0.0351	0.9234	0.6620	0.7911	0.0687
Oil-fried Pie	0.4919	0.5483	0.2352	0.4225	0.3693	0.9221
Fornetti	0.2060	0.2504	0.5146	0.3282	0.4095	0.0110
Pizza	0.1287	0.5473	0.6593	0.6731	0.3788	0.2961
Donuts	0.5574	0.2660	0.4997	0.0735	0.4872	0.1964
Standard Bagel	0.5896	0.7927	0.1532	0.8399	0.9038	0.2142
Filled Bagel	0.5516	0.0549	0.6053	0.2688	0.8993	0.3458
Bread-roll	0.2320	0.1140	0.5895	0.2500	0.5122	0.1218
Croissant	0.0315	0.6267	0.0068	0.0884	0.7932	0.3258
3. Preferred Combinations (consuming the product with or without other products)	0.2391	0.3026	0.2827	0.4253	0.6264	0.4280
4. Consumption Reasons:						
Lack of Time	0.3454	0.3434	0.8228	0.0120	0.3161	0.4492
Reduced Cost	0.2386	0.6296	0.5663	0.0067	0.9103	0.6444
5. Place of Acquisition						
Provider Choice	0.2109	0.1470	0.6264	0.9749	0.7771	0.2146
Provider Location	0.9681	0.3832	0.7352	0.7635	0.5336	0.5451
6. Budget/Expenditure Allotted per Meal	0.1115	0.0994	0.0109	0.4604	0.7218	0.9161

Note: Significant values (*P*-values < 0.05) are highlighted.

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DETERMINANTS OF TOURISM ENTREPRENEURSHIP: THE CASE OF STRAJA RESORT

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ABSTRACT. According to our knowledge there has been limited research conducted in Romania with respect to tourism entrepreneurship. Due to the fact that entrepreneurship can be considered an engine for economic progress and that tourism is an economic activity that efficiently creates jobs in regions lacking important development opportunities, we undertook an exploratory investigation of entrepreneurs from Straja mountain resort. Our research concentrated on identification of the socio-economic background of tourism entrepreneurs, the factors underlying their decision to become an entrepreneur, in general, and that to become an entrepreneur in tourism, in particular. Also, the paper investigates the influence of entrepreneurs' socio-demographic characteristics on the motivations to become an entrepreneur and respectively, to invest in tourism.

Key words: entrepreneurship, tourism, motivations, Straja

JEL Classification: L26, L83

1. Introduction

According to Shane and Venkatraman (2000) entrepreneurship is a mindset that assigns different values to resources and opportunities than does the general population and a mindset that encourages creativity and innovation, changing the game, and being unique. History has proven that with each economic downturn, it is the entrepreneurial drive and persistence that brings the economy back (Kuratko, 2006). Entrepreneurs have an important impact of economic growth through their leadership, management, innovation, research

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and development effectiveness, job creation, competitiveness, productivity, and formation of new industry (Kuratko, 2009). Entrepreneurship is gaining increasing respect from the scholars as a field of research as well as practical application worldwide as a means to achieve wealth creation and personal fulfillment (Ma and Tan, 2006).

The tourism industry seems to be the most efficient branch of the economy in generating jobs and income in less developed, peripheral countries/regions, where development opportunities are limited (Archer et al., 2005). The benefits and costs generated by the tourism activity should be viewed from four sides: tourists, local community, authorities and investors. The tourists pay to enjoy a certain form of tourism; the local community enjoys the benefits (mainly financial) from the tourism activity but also have to face the hidden costs tourists leave behind; the government and the local authorities obtain revenues through taxes and the creation of jobs; the investors enjoy financial benefits, based on the incomes of the businesses they have set up in the host region. Regarding the costs, investors are immune to any other cost, than the financial one (Bâc, 2012).

Tourists' experiences and satisfaction, on one hand and destination and community development, on the other hand, highly depend on tourism entrepreneurship (Bardolet and Sheldon, 2008; Cawley and Gillmor, 2008). The impact that entrepreneurship has on a country's economy materializes in increased competition, creation of new jobs and promoting innovation hence determining economic wealth and enhancing spending power (Holmgren and From, 2005). For this reason countries should find the most appropriate ways to cultivate tourism entrepreneurship.

Although the developing countries could benefit from the development of entrepreneurship in tourism through the involvement and the benefits it could bring to local population it is an economic phenomenon understudied today (Lingelbach, 2005).

Previous researche in the field of entrepreneurship suggest that studying entrepreneur's personal motives to start a business will lead to a better understanding of the growth potential of their businesses an also will reveal why and how a person undertakes entrepreneurial activities. The literature also sustains that motives to start a business differ from one country to another, while studies in the field of tourism and entrepreneurship have been conducted only on the developed economies, such as Canada, the US, Australia, and New Zealand (Chen and Elston, 2013).

The existent gap in the Romanian research on the topic of entrepreneurship in tourism together with the positive impact that entrepreneurship on one hand, and tourism on the other hand, have on

economic development determined us to conduct an exploratory research among the tourism entrepreneurs in Straja resort. We have investigated aspects such as: entrepreneurs' characteristics and background, motivations to start a business and motivations to invest in tourism.

2. Brief literature review

Encouraging and releasing people's entrepreneurial energies is an essential key to the achievement of greater economic prosperity in a country and to the continuing regeneration of its economy over time (Harper, 2003).

Entrepreneurs are examined from various perspectives, such as attitudes, backgrounds, personality traits, economic factors, contextual circumstances, and aspect of social marginality, gender, and geographical location (Beaver and Jennings, 2005).

Mazzarol et al. (1999) distinguish between two directions of study in the field of entrepreneurship: the personal characteristics or traits of the entrepreneur, and the influencing factors of entrepreneurial behavior (social, cultural, political and economic contextual factors).

Most of the studies conducted so far have concentrated on the entrepreneurs characteristics such as: as risk taking, opportunity seeking, creativity, visionary, need for achievement, internal locus of control, tolerance of ambiguity, need for achievement (Mazzarol, 2003; Turan and Kara, 2007).

The socio-economic background factors influencing entrepreneurship has also been investigated in the literature (Beaver and Jennings, 2005). The past employment, family background, gender, education levels, ethnicity, religion, level of support the nascent entrepreneur receives from their family, friends or community are among the factors identified as triggers of entrepreneurship in the literature (Mazzarol, 2003; Beaver and Jennings, 2005).

The identification and exploitation of opportunities by entrepreneurs are greatly influenced by the motives that attract entrepreneurs in the process of entrepreneurship (Shane et al. 2003). These motives are categorized in the entrepreneurship literature into two types: "push" and "pull" factors. In the category of "push" factors are included the elements of necessity that "force" the entrepreneur to start a business while the "pull" motives attract the decision to form new ventures (Gilad and Levine, 1986). The exit from or risk of unemployment, family pressure, job dissatisfaction or autonomy are considered "push" motivations. The need for achievement, the desire to be independent and social development possibilities, innovation, financial success, self-realization, the need for approval, improved welfare and wealth, and following role models are examples of "pull" drivers of entrepreneurship (Verheul et al, 2010).

Reynolds et al. (2001) introduced the concept of opportunity and necessity entrepreneurship making the distinction between push and pull motivation. According to Verheul et al. (2010) previous research underlines the reasons to distinguish between opportunity and necessity entrepreneurs. The socio-economic characteristics, such as the level of education, relevant experience and age differ between opportunity and necessity entrepreneurs. Also the motivation to start a business may influence both the way in which a business is managed and business performance (necessity entrepreneurs obtaining an inferior performance). The impact on economic growth and job creation differ from opportunity to necessity entrepreneurs as well as the determinants of the two types of entrepreneurs. Verheul et al. (2010) argue that this has important consequences for policy making as measures to stimulate necessity entrepreneurship do not necessarily benefit opportunity-driven entrepreneurs, and vice-versa.

3. Material and method

We have conducted an exploratory study to address a gap in tourism entrepreneurship research in Romania. The main purpose of our study was to identify the entrepreneurs' characteristics and the triggering factors of entrepreneurship, in general, and of tourism entrepreneurship, in particular, focusing on a specific tourism destination – Straja resort. Our research questions are:

Q1: *What are the socio-economic characteristics of the tourism entrepreneurs from Straja?*

Q2: *What are the motives to become an entrepreneur and is this decision influenced by the entrepreneur's socio-demographic characteristics?*

Q3: *What are the motives to invest in tourism and is this decision influenced by the entrepreneur's socio-demographic characteristics?*

In order to answer our research questions we collected data using a self-administered questionnaire, which participants filled out with the help of a research operator that clarified questions if necessary and ensured that all questions were answered. The questionnaire was structured in five sections and to answer our research questions we analyzed only three of them. The first one included questions related to the motives to become an entrepreneur and those to invest in tourism, the second section consisted in questions that investigated the characteristics of the entrepreneur's business (type of activity conducted, number of employees, years of operation, seasonality of activity) and the third one comprised questions about the entrepreneur's socio-economic background (age, sex, education level, family history in entrepreneurship, previous job, type of ownership).

Our study was focused on the entrepreneurs in Straja, a mountain resort from Hunedoara County. We used referral sampling thus obtaining 63 valid questionnaires. The sample can be considered representative due to the fact that we investigated 30% of the total population, our investigation being an very similar to a quasi-census.

Out of the entrepreneurs questioned 62 (98%) run accommodation facilities (chalets, villas, boardinghouses etc.) and 1 (2%) own food and beverage businesses (restaurants, buffets, bars, etc.). Among the entrepreneurs who own accommodations establishments, 51.6% also offer food and beverage services and 22.6% offer leisure activities (are administrators of ski slopes, adventure parks, etc.). Considering the size of the business owned, the majority of entrepreneurs (84%) run micro enterprises (0-9 employees), 14% own small enterprises (10-49 employees) and only 2% of them operate a medium-sized enterprise (50-249 employees). More than 42% of the businesses operate for over ten years, 33% have an experience of 5 to 9 years and over 23% are active for less than 5 years. Over 71% of these businesses operate only seasonally.

4. Results and discussions

Our first research question *aimed to identify the socio-economic background of tourism entrepreneurs from Straja.*

Considering gender, the majority, 55 (87%) of the 63 entrepreneurs participating in our study, were men and only 8 (13%) of the subjects were women.

Regarding the age of the participants in our study, we have the following situation: only two of them (3%) were aged between 20 and 30 years; 13 (21%) were aged between 30 and 40 years; most of the entrepreneurs~~,~~ ~~29~~ (29; 46%) were aged between 40-50 years and 19 (30%) said they were aged between 50 and 60 years.

Considering the level of education, most of the entrepreneurs (29; 46%) hold a university degree, 14 (22.2%) of them hold a foreman degree, 13 (20.6%) hold a master's degree and a number of 7 (11.2%) entrepreneurs have graduated from high school or vocational school.

Another dimension of the entrepreneur's profile is the occupation that they had before starting their own businesses. Most of them, 21 (33%), declared they had no other occupation, 10 respondents (16%) said they were free lancers, 9 (14%) said they were former sales agents, and 8 (12%) of them were miners. Of course, there were other occupations listed by the respondents, among which we can mention: drivers, teachers or health professionals.

Family background in entrepreneurship is a triggering factor of entrepreneurship. Approximately 60% of the entrepreneurs declared they had entrepreneurs in their family. Most of them (28.6%) stated they had siblings

that were entrepreneurs, followed by those who mentioned children (20.6%) and parents (17.5%) as entrepreneurs.

We questioned the entrepreneurs about the ownership structure of their business. Most of them, namely 43 (68%), declared they were sole proprietors, while 19 (30%) of the entrepreneurs were associated with family members. Only one of the 63 interviewed entrepreneurs shared the ownership with a person outside his/hers family.

Table 1.

Entrepreneurs' socio-economic characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	8	12.7
Male	55	87.3
Total	63	100.0

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30 years	2	3.2
30-40 years	13	20.6
40-50 years	29	46.0
50-60 years	19	30.2
Total	63	100.0

Education level	Frequency	Percent
High school / vocational school	7	11.1
Foreman studies	14	22.2
Undergraduate	29	46.0
Graduate (Master)	13	20.6
Total	63	100.0

Ownership structure	Frequency	Percent
Sole proprietors	43	68.3
Family member associate/s	19	30.2
Associate/s from outside the family	1	1.6
Total	63	100.0

The second research question *investigated the motivations to become an entrepreneur and also if the socio-demographic background of the entrepreneur influences these motivations.*

For tourism entrepreneurs in Straja resort the supposition from the literature that the main motivation to start a business is the need for higher earnings was confirmed. A total of 50 (79.4%) respondents declared that this was the main reason they become entrepreneurs. Not only in general, but also for each age range, this was the main reason in the decision to become an entrepreneur.

The second most important reason (54% of the respondents) to start their own business was the desire for independence, specifically to be their

own bosses, and not to have to work for somebody else. This reason was mostly mentioned by the entrepreneurs aged between 40 and 50 years.

Another important motive in the decision to become an entrepreneur was the flexibility that this condition offers for the personal life, 33 (52.4%) entrepreneurs indicating this factor. Again, this was the motivation mostly mentioned by the entrepreneurs aged between 40 and 50 years. An important aspect to mention is that out of these 33 entrepreneurs, 25 operate a seasonal business.

Other motives of starting a business include dissatisfaction with previous work (27%), desire for personal and professional success (21%), but also the desire to contribute to the welfare of the community (21%), *e.g.* by creating new jobs. All these three reasons were mostly indicated by respondents aged between 30 and 40 years.

Fig. 1. Motives for becoming an entrepreneur

The women entrepreneurs declared they were mostly determined to start a business by the desire to obtain high earnings (75%) and also by the desire to be their own boss (75%) and, secondly, by the flexibility this status could offer for personal life (50%). Men entrepreneurs were motivated by the desire to obtain high earning (80%), a greater flexibility for the personal life (52.7%) and the desire to be their own boss (50.9%).

The analysis of the motivations based on the education level of our respondents reveals that the desire for personal and professional success was the triggering factor especially for the highly educated entrepreneurs, the dissatisfaction with previous results determined mainly the respondents with low level of education (high school or professional school), while the desire for independence drove into entrepreneurship especially persons with lower level of education but also those with undergraduate studies. The promise of better financial results attracted all the entrepreneurs but mostly those with foreman and graduate studies. A greater flexibility for the personal life and the

possibility to have a contribution in the community constituted the motivating factors for entrepreneurs with foreman studies (see table 2 for detailed results).

In addition to cross tabs analyses, we tested the existence of statistically significant links between the socio-demographic characteristics of the entrepreneurs, on one hand, and their motivation to become an entrepreneur, on the other hand. The results of Chi square tests (table 2) don't support the existence of statistically significant influences of entrepreneurs' age, gender and level of education on their motivations to start a business with one exception. This exception was observed in the case of the motivation to become an entrepreneur due to dissatisfaction with previous work which is influenced by the age of the entrepreneur - young entrepreneurs seem to be determined by this motivation more than the elder ones.

Table 2.

Cross tabulation - entrepreneur's socio-demographic characteristics and motivation to become an entrepreneur

		Desire for personal and professional success		**Dissatisfaction with previous work results**		**Desire to be my own boss**		**Desire to obtain higher earnings**		**Have greater flexibility for my personal life**		**Contribute to the welfare of the community**	
		No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Age	*20-30 years*	0	0.0	2	100	0	0.0	2	100	0	0.0	0	0.0
	30-40 years	5	38.5	6	46.2	5	38.5	11	84.6	5	38.5	3	23.1
	40-50 years	4	13.8	8	27.6	18	62.1	24	82.8	15	51.7	4	13.8
	50-60 years	4	21.1	1	5.3	11	57.9	13	68.4	13	68.4	6	31.6
Chi-Square		*Pearson Chi-Square 3.874, df=3, p=0.275*		*Pearson Chi-Square 12.39149, df=3, p=0.006*		*Pearson Chi-Square 4.487, df=3, p=0.213*		*Pearson Chi-Square 2.332, df=3, p=0.506*		*Pearson Chi-Square 5.174, df=3, p=0.159*		*Pearson Chi-Square 2.785, df=3, p=0.425*	
Level of education	*High school / vocational school*	1	14.3	4	57.1	5	71.4	4	57.1	4	57.1	1	14.3
	Foreman studies	1	7.1	4	28.6	5	35.7	12	85.7	10	71.4	5	35.7
	Undergraduate	8	27.6	6	20.7	18	62.1	23	79.3	15	51.7	6	20.7
	Graduate (Master)	3	23.1	3	23.1	6	46.2	11	84.6	4	30.8	1	7.7
Chi-Square		*Pearson Chi-Square 2.631, df=3, p=0.452*		*Pearson Chi-Square 3.933, df=3, p=0.269*		*Pearson Chi-Square 3.822, df=3, p=0.281*		*Pearson Chi-Square 2.674, df=3, p=0.445*		*Pearson Chi-Square 5.539, df=3, p=0.209*		*Pearson Chi-Square 3.446, df=3, p=0.328*	
Gender	*Female*	1	12.5	1	12.5	6	75.0	6	75.0	4	50.0	1	12.5
	Male	12	21.8	16	29.1	28	50.9	44	80.0	29	52.7	12	21.8
Chi-Square		*Pearson Chi-Square 0.370, df=1, p=0.543*		*Pearson Chi-Square 0.976, df=1, p=0.323*		*Pearson Chi-Square 1.632, df=1, p=0.201*		*Pearson Chi-Square 0.107, df=1, p=0.744*		*Pearson Chi-Square 0.021, df=1, p=0.0.885*		*Pearson Chi-Square 0.370, df=1, p=0.543*	

The third research *question aimed to identify the motivations to become an entrepreneur in tourism and whether the socio-demographic characteristics of the entrepreneur influence these motivations.*

Besides finding the main reasons for becoming an entrepreneur, we were also interested in the motivation of starting a business in tourism industry. The motive to invest in tourism indicated by most (79%) of the entrepreneurs was the high touristic potential. Another important driving factor was the increasing demand for touristic services in that area (71%). Ownership of a property determined the industry choice for 62% of the entrepreneurs.

We want to underline that for the entrepreneurs in Straja the family tradition in this industry or their previous work experience in tourism were among the least chosen reasons for starting a business in tourism.

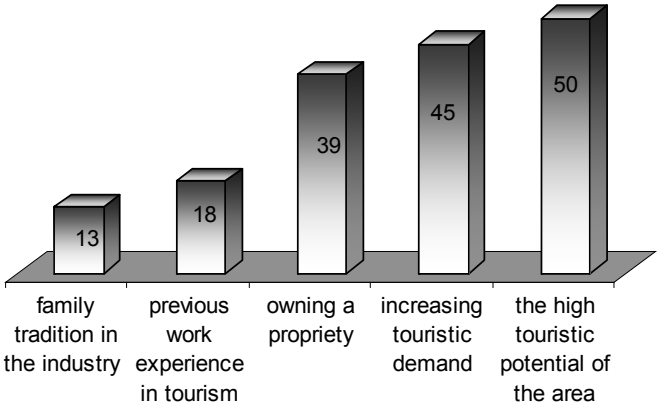

Fig. 2. Motives for starting a business in tourism

We have conducted a cross tabulation analysis to identify the motivation to invest in tourism of the different categories of entrepreneurs (depending on age, level of education and gender).

Most of the entrepreneurs aged between 30 and 40 years (92.3%) and of those over 50 years old (94.7%) declared they invested in tourism due to the high touristic potential of the area, while most of the respondents aged between 30 and 40 years (84.6%) chose this industry due to the increasing touristic demand. Ownership of a property determined the entrepreneurs aged between 40-50 years (69%) and those aged between 50 and 60 years (63.2%). The entrepreneurs aged between 20 and 30 years chose the tourism industry due to previous work experience in this sector and due to family tradition in tourism.

Most of the entrepreneurs holding a high school or vocational school degree (85.7%) as well as those holding an undergraduate (86.2%) stated they have chosen the tourism industry due to the high touristic potential of the area. The increasing touristic demand attracted mostly undergraduate entrepreneurs (82.8%), while ownership of a property in Straja constituted the reason to invest in tourism for most of the entrepreneurs holding a foreman diploma (92.9%). Previous work experience and family tradition in tourism constitute triggering factors towards this industry for most of the entrepreneurs holding a graduate/master diploma.

The high touristic potential of the area and the increasing touristic demand are the most mentioned motives to invest in tourism for both women and men entrepreneurs participating in our study. Previous work experience and family tradition in tourism attracted especially women towards this industry, while ownership of a property determined most-of the men (67.3%) to invest in tourism (Table no 3).

In addition to cross tabs analyses we tested the existence of statistically significant links between the characteristics of the entrepreneurs, on one hand, and their decision to invest in tourism, on the other hand.

Chi square tests' results reveal the existence of a statistically significant link between age, on one hand, and high touristic demand and, respectively, family tradition in tourism, on the other hand. The influence of the level of education of the entrepreneur on the decision to invest in tourism based on motives such as ownership of a property, previous work experience or family tradition in tourism is supported by the results of the corresponding Chi Square tests. Investment in tourism industry due to factors such as high touristic potential of the area, ownership of a property or previous work experience in tourism is significantly influenced by gender (see table 3).

Table 3.

Cross tabulation entrepreneur's socio-demographic characteristics and motivation to invest in tourism

		High touristic potential of the area		**Increasing touristic demand**		**Ownership of a property**		**Previous work experience in tourism**		**Family tradition in tourism**	
		No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Age	*20-30 years*	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	2	100.0
	30-40 years	12	92.3	11	84.6	7	53.8	4	30.8	3	23.1
	40-50 years	20	69.0	21	72.4	20	69.0	5	17.2	4	13.8
	50-60 years	18	94.7	13	68.4	12	63.2	7	36.8	4	21.1
Chi-Square		*Pearson Chi-Square 13.679, df=3, p=0.003*		*Pearson Chi-Square 6.206, df=3, p=0.102*		*Pearson Chi-Square 4.234, df=3, p=0.237*		*Pearson Chi-Square 7.492, df=3, p=0.058*		*Pearson Chi-Square 8.571, df=3, p=0.036*	

		High touristic potential of the area		Increasing touristic demand		Ownership of a property		Previous work experience in tourism		Family tradition in tourism	
		No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*
Level of education	*High school / vocational school*	6	85.7	4	57.1	4	57.1	1	14.3	1	14.3
	Foreman studies	10	71.4	9	64.3	13	92.9	0	0.0	1	7.1
	Undergraduate	25	86.2	24	82.8	18	62.1	9	31.0	4	13.8
	Graduate (Master)	9	69.2	8	61.5	4	30.8	8	61.5	7	53.8
Chi-Square		*Pearson Chi-Square 2.355, df=3, p=0.502*		*Pearson Chi-Square 3.497, df=3, p=0.321*		*Pearson Chi-Square 11.099, df=3, p=0.011*		*Pearson Chi-Square 13.309, df=3, p=0.004*		*Pearson Chi-Square 11.313, df=3, p=0.010*	
Gender	*Female*	8	100.0	7	87.5	2	25.0	5	62.5	2	25.0
	Male	42	76.4	38	69.1	37	67.3	13	23.6	11	20.0
Chi-Square		*Pearson Chi-Square 2.383, df=1, p=0.0123*		*Pearson Chi-Square 1.160, df=1, p=0.282*		*Pearson Chi-Square 5.292, df=1, p=0.021*		*Pearson Chi-Square 5.169, df=1, p=0.023*		*Pearson Chi-Square 0.107, df=1, p=0.744*	

4. Conclusions

In lagging regions local entrepreneurship plays an important role in providing employment opportunities and increasing local incomes. Entrepreneurial strategies, policies and structures to promote/encourage/support the establishment and operation of successful ventures are desirable instruments of development in lagging regions (Skuras et al., 2005).

Due to the positive impact that development of tourism entrepreneurship can have on local communities in terms of participation of locals in tourism industry, improvement of standard of living and increased demand for local supplies (Manyara and Jones, 2005; Shah, 2000), and also due to the need to develop diversified instruments to support the entrepreneurial undertakings, the aim of this study was to identify the socio - economic characteristics of tourism entrepreneurs from Straja resort, as well as to reveal the main motives underlying their decision to become entrepreneurs, on one hand, and to invest in tourism, on the other hand.

The findings of the present study show the general profile of the entrepreneur in Straja: male, aged between 40 and 50 years, holding a university degree, coming from an entrepreneurial family and preferring to be the sole proprietor of his business or to share it with a family member.

In terms of motivations to become an entrepreneur, the main reason was the promise of higher earnings and the desire to be their own boss. The decision to invest in tourism has been mostly determined by the high touristic potential of the area and the increasing demand of touristic demand. In general, the motivation towards entrepreneurship has proven not to be influenced by entrepreneurs' age, gender or level of education with only one exception, in the case

of dissatisfaction with previous job as a reason to become an entrepreneur which is influenced by the age. Conversely, in the case of motivations to invest in tourism only one out of the five studied triggering factors, namely the increasing touristic demand, is not influenced by entrepreneur's socio-demographic characteristics.

The main limitation of our study reside in the sample's limited geographical coverage. Further research can be undertaken to include a region or even the whole country. It is also recommended that the findings of this study be validated with a large-scale randomly selected sample of the target population. Another area that needs to be undertaken is the study of influence of exogenous variables such as outside assistance and government policy on venture creation. We also consider useful an investigation concerning the traits of the successful entrepreneurs as they could motivate other people to engage in venture creation.

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