

A study on investigating the possible introduction of a Finnish rye bread product into the British market and the possible barriers.

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For the attention of Mrs. Susan Rennie

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Table of contents

List of Figures and Appendices.....	3
Chapter 1: Introduction	4-5
Chapter 2: Literature Review	6-20
2.1 History and Current Situation.....	6
2.2 Examining the United Kingdom as a Market Environment	6-7
2.2.1 Analysis of the Bread Industry in the United Kingdom.....	7-8
2.3 Examining Culture and Its Aspects	8
2.3.1 Cultural Diversity and Multi-Cultural Market Environment.....	8
2.3.2 Cultural Aspect Affecting Consumers	9
2.3.3 Frameworks Investigating Differences between Cultures.....	10-11
2.3.4 How Culture Affects Consumer Behaviour	11-12
2.3.5 Analysing Consumer Behaviour	12-13
2.3.6 Product Standardisation vs. Adaptation	14
2.4 Cross-Cultural Marketing Communications and the Promotional Mix	15
2.4.1 Communication Process	15-16
2.4.2 Developing Effective Communication	17
2.4.3 Designing the Message	18
2.5 The Role of Marketing Communications in Branding.....	19
2.5.1 Why Brands Are Important.....	19-20
2.6 Conclusion	20
Chapter 3: Research Methodology	21-23
3.1 A Questionnaire as a data collection method	21-23
3.2 Sampling.....	23
Chapter 4: Data Description and Analysis.....	24-34
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications	35-36
Bibliography	37-38
Appendices	38-41

List of Figures and Appendices

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>Page(s)</i>
Figure 1: Porter's Five Forces Model	7
Figure2: Cultural Framework	9
Figure3: Cultural influences on Consumer Behaviour	12
Figure4: Consumer Behaviour Model	13
Figure5: Elements of a Communication Process	15
Figure6: Buyer Readiness Stages	17
Figure7: Table Graph 'Respondents by Gender'	25
Figure8: Table Graph ' Respondents by Age groups and Gender'	25
Figure9: Pie Chart 'Respondents By Ethnic Background'	26
Figure10: Pie Chart 'How often respondents eat bread'	26
Figure11: Pie Chart 'Type of Bread Eaten Among Respondents by Ethnic Groups'	27
Figure12: Pie Chart ' Respondents Previously Tasted a Rye Bread Product'	27
Figure13: Table Graph 'Respondents' preferences by previous experiences'	28
Figure14: Pie Chart 'How Respondents Described the Taste of 'Ruispalat'	29
Figure15: Table Graph ' What Respondents Think about the 'Ruispalat' packaging'	29
Figure16: Table Graph 'Respondents' Willingness to Purchase the Product in Store by Price They Would be Willing to Pay'	30
Figure17: Table Graph 'Importance of Maintaining a Healthy Diet by Gender'	31
Figure18: Pie Chart 'Importance of a Healthy Diet among the Respondents Who Would Likely Purchase the Product'	32
Figure19: Pie Chart 'Importance of a Healthy Diet among the Respondents Who Would Possibly Purchase the Product'	32
Figure20: Pie Chart 'Respondents attitudes'	33
 <i>List of Appendices</i>	
Appendix1: The questionnaire used for data collection in this dissertation	37-38
Appendix2: Picture of the 'Ruispalat' packaging	39

Chapter 1: Introduction

The research question in this dissertation is: **Investigating the possibility to introduce a Finnish rye bread brand called 'Ruispalat' into the British consumer market and what are the possible barriers this product may face?**

This dissertation will look at the possibility of introducing an iconic Finnish rye bread brand into the British market. The product investigated in this study is called 'Ruispalat'. This particular bread is the most eaten bread in Finland for years. There are many health benefits, like the fact that with fiber you also get antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. It naturally helps to lower your cholesterol and decrease the risk of cancer and diabetes. Recommendation for the daily fiber intake is between 25-23g and one slice of 'Ruispalat' has 5.5 grams of fiber. Despite of its popularity in the Nordic countries, a matching product cannot be found on sale in the United Kingdom.

The purpose is to identify differences between Finnish and British cultures and investigate how these differences affect the demand for the product. This dissertation also aims at discovering differences between the implications of the relevant literature and implications of the cross-sectional research.

The research hypothesis for this is that the British have different taste preferences and that 'Ruispalat will face barriers associated with cultural differences. The research hypothesis is based on that people have strong variations of values, tastes, habits and preferences, large part of which is due to and affected by national culture. These factors affect the consumer response for 'Ruispalat' in the British market.

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the kind of literature and information there is already available on this topic and how these can be of use in this particular case of 'Ruispalat'. Additionally, the objective is to find out what British people think about the product and whether they would buy it if it was available in the British market and reasons behind the answers to these questions. This dissertation also aims at identifying possible gaps in the literature or theories that ignore some aspects considered important in this dissertation. This dissertation will be significant in terms of providing information about how members of the British culture respond to the product. This information is based on quantitative research.

Second chapter of this dissertation is the literature review. In this chapter of this dissertation relevant literature sources and theories are examined. These theories include marketing, branding and consumer behavior theories with a strong emphasis on culture and the effect it introduces. Some of the theories are supported with figures and illustrations for convenience. Additionally, some aspects of marketing

communications have been looked at. Along the chapter there are considerations about how these theories relate to the topic of this study and research questions.

The third chapter concentrates on explaining the research methodology, design and strategy used in the research. The research method used in this study is cross-sectional. A questionnaire was carried out to measure the responses to the bread among British people. The sampling used was non-random probability sampling, further defined as convenience or haphazard sampling.

In the fourth chapter of this research you can find the quantified results of the questionnaire. There are charts that display the correlations between multiple chosen variables. Moreover, these findings are explained and analysed as well as compared to the theories presented in Chapter 2, to find out how well the findings comply with the information from the literature sources.

The fifth chapter is the conclusion for this dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 History and Current Situation

White bread baked with wheat flour has been the most common kind of bread in the U.K. since the Middle Ages when eating bread became more popular and an increasing number of people had access to it. In the 6th century the Saxons and the Danes settled in Britain and introduced rye, which was well suited to cold northern climates. Although rye was used in England even up to 1700s but it is not a typical English grain and was often mixed with other grains to create a blend with more gluten. Since the pre-Formation days white bread was considered the best kind of bread and only the poorer people who could not afford it were eating 'dark loaf'. Dark rye bread became a staple of poverty which lasted at least until the Middle Ages. Today, rye is still a less common grain to be found in the United Kingdom which partly explains the lack of its use in baking. There is also no recent history of any bakery baking rye bread in England. It can occasionally be found to be for sale in big cities like London and Manchester but the bread is always imported. (Hartley, 1969), (The Federation for Bakers, 2007)

According to the Flour Advisory Bureau (2011) 76 percent of all bread sold in the U.K. is white bread. Bread is one of the nation's favorite foods and 99 percent of households purchase it regularly. As much as 12 million loaves of bread are sold every single day in the U.K. On average a British household buys just over 80 loaves of bread per year and spends on average £75 a year on bread. This means that the average cost of a loaf of bread is around 90 pennies.

2.2 Examining the United Kingdom as a Market Environment

To understand the U.K. as a market environment a SLEPT –analysis has been carried out. It looks at the socio-cultural, legal, economic, political and technological aspects.

Socio-cultural factors include language, aesthetics, values and attributes as well as material culture. These affect the way the product is used in the market, brand name and the advertising campaign.

Legal environment can include restrictions and tariffs on imported foodstuff and matters like consumer law and Health & Safety law and regulations. To be noted are also foreign national laws as well as EU level laws and restrictions about the product itself, for example quality requirements. Legal factors often also include trade agreements and taxation.

Economic considerations include for example the question of how the bread industry is developing in the U.K. Also included in the economic factors, is the PPP (purchasing power parity) which expresses what the consumers can actually buy with one dollar in the country. Food is substantially higher in price in Finland

than it is in the UK and pricing of the product may therefore prove to be difficult. Exchange rate of the fallen Euro toward the Pound Sterling also affects the trade and the pricing. Further economic factors include market size, population, age-groups, number of households, disposable income per capita and intensity of competition.

Political aspects include aspects like product requirements and custom or other charges related to the movement of goods.

Technological aspects relevant here include effective research and development which ensures that 'Ruispalat' can be adapted to the British market.

2.2.1 Analysis of the Bread Industry in the United Kingdom

To try and analyse bread industry this dissertation a framework called Porter's five forces analysis has been used. According to the Federation of Bakers, the bread industry is the second largest in the food sector with annual sales of £3.4 billion.

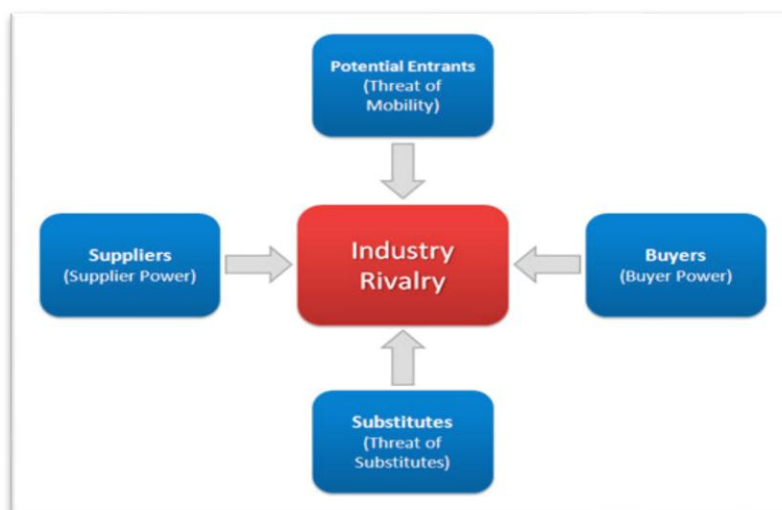


Figure1: Notes Desk (2009) *Porter's five forces model* [online]. [Accessed 9 December 2011]. Available at <<http://notesdesk.com/notes/strategy/porters-five-forces-model-porters-model/>>

Rivalry for rye bread includes the bread most commonly sold in stores in the U.K., white and brown and whole meal bread. According to the Federation of Bakers (2007), the three main bread manufacturers in the U.K. are Allied Bakeries, Hovis and Warburtons. These companies produce 80 per cent of all the bread sold in the UK.

Currently there are around 200 different bread products on the market for consumers to choose from and hence many substitutes for rye bread (The Federation for Bakers, 2007)

In relation to buyer power, consumers have a lot to choose from it has pushed the prices down for bread. You can get a pack of toast for as cheap as 20p. Overall, white bread is the cheapest option in the U.K. market. As stated earlier, consumers in the U.K. market seem to be largely in favor of white, brown and whole meal bread. These types of bread together make up to 93 per cent of sales on the bread market. (The Federation for Bakers, 2007)

Supplier power can be significant in this case, as most of the bread sold in the U.K. is made by domestic companies. This raises a question whether it would make any sense at all to import 'Ruispalat' from Finland. Depending on the nature and speed of the export process, it might be possible that the 'Ruispalat' bread would have to be frozen to ensure the freshness. This, then however sparks a debate whether the bread should also be sold out of the fridge and how this would affect the taste and the sales.

2.3 Examining Culture and its Aspects

There are many definitions for culture, in short it can be described as behavioral patterns that are characteristic of the society and influenced by religious, cultural and social factors, tradition, education, upbringing, agricultural practices and climate. (Johansson, 2009)

As preferences are based on culture it is very important to understand the national culture as a creator of preferences, tastes and consumption patterns. Johansson (2009) also argues that: "One's taste is educated, not something one is born with" (Johansson, 2009, p.61)

2.3.1 United Kingdom's cultural diversity and multi-cultural market environment

Britain is also known to be very culturally diverse across the country. Whereas Brits eat a lot of bread (at breakfast, at tea, as a snack) this may seem weird or unusual for families with for example Indian or Caribbean heritage. Simultaneously when all of the many different cultures blending together into a multi-cultural environment, this might push people to cherish and value their British customs at the same time when the consumption of 'world foods' increases. The population of the United Kingdom as for 30 June 2011 was 62,3 million according to the Office for National Statistics (2012). According to their statistical bulletin on 'Population estimates by ethnic group 2002-2009' there were around 54 million people in the year 2009 in the U.K. who were considered to be of the ethnic background of 'white British'. The second largest group with nearly two million people was the 'other white' category. The third largest group was Indians (approx. 1.4 million) followed by Pakistanis (just over one million). According to this statistic, there were around 9.1 million 'non-white British' people living in the U.K. in the year 2009.

2.3.2 Cultural Aspects Affecting Consumers

The cultural differences pointed out in the previous sections influence consumer's perception, attitude, understanding of the product and communication. These aspects again affect consumer behavior. Social and cultural factors affect every aspect of consumer behavior. Socio-cultural aspects can affect the positioning of the product in the market.

Culture is made up of three essential components, beliefs, values and customs. Below you can see the many factors culture entails and the illustrations briefly explained.

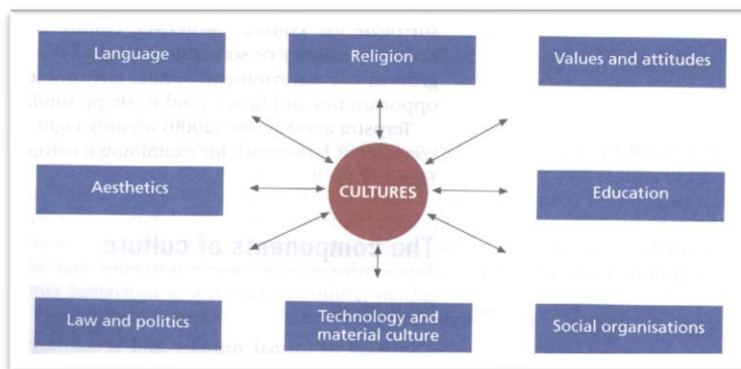


Figure 2. Source: Doole and Lowe(2004) *A cultural framework*. International Marketing Strategy- analysis, development and implementation, Thomson Learning:London, p. 68

Education affects the level of 'sophistication' and also contributes to the lack of knowledge about nourishment and foodstuff, people may end up not knowing what is good for them and what your their needs.

Social organisation refers to the way in which the society organizes itself. This includes interest groups and status systems as well as gender roles.

Technology and material culture concerns itself with how cultures relate to modern technology.

Legal and political system are often seen as 'codification' of the norms of behavior, linked to what is considered acceptable by the national culture. This can also include political sensitivity.

Aesthetics mean the culture's perception of things of beauty, good taste and design. This aspect refers to for example what kind of clothing is considered acceptable. This also includes colors, music and architecture.

Values and attitudes concerning things like time, achievement, work, wealth, risk taking. Marketing-wise these will affect the packaging of the product together with aesthetics as well as the marketing communication activities. These should be handled with importance as they have great effect on consumer behavior. For example 'Ruispalat' may appeal to consumers leading a healthy lifestyle. People who value being healthy would most likely pick the healthy choice rye bread product over the white, nutrition-poor toast.

Religion includes sacred object (like cows in India), philosophical systems, beliefs and norms, taboos, holidays and rituals (like Ramadan). In the U.K. religion does not dominate the culture, but it affects the values and beliefs within the society which are in accordance to religion.

Language is a significant part of culture. Therefore there is a big emphasis on understanding the differences and nuances of language when translating, considering product or brand names to be able to avoid embarrassing hidden or double meanings in marketing material. For example, Nokia introduced its newest mobile phone model called 'Lumia' in 2011. However, it soon discovered that the word in fact translated into Spanish as 'prostitute'. Included in the language aspect, is also the non-verbal communication such as body language.

2.3.3 Frameworks Investigating Differences between Cultures

To be able to examine more closely the aspects of British culture and differences between the British and the Finnish cultures, two frameworks have been used. The first framework classifies countries into four cultural dimensions which represent the cultural distance between countries. This framework is called the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions.

Individualism vs. collectivism

High vs. low power distance

Strong vs. weak uncertainty avoidance

Masculinity vs. Femininity

The dimension of most interest and relevance here is the of uncertainty avoidance because it gives actual indication of how willing consumer in the British culture are to try new, unfamiliar products. According to Hofstede you can see how willing consumers are to take on risks when it comes to buying behavior. The British are less bothered about avoiding risks than Finnish people are. According to Hofstede, the British have a weak level of uncertainty avoidance and would therefore be more open to try and buy a new product. The 'risk' seen from the point of view the consumer can be divided into three; physical, social and

financial. The consumer may, in this case, see a physical risk in buying rye bread (it may make him sick, since he has never tried it and his body may not be used to it). However, the financial risk is not great in this case. Tolerance of risk is usually also varies within culture as well according to the character of the consumer. Some people like to try different brands, whereas some people feel safe by sticking to the same product for years.

Hofstede's dimensions framework has also encountered criticism over the years. Askegaard *et al.* argue that the dimension measure things that can be understood and interpreted in different ways in different cultures. For example, 'risk' or 'feminine' may mean something else to a Chinese person than they do an American. They also argue that Hofstede's dimensions ignore the individuals and only looks at the society as whole. (Askegaard et al. 2009)

Another framework aimed at understanding the differences between cultures is by Hall&Hall (1987). According to them 'one culture is be different from another if it understands and communicates in different ways' (Doole and Lowe 2004). Hall&Hall divided cultures into 'low context cultures' and 'high context cultures'. Hall&Hall describe the two different contexts in the following way: 'Low context cultures rely on *spoken and written* language for meaning. Senders of messages encode their messages expecting that the receivers will accurately decode the words used to gain a good understanding of the intended message. High context cultures *use and interpret* more of the elements surrounding the message to develop their understanding of the message'. (Hall&Hall in Doole&Lowe 2004, p.79). According to this framework the U.K. can be placed more towards the low-context end of the scale. However, the position is not as clear as with Scandinavian countries including Finland which can be positioned towards the very end of the low-context scale.

The next chapter investigates in more depth the cross-cultural communication process that has significant implications from the frameworks above.

2.3.4 How culture affects consumer behaviour

Kotler (2008) has identified personal and social factors that influence consumer behavior. The personal factors include age and lifecycle, occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle and personality and self-concept. All of the factors listed above affect purchases. For example, taste is often age-related and economic circumstances dictate the amount of money you are willing or able to spend i.e. on a loaf of bread. Also, a person's lifestyle has a significant effect on what the customer buys. For example, people who lead a healthy lifestyle – exercise and maintain a healthy diet most likely – are also more likely to buy a product like 'Ruispalat'. Also an important factor is the personality and self-concept one because this represents a possibility to try and match the brand identity of a product or company with the consumer's

so that these two would be as close to each other as possible. The social factors Kotler listed include consumer’s small groups, family, social roles and status. These factors usually have a greater impact on the consumer’s behavior compared to the personal factors. For example, family can have a very strong influence on what people buy and when they buy it. The groups a consumer belongs to and one’s roles and status in the society also affect buying decisions. However, Doole&Lowe (2006) suggest that the kind of factors Kotler identified are also strongly influenced by cultural factors. They also suggest that social and cultural influences intertwine and have a big impact on the whole consumer behavior process. To be able to identify the ways in which culture affects consumers’ attitudes, perceptions and behavior, we have to first identify what culture is. Terpsta and Sarathy (2000) identify eight components of culture which include education, social organization, technology and material culture, law and politics, aesthetics, religion and language. All of these components also affect the way a company operates in a foreign country and have to be given special considerations.

Previously we saw how culture can influence consumers’ attitudes. Now, we shall take a closer look at how culture influences consumer behaviour. Jeannet and Hennessey (1993) have identified three major processes to explain the influence of culture on consumer behaviour. Please refer to figure 3 for an illustration on these processes.



Figure3. Adapted from Doole and Lowe(2004). International Marketing Strategy- analysis, development and implementation, Thomson Learning:London, p. 72

2.3.5 Analysing Consumer Behaviour

In order to then be able to analyse consumer behavior in an international context Blackwell et al (2001). Blackwell *et al.* established steps that should be followed when analysing consumer behavior internationally. They also argue that to determine the suitability of marketing communication actions, companies must understand and analyse buyer behavior as well as cultural implications (Doole&Lowe 2004). To do this analysis Blackwell *et al.* have created a series of questions. Below you can find these questions. They are adapted from Doole&Lowe (2004).

- ❖ **Determine relevant motivations in the culture:** What needs are fulfilled in the mind of the consumer with this product? How are these needs currently fulfilled or do the members of the culture even recognise these needs?
- ❖ **Determine characteristic behaviour patterns:** What are the characteristics of buying behaviour and might these be inconsistent with the behaviour expected for this product? How often are products like this purchased?
- ❖ **Determine what cultural values are relevant to this product:** For example, are there positive values in the culture the product could be identified with?
- ❖ **Determine characteristics about decision making:** Is buying behaviour for this kind of product impulsive or studied? What kind of information is relevant to the consumer when making purchasing decisions? Are the members of the culture open to new products?
- ❖ **Evaluate promotion methods appropriate to the culture:** Themes, illustrations, language used in advertising and their meanings and acceptability.

Usunier (2000) argued that there are many inconsistencies in the buying processes cross-culturally and according to his work there are particularly three aspects of consumer behaviour and the buying process that change across cultures. These aspects include consumer involvement, perceived risk and cognitive style. These terms are briefly explained below.

Consumer involvement means the level of consideration consumer puts into the process of making a buying decision. For example, bread, priced at a few pounds, makes it a low-involvement product.

Perceived risk is the level of risk associated with the purchase of a product. For example it will determine whether a consumer is willing to try new products or just go for the 'usual' or 'familiar' product. Usunier (2000) also claims that the perception of risk is also to brand loyalty and security. This kind of risk taking was also studied by Hofstede whose framework is looked at in detail in section 2.3.2.

According to Usunier (2000) the consumer behaviour model, applicable to mostly Western countries, is logical and includes the following *rational* steps:

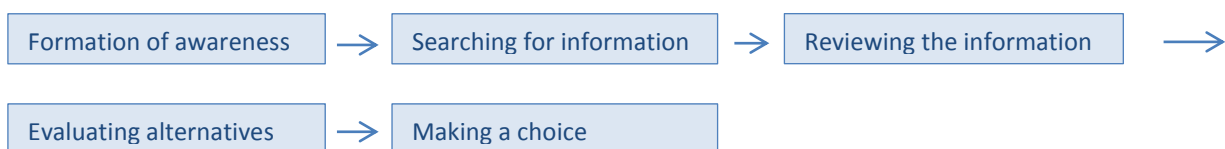


Figure4. Adapted from Doole and Lowe(2004). International Marketing Strategy- analysis, development and implementation, Thomson Learning:London, p. 79

Usunier (2000) also acknowledges that there are many different models of buying behaviour.

2.3.6 Product adaptation vs. standardisation

A main consideration for a company when going abroad is the *assessment of the suitability* of the product they want to introduce internationally. As the consumer abroad at least needs to have knowledge about what the product is and how it should be used. To achieve this, the packaging usually has to be translated. However, the tricky part is to try and determine to what extent the product itself should be adapted for international market environments. (Doole&Lowe, 2004) The factors determining the level of adaptation in this case are cultural factors, most importantly values and tastes. A company has to make a decision about what to highlight as the core benefit of the product so that this will be communicated to customers the most important benefit the product offers. In this 'Ruispalat' case this could be considered the healthiness of the bread. Because the marketing communication would be then emphasising this feature, even in the case where 'Ruispalat' would face a level of adaptation to fit to the British market, it is important that the core value of the product is preserved. According to Doole&Lowe (2004) product appeal can be increased by addressing cultural factors. However, as discovered before in this chapter, the British society is a very multi-cultural one and there are many different preferences and traditions when it comes to food. 'Food is a particularly difficult area for standardisation as the preparation and eating of food are often embedded in the history religion or culture.' Doole&Lowe argue (2004,p. 298-299)

The product should be adapted so that it would best meet the needs and tastes of the local market. Doole&Lowe (2004) propose that exposure to standardised products will eventually redefine customer needs and change their tastes in the long term. Cateora&Chauri (2006) seem to agree with this as according to them, new products often encounter resistance. It also takes time for a culture to learn new ways and learn to accept a new product.

It is therefore a huge challenge to successfully determine to what extent a product should be adapted, still keeping in mind the core benefit. The next chapter deals with marketing communications, actions that are largely affected by the decision made concerning product adaptation and standardisation as well as many of the cultural factors previously looked at in this chapter.

2.4 Cross-Cultural Marketing Communications and the Promotional Mix

Marketing communication is the process of presenting and exchanging information with various individuals and organizations to achieve specific results. Kotler (2008) includes in his promotional or marketing communications mix the following tools; advertising, sales promotion, public relations, personal selling and direct marketing. These are used to “persuasively communicate customer value and build customer relationships.”(Kotler *et al.* 2008, p. 697)

Advertising can include but is not limited to broadcast, radio, print, Internet, outdoor adverts. *Sales promotion* can include discounts, coupons, point-of-purchase displays and demonstrations. *Personal selling* includes press releases, sponsorships, special events and Web pages. *Direct marketing* includes catalogues, telephone marketing, kiosks and the Internet.

Fill (2009) argues that because the focus has shifted from promoting to communicating, communications mix is a more fitting description. In the recent years the digital technologies have impacted the promotional tools and have lowered costs, extended reach and improved communication effectiveness and also given to opportunity to customise communications. In addition, digital technology now enables interaction and dialogue with a range of audiences. (Fill, 2009)

2.4.1 Communication Process

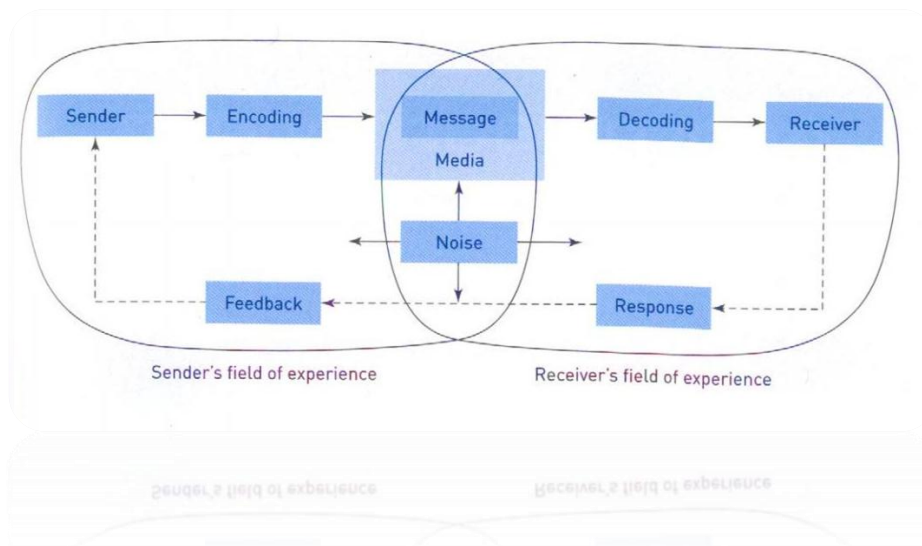


Figure5. Source: Kotler *et al.* (2008) *Elements of the communication process*. The principles of Marketing 5th Ed. Pearson Education: Harlow, p.699

According to Kotler (2008) there are nine elements involved in communication. Above you can see the illustration on how Kotler (2008) places these elements onto a map. The two major elements in

communication are the *sender* and the *receiver*, another two are message and media. Primary communication functions are encoding, decoding, response and feedback. The last element is noise. (Kotler *et al.* 2008)

Please find below a short explanation of all the elements within the figure. I have referred this to the case at hand.

Sender – the party sending the message to another party. (In this case the ‘Ruispalat’ brand.)

Encoding – “The process of putting the intended message or thought into symbolic form” (a ‘Ruispalat’ advertisement including words and illustrations to convey the intended message.)

Message – “The set of words, pictures or symbols that the sender transmits” (The actual ‘Ruispalat’ rye bread ad.)

Media – The communication channel through which the message is conveyed from sender to receiver (Where the ‘Ruispalat’ ad would appear.)

Decoding – The process by which the receiver assigns meaning to the symbols encoded by the sender. The decoding process and response are highly influenced by cultural differences. (A consumer reads the ‘Ruispalat’ advert and interprets the words and illustrations it contains.)

Receiver – The part receiving the message sent by another party. (The consumer who reads the ‘Ruispalat’ ad.)

Response – Reactions of the receiver after being exposed to the message – any of the possible responses, such as the customer is now more aware of the product than before, actually buys the product (‘Ruispalat’) or does nothing.

Feedback – The part of the receiver’s response communicated back to the sender. (Consumers may contact the company producing ‘Ruispalat’ directly or may give feedback in form of answering a research about the ad, i.e. if they remember it etc.)

Noise – The unplanned static or distortion during the communication process, which results in the receiver getting a different message from the one the sender sent. There is a possibility for this to happen in cross-cultural marketing. (Kotler *et al.*, 2008)

2.4.2 Developing effective communication

First step is to identify the target audience. For 'Ruispalat', all people who eat bread are the target audience, the ones who make the buying decision as well as the ones influencing it. It is important to identify the target audience, because it affects all the marketing communication decisions.

After the target audience has been identified, the next step is to think about what kind of response would be desired. In this case, this is to raise awareness. It is also important to know, where the consumer stands now, and to what 'stage' the customer needs to be moved to. Please refer to Figure 6 on Kotler's (2008) byer-readiness-stages describe the stages the consumer usually passes through when in the buying decision process. The aim of marketing communications is to guide the consumer through these stages to achieve final purchase.

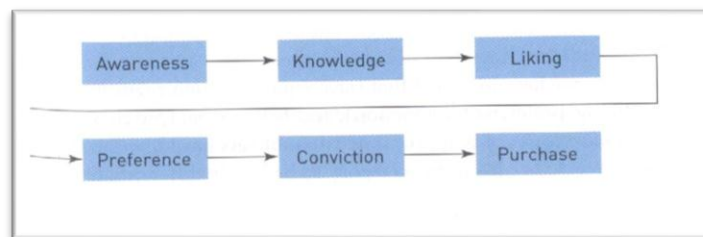


Figure 6. Source: Kotler et al. (2008) *Buyer readiness stages*. The principles of Marketing 5th Ed. Pearson Education: Harlow, p.701

The first stage is awareness, where a company tries to raise initial awareness and brand recognition among its target audience. This is the stage that 'Ruispalat' is at right now, since this kind of product has not been sold in the UK before and majority of people therefore are not aware of this product.

At the knowledge state, consumers might be aware of the company, brand or product but their knowledge is usually limited.

At the liking stage, it is assumed that consumers already are familiar with the company or product. This stage is all about determining how people feel about the brand and how to make them link positive feeling with the brand. Moreover, consumers may like the brand, but not prefer it others.

At the next stage, people already have a positive image about the product and they might prefer the brand, but are not totally convinced that this is the brand for them. However, in this conviction stage it is the company's aim to convince the consumer that their product is the one with the most benefits.

The last stage is the one that is ultimately desired effect of the marketing communications process, the purchase decision. This still does not automatically mean that they have decided to purchase the product since although they might be convinced about the product they might decide to wait for more information or for the company, brand of product to improve even further. This applies especially for high-involvement goods.

However, it must be kept in mind that communications alone rarely make consumer buy the product, but it has to be of superior quality for the consumer so that the desired positive feelings about the product can evolve in the consumer's mind.

The level of awareness also affects the positioning of the product in the market.

2.4.3 Designing the message

First, the communicator should focus on deciding *what to say*, deciding on the message content. Rationally appealing message would emphasize the healthiness and the benefits of the bread, like it contains fiber which is good for your digestion and that it keeps you fuller for longer and that it is made without any preservatives. Emotional appeals would be that because it is 'good for you and your body' you can eat it guilt-free, also to make the customer feel better about themselves as they know that they have chosen the better alternative for their health, associating the feeling of self-fulfillment with the eating of this bread.

Next stage in designing the message I have to choose *a message format*. This includes pictures, headlines and colors used. For example, through the research part of this dissertation are determined the most suitable colors for the packaging.

When planning marketing communications, issues like message translation is complicated because of the cultural differences experienced between the two cultures. One should refrain from only translating the messages, as this may cause problems and make room for possible mistakes. Quite obviously, there is a need to change the name of 'Ruispalat' for it to fit better into the pronunciation pattern of the English language as well as being descriptive of the product. Also to be taken into account are colors and numbers used, the meaning of colors differs across cultures and therefore some research into this may turn out to be very necessary.

However, the bread might raise more interest in people who eat healthy, do sports and look after themselves maybe more than the average person.

2.5 The role of marketing communications in branding

“Marketing communications play a vital role in in the development of brands and it is the means by which products become brands.” (De Pelsmacker *et al.* 2010, p. 72) There are many possible roles marketing communications can play when it comes to brand development. It communicates the brand values, benefits, strengths and differences to the consumer as branding is a method of separation and positioning, respectively. Advertising is used to raise not only awareness about the product but the brand as well and to link positive associations to the brand image. Also the product/brand name, packaging, colors and logos used can be effective tools when building brand associations. Promotion can help build brand presence.

It is important that the communications used to create brand awareness are consistent and meaningful. It can be argued that successful branding is partly the result of effective integrated marketing communications. (Fill, 2009)

In the British market consumers usually associate quality with the time the brand has been on the market. This, on its behalf explains the popularity of brands like Warburtons. This is common for cultures which tend not to be extremely future orientated.

2.5.1 Why brands are important

In this section I have simply listed reasons for *why brands are important*. Framework adapted from Kotler *et al.* (2008.)

Risk avoidance and trust

Consumers want to avoid risk and therefore prefer well-known brands. They also tend to trust a brand they are acquainted with and be loyal to the brand they usually buy. Consumers know the level of quality they can expect from a brand. Also, consumers aren't always necessarily looking for a high-quality product but appreciate consistency – they know what they are getting when they buy a product from a certain brand and therefore are able to avoid disappointment. The brand works as a guide in evaluating the product.

Longevity and Familiarity

If a brand has been in the market for a long time, consumers are more prone to think that the brand is 'not all bad'. This also explains why unfamiliar brands are at a disadvantage. For example, because the British have such a strong trust in their own, national bread brands, makes it difficult for a new, unfamiliar brand to be successful within the U.K. market.

Iconic and Experiential

Eating rye bread in Finland is beyond just the physical product but it signifies a healthy lifestyle as well and therefore it can be argued that the rye bread can also help people to define customer's identity through the consumption of the brand. The brand 'embodies' a healthy choice. Also, there are emotional drivers behind consumers' buying decisions – however, rye bread in Finland is mostly bought for its functional role. This could be different in the U.K., though. Within the UK bread market consumers seem to be favoring local brands. There is strong local competition – or the brands might be owned by global brands but they have acquired or established a local brand which people seem to prefer. Most of the top brands in the market tend to be local brands. They tend to be more familiar to consumers and familiarity is strongly correlated with quality perception. Local brands tend to have advantages like iconic status. White bread can be considered as 'iconic' to the British culture and therefore its brand position is strong. Also, because the local brands have such a long history they have grown strong over the years.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the U.K. as a market area, both economically and culturally. Investigated was also the relevant market environment and bread industry and facts and figures relevant to this. This chapter enabled the conclusion that Finnish and British national cultures are not significantly different but the different preferences in taste are down to customs, traditions and history. As the United Kingdom is more culturally diverse than Finland, this also introduced its own implications. There are many cultural implications that affect buying behaviour and these must be identified and determined to create a successful strategy. Furthermore, because 'Ruispalat' is a new product to the U.K. market an explanation was provided why brands are important and how brand loyalty can be created.

The next chapter Introduces the methodology of the kind of research used in this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Research method refers to the technique used for the collection of data. In this dissertation the data collection method was a face-to-face questionnaire. This method generated quantitative type of data. The use of quantitative research provides data for testing the research hypothesis: the British have different taste preferences and that 'Ruispat' will face barriers associated with cultural differences. With the use of a questionnaire it was possible to limit the amount of received data to make the analysis process simpler and achieving the aims of this research easier.

Since this kind of research depends on human responses it is very possible that data distortion will occur.

Walliman (2001) divides research designs into five different categories: experimental, survey, archival analysis, historical and case study. Also Bell&Bryman (2011) identify five different types of research designs: experimental, cross-sectional or social survey design, longitudinal, case study and comparative design. The design in this dissertation is cross-sectional, according to Bell&Bryman (2011). Its features include that data is collected on the variables of interest simultaneously using a standardised method generating quantitative data and that it tries to measure variations in and between variables. However, the internal validity of this kind of research method is weak which means that associations are produced rather than real findings and it is difficult to establish causal connections.

Walliman (2001) suggests that one should first decide on the type research strategy (quantitative or qualitative) then think about the type of data that needs to be collected if a certain type of analysis tool is preferred. This is largely due to the different characteristics of data but also to the different techniques needed in the analysis phase.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the questionnaire used in this dissertation.

3.1 A Questionnaire as a data collection method

In a questionnaire the answers, in closed questions, are pre-determined and the objective is to find out which ones are selected. These kinds of questions make the analysing process easier since there are only a certain number of possible answers. However, to some extent the use of these kinds of questions makes the results more predictable and less unexpected. Also, if respondents were given freedom to express their answer in another way, for example by using an open-ended questions, the responses might have been different. This however, presents a problem, as to what extent the researcher who designed the questionnaire was being bias when designing the different choices of response for the questions. It may be that the questionnaire design was affected by the kind of answers the researcher was hoping or expecting to see. Also, another issue with the use of close-ended questions is that they give very little indication of

why in fact the respondent chose that particular answer. Therefore, by using a questionnaire as a data collection method it can be hard to determine whether the responses are a fair representation of what people really think. This problem however can be solved by asking further, often open-ended questions like "Please explain why?" or "Please elaborate the reasons behind your answer." This suggests that a good questionnaire should include both kinds of questions- closed as well as open-ended -to give results as accurate as possible. This kind of questionnaire design is called semi-structured.

With a questionnaire there is a problem with the data accuracy and quality it provides. People often complete the form carelessly or even, in some cases, untruthfully. Although the questions have been standardised, there can easily be misunderstandings as to what a question is trying to find out or there maybe problems related to the language and how it is used as this may lead to untruthful results or even to a situation where the results of the misunderstood question cannot be analysed at all. To avoid this, the questionnaire has to be designed very carefully. The questions and the wording used in them should be kept as simple as possible as these kind of questions are easier to understand and answer. Also, the order of the questions is very important and it should be as logical as possible. However, it is impossible for the researcher to control whether the respondent follows the order or not. (Gillham, 2007)

It is impossible to eliminate some of the influences on the respondent when he or she is filling out a questionnaire. For example, respondents may be influenced by each other as they might talk to each other about whether they think, and if they liked the product or not. This kind of interaction may seriously affect the truthfulness of the responses.

Completing a questionnaire takes time. They are often also perceived as boring, especially if they are long (more than six pages) and only consist of one kind of questions. Even in a two-page questionnaire, like the one used in this research, the questions towards the end tend to get less detailed answers compared to ones at the beginning of the questionnaire as people usually are concentrating less towards the end of the questionnaire. Many people do not perceive answering a questionnaire as worthwhile especially if they do not see how this could benefit them.

In this research, the questionnaires were handed out to the respondents and they filled them in personally. This could have been done in a different way as well so that the researcher would have collected the answers from the respondents by asking them the questions and then writing them down for them. This technique is supported by the fact that usually people talk more easily than write. However, writing then again makes people go straight to the point. Also, truthfulness of the answers might have been affected, had the answers been collected orally by the researcher. With the method used, there was also greater case of impersonality as the person posing the questions was kept 'remote'. (Walliman, 2001) Furthermore,

the questionnaire was also completely anonymous which is usually considered to help people give more truthful answers as they cannot be traced back to them.

3.2 Sampling

The sampling used in this research is haphazard, also known as convenience sampling. This means that people chosen to fill in the questionnaire are chosen based on the ease of access. This kind of sampling has received a lot of criticism because it represents the population only very poorly. It does not follow a structure technique and according to Sapsford (2005) as well as Gillham (2007) it very easily introduces bias. As researchers approach members of the public to invite them to take part in the survey, they tend to target certain kinds of people, i.e. friendly-looking and smiling individuals. The time and the place of the sample also matter as anybody who is somewhere else at the time is eliminated from taking part in the questionnaire. According to Groves *et al.* (2004) this also introduces sampling bias as some members of the sampling frame have no or reduced chance of selection. The data collection for this dissertation was physically carried out on the premises of the University of Wolverhampton on a Wednesday during 12pm and 3pm. Therefore it has been recognised that this location affected largely who was chosen to complete the questionnaire. As it is possible to see from the results later on in chapter four the sample turned out to be small and therefore the sample in this research does not well represent the population. The shortcomings of this sampling method have been recognized: 'In a haphazard/convenience selection method there is also no direct theoretical support for using them to describe the characteristics of the larger frame population.' (Groves *et al.* 2004) Moreover, this study was very small and no generalizations can be made and the results only apply to the fifty people who completed the questionnaire. Dixon (1987) suggests in Walliman (2001) that at least 30 cases are required even for the most elementary kind of research. In this research the aim was to have around 70 to a hundred responses to the questionnaire. In the end the analysis was based on 50 responses.

The next chapter deals with analyzing the data I collected by using the questionnaire. The data has been analysed using various methods to investigate the results in accordance to the research hypotheses.

Chapter 4: Data analysis

First stage is descriptive as it deals with representing results in a summarized form (like tables of graphs etc.) This allows the researcher to see the overall responses to individual questions.

First, let us start by looking at the analysis of the closed questions in the questionnaire. These were questions 1,2,3,4,5,6,9,11,12,13 and 14. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the questionnaire.

The first three questions are about subject descriptors which give us the information about the people who have completed the questionnaire. This information will help to divide the answers later on.

From question number four onwards the questions in the questionnaire provide data on the topics investigated. The information from these questions together with the subject descriptors helps to evaluate whether there are differences and where these may be present.

When starting the analysis we have to, according to Gillham (2007) go through two different stages. First, we need to count and assign the answers to appropriate categories. Second, we are to prepare a numerical table or graph which displays the results in a summarized form.

- ❖ counting the number of times each identified answer (and other category) was checked. Then, count the ones who only ticked one category against those who chose two or more. It usually helps to look at the extremes and the average to create initial categories.
- ❖ pie charts are good for comparing different groups (can be done using percentages)
- ❖ incomplete or missing values should also be noted in the research report as they also reflect on the evaluation of the results. It also reflects the likely quality of the correctly completed questionnaires. (Gillham 2007)

In the questionnaire used in this dissertation there were three open ended questions where there were no pre-determined answers. In this case we have to first come up with categories to divide the answers accordingly. To be able to better analyse the answers for this kind of questions further, it would be useful to assign numbers to the categories. Then, listing all the responses in the open questions. However, it could so happen that some of the responses do not fit into any categories and this might make the analysis a bit tricky. This could be solved by assigning new categories or changing the wording in the existing ones so that as many as possible of responses can be assigned a category.

Total number of completed questionnaires is 50.

Figure 7.

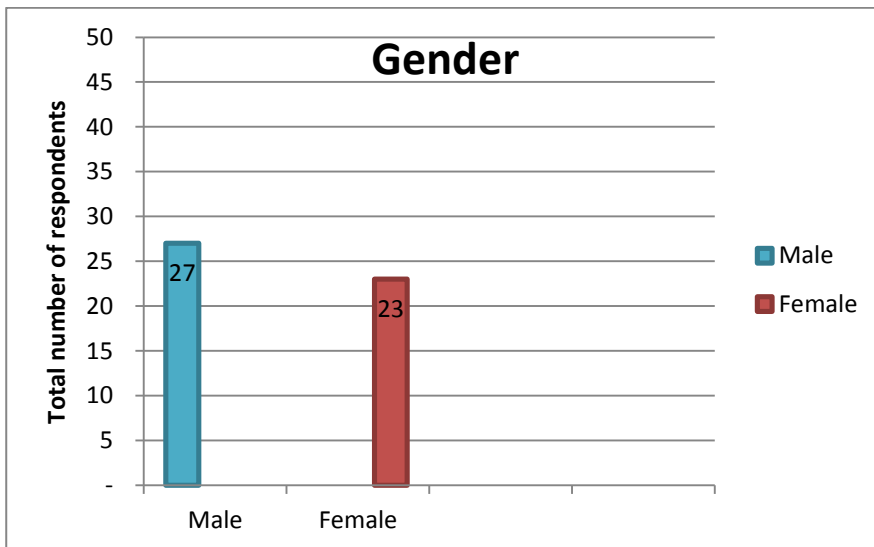


Figure 8.

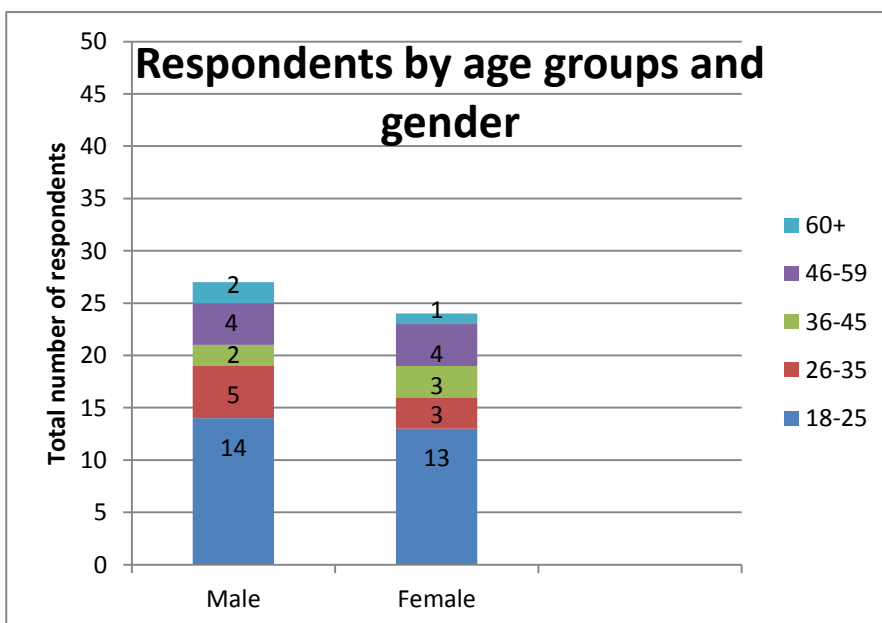
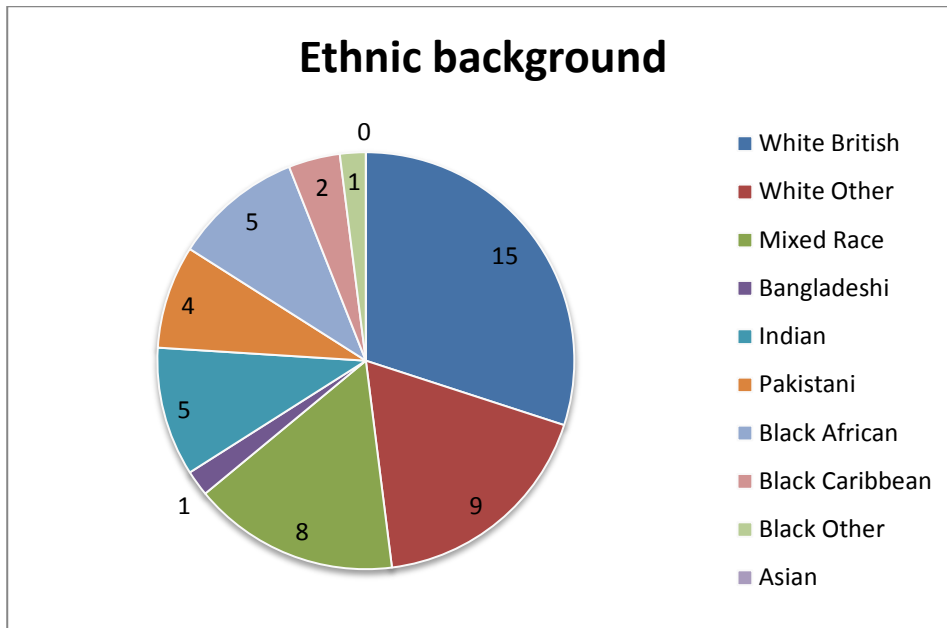


Figure9.



Section 2.3.1 in chapter two explained the cultural diversity of the British society. There were in total fifty responses to my questionnaire and among these there were only 15 native, white Britons. Second largest group was ‘White Other’ which includes mostly white people with European heritage, such as Polish. The third largest group in this study was respondents with a mixed race background, followed by people with Indian and Pakistani heritage. This indicates that Britain, and especially the West-Midlands are where this research was carried out, is culturally diverse.

Figure 10.

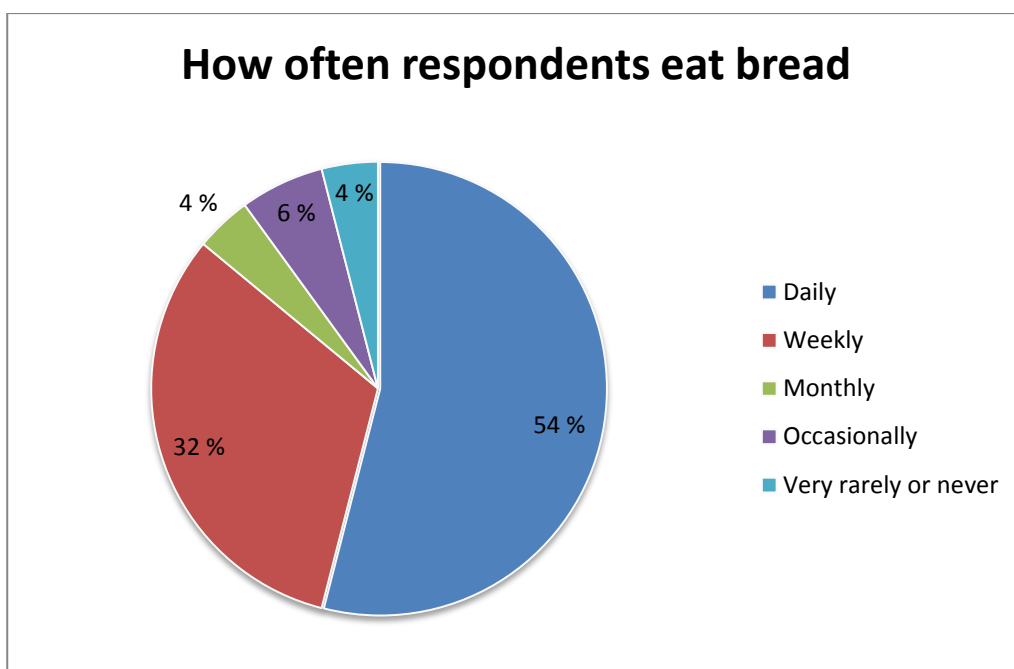


Figure11.

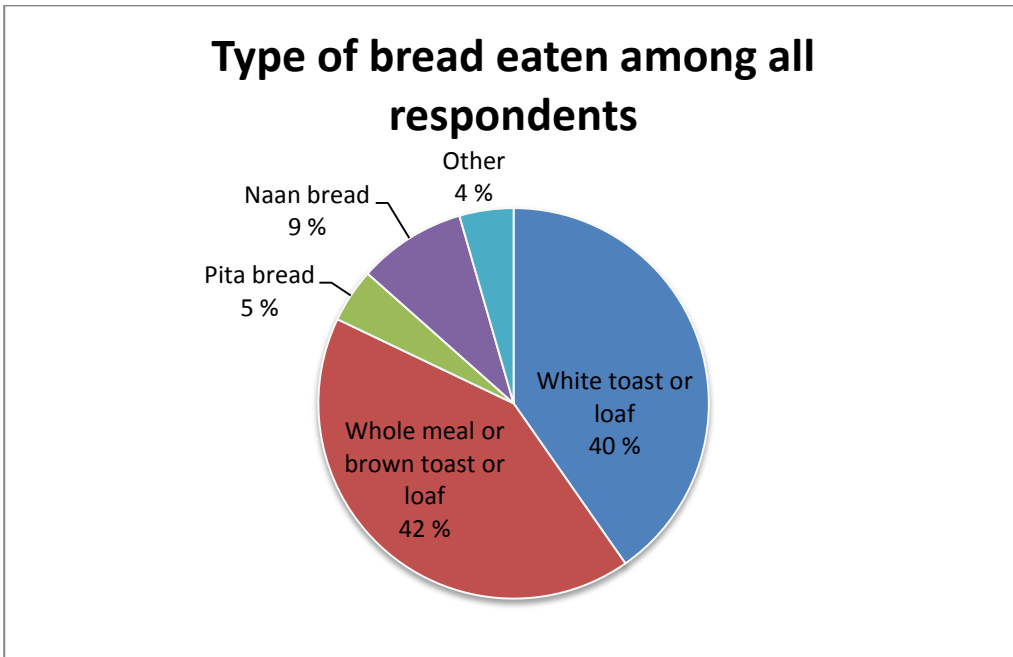
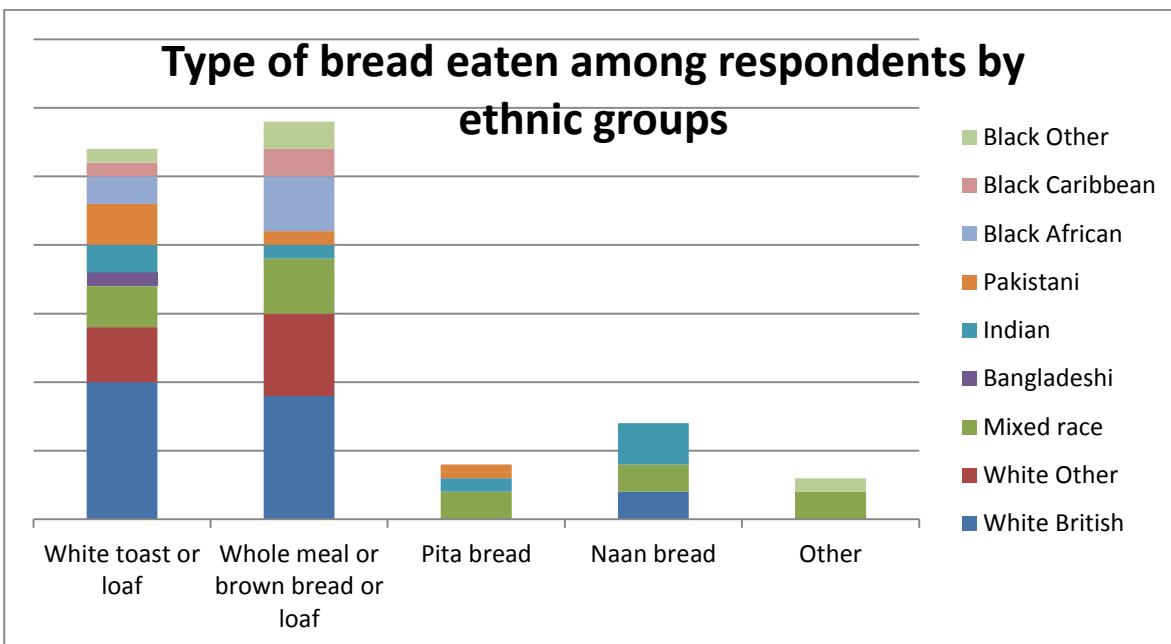


Figure12.

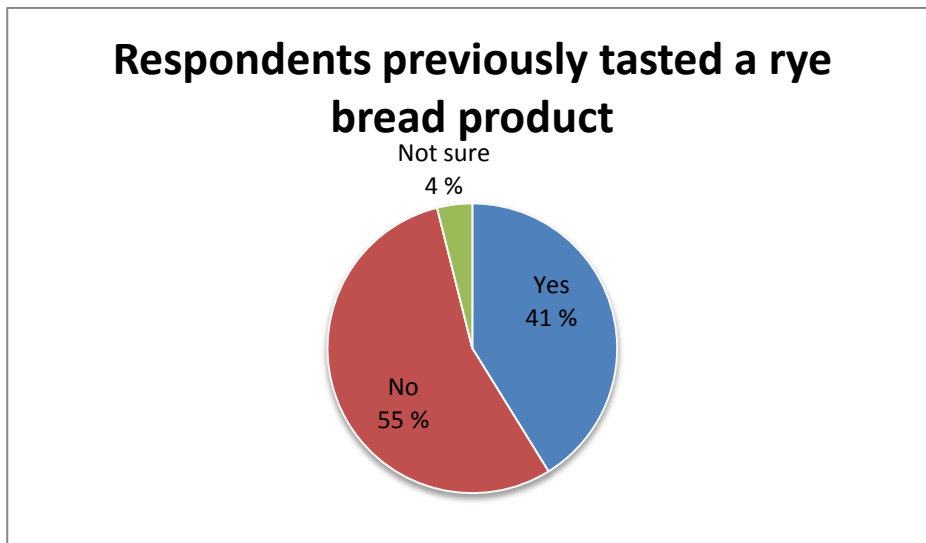


In chapter three according to the Federation of Bakers (2007), white bread is the most commonly eaten bread in the United Kingdom. Also, in this research, it was popular, but was not eaten quite as often as brown/whole meal bread.

However, in the above graph you can see that respondents who described their background as 'White British' eat white bread more than they eat any other kind of bread. The respondent group 'White Other' seemed to prefer brown bread instead of the white version. As you can see here, Indian people prefer naan

bread, commonly eaten in India. However, respondents with 'Pakistani' background seem to prefer white bread. In general, toast was the most popular kind of bread among the respondents.

Figure13.



As stated previously in this dissertation there is currently no product available in the U.K. market that would be identical to 'Ruispalat' and therefore it was assumed that majority of people in Britain have never tasted this kind of bread before. In this research over the half of the respondents, 55% had never tasted rye bread before. However, it should be remembered that here the research encounters a serious limitations because there is no way to ensure that the respondents were thinking exactly the kind of bread 'Ruispalat' is or possibly some other kind of bread. Hence, the problem is that it is impossible to know what their associations are when they think of rye bread. The British however seem to be unfamiliar to this product as there has previously been no explosion.

Figure14.

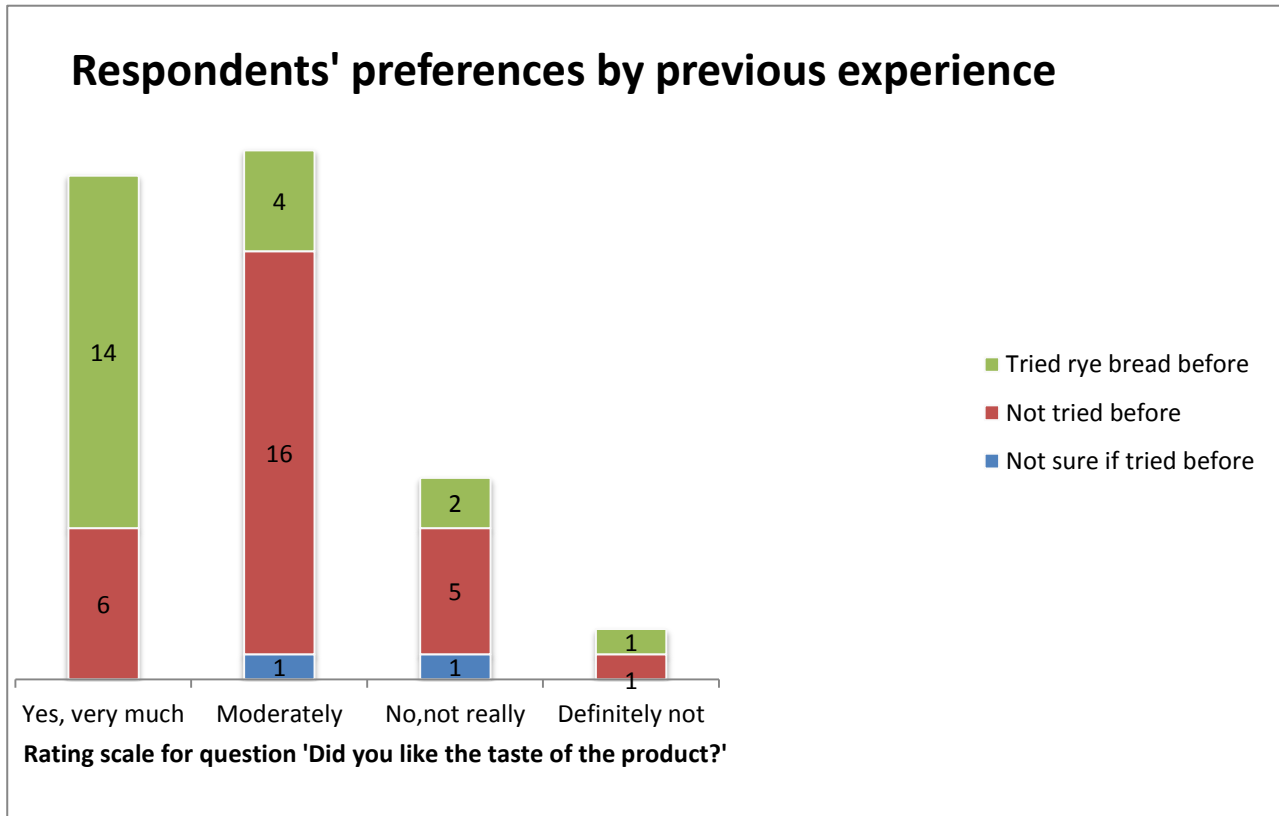
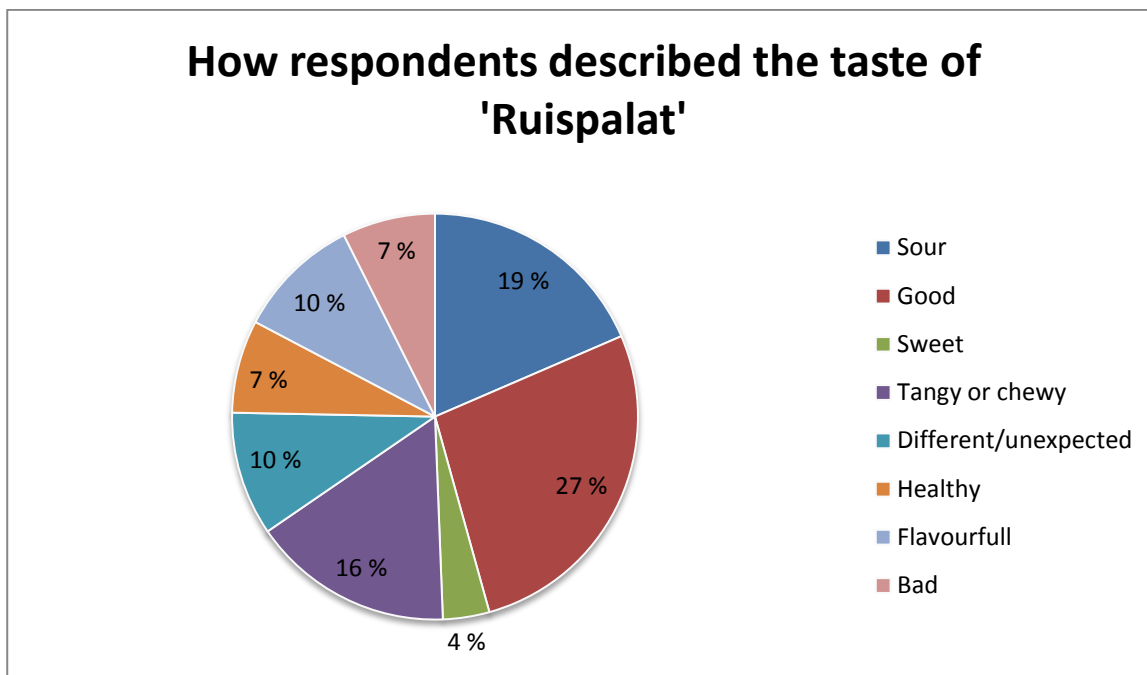


Figure15.



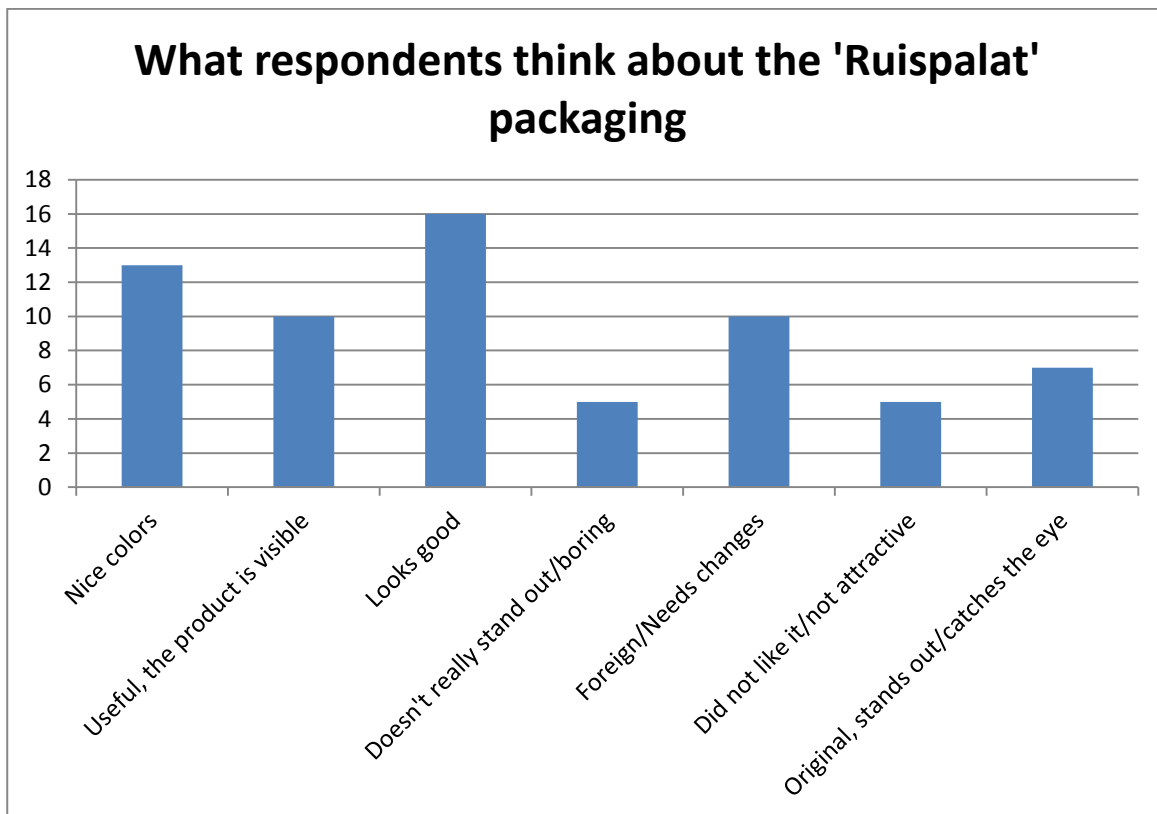
When collecting the responses for the questionnaire, many respondents only after tasting the product said that they had never tasted anything like this before. In the above chart (Figure 15) are illustrated the different tastes respondents reported. The most common opinion was that the bread tasted good. Many also described the taste sour and thought the texture of it was chewy. Above you can see a graph (Figure

14) that indicates that previous familiarity about the product affects the rating of the product. However, respondents who had not previously tasted rye bread only liked it moderately although these people were a clear majority as only six out of the fifty respondents said they did not like the taste of the product. This implies that, no major adaptive changes would have to be done to the product itself and it could be introduced as 'standardised'. According to these responses the recipe for the bread would not have to be changed.

The result from Figure 14 also suggest that there must be exposure for the product and that people need time to get used to the taste of the product, as it is unusual to many Britons.

As the theory implied in chapter three, the packaging of the product along with the name would have to be adapted. Please see below, respondents' answers concerning this matter.

Figure16.



In the questionnaire this question was open-ended and many respondents chose more than one answer. The majority, however, simply stated that the packaging looked good. They were asked to evaluate the way the packaging looked, the colors, material and font used as well as the name. Many respondents think that the red and yellow colors on the packaging were nice and that it was colorful. Moreover, seven of the fifty respondents thought the package looked original and that it would stand out on the shelf in a store, then again five respondents thought the packaging looked boring and not attractive. However, what is really interesting here is the finding that only one in five respondents commented on the text and name on the

package as though it would need to be translated into English. Some respondents, who said the packaging was original and unique, suggested there should be no name change to the product. However, everybody agreed that list of ingredients and other important information should be changed.

Figure17.



From the above chart it can be seen that twelve respondents would 'very likely' purchase the product in a store whereas eleven respondents said they would 'possibly' do this. However, the price these both groups would be most willing to pay for a package of 12 slices, is £1-2. Reflected in this is the relatively cheap price of bread in Britain, as stated in chapter three, in section. Also stated in chapter three, is that because bread is an everyday good and due to its low price there is a low level of consumer involvement. Therefore, none of the fifty respondents was willing to pay £4-5 per package. Majority of respondents who were willing to purchase the product with £3-4 also rated the product a 'healthy lifestyle' product.

Figure18.

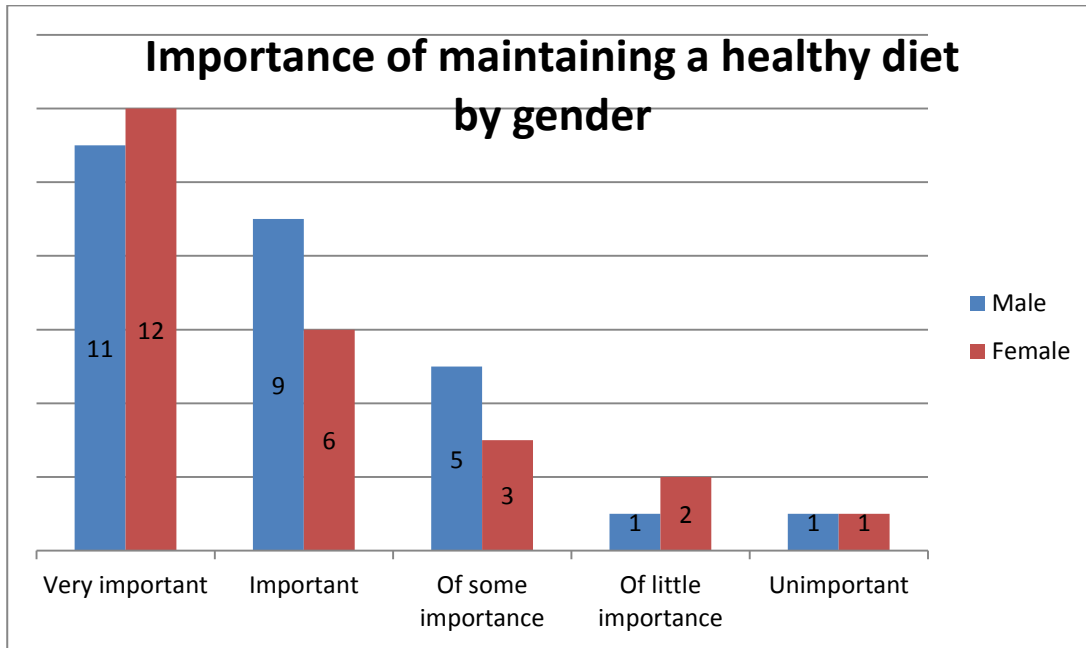


Figure19.

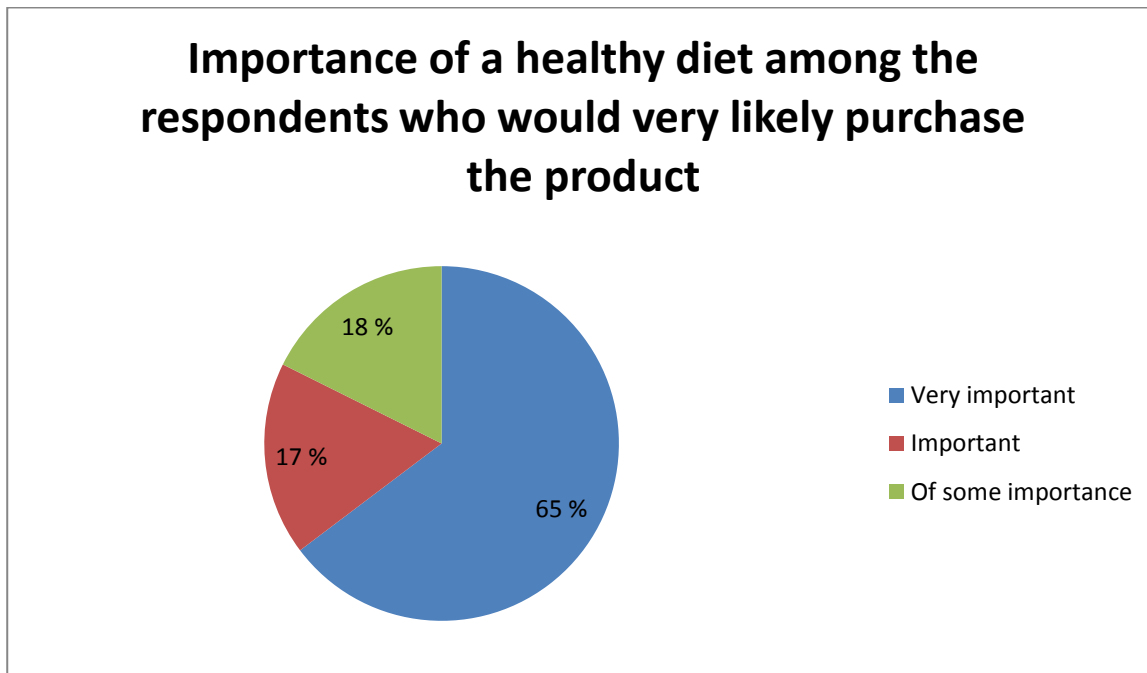
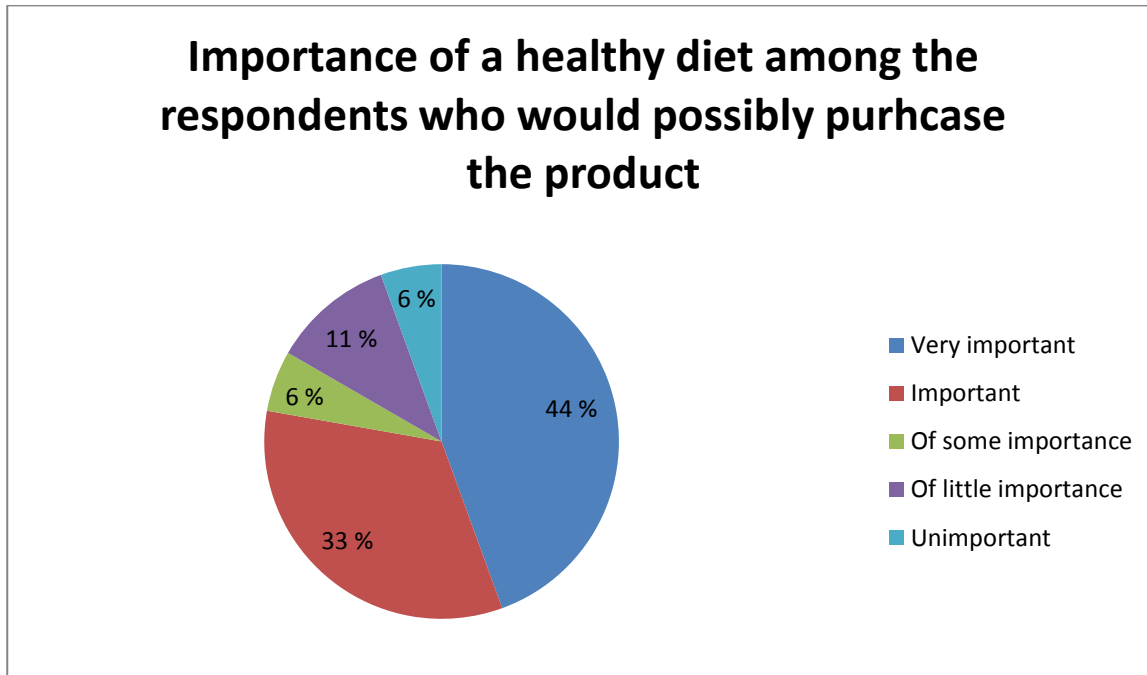
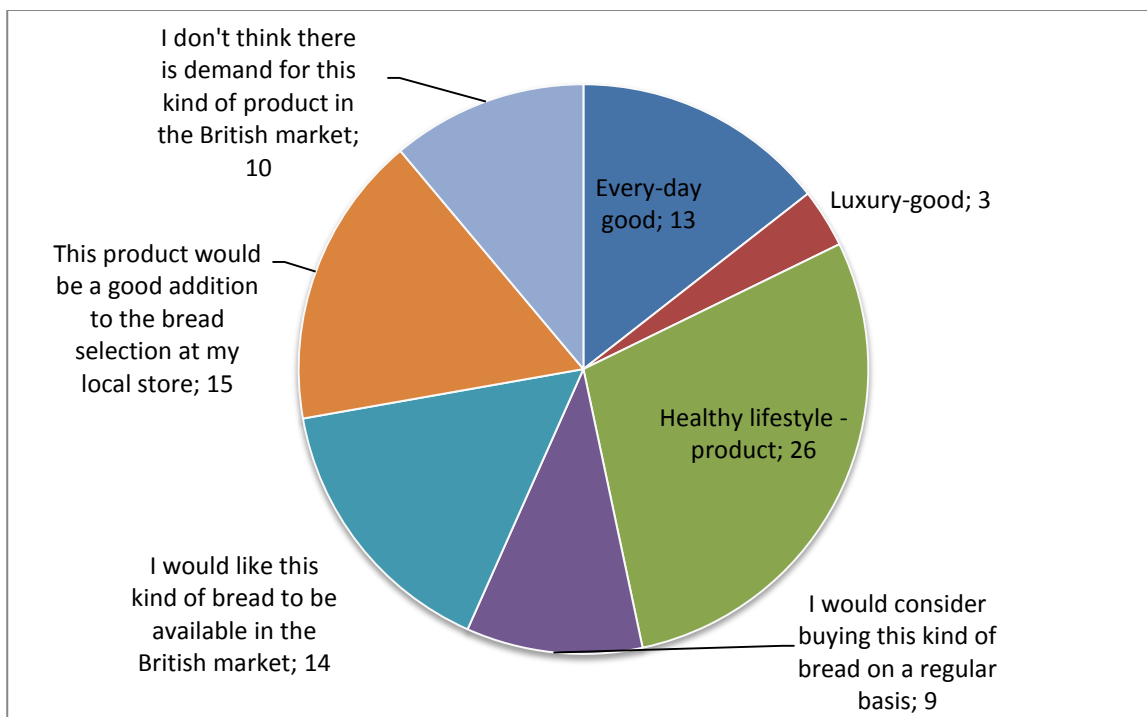


Figure20.



In the literature review, healthiness of the bread was emphasised as the core benefit of the product. In the two graphs above is illustrated, how the majority of respondents (65%) who are ‘very likely’ to buy the product rate that maintaining a healthy diet is very important to them. Also, of the respondents who said they would ‘possibly’ buy the product if available a total of 77% think that maintaining a healthy diet is either ‘very important’ or ‘important’. This suggest that the idea to emphasise the healthiness is possibly something to pursue.

Figure 21.



26 respondents from the total fifty said that they consider 'Ruispalat' to be a healthy lifestyle product. Hence the majority of the respondents recognised that this is healthy product. In chapter 2 section 2 there were considerations about emphasising the value of healthiness. Also in section 2 in chapter marketing communications. However, the most significant finding here is that in total 29 respondents thought the product would be a good addition to the present bread selection and would like this kind of product to be available in stores.

Originally, there was one more additional question in the questionnaire, which has not been analysed because it did not receive any useful or relevant answers. Majority of the respondents just left it blank. This was the question: "What do you associate with Finland?" This question seemed to confuse respondents, too. They were not sure what was meant and it was unclear in many occasions what or where Finland is. This question was put in the questionnaire to find out attitudes towards the country-of-origin to examine the country-of-origin-effect of the product and brand further. However, understandably, this is not relevant to the research of this dissertation based on these results.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

This dissertation has investigated the research hypothesis that the British have different taste preferences and that 'Ruispalat will face barriers associated with cultural differences. It has explained the relevance of cultural factors affecting consumer behaviour and possible barriers that are introduced. It has also explained the importance of culture in international context.

Returning to the research question 'Investigating the possibility to introduce a Finnish rye bread brand called 'Ruispalat' into the British consumer market and what are the possible barriers this product may face?' it is now possible to state that it would be possible to introduce 'Ruispalat' into the U.K. market but how well it would succeed should be investigated in a further study. The barriers identified were cultural including differences in taste preferences as a major influencer.

Factors that made the investigating of this topic difficult at times is the gap in the information about British culture in literature. There were some useful frameworks but these gave only little information as to what the cultural implications are for the British society. Also useful and relevant literature on the United Kingdom's multi-cultural society was extremely hard to find. Therefore it was very hard to imagine what the outcome of the research would be. This is also the reason, the data analysis chapter was not able to dig deeper into the causes of the responses. However, this was also due to the kind of sampling used in the research. Because it was haphazard sampling and there were only altogether 50 responses the results cannot be generalised but only applies to the sample at hand. Also, the sample was relatively homogenous, due to the fact the data collection was done at university where majority of the respondents were in their twenties. The accuracy of the results could have been improved by using non-random sampling and selecting a bigger sample. However, this being undergraduate level research, it would have been helpful if these things would have been done differently. Furthermore, the questionnaire used in the research was simple, clear and well-designed and generated good answers. However, in retrospective a couple of questions could have been altered and added.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, there are serious limitations to this study, especially arising from the data collection phase. The results gathered cannot be generalized and as a consequence the research hypothesis cannot be tested. Also, there is a lot more of relevant literature on than was discussed in this dissertation. It would have been possible to go more in to depth with theories on branding and marketing communication including the adaptation of these theories, for example an advertising campaign could have been designed.

Further areas of study could be a large market research which would give sufficient responses as to whether this kind of product truly would get a positive response like among the fifty respondents of this

study. Also, further studied could be the determinants affecting the buying of bread in the United Kingdom and exactly to what extent the product should be adapted. Also, it could be investigated if the target market of healthy-conscious people is big enough in the U.K. For a company wanting to introduce foodstuff into the U.K. market it is recommended that they familiarize themselves with the cultural differences including preferences between the U.K. and the domestic culture. Also important is the process of marketing communication actions.

At the beginning of this dissertation project, researchers usually anticipate certain kinds of results beforehand, also in this case the researcher had own expectations. These included that the respondents of the questionnaire where they tasted the rye bread, would not like the product as it is very different and unusual. However, to the researcher's surprise the majority of the responses were positive and according to the fifty respondents: 'Ruispalat' would find its way to consumers' homes from the store shelves.

The results of this investigation show that the U.K. market is easy enter, however one should not expect immediate popularity for the standardised product. Britons need time and exposure to accept a new product. Also, a significant barrier is the mission of raising awareness when a lot of people do not recognize the product and have never tasted it before. The fact, that this kind of bread has never been widely eaten or manufactured in the U.K. during the course of the country's history also presents a challenging barrier to make a successful entry for 'Ruispalat'.

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6BU001 Researching Business and Management Issues

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Appendices

Appendice 1: Questionnaire used in data collection

This questionnaire is a part of my undergraduate dissertation research. I am investigating the possible introduction of a Finnish rye bread brand into the British market. There are 15 questions to answers and it will only take a few minutes of you time. Please read the instructions at the beginning of every section. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

In this first section of the questionnaire please answer five questions relating to your characteristics and background. Please tick the appropriate box(es).

Q1. Please select your gender.

- Male Female

Q2. Please select the age group you belong to.

- 18-25 26-35 36-45 46-59 60+

Q3. How would describe your ethnic background?

- White British Bangladeshi Pakistani
 White Other Indian Asian
 Mixed Race Black African Black Caribbean
 Black Other Other, please specify: _____

Q4. How often do you usually eat bread?

- Daily Weekly Monthly Occasionally
 Very rarely or never (Please go to Q6.)

Q5. What type of bread do you usually eat? You may choose more than one type of bread.

- White toast/loaf Wholemeal or brown toast/loaf Pita bread
 Naan bread Other, please specify: _____

Q6. This bread entails 10% (=10g per 100g) of fiber which is known to be good for your digestive system. Please rate how important maintaining a healthy diet is to you?

- Very important Important Of some importance Of little importance Unimportant

In this section there are a few questions about your perception of the product before you taste it. Now, please take a look at the product and the picture of the packaging to answer the next four questions.

Q7. What do you think about the packaging?

Please turn the page →

Q8. This product is 100% Finnish. What associations or opinions, if any, does this introduce?

Q9. Have you eaten any type of rye bread before?

- Yes No Not sure

You have now reached the final stage of the questionnaire. There are only four more questions to answer. Please answer these questions only after you have tasted the bread.

Q10. In your own words, please describe the taste of the product.

Q11. Based entirely on your personal opinion, did you like the product?

- Yes, very much Moderately No, not really Definitely not

Q12. Would you purchase this product in a store?

- Yes, very likely Possibly Not very likely No, never

Q13. How much would you be willing to pay for this product (size of the package being 12 slices)?

- £0-1 £1-2 £2-3 £3-4 £4-5 Other; £_____

Q14. Finally, please select from the above statement(s) the one(s) you agree with the most (you may choose more than one).

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> This is an everyday good | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like this or similar kind of rye bread to be available in the British market |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This is a high-end luxury good | <input type="checkbox"/> This product would be a good addition to the bread selection at my local supermarket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This is a 'healthy life-style' product | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't think there will be demand for this kind product in the U.K. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I would consider buying this or similar kind of rye bread product on a regular basis | |

If there is anything more you would like to add, please write your comments here: _____
