



Healthy and food fitness products invasion in Finland's supermarket industry

Vien Nguyen
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ABSTRACT

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VIEN NGUYEN

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Thesis background. Organic, locally-grown food and supplements had always been a part of the Finnish lifestyle. However, as life became busier, people wanted quicker go-to options and healthier alternatives. This thesis brought a closer look into the current situation of organic, healthy food distribution in Finland as well as companies' pricing and marketing strategy.

Purpose. This thesis was written to explore to what extent fitness and healthy food product have shaped customer's buying behaviour in Finland. Improving health, getting stronger, living "greener" were just among the many popular trends in adapting a healthier lifestyle in Finland. The appearance of more brands produced in Finland and imported from abroad diversified the food market even in local stores and, hence, a new source of revenue for the economy in general. Customers were faced with many options ranging from price difference to packaging and convenient usage, which eventually led to the change in buying patterns by different age groups and dieters.

Methods. In this thesis, both qualitative and quantitative were used. Qualitative research showed how healthy food affect the human bodies, which resulted in the change of eating habits was used. Most insights about the mega trends, Finnish eating habits and lifestyle development were from written materials including books and newspaper. As for quantitative research, data collection was extracted from Finnish Statistics Department, which is a system that has had many surveys, polls and statistics in various different fields such as alcohol consumption, vitamins intake, fat consumption and many more. The data was demonstrated in bar charts. Another source was from K-Citymarket Pirkkala in Pirkkala region, Tampere, Finland as an example. This data was the number of sales of healthy and fitness product over a random week at the shop and what the most popular type was chosen. To further demonstrate the trend in the food market industry, an one-on-one interview with the manager of K-Citymarket Pirkkala was carried out.

Keywords: supermarket, Finland, customers, lifestyle, organic

Research problems. The real problem with the incoming trend of healthy eating in Finland is the quality of the advertised “healthy” products and whether there are real changes in customers’ lifestyle and buying behaviour or not.

Results. The results suggest that organic and local food were highly valued in customers’ criteria when it comes to shopping. Finnish people are increasingly aware of health hazards and are constantly changing diets to eliminate unnecessary ingredients that are deemed to result in obesity, weight gain, high cholesterol, heart diseases and many more. Supplements continue to play a vital role in Finnish everyday life, especially vitamin D.

Conclusions. Finally, as there are already many alternatives for the rising number of vegans and vegetarians, Finland’s supermarkets and local stores need to import and introduce more options to diversify products and give customers more room for decision making. Thanks to great technology developments, new recipes which guaranteed good tastes in food products and supplements, the healthy food product market shows no signs of slowing down with new products coming out every month.

Development proposals. The only needed task to overcome is the raise of awareness towards the proper use of healthy food and supplements as well as creative marketing campaigns that attract all age groups.

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GLOSSARY or ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
10cr	credits

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The change in eating habits and goal of dissertation

This dissertation is written to examine this statement: High the need for organic healthy food products and supplement, smarter the pricing and marketing.

Organic, vegan and vegetarian food alternatives are increasingly introduced into supermarkets worldwide. People might resort to these options due to personal preferences, own medical records, healthy life commitment, influences from acquaintances or, simply, new flavours to try. These changes are necessary in diets due to the increasing health hazards and self-esteem negativity. Social media plays a vital part in forming these shifts and promoting new products widely used by customers aged from 20 to 40. however, improving health is a goal for all ages. This is no difference in Finland.

Customers might influence each other's buying behaviours. As a result, this buying patterns create a trend and companies take advantage more and more. Not all countries in the world can afford to follow this food trend. However, Finland is one of those that can provide many different options for consumers regardless of what they are looking for in their diet and lifestyle. Nowadays, customers can find vegan, vegetarian, lactose-free, dairy-free, plant-based, gluten-free alternatives. A shift is happening. Retailers should keep up with the latest trends that customers are interested in.

1.2. Finland's high quality life and low quality health

1.2.1. General health problems of the world

In many countries around the world, people look different, physically wise because of the difference in whole foods and its alternative. For example, both Europeans and Americans enjoy bread in meals but European, such as the French

are not majorly overweight (Agger, 2011, 8). On the contrary, people in Asian countries substitutes bread and corn starch products for rice and vegetables because of the climate in favour of growing these foods and processed or “canned” food are not various compared to Western countries because fruits, meat and fishes are abundant and easy to find that there is no need to processed them in the winter (Agger, 2011, 25). In “Body problems”, Agger (2011, 24) believes that in such cultures (i.e Mexico, China) , there are fewer people suffered from high blood cholesterol, diabetes, heart problems and such because of the “whole foods” diet and more involvement in physical activities such as walking, running in everyday errands. But if walking and being active daily help shape the general appearance of people in a nation, then why are Finns overweight?

1.2.2 Finland’s health problems related to food

Finland is a developed countries with great technology advances and the quality of life is considered to be high. According to the Finnish Health and Wellbeing Department (THL), from the age group 30-39, over 80% of men have and feel satisfied with the high quality life. Same age group for women, more than 84% of women satisfied with the best quality of life. Over 40 years old Finns also experience a quality living at around 70% (THL Raportti 4/2018, 25). This fact rise a question: “If life is good, how come health is disturbed?” Maybe it is because vegetarian and vegan lifestyle is not the original eating habit in Finland’s history. According to THL (2018), only 1 out of 10 men and 1 out of 5 women eat the recommended portion of vegetables and fruits.

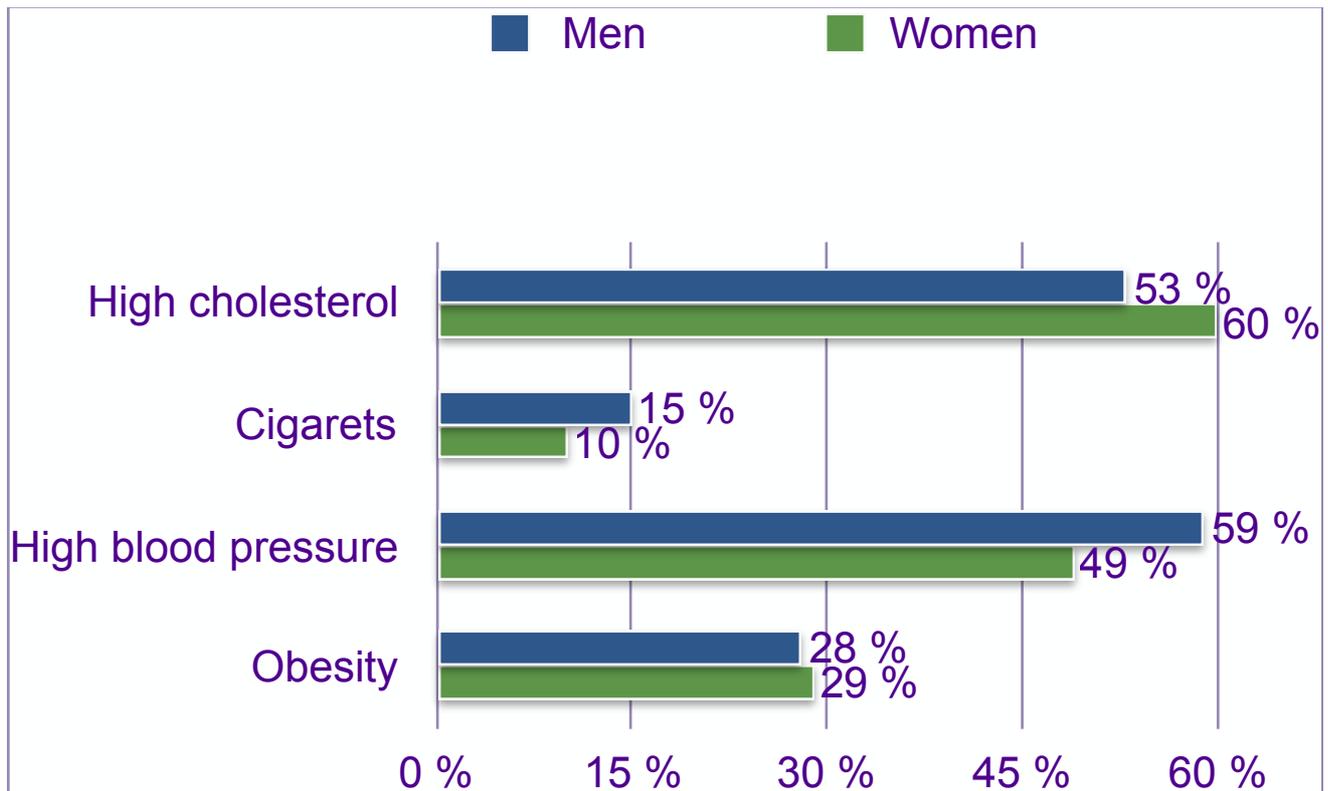


FIGURE 1. Health hazards Finnish undergo in 2017 (THL)

Figure 1 suggests that the number of obese employed Finnish people has become more common by the month in 2017. The Finnish Health and Wellbeing Department (THL, 2017) released the reports of obesity statistics in men and women in 2017. Based on the chart, even though men smokes more than women in 2017. However, both male and female contribute to an over 50% of Finnish citizens in being overweight and over 60% in high cholesterol level. Fortunately, Finns' diets are not high in sugar that blood sugar is not increased.

Within the time period from 2011 to 2017. It is also expected that the percentage of overweight people will increase 10% more in 2028. Depression is also one of the reasons that affect people's choice in food product. The percentage of depressed Finnish rose from 6% to 9% in men and from 9% to 13% in women within 7 years, starting from 2011. Alcohol contributes to the diet considerably in the Finnish lifestyle as well. From 2011 to 2017, the age group 30 to

39 years old drink alcohol at least once a week, with the number of women at almost 80% and men at 66,3%. The elders drink lesser. (Finterveys, 2018.)

1.3. A change in food industry - even fast food

According to The New York Times (1984), Americans specifically choose to eat differently ever since the late 70s. This difference is not about eating healthier but rather about opting for other choices in the menu (The New York Times, 1984). This statement is proven in Finland. In one of the most popular fast food restaurants of the country - Mc's Donalds, the menu includes some "healthier" option. This doesn't mean customers will look better or get skinnier. For example, chicken and shrimp salads are healthier than a double cheese burger but it doesn't mean less calories. Customers, however, don't pay attention to counting calories, but rather the fact that choosing a healthy option make them feel good. This is, nonetheless, a positive change in the fast food culture, which is originally considered to be "junk food", "unhealthy food" or "cheat food". Nowadays, in the McDonald's menu, one can find vegan, gluten-free burgers, oatmeal and, even, for the drinks, there are smoothies, concentrated apple juice, no sugar soft drinks and fat-free milk.

For Finnish fast food brand - Hesburger, there are even a bigger range of vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options due to the positive change in eating habits of Finns. For instance, the menu includes five different kinds of salads, nine smoothies with choices of replacing cow's milk with oat drink for those who are in a dairy-free diet. Hence, there is a change in Finnish consumers' behaviours. Replacing unhealthy ingredients is not the only change Finnish customers make in their diet. Eating clean is another concept. According to doctor Emily Brown of Mayo Clinic, eating clean means including more vegetables, lean meat, fruits, cutting down complexed carbs, consuming healthy fats and avoiding processed food. Nordic fast food restaurant "Friends n Brgrs" have been advertising about how they get their fresh source of ingredients from - a known and trusted source for organic meat and potatoes.

1.4. Objective and scope

The objective of this thesis is to examine the the customers' buying behaviour towards food products when the healthy lifestyle trend hits the market. The research in this paper will categorise the age of consumers, health related issues that affect customers' choices. Two questions will be put into analysis: "How companies have changed the way of selling healthy food product?" And "Are customers helping shaping the economy with their choices?"

1.4.1. Research questions

"How companies have changed the way of selling healthy food products?"

As the concept of eating clean, going plant-based and keeping a balanced diet become more popular in Finland, sellers have been campaigning products based on these positive changes. As a result, these arrangements in supermarkets and local food stores have changed the way customers reach for every product in different categories.

"Are customers helping shaping the economy with their choices?"

This question is, in fact, the counteract effect of the first question. Customers, who are willing to pay more for organic and supplements products, have created the trend of organic and fast healthy alternatives in the supermarket including the improvements in recipes, diversity and advertisements.

1.4.2. Research approach

There will be a presentation of how companies price the products, distribute the goods and which consumers' groups are aimed at. Also, there will be a chart research of Finland's most popular fast food restaurants' menu and the popularity of healthy options in their menu. A calculated pricing strategy in the case of K-citymarket Pirkkala will be discussed. Furthermore, an example of sales and revenue from a typical week of healthy products in the supermarket is attached.

An interview with the shop owner of K-Citymarket Pirkkala is carried out to illustrate the trend, the change and the future of supermarket's food.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Pricing: first independent variable

2.1.1. Price definition

What is “price”? And “what is pricing strategy?” “Price”, the amount of money that a product is valued at by sellers, is the determine factor for many consumers in whether to buy the products. Because pricing strategy is very strategically arranged itself to benefit the sellers, price is not necessarily reflect the true value of the item. (Zolfagharian, Weisstein and Firat, 2017, 162.) Consumers’ decision towards buying a product is determined not only by the quality of the object but also on the economy of the country, finance situation of the buyer, gains versus loss, costs compared to other alternatives (Zolfagharian et al., 2017, 163). Different age group also perceives price appropriate differently. For example, people who are self-earn would spend more reasonable than someone whose spendings are provided by someone’ else.

2.1.2 Overpricing healthy products

Healthy food product in Finland is generally priced higher than the “unhealthy” ones, especially when they are processed or prepared already to use fast. This chapter will analyse the prices of healthy food products and pricing strategy got big and popular supermarkets in Finland: K-market, K-Citymarket, K-Supermarket, S-Market, Tokmanni, Verkkokauppa and Prisma.

According to Sarah Maxwell and Hooman Estelami (2005, 362), in Behavioral Pricing, Pricing strategy is an important part of the company’s structure, the consumers’ buying behaviours and the entire economy. The basic rule of pricing a product is if it’s needs increase, than the price lowers and vice versa. This should mean that healthy and organic products should be cheap since there is a greater and greater need for them in recent years. However, the reality seems to be contradicted to the economic theory above. As there is such great needs

in the market especially when consumers have been influenced by the surrounded society. Many people have seen great health improvements, taking advantage of the situation is a smart move by companies. Customers might reach for the higher priced items due to the belief of “higher priced-higher quality”. Thanks to this rational purchasing decision that companies can come up with a mind-twisted marketing strategy: the contrast price advertisement “ Was 4€, now 2€” sounds way cheaper than “2€”, which is originated from the fact that most customers lack of the knowledge of the product: how it is made, where it is manufactured and hence, how much it should be precisely priced (Maxwell et al. 2005, p. 365). Unfortunately, this “Highly-priced, low quality” advertising strategy stills perform well in Finland.

2.1.3. The “number 9” effect

Smart companies will price the products lower than the price that customers who have needs for them, willing to pay. For example, pricing of energy bars are relatively affordable in Finland as most of them are kept under 2€, which is not a lot if a customer decides to spend an average of 1,50€ everyday as a brunch snack or pre-workout source of energy. Nutrilett, one of the most popular healthy food brands in Finland, can be found in most supermarkets i.e Prisma, Tokmanni, Verkkokauppa, S-market, K-Supermarket, K-Citymarket. Nutrilett ranging from 1,30€ price to 29,90€ (which happens if products are bought in a pack of 20 or so). A lactose-free chocolate smoothie costs only 1,99€ in K-Supermarket, which is a good value deal. A package deal of 15 packs of 33 grams powder for shakes costs 19,90€. The “number 9” effect is wildly used. But is it fair for customers to be fooled by the first glance of the numbers before number “9”. They might realize that the price is one euro more expensive than they had bargain for. The fairness in pricing has been a hot topic for writers. Some argue that the surprisingly huge discounts from time to time place a question on buyers whether if the quality of the products has decreased, the manufacturer has changed to be a cheaper but less reliable one and the likes (Gultinan 2006).

To eliminate trust issues, sellers in Finland categorise customers into segments. For examples, K-supermarket - one of the big supermarkets in Finland keep

their Leader The Protein Bar at the price of 1,95€, but for 3 bars, it's 5€ which is still very affordable for students, teenagers, young working people and seniors who just need to grab a quick snacks. Another cheaper example is K-Supermarket's Star nutrition Bar priced at 2,09 each but for 3 items, it costs only 3€, hence, it is 50% off.

2.1.4. Customer segmentation: cater to the right people

Similar to other countries in the world, Finland's well-known fitness and healthy food brands have "Customer segmentation". Customer segmentation is the act of separated customers into different categories, each represents a character, age group, buying behaviour, finance capability or geography and so on. By creating customer segmentation, companies can focus on one or two groups that will generate great revenues and sales. Healthy and fitness oriented products in Finland majorly targeted at adults aged from 18 to 40 because this age group is the most active (Pimiä 2016). Marja Mutanen - a nutrition physiologist professor at Helsinki University believed that Finnish people have consumed an overload amount of proteins from protein rich products in the markets nowadays such as protein quad, protein yogurt, protein powder (Ilta Sanomat 2016). There are already protein source in the food products that humans eat every- day, there is no need to add extra proteins in the meal and in-between meals. This proves that protein-filled products have taken over a big proportion of the food product market.

2.2. Marketing: second independent variable

2.2.1. Marketing strategy

Professors Abratt and Bendixon of Nova University, Oxfordshire believed that there are levels of defining a market in advance to proceeding a marketing strategy: identify relevant market then defined market and, finally, targeted market (Abratt & Bendixon 2018, 17). The first step is simply focuses on the geography of the market and the size of expansion, which means in Finland most nutritions and healthy product sellers determines to sell their products mainly in Finland, especially small brands. A defined market in the following step is the act of narrow down the customer groups the company want to focus. Most sporty food products are targeted for young people and adults younger than 40, especially those who adopt a busy life and look for a quick to-go snack and drink. Supplements are for all groups because products such as vitamins, minerals, syrups and the like should be consumed harmlessly by people of any age. The same access is designed for organic food products as they don't cause any health hazards. The third stage is to target specific customer segment that hold great needs for certain types of products. This can be seen very clearly in Finnish supermarkets at each aisle that contains products for different types of healthy and organic market.

2.2.2. Product arrangement: a smart marketing move

The organic food products are always open for purchase for all kinds of customers, regardless of age group or lifestyle. Organic foods are arranged in the same or, at least, close by counters because all age group can consume organic products without any complications. Energy drinks are placed in the same aisle as soft drinks and water because they are drinks for past times or to energise. Mainly these types of products are for young people ranging from teens above 15 to above 40 year-olds. Finland is alleged to have the same average number of energy drink consumers as every other European countries. (Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos 2012.) The biggest group of consumers for every

drinks, which takes up to 68%, is adolescents. According to Finnish Health and Wellbeing Department in 2017, among the eighth and ninth graders 11% of boys and 5% of girls drink consume energy drinks three to five times a week and under 10% of each gender drinks it everyday. As for protein bars, Testing Lab in run a research of 712 participants and 29 protein bars brands in 2017, within one month, 81% of the group purchased protein bars 3 to 6 times weekly, 54% of the people are women, the age group in both male and female consumers are from 18 to 49 years old, over 68% are gym and active sporty people. (Testing Lab 2017.) It is important that manufacturers take into account the psychological aspect of consumers when purchasing products.

Features such as flavours, colours, ingredients, source of ingredient and allergy are key when making a product the best seller in a competitive market nowadays. Customers reach for healthier options that are an improvement from what they used to use. There are easy-to-defined markets and there are “general” market. General market in Finland can be seen in the protein bars example. As these go-to snack as suitable for young and old people and organic products as well. Sellers and manufacturers can enter the market without the need to identify the specific customers group. On the contrary, product such as gluten-free, lactose-free and vegan are more catered towards people who are intolerant towards gluten, lactose and animals by-products.

2.2.3. Sustainability

After identifying the targeted market and the customer segments, a marketing strategy is the following phase-one of which is sustainability in Finland. Sustainability and organic food in Finland is one of the major selling points. Organic food in Finland is usually grown in the country with many products have a farming description on the package to ensure customers that it is, truly, healthy for the users and friendly to the environment. For instance, Fazer Yosa, which is an oat-based branch of Fazer company that produce vegan yogurt, snacks, smoothie from Finnish oats, have there philosophy written on the package including how Finnish oats are perceived in the world, how Yosa studies and pro-

duces healthy oat-based products that are rich in fiber and protein. Sustainability should not be seen as just a selling pitch or an “implementation” to a certain part of the production to attract customers because even though there are many options to choose at the store, Finland still has a relatively small selection of brands compared to America or the rest of Europe. As customers hope to build loyalty to a certain brand, the brand has put sustainability as the core value in the company’s production and transportation of any products. (Rudowska 2018, 53.) Earth control is one of the most popular dried fruits and nuts brand from Denmark but famous brands in Finland. From the name to the production, sustainability is the core of the brand, which happens to make a good selling point to the customers. The company commits to reduce carbon dioxide to under a ton per year. The foil package made from climate friendly resources and 43% bio-based materials, which create a good quality to prolong product’s shelf life and, hence, reduce food waste. For consumers, to evaluate the sustainability ethical side of a brand, six following qualities should be checked: successful exploit of resource; relevant in today’s context; connection to the local; longevity; ethical use of resources and labour.

2.2.4. Organic food

What is organic product? According to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs of United Kingdom, “Organic food is grown and raised under no influence of pesticides, fertilisers, additives or being genetically modified”. Organic agriculture is a systems approach to production that is working towards environmentally, socially and economically sustainable production. Instead, the agricultural systems rely on crop rotation, animal and plant resources, some hand weeding and biological pest control. Organic products are marked “Luomu” in Finnish with a green colour. Organic food is not difficult to find in Europe generally and especially in Finland where both technology and consumers’ awareness towards self-care have well-developed (Baourakis, 2004, 192).

What is supplements for health? According to the US National Institutes of Health, supplements are vitamins, fish oils and minerals such as calcium, magnesium and iron. When someone doesn't eat enough nutrients, he or she will be to supplement their diet with supplements. In some cases, vegans and vegetarians need to add supplements as well because not all vitamins and minerals can be found in fruits and vegetables. In Finland, 64% women and 43% men take supplements, which includes both vitamins and minerals in 2012. According to Heli Mansikka from Yle news, the "vitamin" trend has been soaring from 2013 with more brands appearing in the market and stronger, more effective dose for maximum effect.



PICTURE 1. Organic mark is printed on organic products in Finland to imply it meets the EU's organic products standard (Proluomu 2019)

2.3. The increase in number of supplement users, vegans and gluten-free dieters: dependant variables

2.3.1. The increase of added vitamins and minerals and its users

Specialist Heli Kuusipalo believed Finns take too much vitamins than needed. Vitamin water and energy drink that promise to provide vitamins daily intake when being used needs to be checked if that level combine with the vitamins that one consumes from food is not over the limit. Because Finnish people are

not also aware of their personal limit of vitamins and minerals intake, many manufacturer sell their products based on what amount of nutrients an average person would need. Today, there are various products that provides vitamins and proteins, in addition to the traditional pills, tablets and syrup. For example, Kesko K-Ruoka food group has just introduced vitamin infused water during the Specialist Heli Kuusipalo believed Finns take too much vitamins than needed. Vitamin water and energy drink that promise to provide vitamins daily intake when being used needs to be checked if that level combine with the vitamins that one consumes from food is not over the limit. Because Finnish people are not also aware of their personal limit of vitamins and minerals intake, many manufacturer sell their products based on what amount of nutrients an average person would need. Today, there are various products that provides vitamins and proteins, in addition to the traditional pills, tablets and syrup. For example, Kesko K-Ruoka food group has just introduced vitamin infused water during the summer of 2019 and autumn 2019 Virkeä juice with added BC-vitamin, ABDE- vitamin and magnesium or flavonoid.

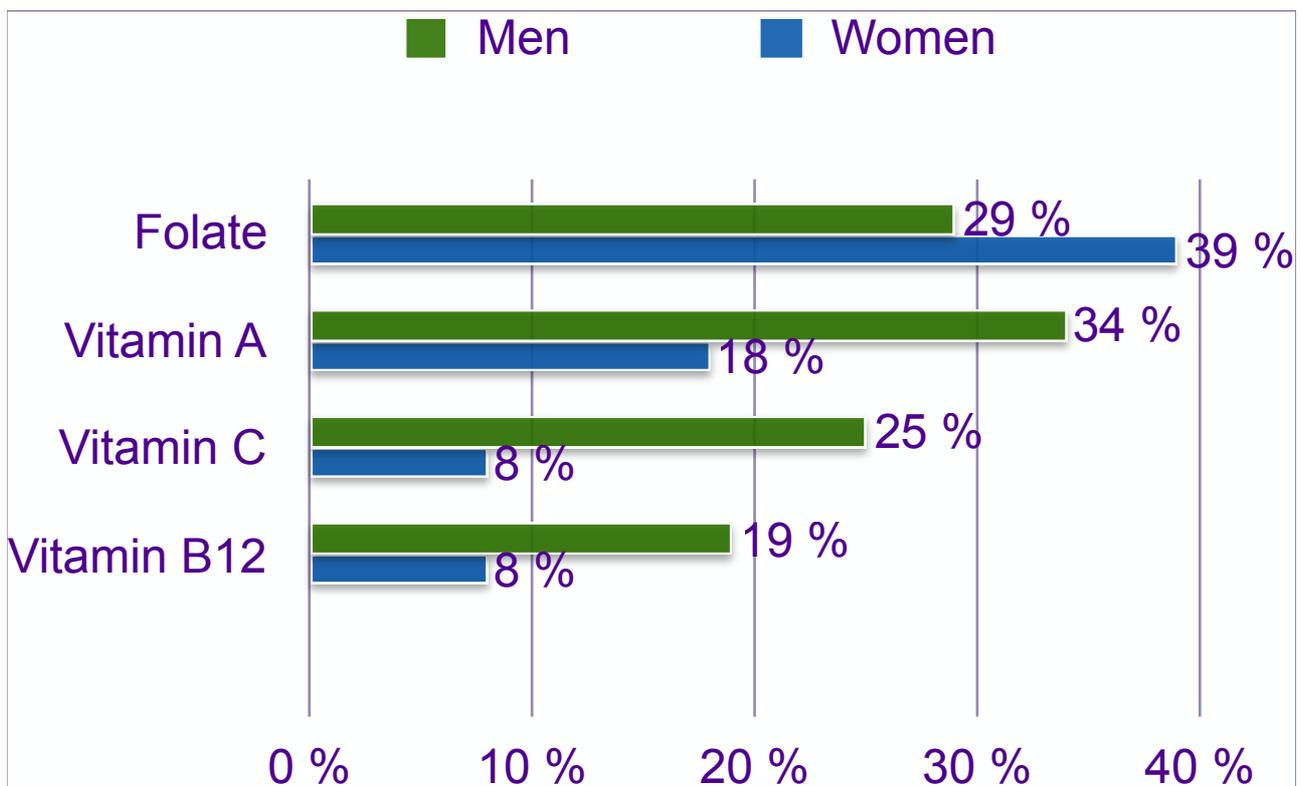


FIGURE 2. THE POPULAR VITAMINS TAKEN IN FINLAND IN 2017

Kuusipalo agreed that vitamin D is the most popular product among Finns due to the lack of sun shine hours and it is the only recommended supplemented vitamin that young people until 18 years old take once a day for everyday, same for pregnant woman and the elder over 75 years. Other vitamins are not necessarily required. However, many products advertised added vitamin C for beautiful skin, hair and vitamin A for eyesight. Furthermore, products that already included vitamins and minerals are added more nutrients. Alpro soy milk is infused with calcium and vitamins, Marli berry juice is supplemented with vitamins D and C, Mehuiza 100% orange juice is added ACDE-vitamins even though in orange juice, there is vitamin C and A. For instance, some of the popular options in the market are Alpro protein quad, Vitamin Well Reload water and many more. Not only supplements' sales soar in department stores and supermarkets, but also in pharmacy, from 2011 to 2013, the revenue from vitamins and minerals increased by 19 % (Mansikka 2014).

The lack of knowledge and consciousness have resulted in the sales increase of these types of supplements as well as their popularity, especially when there are many brands to compared, the price drop and customers are even more tempted to by them. Overusing supplements can cause kidney strain or kidney failure (Kuusipalo 2016). Finland's vitamins are actually stronger than that of other Nordic countries, says Anna Mizrahi to Yle news. Since 2009, Finland accepts EU rules of the allowed maximum amount of vitamins and minerals in supplements, but does not follow the rules strictly. In Denmark and Norway, there is a maximum amount of intake food supplement. Thankfully, the case of intoxicating from supplement in Finland is extremely rare, reported by Martti Kuru. However, it can be seen where the sales , the diversity of brands and the popular use of supplements originated.

2.3.2 The increase of vegans and gluten-free eaters

According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland's change of population, immigration and technology advances have influenced the way people take care of their wellbeing. Some make their own changes by taking part in fit-

ness groups or classes, a community or a project. Most Finns work in self-employment, start-ups and companies that involve in projects; while others jump from job to job. This pressure create fast and smarter lifestyle choices. Boston Consulting Group's report of Sustainable Economic Development of 162 nations placed Finland third after Norway and the Netherlands in turning wealth into wellbeing (Good news from Finland, 2016).

People's choice in healthy food is rather emotional. The products' packaging, commercial advertisement (plant-based, organic and ethical) or, even, how they are arranged in the stores might encourage consumers reach more for them (Bernstein, 2010).

Finns have been encouraged to change their eating habits towards a more plant-based and organic diet. The vegetarian lifestyle is deemed to fit the lifestyle of Finnish people, according to Marrit Termonen from Natural Resources Institute Finland. Finland has a great amount of forest and fauna in general that is covered by grass, which makes animals an in-between in the food chain. Anna Repo from Natural Resources Institute Finland believes that technologies development can lead to better agricultural practices.

2.3.3. The increase in number of environmental-friendly eaters and manufacturers

Sustainability in raising animals and growing vegetables have made a Hugh impact on how Finns see the products and what it represents as well as how it makes them feel good about what they cash on. Sustainable manufacturing has become a marketing trend for healthier and guilt-free product choices among consumers. In 2000, Finland saw an increase of 6% organic farmland. (Baourakis, 2004, 6.) EU's trade regulations have made it easier for Finland to import ingredients or finished organic products to diversify and bring more affordable prices to the Finnish market. Certain standards in terms of quality of the products, especially when applied to animals' by-products such as dairy, cocoa and meat from animals that were raised from other European countries. For

example, chocolate contained products have the “fair trade” mark and dairy ones have the “UHT certified” logo. Finns are also aware of where the products is prepared - “In Finland”, which gives a sense of trust and good quality when it comes to items that are popular in every day Finnish life including milk, bread, small snacks and juice or to-go smoothie.

Sustainability not only concerns manufacturing process, but also the after-used and its consequences. In reports from 2006, the European Commission determines up to 30% of green house emission is caused by food and drinks (Jong, 2013, 2). Hence, companies have the responsibility to minimise the food production process’ downsides. Finnish companies have made sustainability a key part in annual reports, marketing campaigns and websites. Fazer - a leading Finnish companies in dairy, sweets, drinks and bread, places “sustainability” as a topic on the main website. In this section, Fazer updates new pioneering goals monthly such as more products will be plant-based oriented including candies, liquorice and Pure Dark chocolate (Fazer 2019). Fazer’s commitment to reduce 50% emission is one of the highly targeted goal with the “Carbon Action” determine to reduce climate change. The Finnish leading brand is now part of the Baltic Sea Group on a mission that in 2025, the manufacturer will use all vegetables grown in Finland, according to Finnish farming philosophy - Nina Elomaa, Fazer’s sustainability manager.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Methodological approach

3.1.1. Definition of qualitative and quantitative approach

Because this research looks into the buying behaviour of customers who intend to embark on a healthy lifestyle, there should be a combination of qualitative and quantitative together, however not equally (Newman et al, 1998, 16-17).

Qualitative research, also known sometimes as ethnography, is the name of all types of researches that involve observation, documentary and group interviews. Quantitative research, on the contrary, is more statistical oriented. This method using numerical data collecting from polls, surveys. (Newman et al, 1998, 18)

3.1.2. Analysing methods: using both techniques

On definition, the two methods seem to contradict each other but actually compliment each other. According to Newman (1998, 31), integrating qualitative and quantitative methods together is a wise strategic approach to prove a theory that found result is not strong or convinced enough based on its own. There are three different levels of incorporating both methods in a dissertation: convergent, additional coverage and sequential contributions. "Convergent" means the results from both qualitative and quantitative are strong enough on their rights to prove the theories. Because each method has its strength, in "additional coverage" implies the addition of qualitative to the already existing quantitative or vice versa to provide results to each question. As for "sequential coverage", this methods uses the results of one method as the leverage to answer the next question, which subsequently relies on the use of the other method (Morgan, 2014). Since the thesis has more than one question, "additional coverage" will answer the sub questions and contribute to the big question "How fitness and healthy products have shaped customers' buying behaviour?"

3.2. Data acquisition methods

3.2.1. By qualitative research

The reason for using qualitative research is to use to analyse the psychology of customers when buying products categorised in age difference and gender difference, which leads to the difference of product choice and price choice. The mega trends towards healthy eating and changing diet will be also based on newspaper pics that demonstrate why the trends happen and what types of products that have been dominating the food and supplements market in Finland. Furthermore, the sustainability aspects of how eating habits can shape the food production and customers' health and how healthy food affects humans body will be revealed from the qualitative research as well.

3.2.2. By quantitative research

Quantitative is applied to process the numerical data from surveys and K-city-market Pirkkala's sales example. Data about certain sections such as health hazards and vitamins consumption is extracted from Finnish Statistics Department. The statistics is drawn again in bar charts to analyse the situation in recent years. The quantitative research will also be used in the analysis of prices of fitness supplements in well-known supermarkets in Finland. A case of K city market Pirkkala in Finland will be introduced with statistics that represents revenue and sales unit. The fitness food products sold in big supermarkets will be the "sample". Sampling is a process of choosing a specific group of objects to take part in the research and subsequently provide a result that represents a trend.

Another qualitative method lies in the one-on-one interview with the owner of K-Citymarket Pirkkala in Tampere, Finland about the organic and healthy alterna-

tives to customers in the Pirkkala and how important it is to include it in the supermarket's products choice, even dedicated a private aisle for these products. The statistical data will be processed in a bar chart to illustrate the popularity of healthy products in the supermarket.

4. RESEARCH RESULT

4.1. K-Citymarket Pirkkala introduction

K citymarket Pirkkala is the biggest department store in the Pirkkala region of Tampere, Finland, where most resides are Finnish families both old and young age. The interview takes place in the store where Sami Sivonen is the manager. According Mr.Sivonen, health-related products are very important to be included in the supermarket in the following sections: supplements, organic products and vegan products. Below is the SWOT analysis of K-Citymarket Pirkkkala based on self observation.

S (Strength)	W (Weakness)	O (Opportunit ies)	T (Threats)
Stable amount of visitors on regular days and weekend. Free food tasting every weekend. Many sales campaigns. Diversity in brands. Recycling system.	Not enough employees	Have many new products than other shops. More brands and competitive prices.	Cheaper supermarkets just a walking distance around. High prices. The use of plastics is still common for most products.
Long opening hours i.e until 9 on weekdays	Higher prices than other shops	Few competitors in the area.	Not enough media coverage.

S (Strength)	W (Weakness)	O (Opportunities)	T (Threats)
Many brands, Hugh selling space, self-checkout cashier, great lighting system	In a distance location, not in city centre, only attracts regional customers	Customers find more gluten-free, vegan and foreign imported brands. Free food tasting every weekend.	Still only attract customers who have cars or live near by.
Friendly staff who received diplomas in trade	Few instructions on aisle and brands	Appearance on radio, Facebook, Instagram, newspaper	

TABLE 1. SWOT ANALYSIS OF K-CITYMARKET IN 2019

4.1.1. Customer segmentation

Just like any company, customers segmentation is required when selling a product. K-citymarket focuses in three customer groups: youth who are interested in sports and wellbeing, families who have the tendency for supplements such as vitamins and medicine and, finally, adults aged 30 to 40 who make vitamins and sports supplement as their go-to choices including protein powder, protein bars and energy drinks. However, all of the groups seem to be choose naturally derived products then products that contains additives or heavily processed.

4.1.2. Marketing strategy

The marketing strategy of the supermarket is to rely on the philosophy “Finns prefer green and healthy local food”. By this, the food sold in the shop is organi-

cally grown and produced in the Pirkkala region and “marked produced in Finland”, especially for organic perishable food. Sami believes that Finnish people look for “green” and “healthy food”. “Green” does not only vegetables and fruits, but also the way the vegetables and meat are grown and raised. It is preferred that the the entire cycle of food production is environmentally-friendly including farming, transportation and packaging. “Healthy” food, which is a standard for both processed and raw products, does not mean it has to be 100% organic and contains natural ingredients, but rather makes people feel good and balanced when they eat, for example, bread and cheese.

4.1.3. Quality maintenance

To maintain the quality and the diversity of product selections in the shop, all of the healthy products are checked daily, given a 50% off after 7 pm so that they are sold fast and updated with new options every three months. After this three months period, the manager and head of the delivery department with meet up to discuss the possibility of new brands being introduced in the shop to attract new customers and keep the shop interesting to consumers of all ages.

4.2. Research and results

4.2.1. Quantitative research

Cross-sectional survey is carried out at K-Citymarket Pirkkala. This type of survey involves a random target being chosen and no parameters related to it being adjusted. The chosen time is a random week (week 41) in 2019 to examine the sales of organic food and supplements. The products chosen are random and so do the customers, regardless of age group and residency. The following are chosen products: Redbull energy drink 0,25l; Friggs magnesium 20 tablets 80g; Pirkka organic potatoes 1 kg Finland; Barebells CashCara protein bar 55g and Leader Whey chocolate powder 500g. Although this type of survey does

not show consistent results for the entire year, it shows what the shop can expect from sales in one week.

The type of sampling is probability, which means each product chosen stand the same chance of being purchased as the other. Because the products' diversity at the shop is large, single random sampling technique is the most suitable in this situation. After the group of products is selected, the survey is carried by using a system of sales register using by the shop to monitor number of sales and revenue each week.

It can be seen that the sales of Redbull energy drinks are the highest, followed by organic Pirkka potatoes. This suggests the tendency to turn to organic food of customers that are grown in Finland. Furthermore, potatoes are a popular and advantage of vegetables being grown in Finland. This give customers trust and support to the locally grown food in Finland. As for Redbull drinks, these are a to-go quick energising solution for fatigue, tiredness or it can also be seen as a soft drink option. Redbull is a well-known brand so it is easy to understand why the sales are high, which proves "brand" does matter to customers.

	Sale days	Number of sales (one)	Revenue € (VAT0%)	Price development €	Pricing strategy €
Redbull energy drinks 0,25l	7	155	206	122	57
Friggs magne 20 tablets 80g	1	1	2	-3	1
Pirkka organic potatoes 1kg Finland	6	21	33	0	11
Barebells CashCara proefftin bar 55g	5	11	25	8	7
Leader Whey chocolate powder 500g	2	2	21	21	8

TABLE 2. The sales of random supplements and organic product in 2019 at K-Citymarket Pirkkala

4.3. Qualitative research: one-on-one interview

One-on-one interview is one of the most popular types of qualitative research. This in-depth interview discusses the selection of brands, food categories, pricing strategy and, finally, the future of the shop. The conversation lasted for 30 minutes with the manager of K-Citymarket Pirkkala Sami Sivonen. The data analysis method using is text analysis based on written notes during the conversation. The managing style and actions of the manager is also observed everyday to examine how products' storing, restocking and selling techniques of the shop's employees. The data was written and collected at sight and checked by Mr.Sivonen himself.

4.3.1 Diversity and inclusivity at the shop

Mr. Sivonen believes that K-Citymarket should an environment-friendly and localised shop for the the residents of Pirkkala region and providing a great variations of options is a vital philosophy at the shop.

At K-Citymarket Pirkkala, bread has a separate section of dark bread and white bread and many brands were found, also gluten free bread and oat bread has their own shelves. Cheese section is listed there origins and ingredients in a booklet. Also, each week there would be a cheese expert who comes and brings samples to introduce about each cheese that are organically made in any countries that is popular with cheese such as France, Italy and, of course Finland. Inclusion is the main theme for food organisation at K-Citymarket.

To make sure vegan products are visible as much as possible, most of vegan products are put on a shelf that says "Vegan". For instance, the milk, yogurt, cream and other dairy miscellaneous products are marked according to their

types but because all of these products have their alternative options that are 100% vegan, they are all placed in a glass closet that is marked "Vegan", which also means that these are all vegan available products in the stores and that they are not to be found elsewhere in the shop. All organic products are arranged in one shelf so that customers can compare the prices and the favours as well as the origins of production. Healthy inorganic products are also placed in the same place so that they do not interlude with the organic ones.

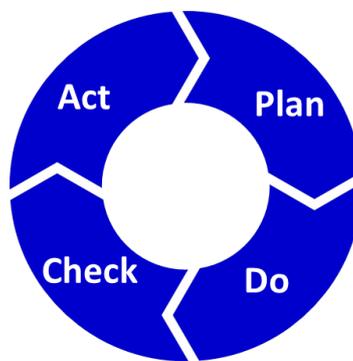
Unlike other shops in Finland, K-Citymarket have a separate shelf for gluten free bread and gluten free other products including spaghetti and the like, powder that replace wheat are arranged here with many alternatives such as rice flour and almond flour from at least 3 different brands that have different prices and different country of origins.

4.3.2. The PDCA cycle

The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle is also made good use at the shop. The model was developed by William Edwards Deming (Surtheland, 2015, 35). First, the shop owner discuss with the providers of certain current products in the stores, what needs to increase in number and what could be introduced at small quantity in advance. Secondly, the new products make a debut at a testing counter. Depends on what category the products belong to, they are on display near the aisle that has the same kind. Cheese can be seen an example. Cheese, if made organically from high quality dairy resources and traditional methods, can bring multiple health benefits including proteins and minerals. In October 2019, high quality imported cheese from France was given out for free to see how customers would react to the taste. This "Do" part is important especially to products that will be sold at a high price, have a unique taste, related to health and are not from Finland. Then, if given approval, these new these types will be added to the cheese "aisle". Step 3 and 4 comes hand in hand, the staff at the store has the responsibility to update the sales every day in the system room. Finally, if it does not show good sales, the product will be replaced by a new kind of cheese that will be put on free tasting next month.

Another type of combining both “food tasting” and “marketing” is to create a quick and easy dish. At the “free tasting” counter, a member of the staff would make a small sample and invite customers to come taste and give opinion right there. For instance, chicken is one of the main meat options in Finland. Organic, free range chickens are appreciated even more, especially when they are bred and packaged in Finland. In October 2019, a cook made fried chicken with real products placed right beside the dish on the table so customers understand what could be done with the product and what it smelled like, compared to processed seasoned chicken. Most people stopped and taste because the nice smell of the dish was difficult to resist. Similar to the cheese, organic Finnish raw chicken with “luomu” mark (which stands for organic) was put on sell after one or two weeks. The following steps were “check” and “act”. Fortunately, the organic chicken made in Finland gave positive revenue. As a result, the product stayed and continued to sell.

By using the “PDCA” model, the shop saves money and keeps customers’ interests alive with new surprises.



PICTURE 2. The PDCA cycle (Roser 2016)

4.3.3. Pricing strategy

Although new products are priced a bit higher because they are new, Mr. Sivo-nen guaranteed that organic products and healthy supplements are not over priced. In fact, most of them are priced the same as others so that customers will end up implementing healthier choices into their everyday life. Nonetheless,

the vitamins and medicines are priced based on the price in the pharmacy in Finland because customers tend to trust pharmacies and buy these types of products from there. By keeping an even price, customers will not have to think twice when they are purchasing food at the shop and suddenly want to purchase supplements or so. The pricing of organic and healthy alternatives at K-Citymarket Pirkkala is not higher than regular options. Buying price of organic or healthy products is only 50 cents to 3 euros more expensive than their “normal” counterpart, depends on what they are. Rare finds in Finland such as spinach, exotic fruits such as mangos, coconuts and meat is priced 2 to 3 € higher than the inorganic ones. Each organic products and healthy replacements usually 15 to 30% higher than purchased price by the shop from the supplier.

4.3.4. Discussion of the future of the shop and the trends

As Finns began to have the tendency to go vegetarian and vegan, Sami Sivonen believes that it is very crucial to make sure vegan alternatives are restock as soon as possible everyday and to implement more vegan options in the shop. The alternatives must have better taste, preferably closing to non-vegan food and better quality. Not all vegan products guaranteed the health benefits as most of them are heavily processed. Hence, products that were not sold well due to the lack of taste will be eliminated from the store. The second trend after “vegan” is the gluten-free and lactose-free or dairy-free. These products are not necessarily vegan, they can still contain animal by product or review from animals.

As for future plan, Mr.Sivonen relies on the feedback from customers as to decide what vegan, gluten-free and organic products to replace and to add in the selection at the store. However, the manager agrees that the vegan products at the shop needs to have better taste and smell. For now, that is the necessary improvement.

5. DISCUSSION

From the interview and survey of K.Citymarket Pirkkala in Tampere, Finland as well as the research of Finnish customers in organic and health food products. It is clear that having a clean, less processed but quick and easy options at the supermarkets is important to customers, manufacturers and retailers. Manufacturers must adhere the standards of organic and supplements production of European Union for products to be legally sold in Finland. Thanks to the increasing number of vegans, gluten-free and organic eaters, nowadays there are many alternative in supermarkets with competitive price to give customers freedom of choice. In Finland, consumers show more support for goods that are produced and packaged in Finland due to the strict and trust worthy process of producing and catering food in Finland. Even vitamins, minerals and other supplements perform well if they are approved and manufactured in Finland. Vitamins are a crucial part of Finns' life due to the fact of lacking of sun light, diversity of fruits and vegetables. As for those who are vegans and athletes, it is important to take supplements as an added source of energy and nutrients to the bodies. Knowing this fact, food makers are now prone to add more vitamins and minerals to products to market them as "healthy" and more appealing.

With that being said, Finland's supermarkets, in general, provide a good selection of unhealthy food replacements including beans snacks, oat snacks and so on. The appealing also comes with a good price. The pricing strategy including the "number 9" effect and buy 2 or 3 for cheap price create great sales for most types of products, whether it is supplements or organic food. Is healthy food overpriced in Finland? Yes, partly due to the harsh Nordic weather that requires food to be imported or grown from elsewhere but also because retailers acknowledge the fact that customers are willing to be more for "healthy" products nowadays.

It is important for customers to buy the right price and the right food. Not everyone needs to consume a huge amount of proteins, vitamins and other supplements such as energy drinks or protein shakes. According to Sarlio (2018, 43), amino and fatty acids, highly recommended monounsaturated fats, 13 vitamins and minerals as well as water and fibre. However, the amount depends on age,

gender, metabolism. Not everyone is educated about the balanced diet and what should avoid or eat once in blue moon. Thankfully, the healthy diet guide is the same for every country in the world (Sarlio 2018, 44). As the vegan trend became increasingly popular among Finns, this is a good sign. A plant-based diet not only reduces carbon footprint and greenhouse emission previously the side effect of raising cattle. According to Iberoamerican Nutrition Foundation, if a person only consumes fruits and vegetables, even according to season, most essential nutrients are covered including vitamins that can dilute in water, fibre that pulls toxins through the body out and more water (Sarlio 2018, 46). There is 73% water in human brain, 83% in lungs, 64% in skin 79% in muscles and kidneys and 31% in bones (Mitchell 1945). By consuming a plant-based diet, people can be assured that water is consumed enough to function probably and stay away from fatigue and illnesses.

As said before in chapter 2, sustainability is one of the main themes that customers care when they reach for a certain brand and manufacturers to maintain a positive image and sustainable production from the fields to the stores. By adapting a plant-based diet, consumers not only protect their own health but also support the cultivation and economy of local farmers, whether in the region or in another country (Sarlio 2018, 47). According to the Barilla centre for Food and Nutrition in 2016, the top of the pyramid is sweets and alcohol. The second top is red, meat and the lower levels in order are fish, dairy, vegetables and fruits and grains. It is important that the low 3 levels are consumed the most and the top of the pyramid is consumed as little as possible (Barilla Centre for Food and Nutrition 2016).

Regardless of whether a dieter chooses to go plant-based or not, vegan and healthy food products in general now account for an important part of supermarkets and even small local stores in Finland. It is important that consumers spend what fits their budget without consuming too much unhealthy food. Everything should be in moderation. More importantly, by consuming healthy food, customers create their own happiness as well as create a more sustainable planet for current generations and many more to go.



PICTURE 3. Barilla food pyramid for a healthy diet (Barilla Foundation 2015)

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview questions with K-Citymarket Pirkkala manager

THEME 1: CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION

- What age groups do the company focuses on?
- What type of products does each customer segment reach for?

THEME 2: HEALTHY, ORGANIC, VEGAN PRODUCT

- Can you describe the diversity of organic products in the store?
- Why is it important to have a separate section just for organic products in the store?
- Do organic products being arranged in a different aisle to prevent misunderstandings?
- Do Pirkkala residents prefer organic food grown in Pirkkala specifically and Finland in generally better than others?
- How often do products got updated? In terms of brand?

THEME 3: PRICING AND COMPETITION WITH OTHER SHOPS

- What is the shop's pricing strategy with healthy products?
- Are supplements sold at a different price than at pharmacies?
- Are healthy and organic products always more expensive than regular ones?

THEME 4: TRENDS THAT THE SHOPS FOLLOWS

- What do you think about the plant-based eating trend at the moment?
- Are vegan and gluten-free products very popular purchased products at the store?
- Do you have any plans for vegan and organic products in the future?