

## Chapter 7

# Interaction between the Emotional and Rational Aspects in Consumer Buying Process for Typical Food Products of Italy

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### **ABSTRACT**

*There are many scientific contributions from different disciplines, including philosophy and psychology, which have dealt with aspects of buying behavior related to typical products. These products convey messages relating to the area of origin (in terms of culture and environment) and food security (including nutritional aspects). Recently, scientific contributions based on “neurological” investigative techniques have been developed on consumer behaviors. They have a relevant interest in the scientific community because they can be a valid instrument to understand the cognitive and emotional processes on “the preferences expressed”. This is a new theoretical approach known as “neuromarketing”. This chapter aims to analyze the cognitive and emotional choices of the consumers regards typical products of Italy. The results could be used to support specific campaigns to enhance the typical product by using a targeted communication which highlights the emotional components of the buying process.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The development is a dynamic process involving all economic and social aspects (Kim and Lennon 2010). In this continuous becoming the adaptations of situations be, towards the new ones, tend to orient themselves towards the acquisition of gratification equivalent social profile and intersectional and approvals in terms of remuneration and social sustainability factors in the offer as well as those of application (Brunso et al., 2002). The typical agrifood products are to be considered within this conceptuality (Gabbai et al., 2003; Scarpa et al., 2005; Grunert, 2007).

Consumer choices are motivated by intense emotional states: individuals may feel guilty about the purchase of an asset particularly expensive, ashamed of having bought a product embarrassing, or feel joy ostentation a fashion product.

The advancement of the understanding of human behavior by the methods of analysis of brain poses new problems and creates the confluence of different disciplines in a new area of scientific research, including “neuroeconomy”. It can be defined as “the application of neuroscientific methods for the analysis and knowledge of human behavior of interest in the economy” (Babiloni et al., 2007).

Focus groups are widely used in advertising and marketing, the brain imaging techniques applied to human decision-making mechanisms could be used to complete the results obtained with traditional techniques.

The interest of the marketing literature for the consumers ‘ emotional lives in a twofold motivation: on the one hand, the interest of academics and marketers to examine not only intentional aspects but also unconscious influences consumer choices, and, on the other hand, the recent and revolutionary orientation of “neuromarketing” emotional aspects to consider as essential constituents of individual decision-making (Bagozzi, Gopinath & Nyer 1999; Damasio 1999; Zurawicki 2010).

Neuromarketing can be defined as the field of studies that apply the methods of neuroscience for analyze and understand human behavior in relation to the markets.

The use of brain imaging techniques can separate the experience “cognitive” of the subject (expressed during the interview) by the activation of brain areas related in different states of mind of which the same can not have conscious awareness. Neuromarketing is stirring at the same time, a lot of interest but also equally suspect<sup>1</sup>.

The decision process of the individuals is in fact affected by the forces that operate below the threshold of awareness and, in the first place, by emotions, that is, from intense affective states created in response to an environmental stimulation.

In this context, consumption choices of food products, are often motivated by intense emotional states (joy, guilt, surprise, interest, approval, expectation, etc.) (Kotler and Scott, 1998; Lancaster, 1971).

The study of the emotions, as well as involve the purchase process, recently also affected other areas, such as the loss or acquisition of credibility of products,

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