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Consumers' perception of food product craftsmanship: a review of evidence

HIGHLIGHTS

• We reviewed 36 papers considering the consumer's perspective.

• We organised the findings in the context of Alphabet Theory.

• Attitudes are relevant predictors of craft food products.

• Price is consistently associated with the perception of quality.

• Craft food consumption is perceived as a meaningful moment of pleasure resulting from a multifaceted experience.

• A critical discussion on the possible directions of future research is provided.

Consumers' perception of food product craftsmanship: a review of evidence

ABSTRACT

The understanding of what the consumer considers as craftsmanship is a sensitive question in the food sector. Despite food label regulations on this issue having undergone partial harmonisation, revealing what the consumer perceives as a craft food is a feat that has yet to be achieved. Drawing upon a review of literature in the field of consumer research, this investigation addresses this knowledge gap. In the light of the Alphabet Theory framework, the review offers a systematic overview of the motives affecting individuals' perception of food product craftsmanship, as well as of the key factors affecting consumer behaviour towards craft foods. The findings provide useful insight to add to the body of extant literature and to discuss the possible directions of research. Moreover, the results can also have relevant importance to support legislators in designing appropriate regulations on craft foods.

Keywords – Food and beverage; Craft foods; Consumers; Attitudes; Behaviour; Alphabet Theory.

Paper type - Review.

1. Introduction

The term "craft*"* is becoming increasingly popular along the food aisles of supermarkets, in restaurants and bars, and is being aptly used by marketers to differentiate their products. Cues provided by the brand are fundamental in the creation of the consumer's judgement of the quality of products (Rao & Monroe, 1988). As pointed out by the School of Artisan Food (2018), to now "there is no single definition of artisan food". Thus, the profuse use of the term "craft" and the disconnection between consumer and industry definitions of craft food products, including craft drinks, (referred to here as "CFPs"), is leading to much confusion over the term, and to a dilution of its distinctive character.

During the past decade, regulation policies on CFPs have received great attention. This rising interest stems from the intention to help consumers make a conscious choice, as well as to preserve small-scale production and processing of high-quality traditional CFPs from the so-called "craftwashing" phenomenon. This phenomenon relies on the use of deceptive marketing practices by industrial firms in the food and beverage sector that introduce craft-like brands. The craftwashing strategy is not applied only in the beer sector (Howard, 2018); many are the fast-food chains that have tried to ride the wave of the "craft" trend in order to increase their sales and attract more consumers by labelling new products as "hand-crafted" (e.g., McDonald's launched an "artisan grilled chicken"; Domino's released "Artisan Pizza"; PepsiCo released Kaleb's Cola, a "craft soda" sold in glass bottle with the notation "Honor in Craft"; Grom, an Italian ice cream chain, was banned from using the term "artisanal" to label its products).

In addition, the adoption of regulation policies on CFPs are committed to strengthening the local economy, especially in rural areas. One problem is that, besides the lack of a clear definition of what CFPs are, to date, there is no international harmonisation of norms

regarding it. This leads to questioning whether consumers really understand what they are buying when they choose to purchase CFPs. With regards to European countries, the "patchwork character" of EC law about the use of the term "craft" can produce (un)intended non-conformities with the current law on food-labelling (i.e. Regulation (EC) No.1169/2011 - Article 7, "Fair information practices"), and this goes to the detriment of both craftsmen and consumers. Referring to specific EU countries, Italy was the first to have recently promulgated a law to define the concept of "craft beer" (i.e. L 154/2016 – Article 35, "Denomination of craft beer"), identifying which aspects of the production process are required to produce craft beer. The autonomous Spanish region of Galicia has proposed a legal definition of "artisan food" centred on the prohibition of some ingredients during the production process (European Commission, 2018). In 2015, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland lay down rules on the use of the term "artisan" or "artisanal" or similar terms in advertising of foods which meet specific criteria (Food Safety Authority of Ireland, 2016). Belgian authorities in 2017 adopted guidelines on the use of the term "artisanal", identifying as criteria for labelling foods as "artisanal" the nature or quality of the ingredients, the production process, and the production at a small scale (SPF Economie, 2017). Moving out of Europe, in the United States, the lack of Food and Drug Administration regulation of the term "craft" or "artisanal" (USFDA, 2013), may induce a misalignment of the concept of the "craft" between consumers and producers, thus leading to confusion over what is and is not a CFP. As far as the Southeast Asian region of Asia, which includes 11 countries, despite food label regulation approaches having undergone partial harmonisation, there is no formal definition of "craft" or "artisanal" (Kasapila & Shaarani, 2011). This review does not aim to provide a prescriptive definition of CFPs.

Rather, it tries to fill two important research gaps in the literature. First, little attention has been paid to give a systematic overview of key motives which underlie the consumer's perception of craftsmanship of foods. Second, a model of the key determinants of CFPs purchasing and consumption behavioural intention is not yet available. This investigation fills these gaps by adopting the Alphabet Theory from Zepeda and Deal (2009) as framework to analyse the recurring elements which emerged from the present review of the literature regarding consumer perception of food product craftsmanship.

2. Theoretical framework

Many theories have been adopted throughout the years to try to understand how human beliefs, values, attitudes and the resulting behaviours interact with one another to shape actions. The Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory (Stern, Dietz, Abel, Guagnano, & Kalof, 1999) is a framework which was introduced to predict pro-environmental behaviour. Since then, it has been applied also to describe behaviours of activism, non-activist public sphere behaviours, private sphere behaviours as well as behaviours within organizations. The VBN Theory is in turn based on other three theories which were also used to predict environmentally conscious behaviours: the Schwartz' value Theory (Schwartz, 1994), the New Ecological Paradigm (Dunlap & Van Liere, 1978) and Norm-Activation Theory (Schwartz, 1977). According to the Schwartz' value Theory, actions are always supported by ten basic personal values types (i.e. stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, achievement, power, security, conformity, hedonism and tradition). The New Ecological Paradigm framework focuses instead on measuring the degree to which an individual agrees with the concept that we must limit our growth and be in balance with nature in order to truly thrive as a species. Norm-Activation Theory postulates that

moral norms are put into action when individuals become aware of the possible adverse consequences of their actions and take responsibility for trying to avoid them. Taking these three theories into consideration, the VBN Theory asserts that values are key elements in shaping beliefs, which affect norms, and eventually lead to certain behaviours. Therefore, VBN Theory can be effectively adopted to explain how personal attitudes are formulated.

The Attitudes-Behaviors-Context (ABC) Theory, was introduced by Guagnano, Stern, & Dietz (1995) and is a model used to explain how attitudes can result in behaviour (Hiamey & Hiamey, 2018); it states that, when context is neutral, attitudes are the prime determinants of behaviour. Contextual factors (which comprise policies, regulations, costs and other exogenous elements) can be either positive or negative; when they are particularly strong and influential, they can shadow attitudes and shape behaviour.

In Zepeda & Deal's (2009) work, VBN Theory and ABC Theory were combined and enriched with other elements (namely the demographics (D), knowledge (K), information seeking (IS) and habit (H)) in order to obtain VBN-ABC-D-K-IS-H theory, or Alphabet Theory (Fig. 1). Thus, based on current consumer theories on environmental behaviour, the Alphabet Theory was successfully applied both in explaining consumer behaviour and in a literature review regarding consumers' perceptions and preferences (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015).

In this investigation, we adopted the Alphabet Theory to systematise the motives which emerged from the literature review regarding consumer's perception of food product craftsmanship, as well as of the key factors affecting consumer behaviour towards CFPs. Based on the framework of the Alphabet Theory, demographic characteristics affect consumer's attitudes towards CFPs (i.e. values, belief and norms) that, in turn, are

continually updated by information seeking, knowledge, and contextual factors (i.e. external conditions such as price, advertising). What is more, the context and attitudes impact consumer habits (namely a personal routine related to a specific situation) that finally affect consumer's behaviour.

3. Methods

The review of the literature was carried out following the steps set out by Arksey and O'Malley (2005). First, the research questions were established. Second, relevant studies were identified. Third, after a screening procedure, pertinent articles were selected and included in the study. The process was then completed by charting the data, collating, and summarizing it. Finally, the findings of the review of literature were reported.

3.1 Research questions

Two research questions were investigated:

- What are the distinguishing attributes of CFPs for consumers?
- How are these attributes implemented in consumers' purchasing and consumption behaviour?

3.2 Selection of bibliographic sources

For refereed literature, Elsevier Scopus®, Web of Science™, PsycINFO®, PsycARTICLES®, ScienceDirect and EconPapers™ were the sources of database. The search strategy was defined a priori to assure transparency and replicability (Webster & Watson, 2002).

3.3 Keywords and search strategy

The search strategy included the adoption of a combination of keywords. The string "(artisanal OR *craft* OR hand-made OR handmade OR handcrafted) AND (food OR beverage)" was used to focus the research on CFPs. In addition to this, the string

"(attitudes OR behavior OR motives OR preferences OR perception OR attributes OR culture) AND (consumer OR consumption OR purchasing)" was run in combination to the above string search to find key aspects for consumers during their decision making process to purchase and consume CFPs. The Elsevier Scopus®, PsycINFO®, and PsycARTICLES®, ScienceDirect and EconPapers databases were searched in the field abstract, title and keywords. Instead, the Web of Science™ database was searched in the field topic.

3.4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The literature search was carried out in August 2018, and no cut-off criteria were applied to time span. Consistent with Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) approach, inclusion and exclusion criteria were determined before running the literature search (Table 1). The search was limited to research articles and reviews written in English. An initial 284 articles were identified, of which 120 produced by Elsevier Scopus®, 104 produced by Web of Science™, followed by PsycINFO® and PsycARTICLES® with 30 papers, ScienceDirect with 26 articles and 4 papers retrieved from the EconPapers database. The double counts was the second exclusion criterion, and allowed us to discard 62 papers. Therefore, 222 papers were finally selected for the double screening process (Fig. 2).

3.5 Screening process

To ensure the quality of the selected articles, a double screening process was conducted: a manual scanning of titles and abstracts, and a manual full-text review stage. This double round of screening resulted in 186 articles excluded because they did not specifically address the key aspects that distinguish CFPs, and/or did not focus on consumer behaviour. A total of 36 papers were finally considered for the review of literature on

CFPs. To validate the above mentioned review process, authors carried out each process both individually and in pairs.

3.6 Material description and evaluation

For a better interpretation of the aspects that determine purchasing and consumption behaviour regarding CFPs, the retrieved papers were described based on key data and attributes (Saldaña, 2013). A key data extraction form allowed for the collection of the following information from each of the reviewed articles: (1) author(s), (2) year of publication, (3) objective(s), (4) type of products, (5) country, (6) continent, (7) sample size and composition, (8) main research issues, (9) measurement method (Appendix A). Attributes were identified deductively based on the existing literature. Relevant information was extracted and analysed in detail by implementing a simple computer-assisted text analysis of the 36 reviewed studies, using the Nvivo® qualitative data analysis software (QRS International, Melbourne, Australia). This last step of the review was aimed at organizing attributes into comprehensive categories to better understand what lies behind the consumer's motivations to purchase and consume CFPs, thus revealing gaps to be explored by further research.

4. Results

4.1 Methodological approaches and research issues

The selected articles cover a time span of 22 years (1997-2018), and more than half have been published in the past three years. Thus, the review reveals a growing research interest towards CFPs and related consumer behaviour.

Concerning the methodological approaches adopted by the units of analysis, 17 studies conducted a survey and 8 studies adopted a qualitative exploratory approach (Table 2). Six research papers adopted a specific methodological approach (e.g. choice experiments,

experimental auctions and experiments in the field of laboratory), whereas five papers used market data.

Table 3 reveals a location profile of CFPs considered in the selected articles. The issue of CFPs plays a dominant role in consumer studies, both in North America (15 papers) and Europe (15 papers). Furthermore, it is worthy to note that research interest towards specific CFPs changes in relation to the geographical area. Studies on craft beer, play a major role in North America (11 out of 15 papers). Most of the reviewed literature focused on consumer preferences and socio-demographic issues (9 of the 11 articles on craft beer), and the survey was the most frequently adopted methodological approach (Chapman et al., 2018; Weber et al., 2018; Gómez-Corona et al., 2017a; Gómez-Corona et al., 2017b; Gómez-Corona et al., 2017c; Maciel et al., 2017; Muggah et al., 2017; Gómez-Corona et al., 2016a; Murray & O'Neill, 2012). Using market data, Feeney's (2017) study is the first one to examine the impact of craft breweries on the urban landscape and cultural heritage. Instead, Murray et al.'s (2015) study focuses on the niche market potential of craft beer. After this alcoholic beverage, cheese is the second CFP that attracted the interest of researchers in North America (2 out of 15 papers). Gedikoglu & Parcel (2014) carried out a survey exploring consumers' preferences towards domestic and imported craft cheese. Instead, Waldman & Kerr (2015) conducted an experimental auction to estimate the value of pasteurization and age as food safety attributes in craft cheese. Muggah et al.'s (2016) study is the first one in North America that focuses on consumers' comparison of the sensory aspects of industrial bread and locally produced craft bread. Moreover, Giraud et al. (2005) explored consumers' willingness to pay for local CFPs.

In studies from Europe (see Table 3), the main research subject is consumer behaviour towards CFPs without referring to a specific product (8 out of 15 papers). Five of these

studies focused on the issues of the cultural meaning of food and local food by adopting a qualitative approach (Kuznesof et al., 1997; Tregear, 2003; Autio et al., 2013; Bessiere & Laurence, 2013; Schösler & de Boer, 2018). Instead, three studies conducted an experiment (Favalli et al., 2013; Raghoebar et al., 2017) or a survey (Kavak & Gumusluoglu, 2007) to explore consumer preferences and personal traits towards CFPs.

In Europe, craft beer was addressed by three studies exploring consumer preferences towards this beverage (Table 3). Two of them focused on the choice of consuming craft beer, and the quality perception of specialty beers using a survey (Aquilani et al., 2015; Donadini et al., 2016). Instead, Donadini & Porretta (2017) conducted a conjoint rating experiment to explore gender preferences towards craft beer. Three papers from Europe focused on craft cheese. Two of them explored the motivations behind the consumer's decision to buy craft cheese by using a survey (Kupiec & Revell, 1998; Rytkönen et al., 2018). Similarly, Di Monaco et al. (2005) conducted an experiment to test consumer perceptions toward craft "pasta filata" cheese. Finally, Abouab & Gomez (2015) explored consumer perceptions of naturalness for "handmade" and "machine-made" grape juice.

A cross-country analysis of CFPs consumption was carried out in four articles. Three papers applied a text analysis to explore the motives for CFPs consumption (Ariyasriwatana et al., 2016; Zevnik, 2012) and the informational content of food labels (Lwin, 2015). Following a similar approach, Gómez-Corona et al. (2016b) explored the effect of culture and consumption habits on craft beer representation amongst men in Mexico and France.

Carvalho et al.'s (2018) study is apparently the first to explore the motivational factors for craft beer consumption in South America. Moreover, only one document explores

consumer preferences for quality and safety attributes of artisanal fruit juices in Kenya (Otieno & Nyikal, 2017).

This review shows that the research interest is strongly focused on the domain of personal preferences towards CFPs (namely the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes), as shown in Table 4. This research issue plays a major role in studies from North America (13 out of 26 papers) and Europe (9 out of 26 papers). The cultural meaning of food is the main research subject in studies from Europe (5 out of 6 papers). Three of these papers explore the attitudes towards local CFPs (Kuznesof et al., 1997; Kupiec & Revell, 1998; Autio et al., 2013). In these studies CFPs are conceptualized as high-value products, for which the main drivers of purchasing behaviour are place of production and cultural aspects referred to the home preparation and cooking methods. Along the same line, Bessiere & Laurence (2013) examined tourist interest in different food cultures in four rural areas in Southwest France. Schösler & de Boer (2018) examined the food philosophies of Dutch consumers, also focusing on the origin of food and their distance from the mainstream food culture. In the light of consumption geography, Feeney's (2017) study explores the cultural meaning of craft breweries in Pennsylvania and their importance in supporting consumers' desire to connect craft beer with the local area and traditions.

4.2 Factors affecting consumers' perception of food product craftsmanship

The Alphabet Theory was a suitable framework to summarize the main findings of the studies. The adoption of this theoretical framework made it easy to highlight the key factors affecting consumers' perception of craftsmanship of foods, and the interrelationships between the determinants of CFPs consumption (Fig. 3). The review of 36 articles led us to identify specific factors and relevant product (or process) attributes affecting consumer perception of craftsmanship of foods, able to affect consumers'

intentions to purchase and consume CFPs. The factors related to individual characteristics of consumers are (1) "connectedness" (i.e. information seeking and knowledge), (2) sensory motive, (3) local identity, (4) self-identity, (5) naturalness (e.g. the use of fresh raw materials), and (6) price perception. These factors might be either drivers or barriers of consumers' perception of product craftsmanship. Moreover, the review revealed four key product (or process) attributes affecting consumers' perception of craftsmanship of foods: (1) price perception, (2) food processing system, (3) brand humanisation and personification (i.e. the human-side traits of the brand), and (4) production scale.

4.3 Demographics

There is some evidence that demographic characteristics such as age, gender and income may influence consumers' attitudes and purchasing behaviour towards CFPs, although results are fragmented. Although demographic characteristics were not the focus of this investigation, some of the reviewed studies revealed significant influences through the age of consumers. Middle-aged and well-educated consumers, with a higher income level, tend to be substantially more oriented to purchase CFPs (Carvalho et al. 2018; Weber et al., 2018; Murray & O'Neill, 2012; Aquilani et al., 2015; Waldman & Kerr, 2015; Giraud et al., 2005). What is more, the income factor seems to influence the choice of the location and the quantity of CFPs consumed (Carvalho et al., 2018). For example, Gómez-Corona et al., (2016a) mention that craft beer consumers are characterised by higher income level, tend to shop in specialised stores, and consume beer more frequently since craft beer has a higher price than commercial beer. The review did not find significant gender differences on consumer purchasing behaviour towards CFPs. Results by Donadini & Porretta (2016) show that men and women shared similar pattern of interest towards craft beers, nonetheless men placed more importance on price, location of brewery an where

to buy craft beer. In the same vein, Gómez-Corona et al. (2017c) highlights that gender differences occur more frequently in the affective experience, as women search for relaxation while men seek excitement and stimulation while drinking beer.

4.4 Information seeking and knowledge

Zepeda and Deal (2009) explained the strong influence of information seeking and knowledge on consumer attitudes. When consumers are more knowledgeable about what they are consuming, they have stronger attitudes and beliefs; similarly, seeking further information will help them to further develop their attitudes, facilitating behaviour and possibly even the formation of habits. What emerged from the review is that the feeling of connection (referred to here as "connectedness"), despite receiving little attention among the selected studies, was a knowledge-based element which influenced attitudes and consumer perception of CFPs. Kupiec & Revell (1998) report the relevance of the direct connection between local raw milk suppliers and producers of specialty cheese. Similarly, Donadini & Porretta (2017) refer to the shortness of the food supply chain as a distinctive motive of product craftsmanship. Thus, rather than as a closeness between artisan and consumers, connectedness is used as a proxy of the geographical distance between the artisan and the suppliers of raw materials. In addition, connectedness can be understood in its spatial dimension (i.e. geographic and organisational proximity), rather than in a social dimension (namely the reduction of number of intermediaries between producer and consumer). This means that procurement of raw materials, production, processing, and retail should occur within a defined geographical area. Donadini et al. (2016) report that social proximity is only sporadically cited in this field of studies, whereas the geographic proximity refers to the identification with a local-food system. The opportunity to know more about where raw materials come from creates within the

consumer a feeling of connection with the craftsman, thus enhancing the perception of product craftsmanship. For example, Aquilani et al. (2015) mention that craft beer is perceived to be of higher quality than commercial beer due to the consumer's knowledge of the selected raw materials used for brewing. Similarly, Rytkönen et al. (2018) refer that consumers generally prefer buying CFPs through short distribution chains, or even directly from the producer, due to the direct relationship of trust between producer and suppliers.

4.5 Context

According to Guagnano al. (2005), attitudes result in different behaviours depending upon the positive or negative influence of contextual factors. Elements of context which were identified included the price, the food processing system, the brand humanisation and the production scale.

4.5.1 Price perception (Price as a proxy of quality and gourmet)

Despite the fact that CFPs include a large range of food and beverage products which are sold at very different market prices, the price attribute is mainly treated in studies on craft beer and artisanal cheese. In particular, the reviewed studies suggest that price attribute is consistently associated with the perception of quality; this means that consumers judge the quality of the CFPs also according to their price, associating higher price with higher quality, and with a luxury product. In Scotland, Kupiec and Revell (1998) found that price and functional properties of craft cheeses are attributes less important in the consumer's decision-making proces. This reduced price-sensitivity is linked to the "high quality" use of this CFP that is deemed as gourmet, hence consumed in lesser quantities and on special occasions. Similarly, Di Monaco et al. (2005) confirm that in Italy the price of Provolone del Monaco craft cheese represents a quality indicator for consumers, especially if

supported by adequate information about its typicality. In the same vein, Gedikoglu & Parcel (2014) argue that consumers are willing to pay a premium price for craft cheese, due to the fact that it is mainly consumed on special occasions.

In Italy, Aquilani et al. (2015) observe that for people who have already tasted craft beer (namely experts), the product's quality is directly proportional to its price. Moreover, craft beer experts linked a lower price to a lower quality, unpleasant taste and mass-produced beers (Carvalho et al., 2018). Similarly, Gómez-Corona et al. (2016a) mention that consumers constantly compare the price of craft beer with that of industrial beer, and the high-level price of this alcoholic beverage justifies its consumption for special occasions. Donadini et al. (2016), while exploring the quality perception of specialty beers in Italy, Spain and Poland, observed that only Italians appear to be less sensitive to a price effect, and could accept a price attribution in between 2.00-10.00 Euros. However, it is not clear whether the perception of higher price of CFPs may positively affect the consumers. For example, Kupiec & Revell (1998) also found that very often the convenience of buying industrial cheeses, counterbalanced any negative aspects related to the production technology. Moreover, consumers can benefit from a wide range of specialty industrial cheeses along the food aisles of supermarkets, characterised by lowest price and continuous availability. According to Donadini & Porretta (2017), consumers who are not familiar with craft beers are unlikely to justify a premium price, and perceive price as a cost they want to minimize. In addition, Carvalho et al.'s (2018) study reveals that for some consumers the high price of craft beer is a hindrance to the consumption of this alcoholic beverage.

Beause price can be conceptualised both as a quality cue and a cost for consumers, it can be considered both among contextual factors and among attitudes (Fig.3). Since an

attitude can be considered as a tendency to judge an object with some degree of favour–disfavour (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998), in this context consumer's price perception can be positive (high price perception) or negative (low price perception).

4.5.2 Food processing system (Hand-made vs Industrial-made)

Despite modern techniques of food processing being generally safe and not altering the natural flavour of food, consumers express concerns about the way foods are manufactured, preferring handmade production modes (Abuab & Gomez, 2005). For example, Donadini & Porretta (2017) mention that consumers are fascinated by the fact that the brewer brews a beer in a way that does not require much treatment and in a natural way. In the same vein, Carvalho et al. (2018) report that consumers perceive craft beers as being produced manually, with greater care in most stages of the process, with little automation. Several studies highlight that in the consumer's mind the term hand-made is closely linked to product craftsmanship and naturalness (Kupiec & Revell, 1998; Di Monaco et al., 2005; Aquilani et al., 2015). For example, Abouab & Gomez (2015) report that the more human contact there is during the production process, the higher is the consumer credence of product craftsmanship and naturalness because human processes are perceived as being more respectful of food integrity. The review provided a clear evidence that attitudes toward technology may affect individuals' perception of product craftsmanship.

4.5.3 Brand humanisation and personification

Despite the importance of brand, few of the reviewed studies have explored the role of attributing human characteristics and traits to non-human entities such as the brand of CFPs (referred to here "brand humanisation and personification"). Abouab and Gomez (2015), highlight that consumers responds positively to brands with humanlike traits; this

seems to stimulate the consumer's sense of place and the idea of human contact during the food production process. Weber et al. (2018) pointed out how iconic elements such as humans, historical figures, agricultural elements are used with the intent of stressing the handmade element of food processing, whereas local connection is generally conveyed through labelling using the location and other graphic elements. Along this line, Di Monaco et al. (2005) reveal that when consumers are informed about the typicality of the cheeses, e.g. using "artisanal", "handmade" and "farmhouse" images, they are more likely to buy and eat it. Moreover, Murray & Kline (2015) observe that brand personality is an active component of consumers' perception of product uniqueness; by leveraging the human-side traits of the brand, it is possible to evoke the individual's feelings of belonging and the perception of handmade processing. The brand is in fact often presented as a personification of a company, the face with which the company wishes to greet new potential customers and clients. A brand is not simply a logo, it is a feeling, a way of life, it st what embodies company culture and gives life to the company itself. The brand must embody and transmit those values that are at the base of every action performed by the company or the entrepreneur. This means that when people come into contact with the brand, in whatever form that may be, they will almost feel as if they were meeting a person or greeting a friend. This is why, in case of a well-constructed brand, consumers can feel a sense of belonging and humanity when exposed to it, and therefore live the consumption of the product not as a mere action but as an emotional experience.

4.5.4 Production scale (Small-scale vs Large-scale)

The small-scale production aspect has not received a lot of consideration, although it is a relevant issue considered by different authors (Autio et al., 2013; Carvalho et al., 2018; Donadini & Porretta, 2017; Gómez-Corona et al., 2016a; Kupiec & Revell, 1998; Di

Monaco et al., 2005; Schösler & de Boer, 2018; Rytkönen et al., 2018). Autio et al. (2013) report that industrial mass-produced food represents a decline in quality of food, especially in terms of flavour. Similarly, Carvalho et al. (2018) found that 68.4% of respondents perceive craft beer distinctively as beer produced on a small-scale, although not necessarily in the domestic environment. Along the same line, Donadini & Porretta (2017) and Gómez-Corona et al. (2016a), relate large-scale brewery to the negative impact on consumer judgement. Kupiec & Revell (1998) and Di Monaco et al. (2005), refer to craft cheese as being produced in small-scale, manufactured not on a regular basis but depending on the availability of raw material. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Zevnik (2012), citing Campbell (2005), highlights that the consumption of mass-manufactured goods is by itself considered alienating. The evidence reviewed suggests that consumer perception of product craftsmanship seems to be strongly affected by the belief that on a small-scale production, the artisan is putting great care in his craft, therefore producing unique products of higher value.

4.6 Attitudes

The role of attitudes in the Alphabet Theory is accommodated through the VBN model, in which values, beliefs and norms are elements that contribute to explain how attitudes develop. In particular, personal values and personal norms (which are those internalized obligations to act in a certain way) bring the individual to form beliefs about a certain subject. In this review the sensory motive, local identity, self-identity and naturalness were identified as aspects which shape consumers' attitudes towards CFPs and motivate consumers to buy or not to buy them.

4.6.1 Sensory motive

The sensory motive is the main key factor influencing consumer perception of a food's craftsmanship. Ariyasriwatana & Quiroga (2016), report that the sensory motive refers to the flavour of food; a complex combination of smell, texture and taste, and visual stimuli that can affect taste as well. The flavour of food has been reported to be strong influences of human behaviour toward food, starting already at a very young age. We are, however, capable of acquiring liking for different types of foods, and this is a demonstration that flavour characteristics are not only determined by our senses (Laing & Jinks, 1996), but are also influenced by attitudes, beliefs and expectations (Clark, 1998).

Several of the examined studies mention flavour as one motive for experiencing CFPs (Autio et al., 2013; Gedikoglu & Parcell, 2014; Donadini et al., 2016; Gómez-Corona et al., 2016a; Donadini & Porretta, 2017; Muggah & McSweeney, 2017; Schösler & de Boer, 2018). A study of craft beer shows that craft consumers seek a multisensory experience, while industrial beer consumers almost exclusively focus on taste (Gómez-Corona et al., 2017a). Thus, the search for living a meaningful sensory experiences stems from consumers' desire to escape the standardization which characterizes the modern food sector; consumers wish to live an authentic and unique moment of pleasure through the food they consume. In the same vein Aquilani et al. (2015) and Carvalho et al. (2018) report that consumer preferences regarding craft beers stem from a search for multisensory experience, linked to the discovery of new flavours. At the same time the unconventional flavour of some CFPs could be too big a deviation from consumers' sensory expectations (Donadini & Porretta, 2017). Since sensory expectation is product specific, attitudes towards CFPs have been considered as a central variable in several studies. Donadini et al. (2006), relate the attitude toward specialty beers to the expectation

of various sensory characteristics of the product. Considering that attitude is a psychological propensity to evaluate objects using a favour-disfavour scale, sensory perception of CFPs can be positive (liking) or negative (disliking).

4.6.2 Local identity

Several studies mentioned local identity as an important attribute of food product craftsmanship. Autio et al. (2013), observed that interviewees linked CFPs to local food, offering them the possibility to experience a real and authentic food experience. Kupiec & Revell (1998), in a study aiming to identify and describe the determinants of consumer attitudes towards craft cheeses, found that an identifiable origin of craft products and a more "intimate" relationship with producers, can instil greater confidence in artisanal as opposed to mass-produced industrial products. Results from two experiments by Di Monaco et al. (2005), interestingly show that information about the origin of an Italian artisanal pasta-filata cheese give rise to positive stereotypes and generate great expectations in consumers. Therefore, the authors conclude that the term "local" is associated in the consumer's mind to the concept of "handcrafted", having a highly symbolic and emotional meaning. Favalli et al. (2013), in a study of consumers' perception towards artisanal and industrial Danish sandwiches, highlight that individuals recognize craft sandwiches as having a distinctive character which is typical of certain local cultural heritage (nation and/or region of a nation). Similarly, Donadini et al. (2017) wanted to understand how consumers conceptualize and define craft beers. Their results show that consumers perceive craft beer also as an expression of the local identity, thus intercepting the geographical connotation of this CFP. Likewise, Gómez-Corona et al. (2016a) illustrate that Mexican consumers prefer to purchase craft Mexican beer also because of their local attachment. Furthermore, the authors point out that the addition of

local ingredients in beers is capable of evoking the feeling of a local beer identity. Results from Rytkönen et al. (2018), interestingly highlight that both consumers' sense of pride related to the cultural heritage and sense of place as territorial anchorage of a product, are among the motivating factors behind the decision to buy local craft cheese in Jämtland (Sweden). Interestingly, geographic specificity, local food traditions and artisan production are cited as relevant components of food authenticity (Schösler & de Boer, 2018).

4.6.3 Self-identity

The self-identity aspect is the third of the key motives influencing consumer perception of food product craftsmanship, and its role in food choices has been extensively discussed. According to Grubb & Grathwohl (1967), consumption choices can be considered an expression of individual efforts to construct or maintain a given identity or lifestyle, and a natural act originating from a clear and stable self-identity. Through food choices, the consumer not only nourishes himself, but also makes a real statement about his persona. In this vein, Kupiec and Revell (1998), affirm that the reinforcement and renewal of consumer self-image can be repeated many times during consumption, converting consumers into connoisseur-consumers. Thus, mainly due to the non-standardized production process, the choice of consumers to purchase and consume CFPs might represent an attempt of social recognition. Some studies mention self-identity as one motive for handcrafted food consumption. Donadini & Porretta (2016), mention that specialty beers offer to the consumer the possibility to reinforce their sense of identity and social recognition, setting them apart from consumers of industrial beer. Similarly, Gómez-Corona et al. (2016a) affirm that consumers want to differentiate themselves by drinking craft beer. Additionally, Gómez-Corona et al. (2017a) observe that craft beer

consumption strengthens an identity process of the craft consumer, who is seeking to distinguish himself from consumers of mass-produced commercial beers. Besides, the authors argue that craft beer is sought for its symbolic value as an identity object, and it is used as a product that can build consumer identity through a symbolic system that is shared with other craft consumers. Ariyasriwatana & Quiroga (2016) report that decisions we make when eating out build our sense of identity as well as reveal traits of our personality to others. Likewise, Schösler & de Boerb (2018) found in a study of gourmet consumers in the Netherlands, that consumption of CFPs is not only a means to establish a social distinction, but it can also be understood as setting new food cultural standards throughout society.

4.6.4 Naturalness

Surprisingly, the naturalness perception of CFPs has not received much consideration despite this aspect being frequently considered a proxy of craftsmanship. Some papers have found that the perception of product craftsmanship is related to the use of raw, fresh materials, even better if associated with a specific region, thus contributing to the impression of handcrafted foods as being natural and authentic (Aquilani et al., 2015; Carvalho et al., 2018; Di Monaco et al., 2005; Donadini, et al., 2016; Kupiec & Revell, 1998; Muggah & McSweeney, 2017). Furthermore, some studies point out that consumers are increasingly aware of the nutritional components of the food and beverages they are buying and generally view CFPs as being healthier than their industrial counterparts (Aquilani et al., 2015; Di Monaco et al., 2005; Kupiec & Revell, 1998; Rytkönen et al., 2018). Otieno & Nyikal (2017) found that consumers are willing to pay a premium price for craft juices that do not contain additives, thus recognizing in the food's naturalness a key attribute of product craftsmanship. Autio et al. (2013) show that

consumers strongly disliked the use of additives, emphasizing the relevance of additive-free attribute of CFPs. Similarly, Donadini & Porretta (2017) reach an analogous conclusion for Italian consumers that describe craft beer as an alcoholic beverage that does not contain any chemical additives and is thus more natural. In the same vein, Abouab & Gomez (2015) observe that handmade production increases naturalness ratings among interviewees (N=133). The authors relate this result to the so-called process dominance effect (Rozin, 2006), in which the humanisation of the production process impacts naturalness perception. Additionally, Muggah et al. (2016) found that consumers associate artisanal gluten free bread with more negative attributes, however, since they perceive it as local and healthier, they continue to buy it. A reason for which people consider CFPs to be more natural is that they are viewed as more respectful of food integrity and nature. Conversely, in industrially-made foods, the machine contact and the intrusion of technology in the production process reduce naturalness perception, with a detrimental effect on the perception of product craftsmanship. Overall, evidence from the reviewed studies reveals that the perception of product craftsmanship is strongly and positively correlated with the perception of food naturalness. Clear evidence is that the concept of naturalness derives from the use of fresh and local raw materials, without additives or artificial flavorings. Moreover, low technology intrusion during the production process, a high degree of human involvement, increase the consumer's perception of naturalness and product craftsmanship.

4.7 Habit

Habits, as a consumer behaviour that is regularly repeated, play a fundamental role in craft foods' purchasing decisions as a conciliating element between attitudes and context, and behaviour (Zepeda & Deal, 2009). Carvalho et al. (2018) report that the main place

of consumption of craft beer is the domestic environment. Aquilani et al. (2015) observe that craft beer is drunk mainly in pubs and with family members, and is more likely to be consumed on special occasions. Likewise, Gómez-Corona et al., (2017c) found that in Mexico City, consumers drink craft beer more frequently during special occasions or in specific contexts. What is more, craft beer is not considered as an everyday product, and its consumption are more oriented towards special and ritualised moments, during special occasions (Gómez-Corona et al., 2016a). Another study (Gedikoglu & Parcel, 2014) on US consumer from the Midwest region, revealed similar results. Consumers bought and use domestic/imported artisanal cheese only for a special occasions; this finding implies that consumers do not purchase artisanal cheese in big quantity or too frequently. Abouab & Gomez (2015) observe that the perception of naturalness of the handmade grape juice increases the purchase frequency.

4.8 Behaviour

All the above explained constructs eventually determine consumers' purchasing behaviour regarding CFPs, though we must remember that most of the reviewed studies revealed that attitudes do not always translate into behaviour. The majority of the articles used surveys to investigate attitudes towards CFPs, and some conducted focus groups or in-depth interviews, thus trying to infer potential consumer behaviours towards CFPs.

To analyse the consumers' behaviour towards CFPs, some studies adopted one of the following experimental designs to determine the willingness-to-pay values for specific CFPs: conjoint analysis, contingent valuation and choice experiment. Due the hypothetical nature of these experiments, the results indicated close antecedents of purchase behaviour (namely the purchase intention), rather than the real appreciation of

CFPs. It is noteworthy that only one of the reviewed articles analysed purchase behaviour in real market scenarios using experimental auctions with real craft food sold and real money paid (Waldmann & Kerr, 2015), thus eliciting the consumers' actual purchase behaviour. The difficulty to compare willingness-to-pay values for different CFPs, using different methods, and across different countries, lead us to avoid reporting concrete values.

Waldmann & Kerr (2015), demonstrate that artisan cheese consumers are not willing to pay more for pasteurization as a food safety attribute, but are willing to pay more for an aged artisan cheese. This finding highlights the importance of the sensory motives, as opposed to safety attitudes, in consumer behaviour towards CFPs. Gedikoglu & Parcel (2014) found higher willingness-to-pay for domestic artisan cheese over processed cheese for respondents who prefer hand-made cheese than consumers who do not have any preferences. Di Monaco et al. (2005) identified that price levels of artisanal cheese significantly affected the liking and the willingness-to-buy among consumers. It is noteworthy that price was considered as a proxy of product quality and authenticity. Kupiec & Revell (1998) affirmed that the price of artisanal cheese is less important that sensory properties, even if very often the convenience derived from buying industrial cheeses through multiple retailers may counterbalance any negative connotations related to the use of the product technology during the production process.

The study by Donadini et al (2016) identified lower willingness-to-pay values for specialty beers compared to industrial lager beers by consumers who are not familiar with these products. The studies by Aquilani et al. (2015) and Donadini & Porretta (2017), basically confirmed this result; beer drinkers, who consider quality to be important and pay less attention to price, are more likely to taste craft beers. Moreover Giraud et al.

(2005) found that local consumers are willing to pay only a small price premium for locally artisanal specialty food products. Furthermore, in a choice experiment study on consumers from Kenya, higher willingness-to-pay values were found for quality and safety attributes of artisanal fruit juice as compared to industrially processed fruit juices (Otieno & Nyikal, 2017).

5. Discussion

The Alphabet Theory was a suitable framework to draw a picture of the key factors affecting consumers' perception of craftsmanship of foods, and how these factors are implemented in their purchasing and consumption behaviour. Moreover, this framework enabled an overview of the current state of knowledge and research gaps on CFPs' consumption behaviour.

The combination of the VBN Theory with the ABC Theory describes how attitudes towards CFPs are translated into behaviour, as well as the gap between consumers' attitudes and their purchase behaviour. Additionally, the inclusion of knowledge in the model is very useful to explain the reinforcement of attitudes, indicating that consumers who take care about information referred to the food supply chain develop stronger attitudes towards CFPs. Whereas, demographics generate insight into the common profile of CFPs shopper (namely middle-aged and well-educated consumers, with a higher income level). Despite the implementation of habits being helpful to explain the consumer's behaviour, spontaneous purchase situations also need to be taken into account.

The majority of the evidence discussed suggests that attitudes were found to be relevant predictors of CFPs purchase behaviour and important motives of consumers' perception of food product craftsmanship. This seems to have important practical implications for

public authorities, for marketers to conduct appropriate and well-informed social marketing initiatives and for producers to promote their products. Moreover, this can also have relevant importance to support legislators in designing appropriate regulations. Values and beliefs regarding CFPs were the main aspects of the attitudes described in this review. There is strong evidence suggesting that consumers link the concept of craftsmanship to foods characterised by distinctive sensory characteristics, which are able to satisfy their desire to experience a meaningful moment of pleasure. This implies that future research should be conducted to explore more in-depth the relations amongst the sensory qualities of craft/industrial foods, the food processing system (i.e. hand-made vs industrial-made), and the production scale (i.e. small-scale vs large scale). Analogous conclusions can be reached for the local identity motives. The sense of place as cultural heritage that a food should convey to the consumer, is a relevant aspect capable of increasing the perception of a product's craftsmanship. Thus, a strong geographical connotation of the CFP is a key element of this factor (Bregoli, Hingley, Del Chiappa, & Sodano, 2016; Michel-Villarreal, Hingley, Canavari, & Bregoli, 2019). The impact of self-identity on consumer's perception of food product craftsmanship, as well as on consumer's purchase behaviour towards CFPs, is another important key issue. The review's findings suggest that self-identity expresses the individual's effort to distinguish himself from consumers of industrial food products. Consumers perceive CFPs as something which gives them the opportunity to reinforce a certain social status in the eyes of the beholder (e.g. "connoisseurship", "nutritionally aware"). It is worthy to note that self-identity is a multidimensional construct that should be investigated more in depth in order to explore its different facets in relation to the behaviour of craft food consumption. In fact, the consumption of CFPs is perceived by the craft-consumer as a meaningful

moment of pleasure resulting from a multifaceted experience that includes both a taste-related aspect and a social aspect, such as the individual's desire to nourish his sense of self as well as his desire of uniqueness and distinctiveness. Evidence which emerged from the reviewed papers suggests that among the main intrinsic/extrinsic product/processing attributes, food processing system and price perception are the most important aspects influencing both the consumer's perception of food product craftsmanship and his purchase behaviour with regard to CFPs. On the other hand, the humanlike traits of brands and the scale of production received less attention.

6. Conclusions and further areas of research

The confusion over the term "craft" in the food sector, is the main cause of the so-called craftwashing. This phenomenon is detrimental for artisans and consumers, and revealing what the consumer perceives as CFPs is a feat which has yet to be achieved.

This review highlights the need to assess consumers' understanding of food product craftsmanship. This is of great interest both for policy makers and marketers in order to avoid confusion in the consumer's mind. Due to the multifaceted nature of food craftsmanship, cross sectional studies between economics, psychology and nutritional science should be conducted to better understand what lies behind the name "craft food".

We have identified at least four research gaps. The first gap is the lack of a systemic overview of the key aspects underlying the consumer's understanding of CFPs; this brings to light a troubling situation regarding how researchers and governments should tackle the problem of craftwashing in the food sector, and how marketers should communicate the craftsmanship of products. Research shows that consumer perception of food product craftsmanship has a complex multifactorial character. The second gap we have identified is the lack of structured key factors regarding purchasing and consumption of CFPs. The

third gap is the lack of a solid research body on consumers' preferences and willingness-to-pay for CFPs in a real context market (Fig. 3). The fourth gap is the lack of studies addressing the social and personal norms as characterising aspects of the consumers' attitudes towards CFPs. Thus, in this review, attitudes involve only values and beliefs. Furthermore, it would be of great interest to study an appropriate measure of consumer perception of product craftsmanship as determinant of the individual's intention to purchase and consume CFPs. This could be relevant to better understand the relationship between additional attitudes, socio-demographic aspects, contextual and / or situational factors, and macro-level factors.

Despite not being exhaustive, this review may represent a first starting point for future researches wishing to fill these gaps. However, our research is not without limitations. Because of the difficulty in clearly delimiting the concept of CFPs, not all potential sources of information may have been included in the review. Moreover, our investigation adopted the Alphabet Theory as a theoretical framework, thus other theoretical perspectives were not adopted and applied.

6. Recommendations

Craftsmen and vendors of craft foods must ensure that the food they sell is linked with the local culinary delights and traditions and that is has an authentic taste, distinguishing it from mass-produced food, thus translating a simple food experience into an emotional and unique experience. Moreover, sellers must be aware of how their product is viewed and evaluate whether or not that corresponds to the image they are projecting at present. The entire marketing process should be centred around consumer needs and wants; marketers should always keep in mind the stages of the consumer decision journey and consider which ones they should ameliorate to target a wider or more specific audience.

This review provides craftsmen and vendors of craft foods with factors that are taken into consideration by consumers during their "active evaluation" phase of the decision-making process to purchase CFPs. Using effective advertisements, it will be possible to reinforce the consumer's perception of craftsmanship of foods as well as attitudes towards CFPs. In doing so, vendors must be aware that people buy CFPs to reinforce their sense of self as "craft consumers", and if consumer's trust is broken, it will have serious implication for the business.

Although this review does not aim to provide a prescriptive definition of CFPs, identifying a legal definition of artisanal products is a question which should be addressed by all governments, especially in those countries who have a solid tradition when it comes to food and beverages. Considering the important differences in terms of culture worldwide, maybe the best option would be to identify national definitions, possibly based on shared and harmonised guidelines. The describing elements which should be comprised in the national definitions can be extrapolated from the results of this study.

These indications could be extremely useful for politicians having to agree on what products can effectively be labelled as "artisanal". Moreover, it might be easier to have separate definitions for each food category. Regulating artisanal products could also bring to the creation of a trademark or logo, thus making these products highly recognizable and giving them a strong differentiating element on the market. Moreover, having a legally recognized logo would allow consumers to make a conscious choice, and it would defend small-scale production and processing of high-quality traditional CFPs from the so-called "craftwashing" phenomenon.

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Figure 1. Alphabet Theory adapted from Zepeda and Deal (2009).

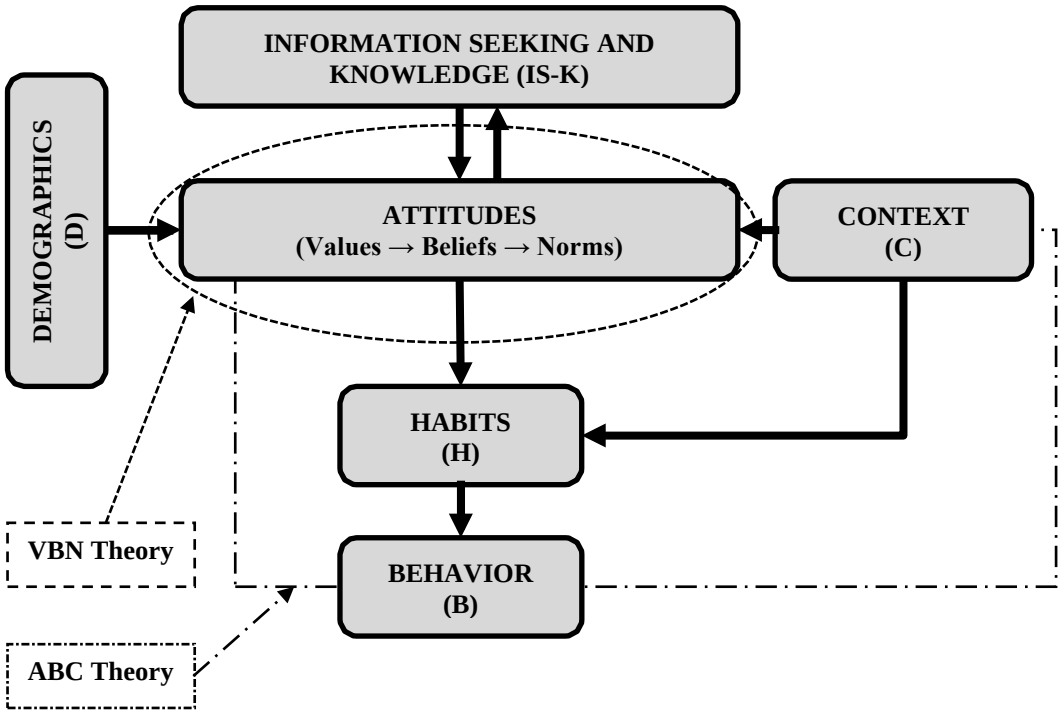


Figure 2. Flow chart and criteria of article selection process.

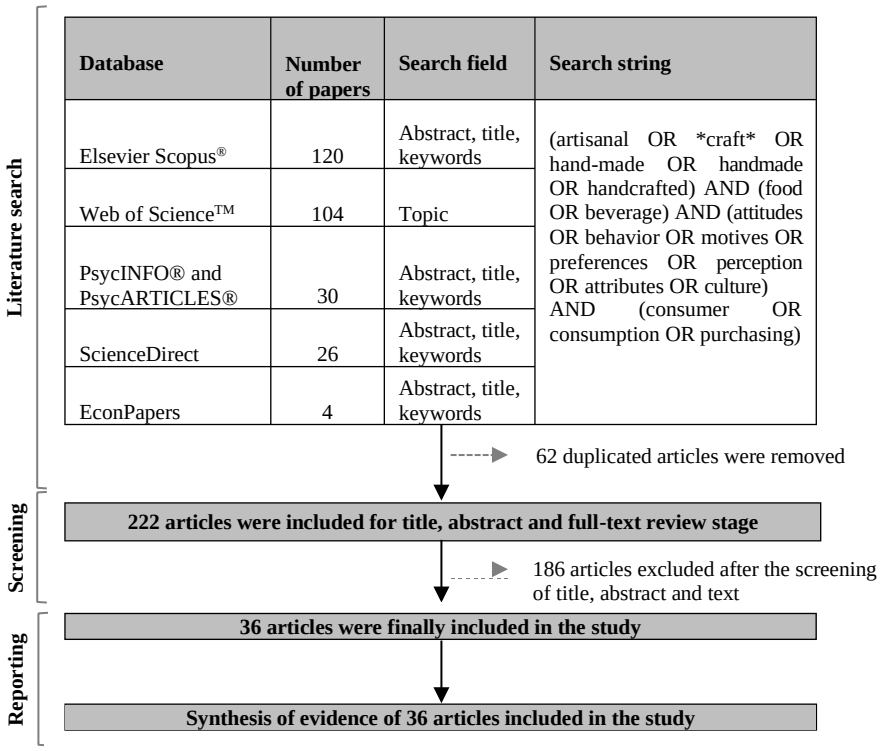
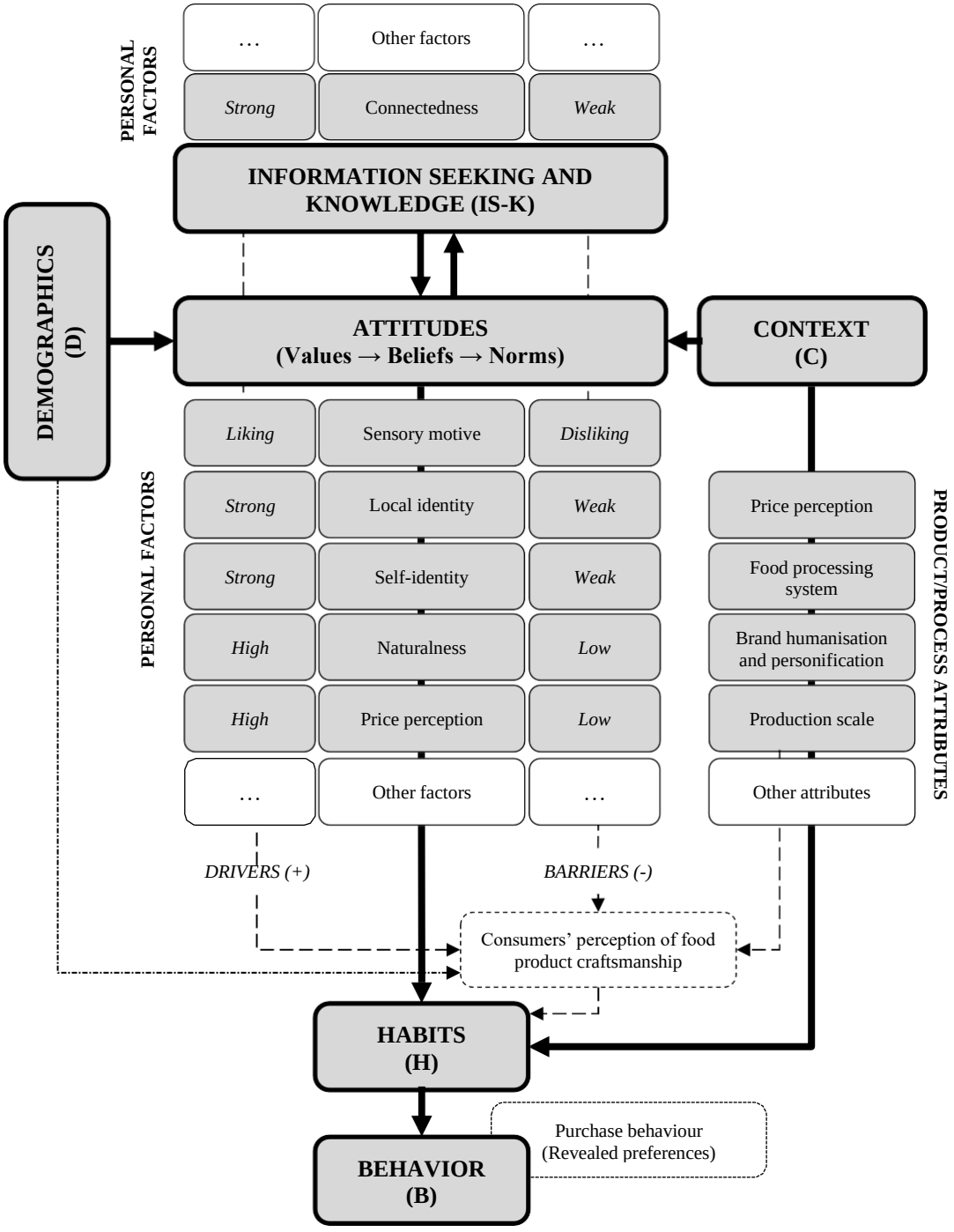


Figure 3. Factors affecting consumers' perception of food product craftsmanship and consumers' behaviour towards craft foods.



Note: White colour indicates areas not covered by the articles reviewed here; ⇢ ⟶ Impact of factors; ---------Research gaps.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Time span	All	None
Language	English	Other
Publication type1	Peer-reviewed	Non peer-reviewed
Publication type2	Research article and review	Other
Product considered	Food and Beverage	Other
Focus	Consumers perception	Other

Table 2. Summary of methodological approaches adopted in the selected articles.

	#	Authors
Survey	17	Aquilani, Laureti, Poponi, & Secondi (2015); Bessiere & Tibere (2013); Carvalho, Minim, Nascimento, de Castro Ferreira, & Minim (2018); Donadini, Fumi, Kordialik-Bogacka, Maggi, Lambri, & Sckokai (2016); Gedikoglu & Parcel (2014); Giraud, Bond, & Bond (2005); Gómez-Corona, Escalona-Buendía, García, Chollet, & Valentin (2016); Gómez-Corona, Chollet, Escalona-Buendía, & Valentin (2017); Kavak & Gumusluoglu (2007); Kupiec & Revell (1998); Muggah, Duizer, & McSweeney (2016); Muggah & McSweeney(2017); Murray & Kline (2015); Murray & O'Neill (2012); Otieno & Adhiambo Nykal (2017); Rytkönen, Bonow, Girard, & Tunón (2018); Weber, Lambert, Conrad, Jennings, & Mastal Adams (2018).
Qualitative explanatory	8	Schösler & de Boer (2018); Tregear (2003); Zevnik (2012); Gómez-Corona, Escalona-Buendía, Chollet, & Valentin (2017); Kuznesof, Tregear, & Moxey (1997); Autio, Collins, Wahlen, & Anttila (2013); Gómez-corona, Lelievre-desmas, Escalona-Buendía, Chollet, & Valentin (2016); Maciel, & Wallendorf (2017).
Experiments	5	Abouab & Gomez (2015); Di Monaco, Di Marzo, Cavella, & Masi (2005); Favalli, Skov, & Byrne (2013); Gómez-Corona, Valentin, Escalona-Buendía, & Chollet (2017); Raghoebar, van Kleef, & de Vet (2017).
Market data	5	Lwin (2015); Ariyasriwatana & Quiroga (2016); Feeney (2017); Donadini & Porretta (2017); Chapman, Nanney, Lellock, & Mikles-Schlutermana (2018).
Experimental auctions	1	Waldman & Kerr (2015)

Table 3. Location profile and food products of selected articles.

	#	Food and beverage products and number of selected articles
North America	15	Beer (11); cheese (2); food in general (1); bread (1)
Europe	15	Food in general (8); beer (3); cheese (3); Grape juice (1)
Cross-Country	4	Food in general (3); beer (1)
South America	1	Beer (1)
Africa	1	Fruit juices (1)

Table 4. Main research issues and location profile of selected articles.

	#	Location profile and number of selected articles
Personal preferences	26	North America (13); Europe (9); Cross-country (3); South America (1)
Cultural meaning of food	6	Europe (5); North America (1)
Market	2	North America (1); Europe (1)
Food labelling	1	Cross-country (1)
Quality and safety	1	Africa (1)