

ASSESSMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF KUJAWY REGIONAL DISHES

*Jadwiga Anna Spiel, Elżbieta Ryczek-Boniecka,
Jerzy Borowski*

Faculty of Human Nutrition
University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

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Abstract

This study analysed the level of knowledge of regional dishes among the residents and restaurant owners in Kujawy. This objective was realized through questionnaire surveys conducted from October till December 2010. Two questionnaires were used, with closed alternative and open-ended questions covering the concepts of traditional and regional products, the availability and range of these products on the market and the factors influencing food shopping motives.

Although 43% of respondents could distinguish between traditional and regional products, respondents considered that regional dishes were still little-known and, above all, not available. There is a lack of promotion and advertising in the region. Local restaurants also have limited menus of particular Kujawy dishes. The most popular were: żurek kujawski, czernina, ryba po kujawsku, szynka z kością, kuleśniak, polewka kujawska and pierogi.

OCENA ZNAJOMOŚCI POTRAW REGIONALNYCH KUJAW

Jadwiga Anna Spiel, Elżbieta Ryczek-Boniecka, Jerzy Borowski

Katedra Żywienia Człowieka
Uniwersytet Warmińsko-Mazurski w Olsztynie

Słowa kluczowe: żywność regionalna i tradycyjna, Kujawy, badania ankietowe.

Abstrakt

Celem pracy było określenie znajomości potraw regionalnych wśród mieszkańców i właścicieli restauracji na terenie Kujaw. Cel ten zrealizowano, prowadząc badania ankietowe od października do grudnia 2010 r. Posłużono się dwoma kwestionariuszami ankietowymi, w których zastosowano

Address: Jadwiga Spiel, University of Warmia and Mazury, pl. Cieszyński 1, 10-726 Olsztyn, Poland,
phone: +48 (89) 523 39 73, e-mail: jadwiga.gutkowska@uwm.edu.pl

pytania zamknięte alternatywne, dysjunktywne i koniunktywne oraz pytania typu otwartego. Dotyczyły one znajomości pojęć produkt tradycyjny i regionalny, dostępności i asortymentu tychże produktów na rynku oraz czynników wpływających na ich wybór żywności podczas zakupów.

Prawie 43% respondentów rozróżniało pojęcie produkt tradycyjny i regionalny. Ankietowani uznali, że potrawy te są jednak ciągle mało znane, a przede wszystkim niedostępne. Brakuje w regionie promocji i reklamy, a lokale gastronomiczne dysponują ubogim menu potraw kujawskich. Do najbardziej znanych dań należą: żurek kujawski, czernina, ryba po kujawsku, szynka z kością, kuleśniak, polewka kujawska i pierogi.

Introduction

Diet is a major factor in human health and is the basis of its existence. Besides the fulfilment of biological functions, it also has a social, cultural and religious dimension. In Poland and around the world there is a growing trend towards ethno-regionalism (TUL-KRZYSZCZUK, KRAJEWSKI 2003). This is related to maintaining the regional identity of individual countries as well as within smaller administrative units (WRITGHEN et al. 1999). There is also a growing trend towards popularization and promotion of traditional food, not necessarily as pro-health, but characterized by unusual organoleptic characteristics (TREGGEE et al. 1998). Kujawy is a region which is rich in multiculturalism. Like Warmia and Mazury, these areas have an ethnic mix of Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Jews and even Dutch and Mennonites (KRZEMIŃSKI 2004, WECKWERTH 2010). The Roma who inhabited mainly Włocławek (and now Ciechocinek) should also be mentioned (KRZEMIŃSKI 2004).

The culinary richness of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region reflects the growing number of products registered as traditional products. As of 07.06.2011 there were 24 products registered (*Ministerstwo Rolnictwa i Rozwoju Wsi...* 2011). Kujawy is a poor region and hence the cuisine is characterized by the simplicity of prepared dishes and monotony. This was associated with the periodicity of production and food processing which, in turn, is associated with the available resource base and is influenced by the seasons, a poor harvest, or imperfect methods of storage (KALINOWSKA 2002). The nomenclature of dishes related to the dialect (kulis (kuleśniak), gzik, polewka, gomółki, pirzok etc.) is also quite distinctive

After the Polish accession to European Union, the authorities of Kujawy and other provinces embarked on a development strategy for culinary regionalism. This resulted in an increase in regional awareness and interest in the acquisition, consumption and distribution of traditional food. To date, issues related to consumer behaviour in relation to food and regional products have not been a subject of many studies (ŻAKOWSKA-BIEMANS, KUC 2009). Such food,

although different from today's dietary recommendations and preferred consumption methods, can also be a potentially healthy food. This has been confirmed by studies of the knowledge and acceptability of regional and traditional food and basic analysis of chemical composition, calorific value etc. (VASILOPOULOU, TRICHOPOULOU 2009, BABICZ-ZIELIŃSKA, ZABROCKI 2003, JEZNACH 2008, JEŻEWSKA-ZYCHOWICZ 2008, SPIEL, BOROWSKI 2010).

The purpose of this study was to determine knowledge of local food among the inhabitants and owners of restaurants in the Kujawy region. In addition, food or products which may serve as a showcase for the region were analysed and consumer preferences and the purchasing motives of this kind of food were determined.

Material and Methods

The aim of the study was carried out based on questionnaire surveys conducted during October-December, 2010. Two questionnaires were used with closed-alternative and open-ended questions. The questions covered, among others, knowledge of traditional and regional product concepts, the availability and assortment of these products on the market and the factors influencing the purchasing motives. Surveys were addressed to randomly-selected residents of Kujawy and to restaurant owners. Restaurateurs were also asked about the type of gastronomic sites, the type and quantity of served traditional food, sources of supply of raw materials and recipes and the type of technology used in food preparation. The questionnaires contained 21 questions, of which 7 represented socio-demographic data describing the socio-economic situation of respondents. The results were analysed statistically using STATISTICA 9.0. The significance of the relationship between the two features were verified using a Chi² test. Results were considered statistically significant when $p < 0.05$.

Characteristics of the respondents

Consumer research involved a survey of a group of 140 persons; including 67 men and 73 women (representing 48% and 52%, respectively). The respondents were aged 18–30 years (27%), 31–40 years (29%), 41–50 years (28%) and over 51 years of age (16%). It was noted that older people were unwilling to answer survey questions.

Forty-six percent of respondents reported having higher education (including incomplete higher education), 25% of respondents declared secondary

education, 18% had basic-vocational education and nearly 11% had primary education.

About 24% of respondents came from rural areas, while the rest came from urban areas over 50 thousand inhabitants. 60% of the respondents were employed, while 16% were unemployed. Less than 11% of respondents were students while 12% were pensioners or retirees. Net income attributed to a family member averaged 1000–1500 PLN. Almost 8% of respondents declared incomes exceeding 2500 PLN.

Studies among restaurateurs were conducted in 46 gastronomic sites, where 63% of the owners were women and 37% men. The owners of the restaurant were mainly from the age groups of 31–40 (35%) and 41–50 (33%).

Approximately 57% had a university degree, 37% secondary education, 4% had basic-vocational education and 2% had primary education.

19.6% of respondents came from a rural area. 94% of owners of gastronomic places declared having a private form of property. Most of the companies were registered in 2002–2010 (61%), the oldest site was registered in 1970. In these places, there were from 1 to 73 people employed. Frequently, the number of employees was 6, with predominantly secondary education (63%).

Results

Consumer survey

The ability to distinguish regional and traditional product concepts was declared by 43% of respondents aged from 31–40, with higher education who were urban residents. These concepts are associated mainly with food products or dishes. For 71% of the respondents, products/regional dishes could be a symbol of the region. The major products included: żurek kujawski, czernina, szynka z kością, kuleśniak (kulis), ryba po kujawsku and polewka. The percentage rate of selected answers is presented in Table 1.

According to respondents, distinguishing between food groups is mainly affected by factors such as: the culinary traditions (27.8%), availability of products (19.1%), promotion (18.7%) knowledge of food preparation methods (17.1%).

The detailed shares of growth determinants in the recognition of traditional foods is presented in Figure 1.

Respondents felt that they were aware of promotional activities conducted in their region. The main methods of promoting traditional food included: folklore events (31%), festivals and ceremonies (29%) and exhibitions in museums (19%). Respondents' knowledge associated with regional cuisine

Table 1
Dishes considered to be regional dishes by respondents in the Kujawy region

The names of dishes (entered by the respondents)	Response [%]
Żurek kujawski	23.3
Czernina/czarnina	17.7
Szynka z kością	14.4
Kulis/kuleśniak	10.5
Ryba po kujawsku	10
Polewka kujawska	6.6
Piernik	2
Brukowiec	1.5
Krupnik, zupa z bani	1.2*
Smażonka, jadwiżanki, gomółki, parzybroda, zagraj, prażucha, szablok ze śliwkami	0.8*
Zacierka, placki ziemniaczane, kiełbasa, kapuśniak, pirezok, kluski z makiem, kopytka fasolowe, pierogi, półgęsek, golonka	0.5*
Zupa królewska, smalec, zupa owocowa, kujawiak, orzechowiec, okrasa z gęsi	0.3*

* percentages for each dish separately

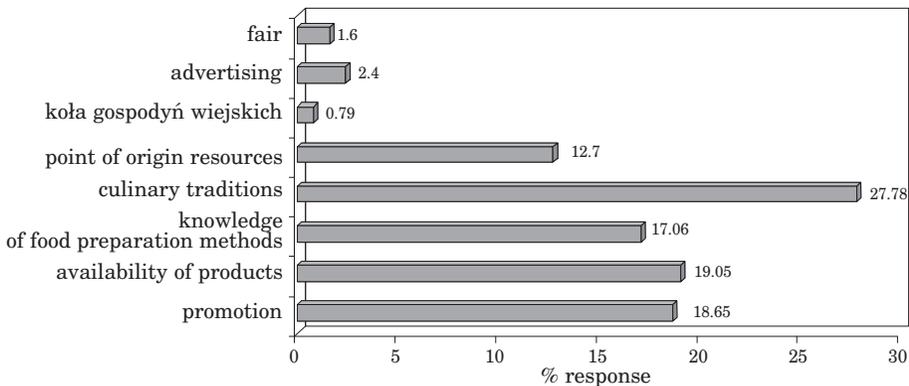


Fig. 1. Growth determinants of knowledge of regional Kujawy cuisine dishes

originated from: events held in the place of residence and neighbourhood fairs (31%), local farmers (29%), the press (18%) and advertising (14%). To a lesser extent, such knowledge is acquired in the workplace, through the Internet, from tourist information or during special events. Paradoxically, events which have an abundance of regional foods also provide little knowledge of it.

While regional food itself was considered difficult to obtain by 62% of respondents, only 5% said that it is very good. This could include people who are either manufacturers of certain products or have a permanent source

of procurement. It was also noted that women have a problem with finding a traditional food at markets, although men believe that the availability of such products is good. An analysis of these relationships showed that they were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). A similar relationship was observed for education. It was considered that the higher education a respondent had, the higher their knowledge of the market was and, thus, such persons were more resourceful in finding places where regional food could be bought.

In addition, consideration should be given to the fact that while 76% of respondents declared a purchase of regional food, others did not purchase it, therefore, their knowledge of the availability and range of traditional products could be insufficient.

In turn, age, education and employment had a statistically significant influence on the purchasing capacity of the respondents. Most buyers were people of both genders aged 41–50 years, with secondary education, were employed, had an income above 1000 PLN per person in the household, and had families between 3 and 5 persons with up to two children. The most often purchased products were fresh meat, meat products, honey, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, cheese and other dairy products (Figure 2).

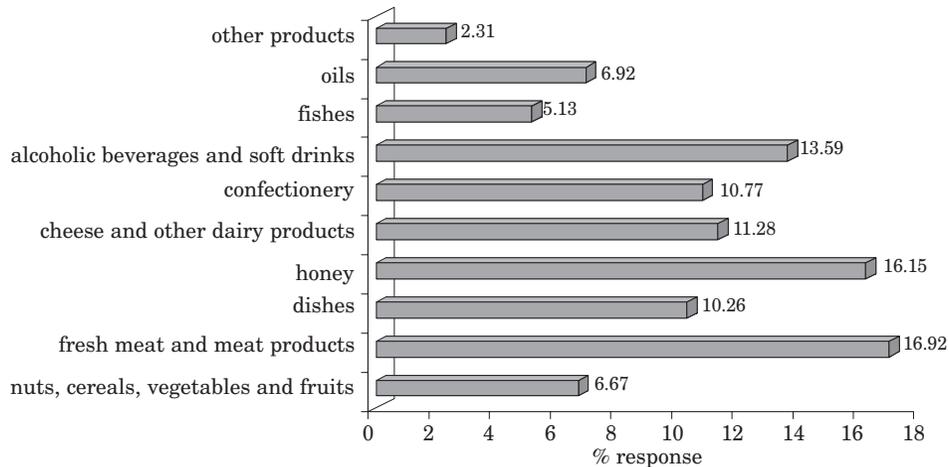


Fig. 2. Regional products most frequently purchased by respondents

Approximately 39% of respondents often paid attention to the origin of raw materials and food production methods. Slightly fewer (33%) admitted that they do it very rarely. In turn, almost 16% had never considered it. These were primarily rural young people under 30 years old with an education up to secondary, studying or working, with an income per one member of the family

from 500–1000 PLN. There was a statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.05$) between employment status and the kind of purchased products. However, as the most important reasons for purchasing regional food, the respondents indicated (it was possible to select several answers as the key and important factors): quality (86% of responses), health benefits (83%), sensory (81%), price (60%) and opinion of friends (50%), habit (28% of responses), coincidence or out of curiosity (19%) and fashion (10%).

The survey of restaurant owners

The starting point in the analysis of restaurateurs; knowledge and familiarity with regional dishes was to determine the type of gastronomical site. The percentage distribution of the type of facility is shown in Figure 3. As shown in Figure 3., these were restaurants (58.7%), bars (19.6%), inns (15.2%) and confectioneries (6.5%).

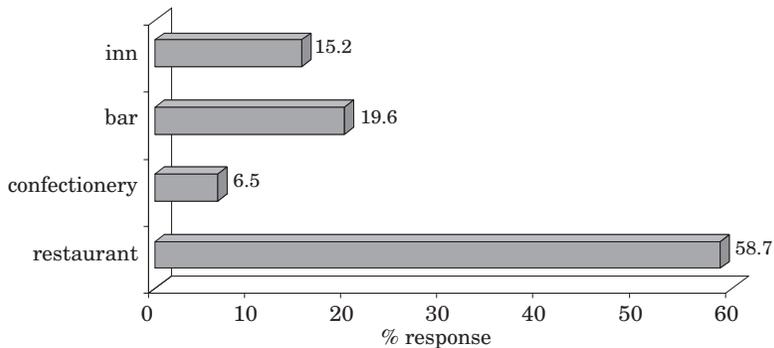


Fig. 3. Kind of gastronomical site

The concept of regional dish or product is associated by restaurateurs with the region of manufacturing (30% of responses), traditional recipe (29%) or method of production (25%). The specific organoleptic properties are the hallmark of traditional dishes for only 12.3%, and quality for less than 2.4% of the respondents. According to Council Regulation (EC) No 509/2006 of 20 March 2006 (*Rozporządzenie Rady...* Dz.Urz. WE 2006, L 93/1), the term traditional product means a product documented in use on the Community market for at least a time period showing transmission from generation to generation. This period should correspond to the period generally ascribed to one generation, i.e. at least 25 years. Traditional

products are distinguished by a specific nature, which means a feature or set of features which clearly distinguishes an agricultural product or foodstuff from similar products in the same category (O.J. EU 2006, L 93/1). A correct and full definition was given by almost 38% of respondents. These were primarily urban women aged 31–40 with higher education, from cities with populations over 100 thousand. 62.5% of restaurant owners declared serving between 1 to 5 traditional or regional dishes on their menus. The dishes served are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Dishes recognized as regional, served in gastronomical sites in Kujawy

The names of dishes (entered by the respondents)	Response [%]
Żurek kujawski	19.2
Czernina/czarnina	13.5
Ryba po kujawsku	7.7
Szynka z kością	7.1
Kulis/kuleśniak	6.4
Polewka kujawska	5.1
Pierogi	3.9
Piernik, sandacz po kujawsku, dziczyzna, ryby, kaczka faszerowana, zapiekanka	1.9*
Brukowiec, zalewajka, kotlet po chłopsku, ciasto miodowe, drób w potrawce, kapuśniak, kluski z serem, pasztet z fasoli, krupnik, tort śmietanowy, golonka, barszcz biały	1.3*
Bigos, orzechowiec, wątróbka kujawska, zupa serowa, naleśniki, żeberka w kapuście, zupa owocowa, gołąbki, sernik, karkówka w sosie, półgęski, jablecznik, mazurek kujawski	0.6*

* percentages for each dish separately

The source from which the restaurant owners acquired raw materials was often from a single provider (53% of restaurateurs), including regional providers (43%). Raw materials also originated from organic farms (22%) and from own production (13.8%).

When purchasing raw materials, such factors as quality (92% of responses considered it very important or important), origin (78%), sensory (62%) and price (53%) were taken into account. Dishes were prepared based on recipes from family transfers (34%), cookbooks (30%), their own ideas (19%), Internet (6%), materials provided by the Agricultural Advisory Agency (5%), from personal experience and the press (both 3%). Approximately 41% of restaurateurs claimed that serving regional dishes in the menu increased the attractiveness of the restaurant, while other motivations included: satisfaction of consumer needs (34%), attachment to tradition (13%), income (6%) and

passion (6%). But involvement in the promotion and sale of traditional products was not felt to be important (81% of respondents). For respondents who did declare such a commitment, the main promotion instrument was advertising. Less than 59% declared that they were willing to broaden their knowledge in this field. Women predominated in this regard (70%).

Discussion

According to GRZYBEK (2009), the main focus of the food market are the customers who determine the requirements for products to meet their consumption needs. In recent years, global markets have seen a trend towards a return to regional food as an alternative to highly-processed or genetically-modified foods (BATYK, SMO CZYŃSKI 2009). Previous studies have confirmed an increased interest in such products. The respondents from Kujawy are familiar with the regional product concept: 42% associate it with food products and 39% with dishes. POMIANOWSKI (2009) suggested that 2/3 of respondents were familiar with the regional product concept and that they identified regional foods even without the word “regional” in the product name. ŻAKOWSKA-BIEMANS and KUC (2009) studied supermarkets (Bomi and Carrefour in Warsaw) and found that knowledge of regional food was declared by 96% of consumers. A questionnaire conducted in Lublin and the surrounding area by STADNIK (2010) indicated a 50% knowledge of regional food by consumers. Regional food is associated by the inhabitants of Kujawsko-Pomorskie province with the region of residence and traditional methods of production. Similarly, LATOCH (2010) found that predominantly men associate regional products with traditional recipes and the manufacturing process. In addition, SPIEL and BOROWSKI (2010) found that 53% of respondents in Warmia and Mazury indicated a knowledge of regional products. PIENIAK et al. (2009) conducted an international study on a representative sample of 4828 people from Belgium, France, Italy, Norway, Poland and Spain and noted that knowledge of regional products was strongly correlated with attachment to tradition, which follows traditional methods of production and methods of consumption.

Forty-five percent of respondents from Kujawy could distinguish between traditional and regional products. Approximately 38% of the restaurants owners, where such dishes are served, were able to give a full definition of a traditional product. The lowest level of this knowledge was among restaurant owners aged 18–30 with lower education. This may result from a lack of experience or lack of interest. It seems unusual that 81% of restaurant owners do not even try to promote traditional food. Thanks to promotion, they could both inform consumers about regional products and also influence their

purchasing decisions. But restaurateurs hold the view that advertising does not correlate with increased sales and is expensive. The study did not establish the reasons for the consolidation of such beliefs, although it is clear that ordinary consumers do notice the promotional activities in their region. Hence, it could be assumed that properly employed advertising, folklore events, fairs, celebrations, festivals and ceremonies could increase the purchase and consumption of regional food. An increase in regional food knowledge could also contribute to the cultivation of family traditions; increasing the availability and assortment of dishes and information on the raw materials and their origins and preparation technology. In addition, 76% of respondents declared a willingness to purchase such products. The most popular would be meat and meat products, honey, alcoholic beverages, soft drinks, cheese and other dairy products.

Conclusions

By analysing and comparing the two surveys it can be concluded that the regional market has two conflicting factors. Randomly-chosen respondents seeking traditional food, have a knowledge of its organoleptic values and quality and are willing to pay more for it. However, restaurateurs and food producers, rather than meet the demands of such consumers, prefer to maintain the usual, conservative methods of marketing. Although they show a willingness to improve knowledge in this field, they are reluctant to provide direct interviews (only 46 were willing to participate in the survey).

Despite the development of the regional food market, it is still considered to be under-developed and not very well-advertised. In the Kujawy area, the range of these products is poor. Many of the dishes thought of as regional products by respondents are actually not. The most frequently-mentioned dishes which could be regarded as a symbol of the Kujawy region were żurek kujawski, czernina and szynka z kością. They are on the List of Traditional Products in Kujawy and Pomerania. Ham on the bone was officially registered as a traditional product by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on 18 June 2009, żur kujawski on 9 May 2008 and czernina kujawska on 18 January 2010.

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