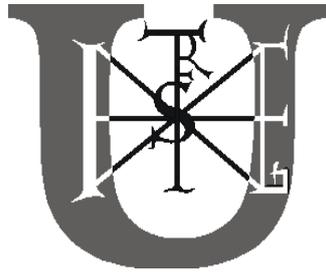


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**THE ANALYSIS OF
FOOD CONSUMER PREFERENCES
IN INSTITUTIONAL CATERING**

Thesis of the doctoral (Ph.D.) dissertation

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1. SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND, TARGETED OBJECTIVES

In my paper I deal with the food consumer preferences of one of the special forms of eating out, namely institutional catering.

I regard it very important to clarify these two central ideas at the beginning of my dissertation with regard to the fact that the use of these terms in the national and international specialist literature shows a very varied picture.

Between the term „eating outside the household”, eating out” as well as „eating outside home” which are also used in the national specialist literature, I have voted on „eating outside the household” as some catering specialists identify eating out as a form of moving out to the street and sell from mobile vendors exclusively. On the other hand, in my opinion the expression „eating outside the household” can reflect the main feature of the service better, i.e. such food that is prepared and most of the time consumed not at home.

Institutional catering as one of the special forms of eating outside the household shows an even more differentiated picture when defining the term. In most cases institutional catering is identified as public catering but in some cases it is also regarded as one type of commercial catering. The terms are mixed in their legal, statistical and professional approaches: it is not obvious where the line between commercial and public catering activities can be drawn. Under the term institutional catering I mean such a combination of public catering and commercial catering whose main feature is to appear with a menu and selection that suit the needs of people of different ages, gender, physical strains and different nutrient intake in the market.

As I have examined institutional catering from the aspect of the consumers, that is why I think it is important to complete the term with the points of view who demand it. In this respect institutional catering is a special way of food consumption outside the household and an alternative for consuming home-made food taken from home.

In my opinion research projects that deal with the factors explaining consumers' behaviour and their choice of services can play a great role in the development of companies dealing with institutional catering.

In the past decades the system of the national institutional catering in Hungary has significantly been transformed. Several new forms of services have appeared and this process has resulted in a market structure best characterised by heterogeneous entrepreneurial system.

However, on the demand side of the food market there have also been significant changes: from the end of the 1980s it has become clearer and clearer that consumption has a status strengthening and demonstrative tenor and „it constructs identity” (Hetsi 2004. 267.p). As a result of this process the analysis of the buying-forming role of values and value systems has become the centre of research projects aimed at food consumer behaviour. For the consumer of the modern age, food not only serves to satisfy physiological needs but also it is a source of pleasure and a method to reach certain values that are regarded important. The lifestyle and value system of the individual are reflected in their habits of eating so that is why food consumer behaviour can be interpreted as the extrinsic projection of the value system that are basically determined by the value trends in the long run.

In my paper I strive to synthesise the food preferences and motivations of institutional catering based on the value system and I also show the peculiarities of food consumer behaviour in institutional catering based on a value oriented approach. The changes in the value systems have led to the appearance of contrastive, dissonant nutrition trends nowadays. By the turn of the millennium it became clear that the value categories playing a great role in consumer behaviour also appeared in the West-European nutrition tendencies. These „central values” are the following: health and ethical considerations, time and pleasures. These main trends will also come to the national food consumer market although a bit late and in a modified form but more characteristically, thus influencing food consumers in their decision-making mechanisms when purchasing something.

Among the values listed above, I concentrate on the examination of time in my paper as primarily it was the appreciation of free time that has resulted in the changes which have increased the significance of eating out as well as institutional catering.

I would like to back the topicality of my research by the following main statements:

- To ensure more and more disposable free time, the consumers tend to make use of eating outside the household as well as home delivery more frequently.
- To have more free time, consumers prefer the more convenient and enjoyable forms of buying.
- Due to the desire for more free time, there is actually less time devoted to food preparation and cooking so the demand for ready-made, easy to prepare convenience food is growing, which are healthy and practical at the same time.
- With the change in lifestyle the time spent on food preparation is decreasing and new eating habits are formed (Szabó 1998, Gaál 1998, Orbánné 2006).

These processes have resulted in the significant modification of the demand side of the food market. In my opinion all this has called for a new approach of food consumer segmentation. To explore the characteristic differences in food consuming behaviour, besides the traditional demographic, social and economic criteria the application of such segmentation criteria is also justified with which certain market groups can be described in a more differentiated way. According to the specialist literature from the beginning of the 1980s the market segmentation based on values and value systems has been given a more emphatic role in the food consumer behaviour examination. The national agri-marketing research has also drawn the conclusion according to which the consumers' differences expressed in food consumption can be explained by the value system differences well.

The main objectives of the research

Social changes, the accelerated pace of life as well as the reassessment of the quality of life has led to the appreciation of free time. According to my basic hypothesis the value system and in it, the judgement of time can be applied as a segmentation criterion so it offers possibilities in the market of food consumers as well as in that one of institutional catering. According to my basic hypothesis I have formulated four research objectives (C1, C2, C3, C4.): the first two are linked to the review of specialist literature, the third and the fourth ones are attached to my empiric research. Later these will found my research hypotheses and my new scientific results. My research objectives can be summarised as follows:

	Objectives connected to the review of specialist literature:
C1	Exploring the common points of value concept, the general consumer behaviour-dimensions and eating out as well as characterising the system of connections.
C2	Introducing and selecting the consumer criteria influencing eating out.
	Objectives connected to empiric research:
C3	Preparing an own model to characterise the system of connections between the factors influencing institutional catering.
C4	Grouping consumers and proving the correlations between segmentations of different basis (general value system, utility factors linked to food consumption and factors determining the ways of institutional catering).

I regard the main common features of value trends, food consumer and consumer trends as well as eating outside the household especially important due to the factors below:

- Eating outside the household is a special situation of consuming food, a concrete way of eating so it is quite obvious that it cannot be stand apart from the general trends of food consumption.
- Eating outside the household can mean a concrete way of spending free time or even the possibility of saving time otherwise spent on cooking. In such a sense it can be linked to the free time habits of the individual expressing the importance of the individual assessment of time.
- Making use of certain alternatives of eating outside the household can be a way of gaining experience or even rewarding ourselves and in such a sense it can also be interpreted as a tool of expressing lifestyle as a king of luxury consumption (C1).

Eating outside the household is attached to individual lifestyle as well as managing their free time in a lot of points. That is why I think the origin of the trends of eating outside the household can be found in values determining lifestyle and the direction of changing the values like in the case of consumer and food consumer trends. From this aspect a special attention is paid to the terminology of values and the examination of value changes from a sociological point of view.

At first I present the main trends in value changes by summarising the national and international sociological studies. I deal with the trends of consumer and food consumer behaviour as well as eating outside the household linked to value trends during which the decisive role of time is always stressed (C1, C2).

My second objective is linked to the synthesis of the national and international specialist literature. According to it, I strive to identify the factors influencing food consumption outside the household. The third objective of my dissertation is to create such a model in the light of the results of my primary research that describes the system of correlations between the factors affecting the special type of eating out, i.e. institutional catering (C3).

As a first step to reach these objectives listed above, I created the basic structure of the theoretical model by making use of the studies on the quantity of consumption outside the household and its structure, which summarises the factors affecting the chosen form and way of institutional catering. It is not my objective to make a general, thorough model as examining all possible determining factors would go well beyond the constrains of the present paper but I think the creation of this consumer model could also provide practical information about the main indicators worth considering and also have to be considered while examining the food consumer preferences of institutional catering.

I carried out the specialist literary review as well as the creation of the basic frame of my own model surrendered to my hypothesis according to which the value system determines the individuals' choice and way of consuming food. I wished to prove this correlation in the case of institutional catering and my primary research serves this purpose, as well (C4). The framework of my basic model consists of the value-system based food consumer theories alongside this logical correlation. In my research I wish to prove that the segmentation based on the perceived importance of the factors that determine the value system, the judgment of the utility factors of food consumption and the way of choosing the form of institutional catering are not independent, i.e. there are common links between the target groups formed on the basis of the three segmentation criteria and the target groups as sets overlap.

The consumer segments of the domestic institutional catering can be described on the research results of my paper and also the size of these target markets can also be estimated, which, I think, can provide useful information for the experts in practice. With the help of my research results the special marketing activities that are necessary to reach the consumer segments of institutional catering can be outlined. There is a great demand for such results nowadays in marketing practice as only food, that can have a nutritional benefit on the one hand and possess well-distinguishable marketing features on the other hand, can earn a long-term success both on the international and domestic markets (Szente 2006).

2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

Before detailing the results, in my opinion it is important to present the concept or the way of thinking that was followed during my empiric research.

I would have liked to create a theoretic model that would contain the factors determining the choice between ways of institutional catering. National and international specialist literature served as the main information base and the main results of my previous quantitative examinations were also incorporated as additional information. During my specialist literary review, theoretical approaches and studies were used. I summarised the models and theories explaining the relationship between the value system as well as consumer and food consumer behaviour. I also published the consumer, food consumer trends together with those of eating outside the household linked to value dimensions. I summarised the criteria that can be linked to the consumers and influencing eating outside the household and also the place and role of institutional catering in eating outside the household separately. As in the specialist literature I only had the opportunity to summarise research and the results of models about eating outside the household, my preliminary quantitative examinations could add a lot to these secondary pieces of information and helped in adapting the results to institutional catering.

I think it important to mention that basically my objective was to create a consumer model so that is why I was striving to group the criteria typically linked to the consumers in examining the use of eating outside the household as well as institutional catering within the frames of both the literary and preliminary research.

After the creation of a theoretical model qualitative research was carried out and one of its tasks was to test the theoretical model. The necessary changes were made and my research model was finalised, which served as a basis for the final research phase, i.e. the 1000 member national quantitative survey.

During the empiric research quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. The quantitative research took place in four phases, the biannual so-called preliminary research means the first three phases and the fourth one was carried out in 2008, a national survey of 1000-member. For recording and statistical processing of the data of the preliminary examinations, SPSS 11. 5 programme while in the case of the 1000-member research SPSS 13. 0 was applied.

During the processing of the results of the quantitative research besides the descriptive statistics, bi- and multi-variable correlation analyses were made with the help of Chi-square trial, factor-, cluster- and variance analysis. Segmentation was carried out by K-means clusterising process at all times. In the case of all processes, several trials were made but only the results of the professionally best explicable and statistically suitable segmentations are detailed when outlining the certain research results. Significance- and F-values were taken into consideration in the case of the correlations examined by variance analysis. In the case of the Chi-square trials the examination of the intrinsic correlations of the certain relationships were made on the basis of the adjusted standardised residual values (AdjR) in the following way of interpretation: positive deviation from the expected value with a reliability of $\text{Adj.R} \geq 2$: 95%, deviation from the expected value with a reliability of $\text{Adj.R} \geq 3$: 99%. In the case of negative numbers, a negative deviation from the expected value can be expected with the same value-intervals (Sajtos-Mitev 2007).

3.1. Quantitative research

3.1. 1. Preliminary quantitative research

My preliminary research was carried out in three phases:

Phase 1: 2003. Pest county (197 assessable questionnaires);

Phase 2: 2005. Békés county (182 assessable questionnaires);

Phase 3: 2007. Heves county (198 assessable questionnaires).

The objective of all the three data recording was to ensure the amount of information necessary for the creation of the theoretical model, to base the national survey (Phase 4) as well as to refine and outline the research topic. I would have liked to examine if the value system was such a decisive consumer criterion according to which characteristic groups could be created even on the market of food consumers.

My highlighted objective was to examine the appearance of time consciousness in food consumer behaviour as well as to analyse the role of the ways of eating in institutional catering.

At the first time (Phase 1) my main objective was to define the main lines for my research. The surveys later (Phase 2, Phase 3) made the wider and more dimensional analysis of the research problem possible.

During all the three research tasks a conscious sample taking was applied and the active employees of the given country were regarded as sampling population.

3.1.2. The national quantitative research

The national survey comprised the fourth phase of my quantitative research (Phase 4). An oral questioning was applied with the help of a pre-tested standardised questionnaire between May-July 2008. In the case of the national sample planned for 1000 persons a conscious sample taking was carried out based on the quota. The national adult employees were regarded as the sampling population so the compounds of the sample are special from the aspect that the older generation above 60 is in a smaller proportion in it than in the total population of the country. The quotas were formed by regions based on the 2007 employment data of the Central Statistical Office (hereinafter referred to as CSO). The proportion of the most important age group (between 18 and 59) of my research in my sample is the same as their share in the sampling population.

Special attention was paid when compiling the questionnaires for the national survey and even in the preliminary research that they should logically fit to the arc of the whole research. To achieve this aim, altogether 15 research hypotheses were connected to the two research objectives (the first two are in connection with the literary review), two of which can purely be attached to the qualitative research. The hypotheses finally base three new scientific results (the fourth, regarding numbering the first new scientific result can only be linked to the theory).

Table 2 illustrates the methodological connections between the research hypotheses.

2.2. Qualitative research

In the qualitative phase focus group examinations were carried out that helped in refining the research topics below: (1) The differences between the consumers in choosing the way of eating, determining the direction of segmentation possibilities for the factors that play a role in choosing the way of eating. (2) Judging and characterising the alternatives of institutional catering from the aspect of the consumers. (3) Defining the concrete topics and questions (test questionnaire) of the qualitative research, (4) and based on all this, the possible re-interpretation of the theoretical model. Two research hypotheses were formulated (H1,H2) that can be linked to the qualitative research. The methodological relationships of the research hypotheses and research objectives can be summarised in the following way:

Table 1: **The hypotheses of the qualitative research and their methodological relationships**

RESERACH OBJECTIVE	RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	WAY OF DATA RECORDING	ANALYTICAL METHOD	New and novel scientific results
C3	H1 The theoretical model is valid in its original form and adaptable under the national circumstances.	Qualitative, focus group interview	Content analysis	T2
C3	H2 The users know well and can characterise the single alternatives of institutional catering.	Qualitative, focus group interview	Content analysis	T2

Source: own compilation

Table 2: The hypotheses of the quantitative research and their methodological relationships

OBJECTIVE	HYPOTHESIS	MY RESEARCH MODEL	SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE TOPIC	QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTION	MEASURE LEVEL	ANALYTICAL METHOD	NEW SCIENTIFIC RESULTS
C3,C4	H3 Consumer groups showing characteristic differences based on the general value judgment can be created on the food consumer market.	The role of the value system among the features of the consumers.	The segmentation role of the value system in the food consumer market	IV/ 22	Interval scale (1-5)	Cluster analysis	T2,T3
C3	H4 The segments formed on the basis of the value system can be defined well according to their primary features.	Factors attached to the consumers: the connection between the value system and the socio-demographic features.	The connection between the value system and the socio-demographic features	IV/ 22 IV/23-32; 35.	Interval scale (1-5) Nominal	Chi ² -trial adjusted residual	T2
C3	H5 Consumer behaviour patterns can be differentiated based on the use of free time as well as signs of lifestyle.	The connection between the value system and lifestyle	The connection between the value system and lifestyle	IV/ 22. IV/ 21.a 21b.	Interval scale (1-5) proportion scale	Variance analysis	T2
C3,C4	H6 Consumer groups showing characteristic differences can be created based on the utility factors of food consumption.	Factors attached to the consumers: the role of food consumer preferences.	The segmenting role of food preferences	IV/ 1.	Interval scale (1-5)	Cluster analysis	T2
C3	H7 Food consumer clusters by the primary segmentation criteria can be defined well.	The connection between food preferences and the socio-demographic features	The connection between food preferences and the socio-demographic features	IV/1. IV/23-32; 35	Interval scale (1-5) Nominal	Chi ² trial adjusted residual	T2, T3
C3	H8 Food consumer clusters by the secondary segmentation criteria can be defined well.	The connection between food consumer preferences and feeding habits.	Food consumer preferences -the connection between eating outside the household and institutional catering -and the connection with cooking.	IV/ 1. IV/10.15 IV/5.6. 8.	Interval scale (1-5) Nominal Interval scale (1-5)	Chi ² -trial adjusted residual variance analysis	T2
C3,C4	H9 Consumer groups showing characteristic differences in choosing the way of institutional catering can be created on the food consumer market.	Factors attached to the consumers: the preferences of the way of institutional catering.	The consumer judgement of factors affecting the way of institutional catering.	IV/ 20.	Interval (1-5)	Cluster analysis	T2, T3,T4
C3	H10 The segments can be defined easily by the socio-demographic features.	The connection between the chosen way of institutional catering and the socio-demographic features.	The connection between the segments by preferences in choosing the way of institutional catering and the demographic features.	IV/ 20. IV/. 23-32; 35.	Interval (1-5) Nominal	Chi ² -trial adjusted residual	T2, T4
C3	H11 Differences between the segments can be defined by all secondary segmentation criteria.	The connection between the chosen way of institutional catering and: - individual feeding habits, - attitude to institutional catering, - judging the factors of choosing the way of institutional catering.	The connection between preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering and feeding habits as well as the chosen way of institutional catering.	IV/ 20. IV/15.17 IV/5.6. 8.	Interval (1-5) Nominal Interval scale (1-5)	Chi ² -trial adjusted residual variance analysis	T2,T4

C4	<p>H12 The are links between the consumer groups formed by the general value system, the utility factors connected to food consumption and factors determining the way of institutional catering.</p>	<p>H12a. There is a correlation between the segments by the value system and the food consumer behaviour groups.</p>	Relationship between the value system and food consumer preferences.	Relationship between consumer behaviour patterns and the segments of food consumption.		Nominal	Chi ² square adjusted residual	T2,T3	
		<p>H12b. There is a correlation between the segments by the value system and the factors determining the way of institutional catering.</p>	Impact of the value system on the judgment of factors playing a role in choosing the way of institutional catering.	Relationship between consumer behaviour patterns and the preferences of the ways of institutional catering.					T2,T3
		<p>H12c. There are links between the segments of institutional catering and the food consumer groups.</p>	The connection between the factors choosing the way of institutional catering and food preferences.	Relationship between food consumer segments and the groups based on the choice of the way of institutional catering.					T2,T3
C3	<p>H13 Choosing a certain type of institutional catering (frequency of use) correlates with the subsidies provided by the place of work (luncheon voucher, contributions).</p>	The impact of direct and indirect subsidies on the chosen way of institutional catering.	Relationship between workplace subsidies and the chosen way of institutional catering.	IV/15. IV/ 14.b.18.b.	nominal proportion scale	Variance analysis		T3	
C3	<p>H14 The infrastructural endowments provided by the place of work affect institutional catering (frequency of use).</p>	The role of infrastructural endowments on the chosen way of institutional catering.	The impact of institutional catering possibilities on the chosen way of institutional catering.	IV/15. IV/ 12.13.	nominal nominal	Chi ² trial adjusted residual		T3	
C3	<p>H15 Choosing certain ways of institutional catering shows a correlation with the type of the place of work.</p>	The connection between the basic features of the place of work and the chosen way of institutional catering.	The relationship between the general features of the place of work and the form of institutional catering on offer.	IV/15. IV/ 33. 34.	nominal nominal	Chi ² trial adjusted residual		T3	

3. RESULTS

3.1. Results of the preliminary quantitative research

Since 2003 several preliminary research tasks have been carried out to examine the segmentation role of the value system in the food consumer market as well as the appearance and polarisation of time consciousness in the food consumer behaviour. In this chapter, of course, it is not my objective to detail all preliminary research, rather, I strive to summarise the results which provided some useful, additional background information to create the model.

3.1.1. Value-system based consumer groups

I examined if it was possible to form food consumer groups of characteristic differences on the basis of the value system so that is why a cluster analysis was carried out by K-means method on the list of the value factors during all the three research tasks. I characterised the segments formed this way based on the value factors involved in factor analysis.

All the three surveys were successful regarding the fact that I was able to segment the samples by individual value hierarchies (Table 3).

Table 3: Segments by the value system and their features on three samples

	research tasks		
	Pest county (2003)	Békés county (2005)	Heves county (2007)
segments by the value system and their features	„value seekers” (73persons)	„value seekers” (77persons)	„value seekers” (93persons)
	overall overestimated factors		
	„conservatives striving for calmness” (53persons)	„seekers of tranquillity and traditional values”(58 persons)	„family-centred traditionalists” (37persons)
	pursuing humane, moralist values		
	„pleasure seekers” (71 persons)	„pleasure-seeking hedonists” (47 persons)	„hedonists” (68persons)
	overestimating the importance of pleasurable life	pursuing value-centred target values, pleasure-seeking	

Source: own research 2003. N= 197, 2005. N= 182, 2007. N= 198

During the research tasks I examined what socio-demographic criteria defined belonging to the cluster significantly. The single value-system based segments showed similar characteristics during the research:

- Among the „seekers of tranquillity and traditional values” (58 persons, Békés county, 2005) the proportion of the married respondents aged between 36 and 50 was higher than expected.
- „Family-centred traditionalists” (37 persons, Heves county 2007) with the same value system also showed similar demographic features: most of them were married females aged between 40 and 59.
- Among the „value seekers” (N=77 Békés county, 2005 and N=93 Heves county 2007) the proportion of women with higher education qualification was higher.
- Among the „pleasure-seeking hedonists” (N=47 Békés county, 2005) and „hedonists” (N= 68 Heves county 2007) the proportion of single males of high income was higher than expected in both cases.

In case of all research tasks I could successfully employ segmentation by the value system, which referred to the relationship between food consumption and basic human value judgment.

3.1.2. Food consumer behaviour patterns: the segmentation role of the relation to time

During all research tasks it was my objective to differentiate the members of the sample by food consuming preferences. The analysis of how and by which ways the certain segments regarded the importance and role of time was of primary importance. The role of time was assigned a special importance during the examinations as I thought consumption outside the household as well as institutional catering could be related to time-conscious consumer behaviour. During the research a cluster analysis was carried out on the points of view of food consumption by K-means method.

Pest county (2003) brought along the following segments:

- „believers in healthy nutrition” (128persons), who seek food of rich vitamin content, high nutritional value and with an attractive appearance.
- „time-conscious consumers”, (33 persons) who assigned a significantly great value to the use of restaurants to save time.
- „gourmets” (36 persons), for whom the flavour, smell and appearance of the food were decisive.

In the light of my results I thought it was worth examining the role of time in more details among the preferences of food consumption and handle eating in a restaurant separately. On the basis of my experience a revised and added list of factors was tested in 2005 and 2007.

With the help of the new list I could also analyse the question of time consciousness in a more dimensional way. Table 4 contains the features of the food consumer groups created by the segmentation processes.

Table 4: Food consumer segments and their features on the samples in Heves and Békés county

	research tasks	
	Békés county (2005)	Heves county (2007)
segments by the value system and their features	„price-and time-oriented” (25persons) seek food which is easy to prepare, packaged in practical packaging at an advantageous price. The criteria of factors easing cooking and cheapness determined their preferences. Due to their price sensitivity it is not surprising that they are not the regular guests of restaurants.	„price-conscious food customers” (23 persons) solely perceived the criterion of „cheapness” as more important than average. For them neither time nor comfort not even quality is a decisive factor, they exclusively look at the prices when buying food.
	„traditional food consumers” (41 persons) choose food on the basis of the primary utility factors such as price and quality. Eating out is not typical of them, either.	„time-and price oriented” (24 persons) assigned great importance to time in food preparation. They seek time saving practical solutions but choosing restaurants instead of cooking is not typical of them-no wonder due to their price sensitivity.
	„frequenters of trendy restaurants ” (71 persons) overestimate all criteria except price related ones („value for money”, „cheap”). According to them, they more frequently visit restaurants than average.	„frequenters of trendy restaurants ” (99 persons) besides price-related factors they regarded all criteria more important than the sample mean. Frequenting a restaurant was very common for them.
	„time conscious quality oriented” (45 persons) prefer fresh and tasty food of high quality. They are the most frequent visitors of restaurants. They also count on institutional catering on weekdays as an alternative to cooking.	„gourmets” (51 persons) like fresh, tasty and varied food.

Source: own research 2005. N= 182 persons; 2007. N= 198

To sum it up, I concluded that the judgment of the importance of time per food consumer segment was significantly differentiated. All this suggested for me that the role of time must be analysed and is essential to examine from several aspects.

In the phase of food preparation the appearance of segments overestimating the time factor showed that it was worth analysing the role of time separately in the light of nutrition habits and

attitude to cooking. Knowing them I thought when summarising the factors affecting the choice of the way of institutional catering in a model, these variables should also be included. The appearance of status-expressing segments seeking the possibility of demonstrative consumption suggested that examining lifestyle at food consumer groups could convey important information. I decided on analysing free time structure as the easiest measurable element in lifestyle and part of lifestyle most indirectly reflecting relations to time. In relation to the polarisation of the time conscious segment, it was realised that not only food consumer preferences but also lifestyle and the value system could explain who and how many persons and by what means utilise the possibility of eating outside the household as well as institutional catering.

I think it is important to mention that both groups by the value system as well as food consumers could be well defined with socio-demographic features, as well. This result urged me to include these primary criteria in my theoretical model.

3.2. Creating a theoretical model

It was my objective to construct such a consumer model that summarises the variables which influence the way of institutional catering chosen by the individual. As far as I know, a model valid for the consumer market of institutional catering has not been constructed so far in Hungary and neither have thorough consumer examinations concentrating on this way of eating been carried out, I could only rely on the results of the examinations found in the specialist literature of eating out. That is why doing preliminary research that could assign the main directions of constructing a model is of primary importance in my opinion (Table 5).

Table 5: Factors and sources of the theoretical model

Model factor	Short explanation, justification, description	Source
value system lifestyle	The value system based (food) consumer preferences proved the relationship between the consumers' choices of concrete food and the attitude to general human values. My preliminary research tasks also justified that the value system was a well applicable segmentation criterion on the food consumer market.	Gutman (in: Lehota 2001) Grunert 1996, Horváth 1996, Daagevos –Gaasbeck 2001, Preliminary research 2003. 2005. 2007.
socio-demographic features	The characteristic features of customers based on their socio-demographic features: gender, age, marital status, income, qualification, residence, type of residence, the number of the members of the household, the size of households, the income situation of the individual and due to their impact on eating outside the household these were adapted to the model summarising the factors determining the choice of the way of institutional catering amended by the basic variable, position.	Becker 1965, McCracken-Brandt, 1987 Nayga-Capps 1994, Byrne, et al 1998, Hiemstra-Kim 1995, Geyer-Alléy 2002 Blisard-Cromartie 2001, Cromartie 2002, Kinsey 1990 Hayden et al. 2007, GfK 2003, Mikesné 2004
food consumer preferences	The adaptation of food consumer preference as a factors influencing eating outside the household even suggested by the results of the preliminary research according to which food consumer segments were differentiated by the frequency of the use of institutional catering.	Blisard-Cromartie 2001 Preliminary own research: 2003. 2005. 2007.
habits of nutrition	The impact of the attitude to cooking on eating outside the household and its adaptation to the model of institutional catering as a factor of nutrition habits.	Becker 1965
subsidies	Subsidies like luncheon vouchers provided by the place of work.	Preliminary research 2003. 2005. 2007. Adler-Akar 2006, Mikesné 2004
circumstances of eating at work	Eating possibilities and facilities provided by the place of work.	
general features of the place of work	The number of employees, the ownership structure of the place of work.	

Source: own compilation

In my theoretical model (Figure 1) I analysed the impact of two variable-sets on the chosen way of institutional catering: the criteria that can be connected to consumers (marked in orange-yellow) and the features of the employer (in green-blue). The extrinsic environmental dimension comprises the whole model affecting employers as an organisation, individual as a consumer, i.e. the macro environment: cultural, political, legal, economic, technological, natural and demographic one.

Mainly secondary data were used for the creation of the model and partly the results of all my three preliminary research tasks as additional information. As they pointed out hypothetical and not generally proved relationships, I thought it necessary to carry out the qualitative-based validity analysis of the model, which helped redefining certain factors, building in new ones and discarding others in the theoretical model.

For the model validation, questioning of the experts was not used –although it is a fact that the interviews with specialists in the practice of institutional catering could have conveyed useful information but in my opinion no loss of information that could not be substituted for in a consumer model took place. The objective of another research could be the examination of the problems arising from the consumers' part and summaries in the model from the point of view of the caterers.

Nowadays the extent and the form of subsidies are linked to the general features of the place of work by the experts so they also became part of the model. The whole model is comprised by the extrinsic environmental dimension, the macro environment directly affecting employers as an organisation and individual as a consumer.

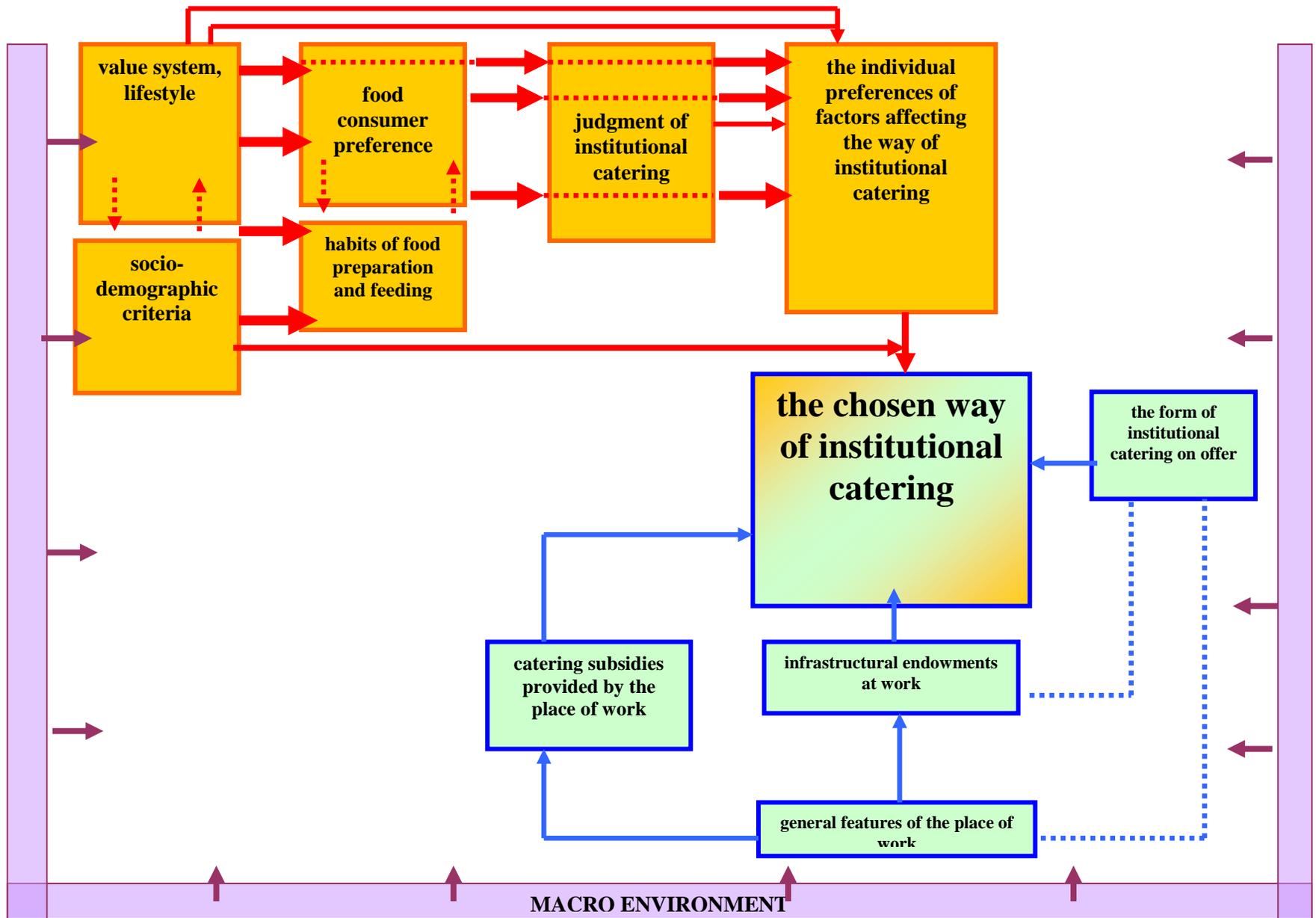


Figure 1: The theoretical model of factors affecting the chosen way of institutional catering

3.3. The result of the qualitative research

One of the objectives of my focus group examination was to test the validity of the theoretical model, to explore the factors playing a part in choosing the way of eating and to examine the general judgments of the alternatives in institutional catering.

Based on the summarised results of the qualitative phase, some alterations had to be made in the model (H1 is not justified). One of the changes was made concerning subsidies. To this point I thought of including it as part of the cafeteria system, in the form of luncheon vouchers. However, it turned out that vouchers for cold meals were rather linked to food purchase and not to the use of institutional catering. That is why a new type of subsidies was built in the model and named it direct subsidy whose main point is that the place of work takes directly part in the catering of its own employees by providing lunch at a discounted price at its own canteen operated totally or partly by the company. Another change was that I had to take out the macro environment from the theoretical model as it turned out that its thorough examination was beyond the frames of a consumer survey. I would like to emphasise again when interpreting the data that it is only about the semi-structured results of a qualitative sample whose primary aim is to show a kind of direction and not to draw general conclusions. Nevertheless, the information provided here shows a good direction and serve as a good guide to construct the research model and finalise the questionnaire of my quantitative research. The connection between the research model and the standardised questionnaire used for the national survey can be summarised as follows:

Table 6: The connection between the research model and the standardised questionnaire used for the national survey

Model factor	Short description	Question of the questionnaire	
value system lifestyle	Individual ranking of value factors, free time structure	Questionnaire IV / Question 22 Questionnaire IV / Question 21 a/b	Criteria attached to the consumer
socio-demographic features	gender, age, marital status, income, qualification, residence, type of residence, qualification, marital status, the size of households, the income situation	Questionnaire IV / Question 23-27 Questionnaire IV / Question 30-32	
food consumer preferences	judgment of the utility factors of food consumption	Questionnaire IV / Question 1	
habits of nutrition	eating habits, attitude to cooking, the method of getting information on nutrition	Questionnaire IV / Question 2. 3-4/b, 5-9.	
judgment of institutional catering	judgment of institutional catering based on time, comfort and price	Questionnaire IV / Question 19	
individual preferences of factors affecting the way of institutional catering	judgment of factors affecting the choice of the way of institutional catering	Questionnaire IV / Question 20	
catering subsidies ensured by the place of work			Features perceived by the employer consumer
direct subsidies	subsidy built in the price of lunch	Questionnaire VI/ Question 17 a/b	
indirect subsidies	subsidy in the form of hot dishes	Questionnaire IV / Question 18 a/b	
Infrastructural endowments at work	possibility of consuming hot meals, premises reserved for consumption	Questionnaire VI/ Question 12-13.	
general features of the place of work	number of employees, ownership background of the place of work	Questionnaire IV / Question 33-34.	

Source: own compilation

The final structure of my research model was created after these modifications (Figure 2).

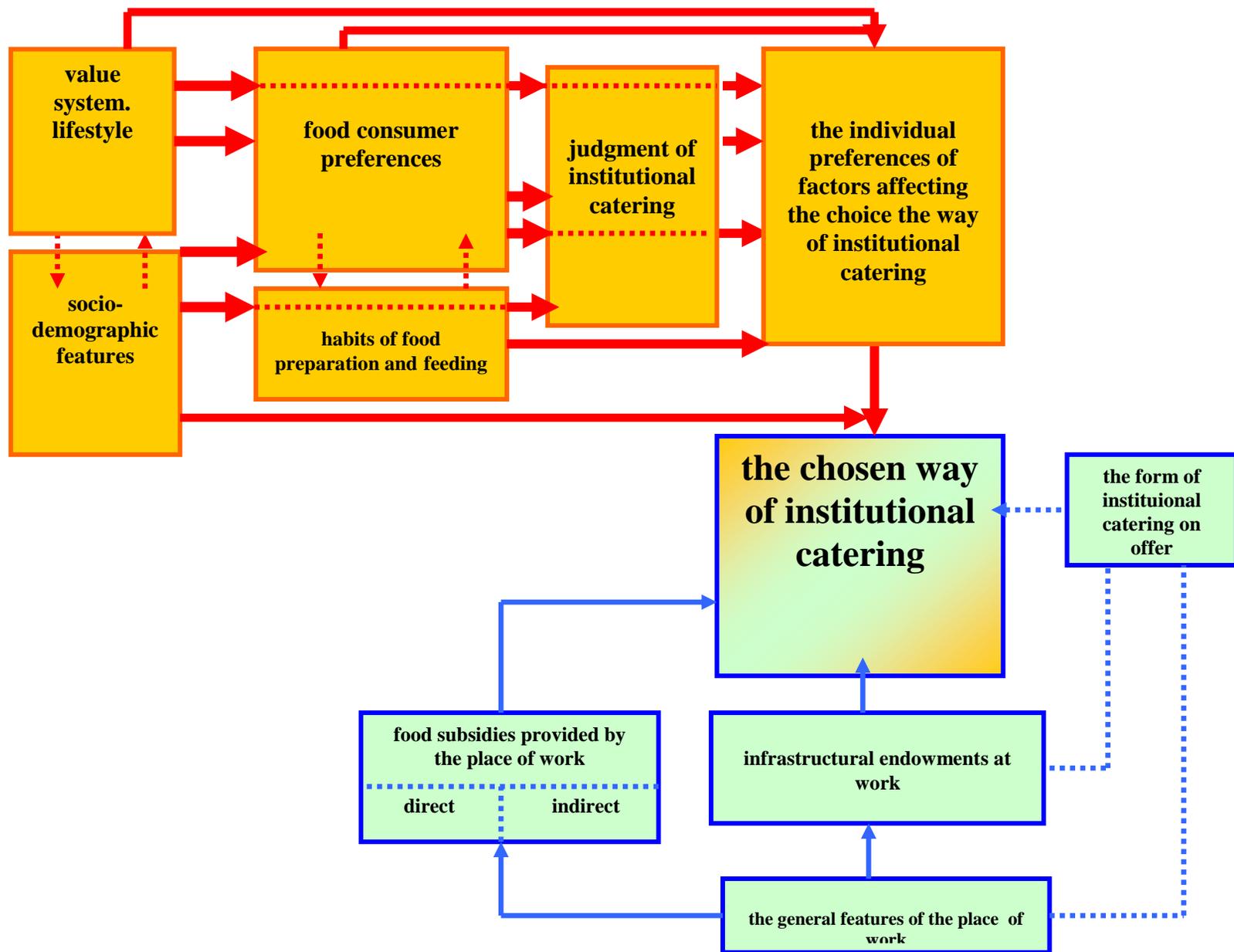


Figure 2: The research model of the factors affecting the chosen way of institutional catering

Source: own compilation

3.4. The result of the quantitative research

3.4.1. The results of the value system-based segmentation

My model serving as the basis of my research is built on the relationship between the value system-based theories. That is why one of my objectives was to explore the link between the segments grouped on the basis of the value system and the consumer groups as well as the target groups formed on the individual judgment of the utility factors of institutional catering (C4). At first I segmented the sample by the value system. A cluster analysis was carried out on the factor groups of the value factors by K-means process. The procedure resulted in the following segments:

- „hedonists” (110 persons),
- „those who want to comply” (500 persons),
- „without preferences” (123 persons),
- „moralists” (267 persons).

3.4.2. Groups formed by food consumer preferences

As the second step I created food consumer behaviour patterns by judging the utility factors of food choice. As a result of the K-means cluster analysis on the factors, the following segments could be distinguished:

- „trendy health oriented” (118 persons),
- „time conscious ones” (126 persons),
- „those who meet the requirements” (253 persons),
- „quality oriented” (165 persons),
- „without motivation” (144 persons),
- „price conscious ones” (191 persons).
-

3.4.3. Groups by individual preferences affecting the selection of institutional catering

As the third step the sample was segmented by K-means cluster analysis on the factors affecting the choice of the way of institutional catering. The process resulted in the following target groups:

- „lovers of comfort-oriented traditional flavours” (126 persons),
- „overestimating everything” (241 persons),
- „price conscious ones” (180 persons),
- „fashion oriented” (137 persons),
- „seekers of fast solutions” (190 persons),
- „without priority” (120 persons).

All the segments were characterised by primary criteria at all times and the results obviously show that these features linked to the consumers show a tight relationship with the chosen form of institutional catering.

By describing the secondary features of the segments it was proved that the socio-demographic features of the consumer (1), their food consumer preferences (2), eating and feeding habits (3), attitude to institutional catering (4) and the preferences of choosing the form of institutional catering (5) indirectly affect the way of institutional catering.

In my research model I presumed that the socio-demographic features directly affect choosing the form of institutional catering so this relationship was also analysed separately.

By summarising these results I concluded that the socio-demographic character of those who frequently make use of institutional catering –regardless its form- are the following: young, city-dweller male aged 18-39 with higher education qualification and high income.

3.4.4. The connection between consumer behaviour patterns and food consumption as well as the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering

One of the main objectives of my research was to explore the most important links between the consumer behaviour patterns created by the value system, food consumer groups as well as the segments created by the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering. One of my hypotheses is that the value system determines consumer decisions either on food purchase or choosing the way of eating on weekdays (H 12 a.b.c.).

After the separation and characterisation of the segments by value-system based behaviour patterns and food consumer preferences, I examined what relationship these target groups had. The basic objective of my analysis was to prove the validity of the value theory of consumer behaviour in food consumption, as well.

3.4.4.1. The connection between value-system based behaviour patterns and food consumer segments

After the separation and characterisation of the value-system based behaviour patterns and the segments by food consumer preferences I examined what relationships these target groups showed. It was my basic objective to examine that the attitude to basic human values also appears in the concrete food consumer behaviour due to the value theory. I could explore well explicable common points both professionally and statistically between the consumer types created and the segments by food consumer preferences (H12 a justified). Table 7 summarises the results of the correlation examinations.

Table 7: The connection between value-system based behaviour patterns and food consumer segments

Segments by value system / Food consumer segments	Trendy health oriented N=118	Time conscious N=126	Those who meet the requirements N=253	Quality oriented N=165	Without motivation N=144	Pprice conscious N=191
Hedonists N=110	13.6% AdjR=0.9	21.4% AdjR=4	7,1% AdjR=-2.3	9.7% AdjR=-0.6	8.3% AdjR=-1.1	11% AdjR=0.0
Those who want to comply N=500	31.4% AdjR=-4.3	28.6% AdjR=-5.1	69,2% AdjR=7.1	42.4% AdjR=-2,1	50.7% AdjR=0.2	56% AdjR=1.9
Without preferences N=123	23.7% AdjR=4.1	23% AdjR=4.0	5,1% AdjR=-4.0	9.1% AdjR=-1.3	18.1% AdjR=4,1	5.8% AdjR=-3.0
Moralists N=267	31.4% AdjR=1.2	27% AdjR=0.1	18,6% AdjR=-3.4	38.8% AdjR=3.8	22.9% AdjR=-1,1	27.2% AdjR=0.2
	Negative deviation from the value expected					
	Positive deviation from the value expected					

Source: own research, 2008. N=997; levels of measure: nominal, Chi-square trial, value=AdjR=adjusted standardised residuum; %=column percentage ratio of segments by the value system in the food consumer cluster

The „trendy health oriented” are typically the young, city dweller females who stated that for them a decisive point when buying food was that it should be low calorie content and free from artificial agents but rich in vitamins. Regarding their eating and nutrition habits they were not at all consequent to their food consumer preferences: they go to fast food

restaurants and often use instant canned ingredients for cooking. More and more it seemed that their health consciousness is fake, they just follow the trends and join what is topical.

Their value system also shows the signs of appearance because if they were health conscious consumers in real, we could expect to be more „moralists”, i.e. regarding human values and also health important among them. It is not the case. Mainly such sample members could be admitted to the group of „trendy health oriented” who belong to the segment of „without preferences”.

The segment of „without preferences” can be described by underestimating all value elements and do not regard anything really important. This mentality is in harmony with the patterns of apparent-behaviour typical of the food consumption in the group. So it is logical that the proportion of „those who want to comply” is much less in the „trendy health oriented” than on average as their overestimating mentality is far from the judgment of this food consumer segment.

„Time conscious” food consumers, who are typically single males aged between 30 and 39 regarded fast preparation more important than average. „Hedonists” represent themselves in a greater proportion of the segment than expected. However, „those who want to comply” account for a much smaller part. This correlation can be explained easily as the „hedonists” follow short-term target values wishing enjoyable life and freedom so for them free time is very important and their „time conscious” value attitude corresponds well to their food consuming expectations.

In the light of these characters it is understandable that „those who want to comply” account for a much smaller part in this food consumer group. At the same time, those „without preferences” show a greater proportion of the „time conscious” food consumers than expected. The existence of this relationship can be explained by the similar socio-demographic features of the two segments on the one hand and by the fact that the significant part of those „without preferences” follow the trendy, fashionable food consumer behaviour patterns on the other hand. That is why their proportion is greater in the two groups closest to the current trend in food consumption, i.e. those of „time conscious” and „trendy health oriented”. I think this also proves that the members of the group „without preferences” do not possess a characteristic, consistent value attitude, rather they follow the actual, trendy nutrition trends.

Most of the food consumers „who meet the requirements” are women with families from whom the value attitude without preferences as well as that of moralists are very far. In this food consumer group most of the members have a mentality and they are „who want to comply”. The group of „those who meet the requirements” and „who wish to comply” are characterised by a special attitude and they regarded everything important both in terms of the basic values and food consumption. The correlation between the two segments proves that who cannot or do not want to rank among the basic human value cannot have a characteristic presence ranking in terms of food consumer criteria. The appearance of this „extreme” group is a natural consequence due to the methodology of clustering procedure.

I think the existence of the common points and the fact that the cluster showed characteristic features from the aspects of both primary and certain secondary segmentation criteria suggest that it could be worth examining the reason for overestimation. In my opinion a preference order in which all factors are equally important suggests uncertainty and reflects such a form of behaviour that is not the consequence of the real, subjective value judgment of the individual. Behind the behaviour of „overestimating everything” there is a kind of need to comply because the individual thinks it is expected from them and it is the good solution.

„Quality oriented” are typically the elder, married men living in the countryside who overestimated traditional points of view in food consumption. They are also characterised by quality conscious behaviour regarding eating and nutrition habits and were consequent in their food preferences either considering the special features of institutional catering or those of eating outside the household. They are well characterised, quality oriented consumers so it is not surprising that most members confess „moralist” values. The proportion of „those who want to comply” is much smaller than expected, which can be explained by the differences in the value attitude and in the demographic features of the two segments.

The group of those „without motivation” is young men with high income living in the capital who do not regard anything important when buying food. The behaviour „nothing counts for me” reflected in the concrete consumer decisions is also typical of them on the level of the basic human values as most people with a value attitude „without preferences” can be found here, in this segment.

The „price conscious” food consumers are looking for cheap food of suitable quality, which proves the strong price consciousness typical of most domestic food consumers.

They do not show characteristic features either in eating outside the household, in institutional catering or eating habits. Their value judgment contains striking features regarding the fact that those 'without preferences' and underestimating everything represent an expressively slight proportion in this segment.

3.4.4.2. The connection between consumer behaviour patterns by the value system and the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering

As the second step I examined whether the validity of the value theory could be extended to decisions on preferences playing a role in choosing the way of institutional catering. In accordance with it I analysed what common points there were between the consumer segments of institutional catering and the value system based behaviour patterns (H12.b. justified). The results of the examination of relations are summarised in Table 8.

Table 8: The connection between the value system based segments and the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering

Segments by the value system/ Segments by the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering	Lovers of comfort and traditional tastes N=126	Overestimating everything N=211	Price conscious N=180	Fashion oriented N=137	Seekers of fast solutions N=190	Without priority N=120
Hedonists N=110	20.6% AdjR=3.7	8.3% AdjR=-1.6	6.1% AdjR=-2.3	8% AdjR=-1.2	22% AdjR=2.20	11.7% AdjR=0.2
Those who wish to comply N=500	34.9% AdjR=-3.6	68.9% AdjR=6.8	48.9% AdjR=-0.3	31.8% AdjR=0.5	27.9% AdjR=-0.9	30.8% AdjR=-4.4
Without preferences N=123	14.3% AdjR=0.7	5.4% AdjR=-3.7	9.4% AdjR=-1.3	32.5% AdjR=2.13	26% AdjR=2.10	36.7% AdjR=3.3
Moralists N=267	30.2% AdjR=0.9	17.4% AdjR=-3.8	35.6% AdjR=2.9	27.7% AdjR=0.2	24.1% AdjR=-1.6	20.8% AdjR=-2.4
	Negative deviation from the value expected					
	Positive deviation from the value expected					

Source: own research, 2008. N=997; levels of measure: nominal, Chi-square trial, value=AdjR=adjusted standardised residuum; %=column percentage ratio of segments by the value system in the food consumer cluster

„Lovers of comfort and traditional tastes” are the consumers typically with high income and higher education working as entrepreneurs who seek eating opportunities that ensure substantial meals for them together with traditional tastes and a wide range of convenience

services when choosing the way of eating. They want everything and do not want to miss anything. As the proportion of hedonistic consumers is greater than expected in the segment it seems that looking for pleasure and experience does not only characterise them in terms of eating habits but also on the level of attitude to basic human values. Knowing it, it seems logical that among the self-rewarding, freedom loving „lovers of comfort and traditional tastes” the number of „those who want to comply” is much smaller than expected.

Those „overestimating everything” are typically married women working as civil servants who regard all factors that can play a role in choosing the way of eating out more important than average. In this segments consumers-mainly females-who do not dare or want to judge anything less important than average are also present.

The connection between the value judgment and consumer behaviour refers to the fact that in this segment the proportion of „those who wish to comply” was significantly higher and that of those „without preferences” was lower than expected and not even the moralist way of thinking was typical of the members of this segment.

„Price conscious” are mostly women working as a civil servant with average income who cater for big families. These socio-demographic features forecast that they are consumers who take a closer

look at what and how much to spend on. This attitude leads them in the decision about the alternatives for institutional catering. They expect reasonable quality at good price and last but not least, the fact if their employers cover part of the expenses at their place of work is also essential for them. They are best characterised by behaviour free from extremities and inconsistency when judging the preferences affecting the choice of the way of eating as well as human values. The proportion of the moralists and those with a balanced value system is higher than expected and in the light of this it is not surprising that the „hedonists” with short-term thinking and selfish values represent themselves in a smaller extent in the segment.

„Fashion oriented”, among which the ratio of women with high income was more than expected, declared that for them the possibility for consuming organic and exotic food when choosing the way of institutional catering is the most important. They are who expect quality assurance from their caterer and provide adequate information to the guests about the actual offer.

In their system of preferences we can find the criteria that are regarded important by a modern, trendy consumer. If I include that most members of this group are those „without preferences”, my statements made about the „trendy health oriented” consumers also prevail here. I think the members of this group are so sensitive to the topical nutrition trends because they have no real and stable value system. They do not support a certain nutrition trend by faith, rather for pretension. Concealing their uncertainty they follow the trends about which the majority says are fashionable.

Men with higher education qualification are the „seekers of fast solutions” for whom the most decisive point is quick service when choosing a caterer. According to the consumer patterns the proportion of „hedonists” and those „without preferences” are bigger than expected. The attitude to appreciate time and free time also fits the hedonist behaviour. In my opinion, the relatively high proportion of those „without preferences” can be explained by the instable value system and inconsistent consumer behaviour of the target group.

Those „without priorities” are such a unique segment who assessed each factor below the average. Nothing was of greater importance than the average for them and did not strive to maximise any utility factor. The ratio of those „without preferences” in the group was higher than expected, which is in harmony with this form of behaviour. The overwhelming presence of „those who want to comply” and the „moralists” was not typical of the segment.

I think in the light of the results we can conclude that the prevalence of the value theories is also extended to the methods of institutional catering, i.e. the value system determines the individual preference of choosing the way of institutional catering and also the choice of the concrete alternative itself.

3.4.4.3. The connection between food consumer behaviour patterns and the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering

One of the main objectives of my examination was to prove that the connection between the segments formed on the basis of food consumer behaviour patterns and the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering does exist according to my hypothesis in the research model. This correlation was also separately analysed and I managed to prove that the results of the two segmentations are interrelated (H12 c justified). Table 9 contains the results of the correlation examination.

Among the „lovers of comfort and traditional tastes”, the „time conscious” ones of the food consumer segments represent a greater ratio than expected. So the fact that the main characters of food consumer preferences are reflected in the choice between the alternatives of institutional catering. The preference system of the „lovers of comfort and traditional tastes” shows the biggest difference towards the food consumers „who want to meet the requirements” and there are expressive differences between these two segments from all respects.

I think it is extremely important to mention from the point of view of examining the potential market of institutional catering that it is the „lovers of comfort and traditional tastes” who take the chance on institutional catering most of the time.

These results prove that one of the main markets of institutional catering that represents 12% of the whole sample is characterised by expressive time conscious food consumer behaviour and hedonistic value judgment.

Table 9: The connection between the segments by the choice of food consuming and the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering

Food consumer segments/Segments by preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering	Lovers of comfort and traditional tastes N=126	Overestimating everything N=211	Price conscious N=180	Fashion oriented N=137	Seekers of fast solutions N=190	Without priority N=120
Trendy health oriented N=118	7.9% AdjR=-1.5	11.7% AdjR=-0.1	8.9% AdjR=-1.4	24.1% AdjR=4.7	8.4% AdjR=-1.7	12.5% AdjR=0.2
Time conscious N=126	22.2% AdjR=3.5	7.1% AdjR=-2.9	7.3% AdjR=-2.4	8.8% AdjR=-1.5	18.4% AdjR=2.7	16.7% AdjR=1.4
Those who want to meet the requirements N=253	18.3% AdjR=-2.0	42.3% AdjR=6.9	27.9% AdjR=0.9	29.2% AdjR=1.1	14.7% AdjR=-3.7	7.5% AdjR=-4.8
Quality oriented N=165	15.9% AdjR=-0.2	12.6% AdjR=-0.19	17.9% AdjR=0.5	21.2% AdjR=1.6	14.7% AdjR=-0.7	20.8% AdjR=-1.3
Without motivation N=144	18.3% AdjR=1.3	3.8% AdjR=-5.4	15.6% AdjR=0.5	5.1% AdjR=-3.3	23.7% AdjR=4.0	25.8% AdjR=3.8
Price conscious N=191	7.4% AdjR=-0.5	24.6% AdjR=1.5	26.3% AdjR=2.4	7.7% AdjR=-2.4	18.0% AdjR=0.3	16.0% AdjR=-0.7
	Negative deviation from the value expected					
	Positive deviation from the value expected					

Source: own research, 2008. N=997; levels of measure: nominal, Chi-square trial, value=AdjR=adjusted standardised residuum; %=column percentage ratio of segments by the value system in the food consumer cluster

In the segment of those „overestimating everything” (about 24% of the whole sample) the members of „those who want to meet the requirements” are the majority of all the target groups of food consumption. Both the features of „time conscious food consumers”

and the behaviour patterns „without motivation” are very far from them. These correlations refer to the fact that overestimation and the way of thinking „I regard everything important so as not to lag behind the others” appear in the behaviour of a certain consumer group. They are the ones who prefer decision making appropriate if „meeting the requirements” on the level of basic human values, in food consumption and even in institutional catering. In the segment of those „overestimating everything” the majority of „those who want to meet the requirements” prefer eating out, especially frequenting classic restaurants but do not go for institutional catering. They are the ones who search for the possibilities of demonstrative consumption that typically expresses status in eating outside the household. As institutional catering cannot be regarded as a status symbol, no wonder that the members of this segment do not often go the canteens, fast food restaurant sin the vicinity of their places of work or inns.

The employees for whom „price consciousness” was dominant when choosing the way of institutional catering, they are also „price conscious” in terms of food consumption. The common feature of the two segments is that they expect good quality at a favourable price in both decision making situations. They do not strive to maximise pleasure, do not search for special flavours or specialities, rather they prefer simple offers of good quality they can afford.

The frequent visit to restaurants is not their characteristic, either. Nor do they take a frequent chance on the possibilities provided by institutional catering. In the light of the above mentioned things, it is not surprising that the presence of the „time conscious” food consumers is not decisive in the segment.

Making use of institutional catering does not really characterise the „time conscious” cluster, which is a regrettable fact as the group comprises a great number of consumers (18% of the total sample). Convincing them would mean a considerable market expansion for the institutional caterers. I think it would be most probable if a greater number of employers were willing to cover part of the employees’ costs of institutional catering. Maybe in the case of greater catering subsidies the price conscious group of consumers would be more open to institutional catering.

In the target group of „fashion oriented” the members of the segment „trendy, health oriented” were represented in a higher ratio than expected. The result is in harmony with the special features of the two segments outlined earlier. Both groups are comprised of consumers who, concealing their uncertain value judgment, support the actual nutrition trends typically not by faith, rather for pretension.

Eating outside the household is not typical of them but if they choose the possibility for institutional catering on weekdays, surprisingly they visit fast food restaurants with pleasure, whose menu is in contrast with the preference system of health conscious food consumption, thus strengthening the inconsistent behaviour of this group.

In the group of „fashion oriented”, besides those „without motivation”, the food consumers who are „price sensitive” are also present in a ratio that is slighter than expected. In the light of this we can presume that it is not due to their price consciousness that the „fashion oriented” do not make use of institutional catering, rather because of the fact that it is not trendy enough for them at present. In my opinion the members of this target group representing more than 13% of the total sample would be worth motivating to make use of institutional catering more often. I think such a communication policy or promotion campaign could be successful in this target segment that would be centred on a competent dietitian as a trustworthy leader regarded competent by the „fashion oriented”.

In the group of those „without priority” the food consumers „without motivation” were present in a greater, while those „who want to meet the requirement” in a slighter proportion than expected. This result justifies that the main features of food consumer preferences also affect the judgment of the factors considered when choosing the way of eating.

Among the „seekers of fast solutions” the food consumers who are „time conscious” and „without motivation” showed a greater proportion than expected while those „who want to meet the requirements” had a slighter one. The „seekers of fast solutions” is another segment whose members often eat out or at their places of work. The ratio of the group within the sample is 19%, which suggests that although it is not the biggest segment but keeping them is a strategic question for the caterers.

The results show that making use of institutional catering mostly correlates with time conscious food consumer behaviour as this food consumer feature is what the two target groups („seekers of fast solutions” and „lovers of comfort and traditional tastes) eating at their place of work most frequently have in common.

Besides time optimisation expectations for comfort, product quality and additional services also appear (e.g. the preference system of the „lovers of comfort and traditional tastes). I think the main points of breaking out would lie in the development of these service elements for the professional institutional caterers. Based on my research work I regard there are more points of view at the disposal of the players on the supply side of institutional catering to get to know their target groups so by means of target oriented marketing activities they could influence their potential clients more effectively.

Between the segments by the value system, food consumer and the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering I managed to explore the links that justified the basic correlation of my research model: the value system affects food preferences and even the individual preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering, which is also determined by the points of view of food consumption.

3.4.5. Analysing the criteria affecting the chosen way of institutional catering linked to the places of work

3.4.5.1. The role of subsidies in institutional catering

In my research model among the factors affecting the chosen way of institutional catering the criteria linked to the consumer have been examined so far and now I would also like to present how the features that can be linked to the employer can affect the way an individual chooses on weekdays.

In the first step of the examination of this nature I analysed whether there was a correlation between the extent of the costs of institutional catering covered by the place of work and the chosen way of institutional catering (Table 10).

Table 10: The correlation of the extent of the direct support provided by the place of work and the frequency of making use of institutional catering

the frequency of making use of the canteen	percentage of the costs of institutional catering covered by the place of work
	sig=0.000 F= 27.584
weekly	45.64
monthly	31.65
never	20.66
total pattern	34.44
the frequency of making use of the restaurant	percentage of the costs of institutional catering covered by the place of work
	sig= 0.001 F= 7.08
weekly	27.65
monthly	28.77
never	40.69
total pattern	34.44
the frequency of making use of the inn	percentage of the costs of institutional catering covered by the place of work
	sig=.0.000 F= 20.94
weekly	22.34
monthly	17.93
never	41.58
total pattern	34.44
the frequency of making use of the fast food restaurant	percentage of the costs of institutional catering covered by the place of work
	sig=0.047 F= 3.07
weekly	26.57
monthly	26.71
never	37.56
total pattern	34.44

Source: own research, 2008. N=997 levels of measure: proportional scale and nominal, One-Way Anova

A special attention was paid to this question as according to the specialists, subsidies can be an important drive in spreading institutional catering domestically. The results of my own research also proved the significance of subsidies as during the factor analysis the statements „could be paid by lunch voucher” and „the place of work should cover part of the costs” created a separate factor group as the elements of subsidies covered and did not merge with any of the service elements (see Table 28 earlier). The tightest correlation with the extent of the direct subsidy could be detected in the case of the canteen where a great part of the expenses are covered by the workplace in any form so employees are pleased to go to the canteen. The majority of the people make use of the possibility at places where hot meals at a discounted price are available for the employees.

However, the regular guests of the inns, restaurants and fast food restaurants are employees of such workplaces where the direct form of catering subsidies is not the common practice. Those who have

meals at the inns, restaurants and fast food restaurants weekly get direct subsidy of a much smaller extent than the average value of the sample. Of course, it does not imply that they only make use of the examined catering facilities because they are not given lunch at a discounted price at their place of work but the subsidies do affect the frequency of making use of the certain catering facilities is for sure.

If the place of work decides on indirect subsidies, i.e. provides its employees with lunch vouchers, it is favourable for the companies dealing with home delivery, buffets and fast food restaurants (Table 11). These are the places where the majority can change the vouchers. In the case of the canteen the correlation can also be shown but the difference is not of a great extent than experienced in the case of indirect subsidies.

Table 10: The correlation of the extent of the direct support provided by the place of work and the frequency of making use of institutional catering

the frequency of making use of the canteen	percentage of costs covered by the workplace in the form of lunch vouchers
	sig=0.001 F= 7.33
weekly	39.00
monthly	35.27
never	26.40
total pattern	31.97
the frequency of making use of the buffet	percentage of costs covered by the workplace in the form of lunch vouchers
	sig=0.029 F= 3.58
weekly	37.62
monthly	32.69
never	27.64
total pattern	31.97
the frequency of making use of home delivery	percentage of costs covered by the workplace in the form of lunch vouchers
	sig=0.003 F= 5.92
weekly	46.75
monthly	34.60
never	28.98
total pattern	32.05
the frequency of making use of the fast food restaurant	percentage of costs covered by the workplace in the form of lunch vouchers
	sig=0.000 F= 8.00
weekly	40.63
monthly	30.24
never	27.26
total pattern	32.05

Source: own research, 2008. N=997 levels of measure: proportional scale and nominal, One-Way Anova

3.4.5.2. Other infrastructural endowments that can be linked to the place of work

The use of certain alternatives is differentiated regarding the possibility of consuming hot lunch provided by the workplace as well as separate premises available for consuming food. It holds true in the case of the canteen that most of their regular guests work at such places that provide their employees with the possibility of consuming hot lunch on the spot. According to the results of the research a significant number of employees would have the possibility to consume hot lunch on the premises but they prefer going to restaurants or fast food restaurants at lunchtime and do not make use of this service.

Table 12: The connection between the infrastructural endowments of the workplace and the frequency of making use of institutional catering

Criteria linked to workplace	canteen	buffet	restaurant	home delivery	inn	fast food restaurant
Possibility for consuming hot lunch at the place of work	sig=0.000 Adj.R= 16.9 91.3% of the regs have one and use it	sig=0.000 Adj.R= 6,5 68,4%- of the regs have one but do not use it	sig=0,000 Adj.R= 10.7 87.7%- of the regs have one but do not use it	sig=0.000 Adj.R= 4.6 23.2%-of the regs do not have it but would use it	sig=0.000 Adj.R= 5.3 75.2%- of the regs do not have it and would not use it	sig=0.000 Adj.R= 4.5 73,4 of the regs have one but do not use it
Type of workplace	sig=0.003 state, local government 34.2% Adj.R= 2.9	sig=0,034 foreign 33,7%- Adj.R= 3,16	sig=0.000 foreign 32.2% Adj.R= 4.5	sig=0.012 mixed 58.2%- Adj.R= 2.4	sig=0.019 national 32.8%- Adj.R= 2.8	sig=0.000 Adj.R= 4.7 32.5%-of the visitors who never go there are employed by the state or local governments
Number of employees (at those who make use of the given type of catering facility minimum once a week)	sig=0.000 above 250 persons 38,4% Adj.R= 4.1	sig=0,008 above 250 persons 33,2% Adj.R= 2,3				
	Adj.R >= 2: of 95% reliability a positive deviation from the expected level					
	Adj.R >= 3 : of 99% reliability a positive deviation from the expected level					

Source: own research, 2008. N=997 Levels of measure: Chi square trial, values: AdjR=adjusted standardised residuum %=the ratio of the number of employees at a given place of work who make use of the given catering type at least once a week

This phenomenon proves my experience gained during my focus group examinations, i.e. there are such employees who search for solutions outside the place of work despite the possibilities and endowments of the workplace.

The same holds true for the regular guests of the buffets. In spite of the fact that they could choose hot meals for lunch at their places of work, they rather look for cold ones that appease their hunger. Both correlations suggest that the individual eating habits and expectations to food are also decisive in the way they consume at work not only the possibilities offered by the place of work.

The results show that the great bulk of employees who decide on inns would prefer hot meals at work if they had the chance. The same holds true for almost 30% of those requiring home delivery services. These correlations are also significant from a practical point of view as they suggest that most of the users of these alternatives would be open to canteen if this chance were offered for them at work.

The analysis showed that facilities at work have a role what way of eating is chosen by the employee but its weight and extent are not the same in the case of the single alternatives. There are ways of eating whose frequency of usage can be tied to the subsidies and facilities (e.g. canteen) on offer provided by the workplace tighter and some are looser (fast food restaurant, buffet, restaurant).

The frequency of using the single alternatives can only be defined by the basic features of the place of work. Among the regular guests of buffets and restaurants the employees of foreign companies (multinationals) with a lot of staff represent a proportion higher than expected. Among those who require home delivery on a weekly basis again the employees of companies of mixed ownership showed a positive deviation from the expected value while in the case of inns the employees of the national companies are dominant. Among the employees of state-or local government-owned the number of those, who could not be characterised by having lunch in fast food restaurants at all, was higher than expected. They are rather regs to canteens. This result justifies the experts' opinion, i.e. state-and local government-owned companies lead in subsidising directly the catering of their employees by running a canteen successfully and providing hot meals at a favourable price.

4. NEW SCIENTIFIC RESULTS

1. Based on the theoretical summary of the topic I have identified the consumer motives affecting institutional catering (T1). In my paper I summarized the results of national and international studies and models examining the factors codetermining the quantity and quality of eating outside the household. To the best of my knowledge there is no scientific work in the national specialist literature-that is why this synthesizing part of my dissertation can be regarded as new.

2. I have created my own research model on the factors affecting the mechanism of the chosen forms of institutional catering (T2). One of the main objectives of my dissertation was to create the theoretical model of the factors affecting the chosen way of institutional catering at workplaces. Following the basic structures of the value based food consuming models and adapting the factors affecting consumption, I have created my own theoretical model which was made more precise and finalised after the qualitative phase of the empiric study. The connections among the factors of the research model like the factors affecting eating habits at workplaces have been proved by the results of the quantitative research. By doing this I have proved that my model is valid in this form.

3. I have explored the connections between the value system, food consumption and the individual preferences of the chosen way of institutional catering. I have proved that the value theories are valid on the consumer market of the food and institutional catering (T3). The value theories that explain the (food) consumers' behaviour and food selection by the attitude to basic human values meant a starting point for me when creating the basic structure of my theoretical model. During my quantitative research I have managed to prove that there is a correlation between the segments by the consumer behaviour patterns formed on the basis of the value system, preferences of the food consumers as well as those of choosing the way of institutional catering. During the exploration of the links between the groups I could justify that the value system determined the individual food consumer's decision and affected the judgment of factors playing a role in the selection of the way of institutional catering, which is also determined by food consumption.

4. I have identified the factors affecting the selection of the way of institutional catering, I have segmented the sample by individual preferences and characterized the groups formed on the basis of basic and descriptive variables (T4). Based on the further results gained during my empiric research I have managed to create the consumer target groups that can be regarded as separate segments from the point of view of the factors affecting the way of choosing institutional catering. I have explored the orientation directions alongside which these segments can be well defined by the choice of the way of eating. Six consumer target groups have been identified along the dimensions of time, price, quality and comfort as a result of segmentation. I have identified the socio-demographic differences shown by the segments as well as the characteristic features reflected in lifestyle-dimension, food consumption, eating habits, judgment of institutional catering as well as in habits of eating at the place of work.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the summarising analysis we can conclude that the central values in the West-European tendencies are health, ethics, time and hedonism. These values also play a significant part in the decision making system of the Hungarian consumers but in a little bit altered form adapting to the local features. The preliminary research tasks aimed at exploring the theoretical correlations of the food consumer behaviour proved that the value trends determined the direction of changing the eating habits as well as their structural modification in the long run. The appreciation of time, the growing importance of health consciousness and the hedonistic approaches' coming to the foreground can be noticed in several aspects of our nutrition culture including the consuming habits of eating outside the household (C1).

The primary aim of my paper was to present the links that characterise common points in the value concept and the general consumer behaviour dimensions as well as in eating outside the household. This objective was accomplished during my literary review, which served as a suitable basis for analysing the special form of eating outside the household, i.e. institutional catering (C2).

One of the decisive objectives of my research was to construct such a theoretical model that summarises all the factors that can affect consumers when choosing the most suitable way of institutional catering to their needs among the possible alternatives (C3). As far as I know, no experiments have been attempted to such scientific examination of its kind and also the analysis of the consumer market of institutional catering has not been covered in Hungary so far. That is why I could only rely on the national and international studies assessing the special features of eating outside the household and this experience was adapted to institutional catering. When creating the basic structure of my theoretical model, my starting point was the common points in the value theory, according to which the consumers' decisions could be well explained by their attitudes to basic human values.

A further objective of my research served to prove the system of correlations in my model that was used to base my research topic theoretically and was directed at proving the tight relationship between the segments by the general value system, the utility factors connected to food consumption and the factors determining the way of institutional catering (C4).

The results of my preliminary research tasks suggested that my theoretical model in its original form did not serve the main objectives of my research so in the light of my qualitative research I reconstructed the model so it gained its final form (H1 not justified).

During the validity examination of the model I regarded it essential to prove that the users could make a difference between the single alternatives of institutional catering so they were able to characterise based on certain points of view and to qualify the possibilities by comparing them. The results of my qualitative research (focus group examinations) also reflect that the consumers place alternatives alongside the following five dimensions: time, comfort, quality, price and elements of the atmosphere (H2 justified).

My further hypotheses were linked to the correlation examination of my research model. The relationship between the value system, food consumer preferences and the ones forming the choice of the way of institutional catering showed the most extensive system of correlations in the model. During the quantitative research I strived to channel the results towards the creation of the model. As the first step, I segmented the sample based on three criteria: the value system, food consumer preferences and preferences forming the choice of the way of institutional catering (H3, H6, H9 justified).

The single consumer target groups were characterised by primary criteria (socio-demographic variables). Of course, I did not manage to state by each examined socio-demographic feature that in the case of the single clusters the given feature significantly determined belonging to the cluster. Apart from this I think that the hypotheses centred around it (H4, H8, H10) can be justified as it also derives from the methodology of the clustering process that there will be segments, especially target groups with a large number of elements, which are so heterogeneous due to the large set of elements that there is little chance to prove a significant difference in the case of each demographic feature. However, the content analysis proved that there is an explicable connection between certain socio-demographic features and the single segments.

Besides the primary criteria, the single target groups were also characterised by such secondary, descriptive variables that became relevant to prove the intrinsic logical relations in the research model.

I think it is one of my most important results that I managed to define the common points between the clusters formed by the three systems of criteria (unique, individual tastes playing a role in the value system, food consumer preferences and choosing the way of institutional catering). By this way I justified that besides the demographic factors regarded relevant by the experts, the individual value system, lifestyle, food preferences, eating habits and attitude to institutional catering also had a role what way they opt for on working days (H12a.,H12.b.,H12.c justified).

Of course, the basic variable of consumers, namely gender, age, marital status, type of residence, size of the household, income and position will keep on playing a dominant role in the individual habits of institutional catering. In my opinion by exploring the secondary criteria the segments that could be potential target groups for institutional caterers could be described more precisely and in more details.

I presumed that the segments formed by the preferences of choosing the way of institutional catering and food consumption could be well defined by all secondary criteria. During the research I proved that the single food consumer segments significantly differ regarding the way of eating, catering habits as well as eating outside the household and institutional catering while the free time structure did not show significant differences in all dimensions between the target groups (H8 not justified). This correlation can primarily be explained that the way of institutional catering as an eating situation has strong ties with the individual's use of time and everyday lifestyle. Among the segments based on the individual preferences of factors playing a role in choosing the way of institutional catering, a significant difference could be shown between the chosen form of institutional catering, the frequency of eating outside the household and the judgment of institutional catering in some but not all the cases (H 11 not justified).

In the case of the segments formed by food consumption and choosing the way of institutional catering the differences regarding secondary criteria suggest that besides the food consumer preferences, eating, catering habits as well as the attitude to institutional catering also influence the individual which way of institutional catering to choose.

One of the main objectives of my empiric research was to prove that the use of institutional catering does not only depend on the criteria that can be linked to the consumers but also they are influenced by the endowments of the place of work.

In the Hungarian specialist literature there are only hints but no concrete research results whether the catering subsidies provided by the workplace and infrastructural endowments as well could influence the active employees when opting for an alternative of institutional catering and choosing

the best that suits individual needs. I regard it a very important result of my examination to have proved that the indirect and direct support provided by the workplace had a decisive role in choosing the concrete facility of institutional catering. My research results proved that the canteen was most frequently visited by the employees if they could have lunch there at a discounted (subsidised) price. In contrast, the support given in the form of vouchers serves good to the turnover of home delivery, buffets and fast food restaurants. (H13 justified).

During my examinations I proved that the frequency of visiting the single catering facilities had a strong relationship with the catering and food consuming possibilities the places of work can or want to provide their employees (hypotheses H14 and H15 justified). It also turned out from the examination that the single alternatives of institutional catering could be associated with a certain workplace type. It was especially true for canteens, typically state-owned institutions or in the hands of local governments. My research results also justified what the specialists stated (Adler-Akar, 2007), i.e. the institutions owned by the state or local governments have a leading role in catering subsidies, especially in ensuring direct ones.

The practical applicability of the main results of the dissertation

In my opinion my research results can arouse the interests of the experts in practice as well, due to the following ones:

- Based on the segments formed during the examination estimation can be carried out on the size of the main target groups of institutional catering and their most characteristic features.
- My analysis proved that food consumer groups that can be regarded as the most important target market of institutional catering based on their choice of food can be characterised by secondary criteria. They belong to the „seekers of fast solutions” or „lovers of comfort-oriented, traditional tastes” among the certain food consumer segments.
- My results show that making use of institutional catering best correlates with time-conscious food consumer behaviour but besides time optimisation comfort, product quality and consumer expectations to additional services are also apparent.
- The experience of this research also means assistance for institutional caterers in defining their possibilities for developing and extending the market and identifying marketing activities suiting the target market requirements.

The main directions of continuing the research

- Further thinking the research model and extension of analysis to the organisational market.
- A complex analysis to what extent the perceived consumer aspects summarised in my established model differ from the real features of the organisational market.
- Examination of the real picture supply shows in parallel with consumer expectations and the real supply of the service providers in making use of institutional catering.

6. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS CONNECTED TO THE TOPIC

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IV.) Participation in research topics

2006-2009: scientific researcher in the Marketing-and Infor –Communication sub-part of Bioenergetics research project

2006-2008

Innovation research on behalf of OTP Garancia about the examination of the national savings and investment habits

2007- 2008

Innovation research on behalf of Coca Cola to examine the national consumer habits of fizzy soft drinks