Magdalena Kalińska-Kula
University of Lodz (Poland, 0000-0003-4809-1901)
Aleksandra Rudnicka
University of Lodz (Poland, 0009-0007-1298-2135)

Marketing Activities of Companies in International Markets in the Context of Cultural Differences of Coffee Market Consumers

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this article is to present the possibilities of differentiating the marketing activities of companies in international markets, considering the cultural background of consumer behaviour on coffee market. To meet the purpose of this article, empirical research was conducted in aa two-stage procedure. In the first stage of research, the observation technique was used, whilst the second stage involved a survey on a sample of 145 respondents from Poland and Italy, using an online questionnaire. The results of the observation, as well as research survey conclusions, confirmed the existence of significant differences within the scope of marketing tools shaped by the manufacturer of the coffee brand concerned on the Polish and Italian markets. Activities confirming, in particular, adjustment of products, distribution and promotion were noted. While interpreting research results, limitations such as non-randomised sampling and the relatively small quantity, which prevent the collected results from being regarded as representative for the target group, should be considered. The undertaken research aimed to fill the research gap relating to the diversification of marketing activities of companies undertaken in the global coffee market, in the context of cultural differences of consumers.

Keywords: international marketing, cultural environment, customers' behaviour, coffee market

JEL Classification: M31, Z1, F14, F23, L66

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Introduction

The increasing and progressive processes of globalisation and internationalisation, which have now become an integral part of contemporary world, exert a real impact on the world's economy as well as relationships between countries. One of the multiple effects of the escalation of the above-mentioned processes is that the modern market assumes an international character and nature, where numerous businesses thrive. Such companies not only attach great importance to convergent phenomena, but also to cultural differences perceived as determinants of consumer behaviour dependent on national culture. Knowing cultural determinants such as the preferences, values, customs, tradition and tastes of consumers from a given country, one may strive to develop specific and effective solutions for marketing activities undertaken on a global market (Bartosik-Purgat, 2011). This article fits into this line of considerations and aims at presenting the possibility of diversifying the marketing activities of companies on international markets, in the context of cultural determinants of consumer behaviour. Theoretical considerations are related to the coffee market, due to its universality and widespread use. Coffee is the second most sought-after product worldwide, its industry is worth more than 100 billion USD dollars on a global scale and consumers drink 500 billion cups of coffee per year (Ersoy et al., 2020).

Witin recent years a lot of research papers have been published, devoted to international marketing (Scopus base alone provides information on approx. 1400 documents published in the latest decade), but research works concerning cultural differences in the context of consumer behaviour are definitely less numerous (e.g. Moon & Oh, 2017; Sharifonnasabi et al., 2020; Bartosik-Purgat & Guzek, 2024), while research undertaken in the field of the coffee market are exremaly rare indeed (Bui-Kinh, 2019; da Cruz Correia et al., 2024). In this respect, the present article may have the potential to supplement the research gap connected with the occurrence of variations in marketing activities undertaken in the international coffee market in the contextvis-à-vis of cultural differences that characterise consumers representing various countries.

This article has been organised in the following way: part 1 is an introduction, next is a systematic review of literature related to key assumptions, international marketing tools and the cultural determinats of consumers behaviour on international markets, setting the fundamentals of theoretical empirical research. Part 3 presents the methodology of the research (context, sampling and application of measure). The fourth section presents the results of the research according to the order of empirical data collection, first presenting the results of the conducted observationsand then the results of the survey carried out among Polish and Italian consumers. Part 5 features a discourse regarding the achieved research results while part 6 is a summary with the emphasis on limitations and future research.

Literature review

International marketing and its key tools

The ever-present processes of globalisation and internationalisation, resulting from social, economic, technological and political factors, contribute to the internationalisation of business activity (Rymarczyk, 2005). According to the economic approach, the process of globalisation refers to business activity denoting the mutual interdependence, connections, similarity of consumption patterns in various countries and multifaceted relationships linking both economies and societies. Economic activity pursued by companies on an international scale is subject to interaction and interdependence with regard to activities undertaken by companies in various regions of the world (Narula & Dunning, 1998). The secondary effect is integration and the mutual penetration of national economies, their operations and various processes melting into one global system of interdependence as well as manufacturing, trade and investment relationships. This gives rise to a global economic system in which subsequent levels of globalisation activities can be distinguished such as enterprise, market and economy (Oczkowska, 2007). Analyzing interrelations at the level of world economy, in particular sectors or markets, as well as business entities functioning within the micro-environment, globalisation should be perceived as a multi-tier process. As an integration of economic actors and systems, this process aims to reduce costs and also maximise the value of the products offered. In this respect cultural determinants play a significant role (Kuciński, 2002; Karcz, 2004).

The globalisation of the management and economic processes determines the intensification of the process of internationalisation, whereby an enterprise develops its commitment on foreign markets in order to successfully locate its economic activities there over time (Grzegorczyk & Szymańska, 2018). According to the Uppsala Internationalisation Model, companies start their expansion in foreign markets which are viewed as close to their domestic one, not necessarily in terms of geographical location, but rather due to culturalism and market peculiarity. Together with the increasing internationalisation, a company gradually enters and expands to more foreign markets, which are deemed more distant (By distance market, we also refer to psychic and cultural distance) (Hollensen, 2004).

Companies which conduct their business beyond their home market must accordingly adjust their measures, tools, rules and instruments that form the marketing mix to make it possible for the company to operate effectively on the foreign market. The international marketing-mix is a set of standard elements such as product, price, place (distribution) and promotion that are subject to adaptation on a foreign market. However, any action taken is the result of a predetermined international strategy, which is intended to lead the company to achieve the goals it has set for itself.

International marketing is the entire process of marketing activities implemented by the company as part of their operations abroad on the international and global market (Duliniec, 2004). In the case of international marketing, the number of specific countries or foreign markets to which the company expands is of no importance; what matters, however, is the activity itself on an international stage which consists of markets from at least two countries (Wiktor, 2009). International marketing not only involves analysis, planning and control of the company market relations, but also the coordination and supervision of marketing activities carried out in the home country in order to generally optimise profits and revenues on all national markets (Backhaus et al., 2001). Assuming that the activity of a company on the international market aims to meet the needs and demands of consumers through exchange processes taking place between various social systems (Karcz, 2004), it can be noted that marketing, in principle, implemented both in an indigenous country and on foreign markets, is governed by the same or similar principles and makes use of a universal set of tools and instruments (Altkorn, 2004). The specific character of international marketing results from entirely different or partly modified elements that make up the macro and micro-environment – such differences relate in particular to legal solutions, political systems, the economic situation and cultural distance (Wiktor et al., 2008). From this perspective, the essence of international marketing is the comprehensive, in-depth understanding of the foreign market environment. Both the selection of the marketing strategy and the degree of adaptation of marketing elements to suit the character of an environment and, particularly, consumers, depends on such knowledge. (Duliniec, 2007). The condition for the marketing strategy to be effective is to meet the needs and requirements of consumers relying on in-depth knowledge as well as insight into the process of buyers' decision making (Dimitrova & Yankova, 2015).

Adequate composition of the marketing-mix and its adaptation to the selected target market is a necessary element of marketing strategy (Wrzosek, 2004; Pomykalski, 2005). In the course of the development of the marketing mix, it is crucial to determine the strategic role of specific instruments and, further, to establish which of them are a priority (Dimitrova & Yankova, 2015). In addition, interdependencies between particular instruments should be taken into account and elements of the marketing-mix should be adapted to meet the identified needs of prospective consumers. At this stage, depending on the previously selected course of action by the company, instruments, as well as their hierarchy and structure. are changing (Johann, 2009), so that they can be used effectively sto shape and build market phenomena in the international environment (Limański & Drabik, 2010).

Marketing mix strategy on foreign markets can take either global, domestic or hybrid form. Global marketing mix strategy is based on the idea that there is a global consumer who has similar or homogenous needs, demands and preferences and operating under similar market conditions. In this case, identical marketing tools and instruments are used and, furthermore, their combination on foreign markets is exactly the same. Domestic strategy involves the implementation of a separate and personalised composition of marketing instruments in all the foreign markets where the company operates. By contrast, hybrid strategy relies on the standardisation of one of the marketing mix instruments, for example the product, and all the other tools are adjusted to particular foreign markets and local prospective consumers (Grzegorczyk, 2013).

In order to implement the global marketing strategy, the company must make decisions relating to the product. These include the shaping of the product structure, quality and material characteristics as well as developing the packaging, assortment, establishing a product brand and introducing product innovations/

variations (Duliniec, 2007). Analyses of the foreign market environment lead to measures aimed at product standardisation, adaptation or the introduction of new products (Kotler, 1994).

Product standardisation strategy refers to launching and placing goods or services that are relatively unchanged on foreign market. The main benefit of this strategy is that it is cost-effective. It is easier to standardise supply goods than consumer goods, and in the latter case – durable goods (Meffert & Bolz, 1994). It is far more difficult to standardise food products, which are considered non-durable goods (Smalec, 2012), since it is frequently necessary to adapt them to foreign markets, local consumer customs, preferences, tastes, habits and consumption patterns.

On the other hand, product customisation strategy is a process in which the company customises the products in order to align them with the specific needs of the target foreign markets and local conditions. Customisation may involve various elements of the product such as packaging, colour, size, product marking or methods of use (Grzegorczyk, 2013). Factors that favour product customisation include the diverse cultural conditions in the individual foreign markets, the prospect of achieving significantly more favourable economic conditions as a result of expanding or making changes to the product range, goods differentiation by consumers, increased demand for add-on versions and variations of the product, poor opinion or image of imported products due to the so-called "country-of-origin-effect - COO" (Terpstra & Sarathy, 1994).

In the same way as the product, the price can also be adjusted to local markets as an expression of polycentric policy. An alternative can be the global pricing policy which boils down to the unification of prices for all markets served by the company (Smalec, 2012; Grzegorczyk, 2013). A factor favouring the implementation of this strategy can be the development of technology which, by integrating different markets, makes it much more difficult to maintain diverse pricing policy at home and in a foreign country (Grzegorczyk, 2013). There are internal and external factors that affect decisions regarding the unification and differentiation of prices on foreign markets. Among internal factors are company strategic objectives with respect to a foreign market, the level of the company internationalisation and engagement in global activity, centralised management and decision-making with regard to marketing activities or lack thereof (Duliniec, 2007). External factors are deemed to be benchmarks which greatly influence the upper limit of the product's price (Pyka, 2021). These include all basic and major elements that characterise the market, namely demand and its flexibility, market competitiveness, legal and administrative restrictions, the economic situation and currency convertibility. Another feature that also affects the trend of price adjustment to foreign markets is the heterogeneity of the international environment (Duliniec, 2007). Research demonstrates that the impact and prevalence of the above-mentioned external or internal factors depends on a specific country and its economic and regional diversity (Samli et al., 1993).

Companies that operate in a foreign market pursue pre-determined marketing goals that also affect the distribution system. A key role in the selection of the distribution strategy play specific features and characteristics of a product since they determine the means and needs in terms of warehousing, transportation and the sale of goods. Convenience consumer goods that are characterised by low prices and daily use, including food products, can be delivered to the end buyer through medium, long and expanded distribution channels. A growing trend, however, is to shorten distribution channels in the case of products whose shelf life is short due to their physical properties, short-lived fashion trends or technology. Such products are frequently dealt with by launching the producers' own sales network in order to maximise the volume of turnover. On the other hand, technically complex products are supplied to foreign market using significantly shorter distribution channels due to consumer demands concerning the appropriate quality of products, terms of purchase and after-sales service (Limański & Drabik, 2010).

Any company thinking of launching promotional activities on foreign markets should, first of all, consider the cultural factor with all its components including nation-specific trade customs, language differences, behaviour inherent to a group of consumers or unique habits. This entails, among other things, the appropriate translation of advertising slogans or product labels, avoiding word-for-word translation (Grzegorczyk, 2013). While implementing a pre-defined promotion strategy in a foreign market, the company must also make a number of decisions relating to the degree and scope of adaptation or standardisation of such activities (Janeczke, 2013). The bigger and more obvious the differences between the home country and foreign country, the more the forms and channels of communication in those countries deviate. On the other hand, the more global, internationally well-established and recognizable the image and brands of the company are, the more important it becomes to standardise and unify its promotional activities (Duliniec, 2009). Moreover, during the initial internationalisation phase, the company often relies upon compulsory adaptation, however, as business activities develop on the foreign market, and experience grows stronger, standardised promotional activities on a global scale become possible with positive effects. Nevertheless, the full standardisation of promotional activities on the international market is generally impossible (Rymarczyk, 2002).

Cultural aspects of consumer behaviour on the global market

Culture, seen as the totality of tangible and intangible products of human activity, such as conduct, values, learned and acquired behaviour and their consequences, is identified with specific patterns of behaviour that are accepted by a given society, passed on to and instilled in subsequent generations (Linton, 1995). Culture is a specific set of products of human hands and mind at the same time, shaping and influencing subsequent human creations underpinning, in this case, the reasons of human actions (Skupna & Waszczyk, 2006). Culture, contemplated from the social perspective, is defined as a society-specific and learned lifestyle, a way of responding to stimuli coming from the environment and a unique type of interpersonal contacts (Hanna & Wozniak, 2001).

From the marketing point of view, a significant role is attributed to concepts such as culture of social groups which refers to prospective buyers (language, age and religious groups), trade or organisational culture and, particularly, culture of whole nations. National culture plays a special role in international marketing and as such is defined as a set of unique features, characteristic and typical for a country (Duliniec, 2006). The enormous importance of national culture stems from the diversity and complexity of cultures and their significant impact on general conduct and the actions of those forming them (Bartosik-Purgat, 2010). Possessing knowledge of the national culture of specific countries, as an element of the global environment, is crucial in the process of the selection of target markets, foreign market entry decisions along with a number of operational marketing decisions. Furthermore, in view of international marketing, possession of knowledge of national cultures allows grouping and appropriate clustering of national markets which share cultural similarity which, in turn, facilitates decision making regarding the regional standardisation of marketing activity (Duliniec, 2006).

Existing correlations between the characteristics of national culture and the behavioural patterns of buyers make it possible to properly adapt the marketing strategy that is to be implemented so that it aligns with the preferences, expectations and the needs of buyers determined by cultural factors (Nowacki & Fandrejewska, 2017). In the process of shaping and making decisions related to all the elements of the marketing mix in particular foreign markets, not only is the knowledge of national culture important, but also knowledge of cultural differences between various regions of the same country (Duliniec, 2006).

Two groups of stimuli can be distinguished that register in the buyers' consciousness and influence people's consumption choices. To the first group belong marketing stimuli and tools applied by companies, whereas non-marketing stimuli, independent of the company, belong to the second group. Among the latter are personal, psychological, social and cultural factors, which are deemed to have the greatest impact (Zięba, 2010). Cultural factors including the subculture from which as the consumer, the environment and social class originate, along with economic factors, determine and indicate values typical of a given society (Durksa & Hofstede, 2004). Therefore, de Mooji (2004) emphasises the relationship between consumer behaviour on a certain market with traits of society's culture. Duliniec (2006) notes that culture and a general system of values shared by consumers on a given foreign market determine the behaviour, lifestyle, preferences and needs of members of a given community. This affects buying decisions, the pattern of purchases of goods and services, attitudes towards various sources of information, such as mass media, and many other versatile elements that are critical for marketing.

An identical product sold on culturally diverse markets may be associated with different traditions regarding consumption. The impact of culture on the assortment of products available on the market is particularly noticeable in the case of eating habits (Wiktor et al., 2008). A certain contrast in the approach to the food preparation process is also highlighted, distinguishing, for example, the "fast food style" (Portugal, Italy, Spain, Greece, Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, Austria, Hungary), "celebration style" (Holland, Denmark, Finland, Switzerland) and "party-like style" (France, Poland, Norway, Ireland, Czech Republic) (Zięba, 2010).

Changes, diversity and the frequency of global processes that occur in the consumer environment influence consumer behaviour and buying decisions (Bartosik-Purgat, 2017). However, it can be seen that modern consumers are more and more often rejecting global lifestyles and ways of life, and therefore also behaviours, habits or brands that are known and established around the world. sThere is a spontaneous and growing emphasis on regional traditions, typical norms and a return to roots and culturally specific goods. In particular, it refers to food products as inhabitants of certain regions attach great importance to the protection of their culinary heritage and tradition. This "back to typical, local products and traditional eating customs trend" is mostly noticeable in highly developed countries (Wiktor et al., 2008). In those countries, there is a growing trend among consumers who cut themselves off from shared values, emphasizing their own unique culture, originality and individuality, instead (Smith & Bond, 1999). This phenomenon is known as divergence, i.e. drifting away and diversification of cultures, thus searching for one's identity It is worth noting that the inclination to cultural convergence, making cultures, standards and customs alike with increased interaction (Bednarski, 1998), is mostly popular among young consumers who are mobile, educated, possess a command of foreign languages, travel widely and are familiar with other, foreign cultures, markets and their products (Aldridge, 2005).

Despite the fact that globalisation which is heading towards uniformity on multiple levels is inevitable nowadays, in the contemporary world, not every consumer or member of a society is willing or capable of giving up their customs, values, traditions or norms. Needs, preferences and the habits of consumers from other countries seem to differ nowadays more than ever before. Kay (1999) notes that in such circumstances diversification is more important than the advantages of economy of scale, among other factors. Organisations that intend to market products in different countries must be sensitive to cultural factors at work in their target markets and challenge them. Only those companies that go to such lengths to deeply understand the market, their prospective buyers, and, further, adequately customise their products to the new environment, gain the competitive edge and can achieve success. Additionally, it should be stressed that it is seldom possible to market totally unchanged products in foreign countries, as in most cases slight customisation, if only in the scope of colour, design or package size, is necessary to make a more unique item matching consumer demands shaped by culture (Ratajski, 2009).

Research methods

The main purpose of this research was to determine and verify the possible differences in marketing mix activities undertaken by organisations operating in international markets in the context of cultural determinants of consumer behaviour in these markets. The research was carried out on the coffee market, focusing on marketing activities undertaken in Poland and Italy by Lavazza global brand. The coffee market was purposely chosen due to the universality of the product which continues to thrive as one of the most consumed beverages globally. In turn, the decision to choose a manufacturer brand from the Italian market was dictated by the country's firmly entrenched coffee-drinking culture. A number of research questions were posed for the purpose of undertaken research.

RQ1. What assortment of Lavazza coffee varieties is available in Poland and Italy?

1.a. How many varieties of Lavazza brand can a consumer buy at an average shop in Poland and Italy?

1.b. What is the size of the bags of Lavazza coffee sold in Poland and in Italy?

RQ2. How is the price of Lavazza coffee being shaped by consumers on the Polish and Italian market?

RQ3. How is the availability of Lavazza coffee managed in Poland and Italy?

RQ4. What promotional campaigns are being implemented by Lavazza brand in Poland and Italy?

4.a. How often are Polish and Italian consumers presented with particular forms of Lavazza brand advertisements?

4.b. Are promotional activities launched by Lavazza brand on social media noticeable in Poland and Italy?

RQ5. What kind of product is Lavazza coffee perceived as among Polish and Italian consumers?

In the course of the collection of input data, a two-stage research procedure was carried out. In the first stage of research, the observation technique was used in order to directly identify how particular elements of the marketing offer are shaped on the surveyed markets. The second stage involved research survey to obtain information on the perception of marketing instruments by consumers in the surveyed markets, using an online questionnaire. Application of research method triangulation, including a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, allowed for a broader context of the phenomenon under research, ensuring a higher level of quality of the research conducted and reducing the number of errors resulting from the use of only one research method.

During the first stage of research, observation of three of the most popular and frequently visited grocery stores in Italy and Poland was carried out. The research tool was an observation report sheet. In Italy, the following stationary outlets of stores were observed: Coop, Conad and Carrefour, whilst in Poland: Auchan, Biedronka and Lidl. Research was conducted in late August and early September 2023.

In the course of stage 2 a consumer survey was conducted between 4 and 14 September 2023 using questionnaire as a measuring instrument. The questionnaire was prepared in Polish and subsequently translated into Italian so that the survey could be conducted in both countries simultaneously (the questionnaire consisted of 22 closed questions, the only difference being the language itself). Researches have chosen convenience sampling and the sample size was 145. The sample included 74 consumers from Poland and 71 consumers from Italy. The research trial structure has been presented in Table 1.

The survey sample included an equal proportion of men and women from Poland and Italy. Additionally, respondents from Poland and Italy were similar in terms of age and education. Both sub-groups were dominated by individuals between 26-45 years of age (just above half of the respondents) and with higher education (more than 2/3 of respondents). However, certain differences were found among respondents from both countries concerning the financial standing of the household and the size of the place of residence Every two out of four respondents from Poland were residents of cities with a population estimated at over 500.000 inhabitants; at the same time, almost every second respondent described the financial standing of his/her household as good. In the case of respondents from Italy, nearly one third were residents of cities with a population ranging from 50,000 to 200,000 inhabitants, and two out of five respondents declared their financial standing as being "average".

Table 1. Respondent profile (%)

Profile of respondents	In total	Poland	Italy
SEX			
women	49.7	58.1	40.8
men	50.3	41.9	59.2
AGE			
over 25 years of age	38.6	36.5	40.8
26-35 years	31.0	36.5	25.4
36-45 years	20.0	13.5	26.8
over 45 years	10.4	13.5	7.0
EDUCATION			
basic	2.8	2.7	2.8
secondary	29.7	28.4	31.0
higher	67.5	68.9	66.2
FINANCIAL STANDING OF HOUSEHOLD			
very poor	0.7	1.4	0.0
poor	7.6	0.0	15.5
average	35.2	29.7	40.8
good	42.7	48.6	36.6
very good	13.8	20.3	40.8
SIZE OF PLACE OF RESIDENCE (NUMBER OF INHABITANTS)			
village	6.9	5.4	8.5
up to 20,000	10.3	2.7	18.3
20,000-50,000	11.7	9.5	14.1
50,000-200,000	26.2	21.6	31.0
200,000-500,000	16.6	18.9	14.1
over 500.000	28.3	41.9	14.1
Total of	**145**	**74**	**71**

Source: author's elaboration based on research results.

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In the course of analyses, researchers attempted to ascertain if the distributions of variables in each group of respondents representing the two countries were identical or whether they differed from one another. In order to test the differences in the variables' distribution, the Mann-Whitney nonparametric test was used due to the fact that the distribution of dependent variable values deviated from normal distribution and moreover some response variables were measured on an ordinal scale. To describe the collected data, measures of central tendency such ass mean (M), median (Me) and measures of variation, i.e. standard deviation (SD) were used. The statistical significance of the relationship between variables was determined on the basis of chi-square independence test, while the strength of association between variables characterised according to nominal and ordinal scale was measured with Cramer's V. All calculations were performed in SPSS for Windows (version 28.0).

The research results were presented according to the order of empirical data collection, with the results of observation coming first, followed by the results of survey research.

Research findings

Adaptation of Lavazza's marketing mix instruments on the international market in the light of observation results

Lavazza emphasises that one of the main objectives of its strategy is to create value for all its consumers and the communities for which the company's activities are carried out, in all the markets it serves.. The full range of Lavazza brand consists of ground coffee, coffee beans and coffee capsules. Within each of the above mentioned coffee categories, it is possible to distinguish a variety of kinds, flavours and intensity. The results of the observation test indicate that Italian consumers can choose from a wide range of different Lavazza coffees which are available in grocery stores. On the other hand, an analysis of the availability of Lavazza brand coffee in Polish stores shows that domestic consumers can choose from a significantly smaller range of coffee products (Table 2). In the case of ground coffee available in stores in Italy which were covered by the survey, ten varieties of Lavazza coffee were noted on average, while in the stores in Poland which were surveyed, there were only up to three varieties available on average. In the case of coffee beans, Poles can choose, on average, from among four types, while Italians can choose from among six varieties. Lavazza coffee capsules are not reported in Polish stores, while the home market offers between 2 and 23 varieties of coffee capsules in the surveyed stores.

It should be noted that the packaging size of Lavazza coffee on the Polish market has been adjusted. It has been observed that in Italy, apart from standard, single ground coffee packages of 250 g, stores often sell the combined twin pack (2x250g) or even the quadruple pack (4x250g) of the same coffee without the option of separating them and buying a single pack. On average, about twice as many types of coffee are sold in twin packs than in single packs, while up to four coffee varieties are offered in quadruple packs on average. It is worth emphasizing that in all the Polish stores covered by the analysis and research observation, only the most basic, standard size pack of 250g of ground coffee are available without the option of buying other sized packages. Moreover, in Polish stores consumers can find Lavazza ground coffee in "cylinder-type" packages, which resemble an aluminum can and is often used for other brands instant coffee. This type of packaging has not been noted for the same coffee variety in Italian stores. Accordingly, one may conclude that the "cylinder-type" package is also the effect of the adjustment of the Lavazza brand to the foreign market. As far as coffee beans are concerned, packs of 500g and 1000g have been reported to be in stock both in Poland and Italy.

Table 2. Types of Lavazza ground, beans and coffee capsules available in Italy

Product	Poland	Italy
Ground coffee	Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Classico*; Lavazza *Qualita Oro Perfect Symphony* (Lavazza *Qualita Ora Sinfonia Perfetta*); Lavazza *Qualita Rossa*	Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Classico*; Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Dolce*; Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Ricco*; Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Forte*; Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Classico Espresso*; Lavazza *Qualita Rossa*; Lavazza *Qualita Rossa Macinato;* Lavazza *Caffe Decaffeinato*; Lavazza *Qualita Ora Sinfonia Perfetta*; Lavazza *iTierra! Bio-Organic For Planet*
Whole bean coffee	Lavazza *Qualita Oro Perfect Symphony* (Lavazza *Qualita Ora Sinfonia Perfetta*); Lavazza *Crema Classico*; Lavazza *Caffe Crema Dolce*; Lavazza *Crema e Gusto*	Lavazza *Crema e Gusto Classico Espresso*; Lavazza *Qualita Ora Sinfonia Perfetta*; Lavazza *Qualita Oro Espresso*; Lavazza *iTerra! Bio-Oragnic For Planet*; Lavazza *Caffe Decaffeinato*; Lavazza *Qualita Rossa Caffe*
Coffee capsules	-	Lavazza *Qualita Oro*; Lavazza *Qualita Rosssa*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Espresso Delizioso*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Espresso Passionale*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Espresso Intenso*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Qualità Oro*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Qualità Rossa*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Cremoso*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Orzo;* Lavazza *A Modo Mio Dek;* Lavazza *A Modo Mio Suerte*; Lavazza *A Modo Mio Caffè Ginseng*; Lavazza *Dek*; Lavazza *Dek Dolce Gusto Gentile*; Lavazza *Crema e Gusto Classico*; Lavazza *Crema e Gusto Forte*; Lavazza *Cappuccino Dolce Gusto*; Lavazza *Espresso Cremoso*; Lavazza *Espresso Intenso*; Lavazza *Espresso Maestro Ristretto*; Lavazza *iTierra! Bio-Organic For Planet*; Lavazza *Caffè Vergnano 1882 Cremoso*

Source: author's elaboration based on research results.

In order to analyse the price of Lavazza products on the Polish and Italian market, the ground and whole bean coffee varieties commonly available both in Poland and Italy were taken into account. The prices of ground coffee in 250 g packs and whole bean coffee in 500 g packs were analysed. To compare the price levels of products on both markets, the average Euro exchange rate applicable in the period of empirical data collection, i.e. in August 2023, amounting to 4.456EUR (National Bank of Poland, 2023) was used for calculations. Data relating to the compared coffee prices on the markets covered by the research are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Lavazza coffee prices on the Polish and Italian market

Type of coffee	Average product price*		
	Poland	Italy	
	in PLN (Polish złoty)	in EUR (euro)	in PLN (Polish złoty)**
Ground coffee (250g)			
Lavazza *Crema E Gusto Classico*	18.09	4.06	18.09
Lavazza *Qualita Oro Perfect Symphony*	22.20	5.60	24.95
Lavazza *Qualita Rossa*	21.98	4.21	18.76
Coffee beans (500g)			
Lavazza *Qualita Oro Perfect Symphony*	49.44	11.49	51.20

Note: * The average price was calculated as an arithmetic mean of the product prices offered in the following stores: Coop, Conad, Carrefour (Italy) and Auchan, Lidl, Biedronka (Poland) between 21-23.08.2023.
** The price after conversion, according to the exchange rate of 4.456€, dated 23.08.2023, published by the national Bank of Poland (2023)

Source: author's elaboration based on research results.

The prices of Lavazza ground and bean coffee on domestic and foreign markets are maintained at a comparable level. It should be noted, however, that despite the comparable level of Lavazza coffee prices on both markets, it could be perceived differently in view of the income of consumers in Poland and Italy. This results from the fact that the average annual employee's salary in Italy and Poland vary greatly. In the period of empirical data collection, the average annual remuneration of employees in Italy was 30 000 euro, which, after calculation into a monthly salary, amounts to 2 500 euro. In case of Poland, the annual remuneration was approximately half of this figure and amounted to 15 000 euro, which amounts to a monthly salary of 1 250 euro (Eurostat, 2023). Therefore, it could be concluded that Lavazza coffee may be seen by Poles as two times more expensive than according to Italians.

Lavazza has its headquarters and main production site in the heart of historic Turin where it was founded. At present, the company has nine production sites all over the world, stationed in six countries, from where products are distributed to 140 countries (Lavazza, 2023). Since coffee products offered by Lavazza are classified as convenience consumer products, characterised by relatively low prices and everyday use, they can be delivered to ultimate buyers either through medium, long or expanded distribution channels in such markets where the company does not operate through own associated companies. Taking into consideration the character of the product and the fact that the company sells its products to buyers from various market segments, Lavazza strives to reach the widest possible number of wholesalers, retailers and end buyers. On the Italian market, the distribution of Lavazza brand products takes the form of intensive distribution. Lavazza coffee is placed in as many sales outlets as possible, from little shops to supermarkets and specialty stores. The assortment of Lavazza coffee products available in such places is more diversified. Similarly, on the Polish market, those products are easily accessible in the majority of grocery stores and supermarkets. If we consider, however, little corner shops or those on the outskirts of towns, the number of available coffee varieties is often limited, even to one product variant.

In its promotional activities, Lavazza focuses mostly on advertisements and public relations, being also deeply involved in running Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and TikTok profiles. On the social networking site Facebook, the brand has both a profile dedicated to the Italian public in its mother tongue and a separate profile for Polish consumers.. Both profiles have gathered more than 1 million likes. The posts touch various topics from business-related (coffee drinking, building human relations) to sports events with which the brand has been linked. It is worth mentioning that content published on Lavazza Polish and Italian profiles are not homogenous although generally related to the brand, coffee or coffee culture in the broadest sense (Lavazza. Facebook Poland, 2023; Lavazza. Facebook Italia, 2023).

Similarly, on Instagram, the brand created separate profiles for consumers from various countries, and one official profile dedicated to buyers worldwide, run in English. The profile aimed at the Italian community boasts an impressive number of nearly 43,000 followers, with posts published on a regular basis and the number of comments ranging from a few to over one hundred. The profile features posts addressing a variety of topics including those about coffee consumption, and others its manufacturing or the brand history. The brand highlights its involvement in sustainability, care for the environment, commitment to support its home country and its development, as well as numerous sporting events. On the other hand, the Polish profile has 4,000 followers, and the number of comments ranges from several to several dozens. Photos or quick videos added to the profile also refer to coffee-related issues, its brand or history, but differ from those published on the Italian profile (Lavazza. Instagram Poland, 2023; Lavazza. Instagram Italia, 2023).

Lavazza has no account on Twitter dedicated to Polish consumers, however, there is a 'Lavazza USA', profile characterised by a high level of activity, posts published on a regular basis and content targeted to nearly 2,000 followers (Lavazza. Twitter, 2023). 'Lavazza-coffespot' is, in turn, the company profile on TikTok with 233 followers. The videos posted there revolve around the theme of coffee brewing, testing new flavours and varieties, trivia about coffee equipment and Italy as such. Most of the published content gets from several to several dozen likes (Lavazza. Tiktok, 2023).

In its promotional activities, Lavazza focuses, to a large extent, on sponsorship. The company decided to partner the most important and prestigious sporting events worldwide and, at the same time, support outstanding athletes such as Jannik Sinner, the youngest Italian professional tennis player ever who reached ATP top ten ranking. Among the sporting events that Lavazza decided to partner are all four Grand Slam tennis tournaments, namely Wimbledon, Roland Garros, US Open and Australian Open. Additionally, the company became a sponsor of minor tennis tournaments such as Nitto ATP Finals 2021-2025 that takes place in Turin, the brand's home city. The Lavazza philosophy behind decisions about sponsorship is that the world of coffee, just like ground tennis, require enormous precision, accuracy, attention to the tiniest details and the pursuit of perfection. The brand also supports other sports such as golf, skiing, horse-riding and football. One example is the partnership with Juventus, which, like the brand itself, is based in Since 2018 the company has also been associated with the football club Arsenal F.C. being the official team's coffee (Lavazza, 2023).

Lavazza's marketing activities on the Polish and Italian coffee markets in the light of the consumer survey results

In the course of the survey, respondents were asked about the breadth of the available range of different Lavazza coffees, price perception, brand coffee availability and promotional activities with a particular emphasis on social media promotion (Table 4). The comparison of the distribution of the variables in the two groups – consumers from Italy and Poland – showed that Italians rated both the breadth of the product range as well as the availability and Lavazza coffee sales more highly, and perceived its price as more affordable than Polish respondents. The overwhelming majority of respondents, i.e. 86% of all surveyed Italians are of the opinion that the range of Lavazza coffee products available in stores is rather wide or definitely wide, while less than half of Polish respondents shared the same opinion. At the same time, a little more than 4% of Italian respondents found that stores did not offer a wide range of Lavazza coffee, while every fifth respondent from Poland expressed a negative opinion about the choice of various coffee types (definitely NO answer – 6.8%, rather no – 13.5%). A comparison of the distributions of the variables in the two groups of respondents studied showed that the results in the Italian consumer group ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$ = 93.73) were higher than in the Polish consumer group ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 53.11). The analysis using U Mann-Whitney test by ranks showed that discrepancies between groups were statistically significant U = 1155.000; $p < 0.001$ (asymptotic significance two-tailed).

Table 4 Lavazza's marketing mix tools according to consumers in Poland and Italy

Position	Country	N	*Me*	*M*rank	U Mann-Whitney test statistics	Significance level
Breadth of product range	Poland	74	3	53.11	1155.000*	<0.001
	Italy	71	4	93.73		
Price perception	Poland	74	3	55.10	1302.500*	<0.001
	Italy	71	4	91.65		
Perceived availability	Poland	74	4	51.49	1035.500*	<0.001
	Italy	71	5	95.42		
Perception of promotional activities	Poland	74	2	62.35	1839.000*	0.002
	Italy	71	3	84.10		

Note: * statistically significant differences occurred.

Source: author's elaboration based on research results.

In order to clarify opinions expressed, respondents were asked to specify the number of Lavazza coffee products available in an average store in Poland and Italy. More than three quarters of the respondents in Poland indicated that between one to three Lavazza coffee products could be found in an ordinary store. On the other hand, more than one third of Italian respondents expressed the opinion that on average stores offer between seven and nine Lavazza coffee varieties, while according to more than one fifth of respondents – more than nine. The comparison of the distribution of variables within the two groups of respondents showed that the results obtained in the group of Italian consumers ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$ = 101.10) were higher than in the group of Polish consumers ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 46.04). The analysis using *U* Mann-Whitney test by ranks showed that the discrepancies between the groups were statistically significant: $U = 632.000$; $p < 0.001$ (asymptotic significance two-tailed).

Moreover, respondents indicated the size of packaging in which Lavazza coffee is sold, specifically asking about ground coffee as the type of coffee characterised by comparable availability in the light of the prior observation's results. In Poland, consumers most often provided feedback that Lavazza ground coffee was sold in 250g packs (this response was given by nearly 80% of respondents). By contrast, nearly 60% of Italian respondents indicated that the 2x250g pack could be found in any average store, and more than one fourth of respondents mentioned the 4x250g pack. Only 1,4% of the respondents from Poland declared that it was possible to buy the 4x250g pack. By comparing the distribution of variables in the groups of respondents, it was noted that the results obtained in the group of Italian consumers ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$= 99.59) were higher than those in the group of consumers from Poland ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 47.49). *U* Mann-Whitney test by ranks showed that discrepancies between the groups were statistically significant: $U = 739.000$; $p < 0.001$ (asymptotic significance two-tailed).

In the course of survey, the respondents also identified how they perceive Lavazza brand coffee prices – to what degree, in their opinion, it is affordable or unreasonably inflated. More than half of the respondents from Italy took the view that the price of the coffee was affordable (19.7% of respondents answered "definitely affordable", and 38% "fairly affordable"), while in Poland only about 15% of respondents agreed that the price of Lavazza coffee was fairly affordable and over half the respondents felt that the price was inflated ("fairly inflated " – 35.1%, "definitely inflated" – 9.5%). The comparison of the distribution of variables in the two groups of respondents showed that the results obtained in the group of Italian consumers implied greater price affordability ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$ = 91.65) than in the other group of respondents ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 55.10). The analysis using *U* Mann-Whitney test by ranks showed that the discrepancies between the groups were statistically significant: $U = 1302.500$; $p < 0.001$ (asymptotic significance two-tailed).

In addition to the above, respondents from both countries were asked to express their opinion about the level of the availability of Lavazza brand coffee in the majority of stores. Italian respondents overwhelmingly agreed that Lavazza brand coffee was available in most of the stores they knew, as nearly 96% of all respondents expressed this opinion ("definitely available" – 59.2% and "fairly available" – 36.6%). Respondents from Poland most often indicated that Lavazza coffee was "fairly available" (nearly two-thirds of respondents), and just above 12% of Polish respondents replied that Lavazza coffee was not easily available in an average store. The comparison of the distribution of variables in the two groups of respondents showed that the results obtained in the group of Italian respondents implied wider availability of products ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$ = 95.42) than in the other group of respondents ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 51.49). The analysis using *U* Mann-Whitney test by ranks showed that the discrepancies between the groups were statistically significant: $U = 1035.500$; $p < 0.001$ (asymptotic significance two-tailed).

To establish how the promotional activities of the Lavazza brand are perceived, the primary focus was on advertising activities. Respondents from Poland and Italy were requested to identify to what extent various forms of advertising of Lavazza brand coffee had caught their attention. Forms of advertising taken into consideration included TV commercials, radio ads, social media advertising placed on the brand's official profile, influencer marketing and advertisement, outdoor advertising banners and billboards along with store promotional magazines. Respondents expressed their opinion of each of the above-mentioned forms of advertising by awarding points on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 denoted the least common form of advertising, and 5 – the most common one. Next, the general advertising perception index was calculated as an arithmetic mean of the respondents' marks, where the measure obtained could have a value ranging from 1 to 5. The comparison of distributions of advertisement perception index within the groups of respondents showed that the results obtained in the group of Italian consumers ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$ = 84.10) were higher than in the group of consumers from Poland ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 62.35). The analysis using *U* Mann-Whitney test by ranks proved that the discrepancies between the groups were statistically significant: U = 1839.000; $p = 0.002$ (asymptotic significance two-tailed).

Analysing the particular forms of Lavazza brand advertising, it was noted that the most common form of advertising seen by the Italian respondents was advertising on social media via the brand's official profile (M = 3.48; SD = 1.23). According to Italian respondents, the second most often viewed form of advertising were TV commercials (M = 3.13; SD = 1.15). At the same time, nearly eight out of ten Italian respondents indicated that radio ads were the most uncommon form of promotional activities (M = 1.79; SD = 0.79). Slightly less - seven out of ten respondents- were of the opinion that online marketing and advertising campaigns by influencers were also not often viewed (M = 2.08; SD = 0.99). By contrast, Polish consumers most see Lavazza coffee advertised in the promotional magazines of shops (M = 3.47; SD = 1.29), while social media advertising was identified by them as relatively less common (M = 2.57; SD = 1.07). Just like Italian respondents, Polish consumers identified radio ads as the most uncommon form (M = 1.43; SD = 0.88), immediately followed by influencers' marketing campaigns (M = 1.78; SD = 0.99), which was negatively evaluated in terms of visibility by more than eight out of ten respondents.

At the same time, comparisons of the distributions of the studied variables in the groups of respondents from Poland and Italy showed a number of statistically significant differences (Table 5). The results obtained in the group of consumers from Italy were higher than in the group of consumers from Poland in the case of TV commercials (U = 1772.000; $p < 0.001$), radio ads (U = 1861.500; $p < 0.001$), social media advertising on the official brand profile (U = 1504.000; $p < 0.001$; two-tailed asymptotic significance) and advertising by influencers (U = 2109.500; $p < 0.029$). In the case of store promotional magazines, the results obtained in the group of consumers from Italy were higher than in the group of consumers from Poland (U = 1776.000; $p < 0.001$). Billboards and outdoor banners were unanimously described by respondents in both countries as rarely noticed and the comparison of the distributions of the studied variables did not reveal any statistically significant differences.

Table 5. Forms of advertising of Lavazza coffee noticed by consumers in Poland and Italy

Position	Country	N	*Me*	*M*rank	U Mann-Whitneytest statistics	Significance level
TV commercials	Poland	74	2	61.45	1772.000*	<0.001
	Italy	71	3	85.04		
Radio ads	Poland	74	1	62.66	1861.500*	<0.001
	Italy	71	2	83.78		
Social media advertising on official brand profile	Poland	74	3	57.82	1504.000*	<0.001
	Italy	71	4	88.82		
Advertising by influencers	Poland	74	1	66.01	2109.500*	0.029
	Italy	71	2	80.29		
Billboards and outdoor advertising banners	Poland	74	2	69.04	2334.000	0.224
	Italy	71	2	77.13		
Promotional magazines of shops	Poland	74	4	84.50	1776.000*	<0.001
	Italy	71	3	61.01		

Note: * statistically significant differences occurred

Source: author's elaboration based on research results.

While examining the perception of Lavazza's promotional activities, it was also established how Lavazza's activities conducted on social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc., are perceived. Almost 60% of surveyed Italian consumers expressed a positive opinion, stating that they notice and follow Lavazza's promotional activities on social media (definitely yes 16.9%; rather yes – 42.3%). On the other hand, the reverse situation occurred in case of Polish consumers as nearly 60% of respondents do not notice promotional activities on social media. Comparing the distribution of variables in the surveyed groups, it was noted that the results in the group of consumers from Italy ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Italy}}$ = 94,44) were higher than in the group of consumers from Poland ($M\text{rank}_{\text{Poland}}$ = 52,43). The analysis using U Mann-Whitney test by ranks showed that the differences between groups were statistically significant: U = 1105.000; $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed asymptotic significance).

In the course of the survey, respondents were asked how they perceive Lavazza coffee. All the respondents most often indicated that Lavazza coffee was a mid-range product. This answer was given by nearly two-thirds of the Polish consumers and almost three-quarters of the respondents from Italy. However, it should be noted that almost every fifth Italian respondent considered Lavazza coffee a basic product, whereas in Poland almost every fourth respondent described Lavazza coffee as a luxury product. A statistically significant relationship of medium strength was noticed between the perception of Lavazza coffee and the respondents' nationality, where χ^2 (2, N = 145) = 8.727; $p < 0.013$, and Kramer's V coefficient = 0.245.

Discussion

Coffee is grown in over 70 countries of the intertropical zone, or about half of all countries in the world, and consumed worldwide. Coffee plays a significant role in family and social life, and drinking coffee has become a "must-have" for many consumers in many situations. Thanks to the nutritional properties and social functions drinking coffee is a kind of daily ritual, willingly organized and experienced by people, and the greatest "coffee lovers" are Europeans (Olejniczuk-Merta, 2024), especially Italians.

Modern culture, economy and business in Italy were built on their strong history and the deeply rooted traditions of this country. One of the main and most important foundations of Italian culture is family and strong relations with it irrespective of age. As a result, there is a social acceptance of cohabitation with parents even as an adult, which, in turn, has a profound impact on the Italian economy. This trend means that there is less involvement and motivation to seek employment or start one's own business venture. Additionally, it becomes obvious that their cultural interpretation of loyalty and the broadened perception and understanding of the "family" concept has the effect of blurring the lines and crossing borders between personal and business life. Accordingly, a consumer's ongoing commitment to repeatedly visit a specific bar, store or restaurant over time is perceived as a sign of loyalty and emotional attachment to this place, whereas visiting another place tends to be interpreted as flagrant betrayal. Italian's deeply rooted and extreme propensity for loyalty may have both positive and negative results on consumer habits (Hooper, 2015; Glover & Gibson, 2017).

Coffee is inherent, integral and deeply embedded in Italian culture. An Italian, on average, consumes 5. kg of coffee annually. For the majority of Italians, espresso is a cherished ritual, something more or less "divine" and is consumed not only in the morning but throughout the day. The tradition of drinking coffee has become an irreplaceable ritual woven into the fabric of daily life that enhances building face-to-face interaction, encourages socialisation and brings people from various environments closer together, Long-term, extensive research of the Italian way of drinking coffee, their recipes and a wide variety of brewing and preparation methods have placed this country at the forefront of shaping and promoting coffee consumption patterns. It should be highlighted that owing to Italian coffee culture, it is now one of the most appreciated and popular beverages worldwide (Starbucks, 2023).

In Poland, defining traits, such as work, family, tradition, as well as love and friendship, are considered the most typical social characteristics. Despite the globalisation of consumption, Polish consumers stick to their preferences, shopping habits and specific needs The most typical and universally accepted Polish social behaviour includes cooking and enjoying meals at home with the family, and equally frequently, visiting family and friends instead of eating out. Typical traits of the Polish nation include hospitality, kindness, openness and resourcefulness (Stolecka-Makowska, 2016). Despite the globalisation of consumption, in Poland, a growing interest in typical and traditional Polish products and of Polish origin can be observed (Rudawska, 2013). Poles have their shopping habits and preferably visit their favourite stores buying mostly those brands and products which they trust. A significant number of consumers do not tend to change their habits or try new brands or products. At the same time, Poles can be described as cautious buyers, purchasing planned goods, painstakingly checking expiry dates, the prices charged, and, on top of that, allocating a specific budget to meet the shopping expenses (Włodarczyk, 2013).

In Poland, an average consumer drinks 2.85 kg of coffee annually which is nearly 3 kg less than the average Italian. Consumers who regularly drink coffee can be divided into three groups: the instant coffee buyers' segment, the ground coffee buyers' segment and the bean coffee buyers' segment. During recent years, coffee capsules have been growing in popularity and this coffee segment is emerging as a fast-growing segment in the coffee market in Poland (Bartkowicz, 2015). It should be noted, however, that Poles are characterized by a strong attachment to traditional coffee categories – especially ground and instant coffee, but at the same time, the number of consumers who want to prepare at home coffee as good as the one served in cafés is growing. The reason for new trends in consumption are, on the one hand, new consumer needs in terms of types, flavors, and ways of serving coffee, and on the other hand, increasingly professional items used to satisfy these needs, i.e. modern, highly advanced equipment for preparing coffee or coffee drinks at home (Wroblewski et al., 2024).

The conducted research made it possible to verify the differences in the marketing mix activities conducted by Lavazza on the Polish and Italian coffee market. In light of the results of carried out observations, as well as the feedback from the respondents who took part in the consumer survey, it was noted that the first element of the marketing mix, i.e. the product, differs depending on the market. For the Italian coffee brand, Lavazza, Poland is a foreign market and it offers a considerably narrower range of variants and types of its product. It is assumed that, to a large extent, the limited number of coffee flavours available in Poland and, in comparison, the highly developed number in Italy, are the outcome of differences in the quantity and frequency of coffee consumption, which are due to the observed differences in coffee-drinking culture stemming from the traditions cultivated in the two countries.. Moreover, research showed that in the case of both analysed markets there are differences in the size of the packaging in which Lavazza coffee is most often available and sold. One may conclude that offering twice or even four times larger coffee packages (in the case of ground coffee) on the Italian market is the result of adapting the product to the needs of local consumers. In Poland, on the other hand, due to the lower frequency of drinking this beverage and the fact that consumers are not used to drinking coffee several times a day, packages in which the product is sold are correspondingly smaller. The observed differences in both the product range and the volume of the packages can be deemed to be a manifestation of adaptation to habits, preferences and the culture of the country concerned.

Furthermore, the conducted research showed that the prices of identical Lavazza coffees in Poland and Italy, in nominal terms, differed insignificantly, which could imply that the brand implements a uniform pricing policy on the international market (Duliniec, 2007). It should be emphasised, however, that despite the comparable level of prices on both markets, Lavazza coffee can be perceived differently in Poland and Italy depending on consumer income.

The conducted research also demonstrated that regardless of similar assumptions related to the distribution strategy implemented by Lavazza in Poland and Italy, which in both cases, proved to be intensive, consumers in Italy much more frequently stated that Lavazza coffee was available in all the stores they know. Polish consumers agreed that they could purchase the surveyed brand in the majority of stores but less frequently acknowledged that Lavazza coffee was available in all known shopping places in a convenient localisation. It can be presumed that culture related differences as well as the frequency of coffee drinking by Poles by whom it is considered not quite so primary and necessary as by Italians, result in the lower availability of the brand, in particular in small shops.

While analyzing the variety of promotional activities undertaken by Lavazza on the Polish and Italian market it can be noted that they are far from standardisation. Lavazza, despite relying on similar tools and using the same subject of promotional theme on various foreign markets, takes into account their specific features and the diverse preferences, needs and demands of local consumers. Due to the above, Lavazza, while maintaining the same motive of promotion, makes use of a variety of promotion tools with varied intensity. As a consequence, Polish consumers are much more likely to see the brand's promotional activities implemented in the form of printed advertising made available in grocery stores or supermarkets, while consumers in Italy are more likely to see Lavazza coffee advertisements placed on social media and on television. In view of the respondents' feedback it was also noted that brand promotional activities launched on various social media platforms are much less frequently noticed by consumers in Poland than in Italy.

In conclusion, Lavazza can be considered to be implementing a hybrid marketing mix strategy, but it should be emphasised that the trend towards standardisation was noted only in the case of one tool, notably the price. For the remaining elements such as product, distribution and brand promotion on foreign markets, it pursues the adaptation strategy. Moreover, where the Polish market is concerned, what is emphasised is the implementtation of the vision of a sustainable and open world in which, apart from widespread availability, coffee is also a cherished value, daily ritual and an essential part of culture. The adopted strategy may be the result of noting the existing differences between the countries as well as the characteristics of consumers on both markets.

Conclusions

Globalisation and internationalisation continue to be controversial and raise multiple questions as key processes that have a real impact on how modern markets function. Many businesses that previously used to operate solely on domestic, national markets, are beginning to participate in international trade by entering foreign markets . Foreign markets, even those geographically close to each other and the local consumers are characterised by specific culture, including a unique system of values, standards, preferences, lifestyle and needs. The foregoing elements affect buyers' purchasing decisions, their pattern of purchases or attitudes towards promotional activities. Therefore, companies operating on an international scale, while planning their marketing strategy and shaping the marketing mix tools, increasingly take into account the emerging and existing intercultural differences.

The aim of this article was to present the possibilities of the diversification of the marketing activities of companies on a global market, in the context of the cultural background of buyer behaviour. The theoretical considerations referred to the coffee market, focusing on the marketing activities carried out on the Polish and Italian markets by Lavazza. The emphasis was on presenting the differences that arise in relation to the basic marketing-mix tools, which may be subject to standardisation or adaptation on foreign markets. It was assumed that the socio-cultural environment significantly affects the preferences, needs, demands, habits and attitudes of consumers. This means that companies operating on the international markets should consider the differences between buyers buyers from the countries concerned when designing their marketing mix.

The results of the observations and the survey conclusions confirmed earlier theoretical findings. In implementing the adopted research objectives, the differences in the scope of marketing tools fostered by the Lavazza coffee manufacturer on the Polish and Italian markets were verified. The producer of this coffee appropriately and carefully adjusts the tools used and marketing activities undertaken, taking into account the expectations of consumers on the domestic Italian market and taking measures on the foreign market, which, for this purpose, is the Polish market. Certain activities were noted that confirm product adjustment in particular, but also distribution and promotion.

While interpreting the presented results, the limitations of the study should be taken into account. Due to non-randomised sampling and its relatively small quantity, the results may not be regarded as representative for the entire target group. Moreover, it should be noted that, although the attempted exemplification of theoretical findings on the grounds of the domestic and Italian coffee market allows a number of culturally determined differences to be noted in the context of marketing activities, a broader reference to non-European global markets, such as Asia or Latin America, is missing. In pointing out directions of future research, it is worth taking into account the broader context of comparisons on a global scale, by reaching out to consumers from areas where particularly strong cultural determinants may exist affecting both purchase preferences and the marketing activities of companies operating there.

Author Contributions

Conceptualisation, M.K.K. and A.R.; methodology, M.K.K. and A.R.; software, M.K.K..; validation and formal analysis, M.K.K.; data curation, A.R.; writing—original draft preparation, M.K.K. and A.R.; writing—review and editing, M.K.K.; visualisation, M.K.K.; supervision, M.K.K.. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Declaration of competing interest

There is no financial and personal relationships with other people or organisations that could inappropriately influence (bias) our work.

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Notes on contributors

Magdalena Kalińska-Kula holds a post-doctoral degree in the discipline of management and quality science, Professor at the University of Lodz and head of the Marketing major in the undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Management. She was the head of the Department of Fundamentals of Marketing (in the years 2020-2024), subject editor of the scientific journal Folia Oeconomica, Acta Universitatis Lodziensis (2017-2020) and a member of the Commission for the Quality of Scientific Research at the Faculty of Management, University of Lodz (2016-2024). Her research and scientific interests include marketing research and its role in managing a modern enterprise, the use of digital technologies in marketing and consumers behaviour in the era of the virtualisation of trade. She is in charge of and coordinates research projects of both scientific and commercial nature. She is the author or co-author of nearly 100 publications, including articles, monographs, chapters in monographs and textbooks.
email: magdalena.kalinska@uni.lodz.pl

Aleksandra Rudnicka graduated from the Faculty of Management, University of Lodz, where she was awarded a Master's degree in Management, with a major in Marketing. She uses the knowledge acquired during her studies at DACHSER where she works as a Marketing and Communication Specialist.
email: olarudnickaa99@gmail.com

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