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# Innovations on the Tea Market in the Face of the Observed Megatrends in Consumption

## ABSTRACT

The tea market is one of the largest markets in the global economy, and tea is the second most frequently consumed beverage, after water. The aim of the article is to present product innovations observed on the global tea market against the background of identified megatrends in consumption, affecting both tea producers and sellers, as well as consumers of this drink. The article contains theoretical considerations supported by the analysis of source materials. It presents the main megatrends influencing the behaviour of tea market entities. It also describes the reactions of tea producers and sellers to the needs and preferences of consumers determined by the identified megatrends. The analysis of the collected data allowed us to conclude that the main megatrends determining consumer behaviour on the tea market are as follows: wellness pragmatists, greenwashed out, delightful distractions, progressively polarized, decarbonisation, work and life unbounded, climate changers, outlook for the great life refresh and rural urbanites. Tea producers and sellers, in order to meet the needs and preferences of consumers determined by these megatrends, will have to introduce to the market a number of innovations regarding both the core of the product and other elements of its structure. In line with consumer expectations, tea products should be comfortable to use, enabling the consumer to have fun and expand their experience, and environmentally-friendly. This article contributes to the development of the theory of consumer behaviour and contains a number of implications for practitioners whose area of activity is the tea market.

**Keywords:** innovations, product innovations, megatrends in consumption, consumer behaviour, tea market.

**JEL Classification:** D12, L66, M31, O32.

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## Introduction

Innovation is the most valuable attribute of a free market economy. It determines its strength and ability to overcome crises. The Latin source of this concept – *innovatio* means the introduction of something new, a newly introduced thing, a reform, novelty (Nowacki & Staniewski, 2010, p.15). The classic Schumpeterian approach to innovation associates it with a new product, new technology, new market or new organisation of production and sales. Thanks to innovation, it becomes possible for enterprises to move forward, which means gaining a competitive advantage (Borusiak, 2011, p. 111). Enterprises that want to win their future must break the boundaries of current competition and delight their customers with innovations (Kabukcu, 2015).

Reading consumer needs is helped by the analysis of megatrends observed in consumption (Kita et al., 2022; de Monteton & Margreiter, 2023; Wróblewski & Mokrysz, 2017; 2018; Wróblewski et. al., 2019). A good example of following megatrends are companies operating on the tea market. Tea is the second most popular drink in the world, after water. Estimates indicate that as many as 3 billion cups of it are drunk a day globally (Food News, 2023). Even though tea as a drink has been known for centuries, both tea producers and sellers continue to strive to make their products attractive to subsequent generations of consumers. According to the Pinterest trends report in 2022, the most frequently searched terms included: “tea party aesthetics”, “vintage tea party”, “butterfly pea tea” and “tea ideas”. On social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram and Facebook, videos with tea drinks from around the world were very

popular, e.g. blue-violet Butterfly Pea Tea from Kenya, bubble tea from Taiwan or matcha from Japan (Pinterest Predicts, 2024).

The aim of this article is to present product innovations present on the global tea market against the background of identified megatrends in consumption, affecting both tea producers and sellers, as well as consumers of this drink. The article contains theoretical considerations, supported by the analysis of data from secondary sources. The area of observations made are entities operating on the tea market.

The article is organised as follows: in the literature review section, the concepts of innovation and product innovation as well as consumer trends and megatrends are defined. The global tea market is also briefly characterised. Subsequently, in the materials and methods section, the source materials and methods of their analysis are presented. The results and discussion section presents a description of product innovations currently observed on the tea market, which are the response of tea producers and sellers to the most dynamically developing megatrends in consumption. The manuscript ends with conclusions from the analyses and discussion of the results.

The conclusions drawn from the presented material do not fully exhaust the topic, but they may constitute a voice in the discussion on the observed changes taking place in consumer behaviour itself, as well as in B2C relationships (Conrad, 2022). The presented data may also be useful to companies producing and selling tea in the process of building their competitive advantage based on lasting relationships with

consumers. The information presented in this article is not of a commercial nature and has

been prepared in the spirit of an open model of scientific communication.

## Literature review

### *Innovations and product innovations*

The term “innovation” in the literature on the subject has many meanings, referring both to the act of introducing innovations and giving newness to various phenomena, including products, by people who perceive them as new. Therefore, “innovation” is considered an interdisciplinary category, described and analysed from many perspectives, which can be considered both broadly and narrowly (Hermundsdottir & Aspelund, 2021). Representatives of the broad approach include, among others: J.A. Schumpeter and P.F. Drucker. In a narrow sense, innovation is defined by such authors as: Ch. Freeman, C.F. Carter, B.R. Williams, J. Mujžel, B. Gruchman, most often referring innovations to technical changes, ignoring their process, organisational or marketing aspects (Kucharska, 2014). The pioneer of this category, J.A. Schumpeter, considered the introduction of a new solution into practice as an innovation. Schumpeter's innovations are absolute (inventions which are introduced for the first time on any global market) and require outstanding individuals and risk-bearing (Rudzewicz & Strychalska-Rudzewicz, 2013). Replicating the introduced solution is only imitating and copying the innovation. According to Schumpeter, consumers play a passive role in economic development, including innovation. The vast majority of changes in the structure of consumer products and services are forced by producers on consumers, who often resist changes and had to be convinced to change. In turn, Drucker emphasise the great importance

of marketing in the innovative activities of enterprises, which cannot be carried out in isolation from the needs of the consumer. Drucker defines innovation as any novelty that is new to the user – consumer (Drucker, 2004, p. 38-39). For Drucker, innovation is not only conceptual, but also perceptual. The idea may have existed for a long time, what matters is that it is perceived as new. The innovation process includes identifying consumer needs and creating and providing them with a new product that brings value or benefit not yet offered on a given market (Kotler et al., 2002, p. 662). Innovation is therefore a new solution that offers values to consumers (result approach to innovation), as well as the process of creating new and better solutions to consumers' problems (functional approach) (Kucharska, 2014, p. 20).

Schumpeterian and Druckerian approaches can be treated as two poles of the concept of innovation. While Schumpeter precisely defines situations in which absolute innovations can arise, Drucker defines innovation as the deliberate search for opportunities to introduce new things (Romanowski, 2011). Both approaches are included in the Oslo Manual, which contains a set of concepts applicable to the European Union's innovation policy. According to the Oslo Manual, innovation is “the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (goods or service) or process, a new marketing method or a new organisational method in economic practice, workplace organisation or relations with the environment” (OECD & Eurostat, 2008, p. 48). The presented

definition allows for the distinction of innovation by subject into: product, process, marketing and organisational innovation.

Due to the topic of the presented article, the concept of product innovation requires explanation. According to the Oslo Manual 2018, it is “a new or improved product or service that differs significantly from the enterprise's existing products or services and that has been introduced to the market.” As the authors of the Manual write, product innovations must primarily provide a significant improvement in one or more properties or performance specifications. This should include the addition of new functions or improvements to existing or new utilities for the user or consumer. The relevant functional characteristics in this case are quality, technical specifications, reliability, durability, economy in use, affordability, comfort, usability and user/consumer friendliness. Importantly, product innovations do not have to involve improving all functions and performance specifications. Improving or adding a new feature may result in the loss of other features or loss of performance in some respects. (OECD & UE, 2020, p. 79).

### ***Macro trends in consumption and their sources***

In the literature on the subject, the concept of trend has been present since the mid-20th century, finding its place first in mathematical and economic sciences to determine changes in graphs and sequences of numbers, and then in sociological sciences and marketing to describe changes in culture, world views and lifestyles (Raymond, 2014, p. 14). Ph. Kotler defines a trend as “a direction or series of events characterized by a certain momentum and persistence” (2005, p. 159). B. Mróz defines a trend

as “changes occurring over time in social or market phenomena, the direction of which can be measured using specific indicators, measurement scales or indices” (2013, p. 115-116). In turn, T. Zalega understands the term trend to mean the current direction of development in a given field or, in a more general sense, a monotonic component of the dependence of the examined feature on time (2013, p. 3-4). Trends may therefore be short- or long-term in nature, and in terms of their scope: global (megatrends) or regional (microtrends). The specific features of trends are variability, co-occurrence (mutual overlap) and divergence (simultaneous emergence of trends and counter-trends) (Tkaczyk, 2012; Dybka, 2017).

Ph. Kotler divides trends according to their durability, dividing them into temporary fashion, trends and megatrends. He defines temporary fashion as an unpredictable, short-term change without any major economic, social or political significance. According to Ph. Kotler, trends and megatrends are more durable and easier to predict. A trend outlines the shape of the future, it is a long-term phenomenon, observable in the behaviour of consumers and enterprises in many markets (Wróblewski, 2018). The emergence and development of a trend is confirmed by reliable values of economic, social and demographic indicators appearing at the same time (Kotler, 2005). Megatrends, in turn, are undoubtedly related to globalisation (Maciaszczyk, 2016, p. 162). According to J. Naisbitt, megatrends identify all socio-economic or structural processes which are formed slowly, but once they appear, they influence all areas of life for some time (Gajewski, Paprocki & Pieriegud ed., 2015, p. 15). Moreover, megatrends can influence every individual and can change and shape the future of

the entire world (Zmyslony & Niezgodna, 2003, p. 194). The concept of megatrend can also be defined as certain unchanging economic, social, political and cultural tendencies, as well as phenomena emerging in the process of civilisational development of society, having various conditions and covering the entire world, determining the key goals and directions of human development and leaving their mark on the environment (Borodako, 2009, p. 90). Megatrends therefore identify sets of certain economic, social or environmental patterns of behaviour that change the way people live and the products these people need (Hajkowicz & Moody, 2010, p. 2). Referring to the work "The impact of megatrends on western governments" by futurologist F. de Meyer, megatrends can be presented as long-lasting, quickly spreading trends, strongly influencing society in many dimensions and evoking the belief in their inevitability (de Meyer, 2011).

In order to fully present what trends in consumer behaviour are, it is also worth referring to the views of H. Vejlgaard, who deals with the practice of trend forecasting. This researcher defines a trend as a process of change that is perceived from a psychological, economic or sociological perspective, which may be short- or long-term and regional or global in scope (Vejlgaard, 2008, p. 9). Adopting this point of view, one can agree with T. Zalega that "a trend in consumer behaviour is understood as a specific direction of change in the lifestyle of a model consumer, acting in an objective manner, i.e. regardless of their will and awareness" (Zalega, 2015, p. 80). Looking at the analysed issue from the perspective of Ph. Kotler, it can be concluded that trends in the sphere of consumption arise as a result of the impact on the purchasing behaviour of consumers of the

broadly understood environment (social, economic, legal, political, demographic and technological), which in turn influences changes in their consumption patterns (see e.g. Kotler et al., 2002; Kucharska et al., 2015).

According to F. Shaw, emerging consumer trends influence the way enterprises operate, thus creating new rules for the functioning of modern organisations (Shaw, 2002). The effect of the impact of new consumer trends on enterprises is therefore changes in the behaviour of these entities, which, on the one hand, try to keep up with the changing consumer, and, on the other hand, begin to shape their behaviour, preferences and choices. In the latter situation, we can talk about companies creating product trends (Maciejewski & Mokrysz, 2019).

For marketing-oriented companies, it is crucial to observe those trends which have the greatest impact on consumer behaviour, i.e. the macro-trends. Macro-trends in consumption are considered to be significant social, economic, political and technological changes that develop slowly, but once they occur, they influence consumer behaviour for several or even 10-20 years (Aburdene, 2007). They have many sources, so it is often easier for researchers to identify emerging macro-trends than to investigate the conditions which cause their emergence. Nevertheless, at least several key factors can be identified, such as the digital revolution, changes in the employment structure, changing role of women in society, changes in the level and distribution of income among the population, the growing number of consumers, the increasing level of consumer awareness and knowledge, and the dynamic development of transport (Maciejewski, 2013).

## **Global tea market**

FAO data on global tea production in 2021 says it increased to 6.5 million tonnes from 6.3 million tonnes in 2020 (FAO, 2022). According to the website Czasnaherbate.net, all tea plantations in the world cover approximately 4.5 million hectares. The average annual yield from each hectare is less than 1.5 tonnes of dry leaf matter. If we compared the area of tea cultivation to the area of the country, it would be the 130th largest country, behind Estonia (45,200 km<sup>2</sup>) and ahead of Denmark (43,000 km<sup>2</sup>). This area is larger than e.g. the area of Switzerland (41,300 km<sup>2</sup>), Moldova (33,900 km<sup>2</sup>) or Albania (28,700 km<sup>2</sup>) (Food News, 2023). At the same time, an analysis created by Market Hub estimates that by 2025 the value of tea production will reach 7.4 million tonnes. In terms of value, the global tea market in 2022 reached USD 220.7 billion and according to Statista Consumer Market Insights forecasts, it will increase to USD 268.5 billion by 2025.

Tea production in the world is concentrated primarily in Asia, although there is no shortage

of enthusiasts of this drink in other parts of the world. The largest tea producer at the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century was China, producing as much as 3.1 million tonnes, with a 47% share in the world market. Estimates show that tea production in China is expected to almost double by the end of this decade, driven by increased sector productivity. Second place is occupied by India, which produced 1.33 million tons, and third place – Kenya with 0.54 million tons. Other countries important in tea production are Sri Lanka, Turkey, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, Iran and Argentina. According to forecasts, the production of black tea between 2025 and 2030 is expected to grow by an average annual rate of 2.1%, and green tea by as much as 6.3% (Food News, 2023).

This huge and dynamically developing market includes not only the hot drinks segment, but also iced teas and ready-to-drink tea drinks. Tea is the second most frequently consumed drink in the world, after water (Kucia, 2024).

## **Materials and research methods**

The source base of the article are research results on observed megatrends in consumption, consumer behaviour and product innovations on the global tea market conducted by renowned research agencies and consulting companies in the years 2020 - 2024.

The innovations are described against the background of the observed megatrends and those megatrends in consumption which are expected to influence the global consumer population in the coming years. In order to characterise these trends, materials from the research agency Mintel Group Ltd (MG), research

by the consulting company Ernst & Yuong (EY) and data from the research agency Euromonitor International (EI) were used. MG's research covered the entire global tea market divided into Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), Asia and the Pacific (APAC) and North and South America (Americas). The reports were prepared in 2021-2022 (Dahn, 2021; Kaczorowski, 2022). The data presented by EY result from the analyses based on literature sources and primary research conducted in renowned scientific and research centres from around the world (EYGM, 2020). Meanwhile, EI

data on the top global consumer trends that may have the greatest impact on consumer behaviour in 2022 and subsequent years were obtained as a result of quantitative direct research conducted by 15 regional offices of the company operating in 100 countries around the world. EI research results present the state of the market as of January 2022 (Angus & Westbrook, 2022) and February 2024 (Grigojevaite et al., 2024).

## Results and discussion

Presenting the results of the conducted analyses, it can be noted that tea consumers have a wide variety of preferences in terms of the taste of teas offered on the market, their health-promoting properties and the convenience of preparation and consumption. It also happens that tea producers and sellers are faced with the task of meeting contradictory needs at the same time. An example here is consumer expectations in terms of convenience, while maintaining the principles of sustainable development and fair trade. This disconnect is particularly visible in the EMEA region. Such consumer behaviour is influenced e.g. by the following macro-trends: decarbonization (EYGM, 2020) or greenwashed out (Grigojevaite et al., 2024). Consumers are trying to be ecologically responsible and take pro-environmental actions, but at the same time they are tired of it. In APAC countries, tea consumers expect producers, in addition to convenience and speed of preparation, to reduce the sugar content in the tea drinks they offer. Americas consumers are primarily looking for teas which support their immune systems and at the same time enjoy new flavours and colours. This region of the global tea market seems to be the most open to

The collected data made it possible to characterise the main innovations introduced to the tea market and to analyse the impact of megatrends and new trends in consumption on consumer behaviour in this market.

Research for the purposes of this study was carried out using the desk research method, and logical inference methods and the comparative method were used to analyse the data. A descriptive and tabular form was used to present the obtained research results.

innovation. Consumers want to expand their tea horizons with new, niche and innovative tea flavours as well as unconventional combinations and hybrids.

Developing the presented threads, it can be concluded that the expectations in the area of functionality concern primarily the beneficial impact of tea drinks on human health and well-being. Tea is supposed to reduce stress and negative emotions. It is supposed to add energy and strengthen the immune and digestive systems. It is supposed to be rich in antioxidants and maintain healthy skin and hair. Mintel research shows that as many as 46% of adult tea consumers from the USA are interested in tea which supports immunity (Kaczorowski, 2022). Innovations in this area lead to the enrichment of tea mixtures with ingredients commonly considered health-promoting and medicinal (ginger, echinacea, turmeric, licorice, vitamins, probiotics). When reaching for a cup of tea, consumers expect that it will not only be beneficial to their physical health, but also to their mental health. Such expectations include e.g. every second resident of Brazil, looking for products that reduce stress and tension caused by the possibility of a return of the pandemic,

climate change or rising inflation (Kaczorowski, 2022). Consumers expect tea drinks to also reduce anxiety, facilitate falling asleep and support the proper functioning of the brain. The aforementioned expectations are primarily in line with the macrotrend of wellness pragmatists (Grigojevaite et al., 2024). Consumers expect simple, accessible solutions which enable them to take independent, effective care of their health and beauty. In response, such products as immunological teas strengthening immunity (Brazil), calming wellness teas (Costa Rica) and cognitive health teas with omega-3 acid (Colombia) have already appeared on the South American market.

Comfort should go hand in hand with functionality. An example would be offering consumers ready-to-drink teas rich in health-promoting ingredients, without the need to prepare multi-ingredient mixtures and long brewing. Innovative packaging dedicated to tea drinks can help meet this expectation. These packaging, as well as the tea products themselves, must also meet the requirements of biodegradability and compostability. More and more consumers in the market are showing interest in tea that is produced and supplied in an ethical and sustainable way. These expectations are particularly visible in the segments of young consumers involved in ecology and environmental protection, for whom equality and respect for human rights are basic values. Such consumer attitudes are influenced by the progressively polarised macrotrend (Grigojevaite et al., 2024). Thanks to social media and the dynamic development of transport, the world has shrunk to the size of a global village. It is easier for people to fight for their values and engage in various ideas, including those aimed at protecting the climate and the environment.

Tea producers must therefore look for innovative solutions also in the area of eliminating plastics in tea packaging and tea bags (Dahn, 2021). According to Mintel research, 75% of adult Germans agree with the statement that using biodegradable tea bags is a good way to reduce the amount of plastic waste (Kaczorowski, 2022), and 67% of residents of the United Kingdom have a similar opinion (Dahn, 2021). Involvement in these areas may allow tea producers and sellers to acquire many new customers and retain existing ones. It is also part of the climate changers macrotrend pushing ecological activism and a low-emission lifestyle. In order to attract the segment of climate change apologists, tea producers and sellers should offer carbon footprint certified products. Transparent labelling of carbon neutral products builds trust and enables consumers to make informed choices (Angus & Westbrook, 2022). It is also gaining recognition among supporters of the previously mentioned decarbonisation megatrend.

Convenience also means, or rather primarily, minimising the time of brewing tea. Innovations are therefore expected in instant and ready-to-drink teas which can be quickly prepared and consumed on the go. This type of solutions is especially expected by Asian residents, for whom the ease of consuming the drink, the speed of its preparation and convenient packaging, good for use on the go, are very important. Packaging which allows the consumer to heat tea in a microwave oven is also well received. An even better solution may be self-heating cups or instant tea bottles into which you can pour hot or cold water, depending on your preferences. A convenient, although not necessarily ecological solution is instant tea in disposable packaging. These solu-



tions can already be found on the Chinese market. In this type of consumer behaviour, the influence of the work and life unbounded macrotrend can be seen (EYGM, 2020). The boundaries between study, work, recreation and retirement are blurring. Consumers expect products that will accompany them in all their life activities, without absorbing them too much.

A large part of consumers look for variety, change, an extension of the range of flavours, aromas and unconventional combinations, as well as fun, in tea drinks. It is not required that the tea be a classic tea. On the contrary, consumers are increasingly interested in drinks based on tea or in which tea is one of many ingredients. An example is Blue Latte tea with butterfly peas, offered in Japan and other parts of Asia. This solution is an innovative idea by Nescafe, offered in the form of capsules for Nescafe Dolce Gusto coffee machines. Speaking of capsules, they can also be biodegradable, produced on the basis of plants without the use of aluminum (Sweden). On the Australian market you can find sets for bubble tea prepared in a microwave oven, sets for milk tea with brown sugar jelly and bubble tea sets with rubber pearls. A desire for new and exciting teas also characterises American consumers. Nearly 40% of U.S. adults who drink tea say they are interested in discovering new teas. Nearly 30% declare that they drink different types of tea to achieve different benefits (Kaczorowski, 2022). Consumers expect innovations in the field of floral, fruit and vegetable aromas, as well as the always popular herbal aromas. Openness to new flavours means that more and more organic, semi-fermented oolong teas are drunk on the American market (e.g. in Canada). On store shelves in the USA you can also find white tea

with coconut or a hot drink with the flavour of birthday cake. Sparkling botanical tea with turmeric and saffron is intended to strengthen the senses and provide physical and mental regeneration. These behaviours include the influence of the previously indicated megatrends: wellness pragmatists or work and life unbounded, but above all, the macrotrend known as delightful distractions (Grigojevaite et al., 2024). Consumers want to be able to afford moments of goodness, a bit of fun in their often hectic and tense daily rhythm. They want to stop, rest and de-stress. They want to live in harmony with nature and surround themselves with it, regardless of where they work or live, which is so characteristic of the rural urbanites megatrend. The calming and regenerative properties of teas are also part of the great life refresh macrotrend (Angus & Westbrook, 2022). Tea drinks should add energy to action, pursuing passions and personal development of tea consumers.

The high-sugar diet still practised by many consumers is becoming a civilisation problem which causes many dangerous diseases. Conscious consumers expect innovations to eliminate or reduce sugar in tea drinks. More than 1/3 of adult Thai residents demand a reduction in the sugar content in ready-to-drink (RTD) teas (Kaczorowski, 2022), and nearly 30% of adult Germans have a similar opinion (Dahn, 2021). The sugar content in tea drinks, especially RTD, should therefore be perceived as an important purchase barrier. The expectation of reducing sugar content is followed by the expectation of reducing calories, fats, preservatives and artificial sweeteners, flavours and colours.

In the case of markets with a hot climate (Mexico, South America), innovations are ex-

pected to quench thirst with cool tea drinks. Peach and ginger infusions, passion fruit teas prepared with cold mineral water, and instant iced tea lime are now available.

When analysing the impact of megatrends on consumer behaviour in the tea market, it is difficult to forget about the recent COVID-19 pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In line with the macrotrend outlook for the great life refresh (Angus & Westbrook, 2022), pro-

## Conclusions

The literature studies and analysis of available direct research results allow for the following final conclusion: the currently observed changes in consumption do not have a uniform direction and, like the entire human existence, are subject to postmodern eclecticism. The emergence of one trend causes the appearance of one or more opposite, divergent, cancelling or strengthening trends as a result of synergy. Some trends are starting to lose their importance – some are gaining strength. Others, as they fade away, become the basis for the emergence of new, yet unknown ones.

The tea market, part of the larger food and beverage market, is no exception. Consumer behaviour is influenced by numerous megatrends, shaping their lifestyle and influencing their purchasing decisions (Maciejewski, 2018). Enterprises wishing to strengthen their competitiveness should not only observe the trends that have the greatest impact on consumer behaviour, but also take the initiative and actively shape their preferences and choices. This can be done by including consumers in management processes to create unique value together (Krowicki & Maciejewski, 2024). The result of this cooperation may be product inno-

ducers and sellers of tea drinks should prepare product innovations that can help consumers overcome the turmoil related to the pandemic. In many industries, companies operating in line with this macrotrend are perceived by consumers as partners helping to adapt to the post-pandemic reality, as partners helping to develop a new lifestyle.

vations concerning both the core of the product (basic benefit) and other elements of its structure (actual product, improved product, potential product).

The supply side's response to the reported needs of consumers may include e.g. developing innovative variants of functional teas that have a beneficial effect on human health and well-being. Teas that lower stress and blood sugar levels help you fall asleep, and improve brain function. Consumer expectations towards teas, however, do not end with their health-promoting properties. Product innovations on the tea market also include the development of teas that are convenient to prepare and consume. We are talking here primarily about instant teas, teas that can be heated in microwave ovens, teas in self-heating cups and disposable packaging. Tea is also supposed to accompany fun, relaxation and create good moments of the day. It is intended to expand the horizons of consumer experiences through non-obvious combinations of flavours, aromas and colours. It should surprise and invite you to adventure, and allow you to define yourself anew. And all this is to be done in harmony with nature and sustainable development. Therefore, there are

at least several important areas for product innovations expected by tea consumers. These are primarily functionality, comfort, fun and expanding experiences, care for the environment and your own lifestyle.

The research results and conclusions presented in this article do not exhaust the topic.

The authors of the article hope that their considerations will constitute an incentive for further discussion on the forms of product innovations that are developing on the global tea market, as well as on the impact of current and future macro-trends on consumer behaviour in this market.

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Conceptualization, G.M.; methodology, S.M.; software, G.M.; validation, G.M., S.M. and P.K.; formal analysis, S.M. and P.K.; investigation, G.M.; resources, S.M.; data curation, S.M.; writing—original draft preparation, G.M.; writing—review and editing, G.M., S.M. and P.K.; visualization, G.M.; supervision, S.M. and P.K.; project administration, G.M. and S.M.; funding acquisition, S.M. 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 organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) our work.

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