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Entrepreneurial Marketing in the Ethnic Food Niche

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A B S T R A C T

Aim/Purpose: The article aims at examining the niche strategy applied by restaurant owners and food producers in the ethnic cuisine market in Poland. It also explains how the entrepreneurial marketing tools are used by such SMEs to sustain their competitive position in the volatile and uncertain environment.

Design/methodology/approach: CATI survey was conducted between September and October 2023 among 85 Georgian entrepreneurs operating in Poland, selected via purposive sampling. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA and correlation methods were applied to analyse the data.

Findings: All respondents in the sample used the niche strategy, but it covered different parts of their offering. A stronger market adaptation of the food offering was accompanied by a stronger social media marketing capability, stronger co-production with clients, more focus on opportunities and legitimization of the offering. The use of these entrepreneurial marketing tools was accompanied with higher acquisition of new clients.

Research implications/limitations: The limitations regard the size of the sample and the cross-sectional approach of the study. Thus, it is advisable to extend the study to another ethnic food market segment and to prolong the study to check the validity of results in a more stable economic situation.

Originality/value/contribution: The mix of competitive strategies applied by the ethnic restaurants in Poland, who both concentrate on the traditional ethnic food niche and adapt their products to the tastes of the local population provides an interesting contribution. This mix of strategies can be classified as a "hybrid" strategy which integrates the specialization and differentiation understood in the classical Porter's sense.

K e y w o r d s: niche strategy, entrepreneurial marketing, ethnic food, Poland, Georgia
J E L C l a s s i f i c a t i o n: M16, M31

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Introduction

The Central and Eastern European region, including Poland, has witnessed changes in consumer eating habits due to increased travel and migration. The market for dining services has been constantly growing in this region. According to Euromonitor International (Passport, 2024) the value of foodservice sales in Poland increased by 14% in 2023 to PLN 28.3 billion compared to 2022. The number of outlets (restaurants, bars) grew by 2% to 24,138 in the same year meaning an increase of sales per outlet, which was not only due to inflation, but also due to the growing variety of the dishes offered.

The increasing willingness of European consumers to experiment with novel tastes, leading to the growing popularity of ethnic cuisine has also been noted by reports (Passport, 2024). The rising preferences for healthy ingredients and organic farming are in-line with the health-consciousness trend present among the Central and Eastern European consumers (Maciejewski *et al.*, 2020). Among the Polish consumers, 53% declare that the leading issue in food choice is the concern for health (Strategy&, 2024).

Ethnic foods are defined as foods originating from the heritage and culture of an ethnic group that uses their knowledge of local ingredients of plants and animal sources (Fortune Business Insights, 2024). The global ethnic food market size was valued at USD 86.90 billion in 2024. The market is projected to grow to USD 153.21 billion by 2032, exhibiting a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.4% during the forecast period. In turn, the European ethnic food market generated a revenue of USD 15,612.9 million in 2024. This market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 8.2% from 2025 to 2030 which is faster than the average global growth rate (Horizon Grand View Research, 2025).

The ethnic food market in Europe is more saturated compared to other developed regions. In Europe, the presence of ethnic group foods, such as Italian, Spanish, French, and Greek products limits the growth of other ethnic group food categories. However, the demand for them is expected to grow steadily. The expanding multicultural population in Europe, rising consumer interest in diverse cuisines, significant growth in the hospitality sector, emerging health and wellness trends, and rapid technological changes are some of the factors boosting the industry's revenue and driving the European ethnic food market growth (IMARC Group, 2024).

In Poland the value of foodservice sales in 2023 almost doubled the growth rate of the ethnic cuisine market in Europe (Passport, 2024). Middle Eastern full-service restaurants were the best performing category among the ethnic food types offered in Poland (a growth rate of 16 % in 2023).

The mentioned changes in eating habits generate responses in company strategies. As the market for ethnic products grows and proves stable and profitable, it is attracting corporate competitors. Mainstream marketers are likely to adapt their strategies to the increasingly diverse tastes of consumers. In response, small ethnic entrepreneurs are likely to expand to serve the needs of mainstream clients as their products become recognized and assimilated into a larger population (Jamal, 2005).

Small and middle-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent the majority of ethnic restaurants and food providers. When they set up their activity abroad, before developing strong business ties with the local population, they act as typical small exporters and often choose the specialization strategy. Doole and co-authors (2022) indicate that the strategy of international niche is the most often applied by such SMEs in foreign markets. This strategy is concerned with offering a differentiated product or service overseas, usually to a single customer segment, using the full range of market entry and marketing-mix options available (Doole *et al.*, 2022). After the initial stage, SMEs often use peer networks to gain a larger share of new foreign target markets (Ojala, 2009). They can establish a fully owned presence abroad as local service providers in the food and catering industry. Their commitment and regular communication with the foreign market enables customer-focused SMEs to specialize in international niches and to become successful despite their scarce resources (Hagen *et al*., 2012).

This article aims at examining the niche strategy applied by restaurant owners and food producers in the ethnic cuisine market in Poland. It also explains how the entrepreneurial marketing tools are used by such SMEs to sustain their competitive position in the volatile and uncertain environment.

Literature review

Differentiation and specialization in international foodservice marketing

Differentiation in the foodservice business includes putting unique dishes on the menu that customers cannot find anywhere else. The menu should be renewed systematically which is also possible because the experience of the staff, as well as the quality of supplies and premises, play a huge role. Thus, ethnic restaurants focus on employing native cooks from their home countries and offering dishes prepared according to traditional recipes based on ingredients sourced from the original market (Thevenet, 2023).

For a niche player to be successful, the product or service must not only be distinctive (highly differentiated), but also recognized by consumers and other participants in the international supply chain. In addition, SMEs need to specialize in meeting the specific needs of their customers, provide high levels of service, and demonstrate market commitment (Hagen et al. 2012; Brown and McDonald, 1994). The strategy defined by Porter as specialization, focuses on a carefully selected group of buyers with specific needs with are unique for this market segment (Porter, 2006). A recent large study in the manufacturing industry in Poland showed that the perception of success by small exporters' was negatively related to using a standardization strategy (n=304 firms, Sikora 2020). This finding also confirms the importance of differentiating market offerings by small firms.

All the above factors are present in the activities of Georgian restaurants serving Polish customers. Despite the significant cultural differences between Poland and Georgia, these restaurants are highly valued by Poles. Rankings list Georgian cuisine at 4th , 9th or 12th place among the other restaurants in major Polish cities like Poznań, Warsaw and

Wrocław (resto.com.pl; najlepszewwarszawie.com; foodokracja.pl). The restaurants are located in prestigious places such as the old towns or central business districts. The typical main dishes are accompanied with hot and cold drinks delivered from Georgia, which make the niche positioning of original ethnic food credible.

Tea cultivation in Georgia has a rich history that dates back to 1845, when the first tea plants were introduced in experimental plantations along the Black Sea coast (Prikhodko *et al.*, 2022). Tea production increased significantly and by the mid-1970s Georgia had become the leading producer in the Soviet Union, supplying 95% of all the tea consumed in the Soviet Union. However, the increase in production came at the expense of quality. The traditional hand-picking that had been used in the 1890s was replaced by mass mechanical harvesting (Nakhutsrishvili, 2012). The structural changes that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s resulted in the decline of the Georgian tea industry (Prikhodko *et al.*, 2022). However, interest in the tea sector has grown in recent years. In 2024, Georgia exported 1,690 tons of tea valued at 2.8 million USD, reflecting a 21.4% increase compared to 2023. The main importing countries are: Turkey, Mongolia, Kazakhstan (BMG, 2025).

The global tea market has seen significant changes in recent years. There has been a steady increase in international demand, particularly in the categories of green and organic teas. While China, India, Sri Lanka, and Kenya continue to dominate production, new entrants are making their mark, especially in the organic and premium tea sectors. While Georgia is a relatively small player in the global market, it has niche opportunities with high potential. The growing demand for organic and environmentally friendly tea is a great opportunity for Georgia (www.btuai.ge). Georgia is one of the northernmost tea-producing countries in the world, thanks to the humid subtropical climate of the Black Sea, which creates optimal conditions for tea cultivation across five regions of Western Georgia. The number of sunny days, average air temperature, subtropical climate and rainfall in Georgia contribute to the high quality of tea. The unique ecosystem and temperature differences in summer and winter determine the seasonality of the harvest. Currently 16 different varieties of Georgian tea are harvested. In winter, the temperature often drops below zero, which effectively eliminates pests. This natural environment allows for the minimal use of pesticides on tea plantations, paving the way for organic farming methods and increasing export potential. Compared to southern tea-growing regions, Georgia's relatively fewer sunny days result in lower levels of tannin in its tea. As a result, Georgian black tea has a unique hue, while the green tea is remarkably light and has a moderate bitterness. The region's harmonious temperature fluctuations promote the development of aromatic compounds in the tea plant shoots, culminating in a distinctive aromatic profile that sets Georgian tea apart (www.mountaintea.ge).

Most of the Georgian restaurants in Poland offer authentic tea products, bringing the rich tea culture of Georgia to their menus. Among the varieties available, guests can enjoy traditional black and green teas, known for their distinct flavors. It is rare to find a restaurant where a non-traditional tea variety is included alongside traditional varieties on a menu. An example of a menu from Warsaw is

the following: "Herbs picked in spring from the charming mountain meadows of Tushetia that are sun-dried naturally. A blend of herbs and flowers to aid digestion." (www.rusiko.pl).

Apart from the menu, the high quality of service, the commitment of skilled staff, and the location of high quality ethnic restaurants are important elements in their positioning (Illo, 2021). Nowadays restaurants serving ethnic cuisine are spread across all urban areas, not limited only to areas where migrants live. This trend can be observed for example in Madrid, where the spatial concentration of ethnic restaurants and bars is very high in the case of Japanese cuisine, slightly lower for Italian cuisine (which is the most popular), and almost nonexistent in the case of Chinese cuisine (Derek, 2020). The convenient location in the city center stimulates the interest of connoisseurs and also underlines the niche positioning.

It is worth noting that ethnic restaurants in major cities often emphasize the distinctiveness of their cuisine by engaging in horizontal differentiation within the category (Lane and Opazo, 2023; Glynn and Navis, 2013). The differentiation within the high-end category is based, first of all, on the expertise in a particular foreign cuisine. Offering national, regional dishes emphasizes the faithfulness to 'the essence' of the home country, often perceived as authenticity by diners. According to Ray (2016, p. 179) "(such restaurants) trade more in the domain of authenticity than in the realm of innovation in haute cuisine". Such a strategy of prestige niche is followed especially by the restaurateurs offering ethnic food to large urban populations.

Operational measures within international foodservice marketing

In the high-risk environment of international marketing, including the changes of consumer trends and the growing requirements for product and service quality, entrepreneurial marketing is a helpful approach (Nwankwo and Kanyangale, 2022). Entrepreneurial marketing can be defined as an organizational function and a set of processes for shaping, communicating, delivering value and managing relationships with customers in a way that benefits the organization and stakeholders which is characterized by innovation, calculated risk-taking, proactiveness and can be carried out without the use of organization-controlled resources (Kraus, Harms ad Fink, 2010).

The dominant feature of this view is a non-traditional, entrepreneurial way of marketing, in which managers are immersed in market activity and thus have an in-depth view of the customer problems they are trying to solve with products and value propositions. Instead of a traditional, market-oriented approach, the focus of entrepreneurial marketing is on the so-called "new 4Ps" (Gillmore, 2011). These include: the key role of the entrepreneur (Person); his/her focus on achieving the strategic goal (Purpose), i.e. e.g. introducing an innovative product before competitors; improvement of customer service processes (Process) and practices focused on developing products using direct customer communication, network connections and market relations (Practices).

Apart from these instruments, the entrepreneurial marketing approach often includes legitimizing the producer and his/her offering by participating in various contests and receiving quality certificates (Sullivan Mort

et al., 2012). Such an activity may improve the image of a small player demonstrating their experience and reliability within a specific market segment.

Finally, entrepreneurial marketing is typically based on the effective application of social media for communication, networking and co-production with customers (Fink et al., 2020). The social media tools are cheap and also derive their success from frequent interaction with close networks, which are characteristic for the migrant economic activity in foreign markets.

In the following part of the study we explore how restaurant owners use these tools in ethnic food marketing. We apply the example of Georgian foodservices in Poland, due to their growing popularity and an increasing number of Georgian migrants in this country (from 2020 to 2024 the proportion of Georgians among all working foreigners in Poland rose from 2% to 2,6%; Statistics Poland, 2024). The analysis aims to assess the popularity of the ethnic food niche strategy among Georgian entrepreneurs in Poland and to examine the marketing tools used by this group of SMEs.

Research methods

The CATI survey was conducted between September and October 2023 among 85 Georgian entrepreneurs operating in Poland. Purposive sampling was adopted to ensure that suitable research participants were selected. The selection criteria were: time of operation in the Polish market (at least two years); industry: catering /restaurant services, food and beverages production and retail services; the number of contracted employees: up to 49.

According to data from the Georgian agency conducting survey research, there are 614 companies operating in Poland in which one or more shareholders are Georgian citizens. The general population of Georgian firms operating in Poland in food and beverages production, catering/restaurant services, and retail services is estimated to be c.a. 386 firms. Out of these respondents, no contact information was available for 27 individuals. Out of the 359 respondents, 87 had outdated or incorrect contact details. The next step was to assess the willingness of these individuals to participate in a phone interview. Out of the 272 individuals who were successfully reached, 85 expressed willingness to participate in the interview and actually completed the phone interview, giving a response rate of 31%. This level of response rate may be due to an unwillingness to participate in official studies because of a low trust towards research institutions and an unwillingness to reveal the details of economic activity in the foreign country. In the final sample, there were 56 micro and 29 small firms; 48 representatives of catering/ restaurant services, 21 firms producing food and beverages, and 16 firms providing retail services (mainly food-sellers).

To check the popularity of the ethnic food strategy we asked a closed question: “Do you offer standard (Georgian) products for the Polish market or do you offer products adapted to the requirements of individual local customers?”. The possible answers were: (1) The entire range of our products/services are typical, standard Georgian products; (2) Most of our product/service ranges are typical, standard, Georgian products; (3) Approxi-

mately half of our product range is standard products/services and half is tailored to Polish market requirement; (4) The majority of our product/service range is adapted to the requirements of the Polish market; (5) The entire range of our products/services are tailored to Polish market requirement.

To operationalize the tools of entrepreneurial marketing we adopted measures from the entrepreneurial marketing orientation scale (Fiore et al., 2013; Kowalik et al., 2022, included in Appendix 1).

Finally, we explored the popularity of social media in SME marketing. We applied a social media marketing capability scale (Susanto, et. al 2021). The respondents were asked: "If you use social media, please rate the importance of social media for your business" and provided nine statements, with answers ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (7) "strongly agree". The statements included: (1) Our company is using social media to promote its offering; (2) Our company uses social media in the evaluation of its marketing performance by getting feedback from users (likes, shares and follow-up from Instagram, Facebook and Twitter); (3) Our company uses different languages in marketing through social media; (4) Our company systematically collected customer feedback on social media sites; (5) Our company uses social media in performing customer service activities; (6) Our company improved the quality of their products through the study of customer feedback through social media; (7) Our company is looking for new customers through social media; (8) Our company uses social media in the search for general information about the target market; (9) Our company uses social media to search for competitors' information. We have checked the scale's reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) with an acceptable result of 0.822. After removing item 3, the scale's reliability improved to 0.837. The mean value of the social media capability in the studied sample was 4.73 (St. dev.=1.1).

Research findings

Regarding the question about applying ethnic food strategy 32 firms said that they offered half or more standard Georgian products and 53 - offered half or more products adapted to the Polish market in their menus and shops (Table 1). No respondent chose the answer "The entire range of our products/services are tailored to Polish market requirement". Thus we considered that all respondents in the sample used the niche strategy, but they chose to adapt different parts of their offering. Among the foodservice and food producing firms the most often chosen option was to offer half standard Georgian products and half adapted to the Polish market. Among retailers the majority offered standard Georgian products.

Table 1. Application of ethnic food strategy by the Georgian SMEs in Poland (n=85)

Specification		*Do you offer standard Georgian products for the Polish market or do you offer products adapted to the requirements of individual local customers. Please choose the right answer:*				Total
		The entire range of our products/services are typical, standard Georgian products	Most of our product/service ranges are typical, standard, Georgian products	Approximately half of our product range is standard products/services and half is tailored to Polish market requirement	The majority of our product/service range is adapted to the requirements of the Polish market	
Industry	Catering/Restaurant Services	5	6	26	11	48
	Food and Beverages Production	3	3	10	5	21
	Retail Services	11	4	1	0	16
Total		19	13	37	16	85

Source: own study.

Note: the answering scale included: (1) *The entire range of our products/services are typical, standard Georgian products*; (2) *Most of our product/service ranges are typical, standard, Georgian products; (3) Approximately half of our product range is standard products/services and half is tailored to Polish market requirement; (4) The majority of our product/service range is adapted to the requirements of Polish market; (5) The entire range of our products/services is tailored to Polish market requirement*.

Next we compared the mean scores of the entrepreneurial marketing scale items in groups which applied the "standard Georgian products strategy" (option 1. and 2. in the ethnic food strategy scale, n=32) and those who had half or more of their products adapted to Polish market requirements (option 3. and 4., n=53 firms). The results are displayed in Tables 2 and 2a.

Table 2. Comparison of entrepreneurial marketing scale items in firms who applied "standard Georgian products" strategy and those who had half or more of their products adapted to the Polish market (one – way ANOVA)

Items in entrepreneurial marketing scale	Specyfication	Sum of squares	df	Square mean	F	significance
Our marketing efforts tend to have a low risk level for our business.	Between groups	14.220	1	14.220	10.349	0.002
	Within groups	112.673	82	1.374		
	Total	126.893	83			
Communication with customers is a great way to get ideas for innovation (e.g. new product types, new packaging, new forms of communication)	Between groups	12.018	1	12.018	5.902	0.017
	Within groups	166.971	82	2.036		
	Total	178.988	83			
We pursue untapped market opportunities regardless of budgetary or staff constraints.	Between groups	3.783	1	3.783	2.771	0.100
	Within groups	111.967	82	1.365		
	Total	115.750	83			
We try to gain recognition for our offer through quality certificates. awards or participation in competitions.	Between groups	33.433	1	33.433	9.114	0.003
	Within groups	300.805	82	3.668		
	Total	334.238	83			

Source: own calculations using IBM SPSS. Note: only the scale items with significant differences of the means comparison are displayed.

Table 2a. Comparison of entrepreneurial marketing scale mean values in firms who applied "standard Georgian products" strategy and those who had half or more products adapted to the Polish market

Items in entrepreneurial marketing scale	Do you offer standard products for the Polish market or do you offer products adapted to the requirements of individual local customers. Please choose the right answer:	N	Mean	Std. dev.	Stand. error of mean
Our marketing efforts tend to have a low risk level for our business.	half or more products adapted to the Polish market	52	5.21	1.242	0.172
	"standard Georgian products" strategy	32	6.06	1.045	0.185
Communication with customers is a great way to get ideas for innovation (e.g. new product types, new packaging, new forms of communication)	half or more products adapted to the Polish market	52	5.17	1.339	0.186
	"standard Georgian products" strategy	32	4.31	1.533	0.271
We pursue untapped market opportunities regardless of budgetary or staff constraints.	half or more products adapted to the Polish market	52	2.58	1.242	0.172
	"standard Georgian products" strategy	32	1.72	0.851	0.150
We try to gain recognition for our offer through quality certificates, awards or participation in competitions.	half or more products adapted to the Polish market	52	3.31	2.082	0.289
	"standard Georgian products" strategy	32	3.19	1.908	0.337

Source: own calculation using IBM SPSS.

Next we checked the social media marketing capability's correlation with the adaptation of the ethnic food offering. The Pearson and Spearman correlation indicators are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation between adaptation in the ethnic food strategy and social media marketing capability of the Georgian SMEs

		Social media marketing capability (mean)
Do you offer standard products for the Polish market or do you offer products adapted to the requirements of individual local customers? (scale 1-5)	Pearson correlation indicator	0.379
	Significance	<0.001
	Spearman correlation indicator	0.333
	Significance	0.002
	N	85

Source: own calculation using IBM SPSS.

The results in Table 3. show that a stronger social media marketing capability among Georgian SMEs is associated with a stronger adaptation in their ethnic food offerings to the Polish market needs. The correlation indicators are at a lower moderate level.

We have also checked if there is any significant difference in new client acquisition between firms using adaptation in ethnic food offering and those selling mostly standard Georgian products. The question "How has the new client acquisition evolved over the past two years, compared to competitors". Please choose one answer: (1) far worse than our competitors, (2) worse, (3) rather worse, (4) comparable, (5) rather better, (6) better, (7) definitely better than competitors was asked of all respondents. We found in the group of firms offering half or more products adapted to the Polish market the mean result was 4.85 (St. dev. 0.987) and in the group selling mostly Georgian standard products was 3.88 (St. dev. 1.126). The difference was significant at p=0.032 (ANOVA).

Summing up:

- in the whole studied population, the indicators of entrepreneurial marketing are the highest for the low-risk dimension (low cost, low risk marketing – statements 9, 10, see: Appendix 1),
- the second dimension of entrepreneurial marketing with high scores is customer orientation. The restaurants, bakeries and ethnic product retailers place lots of emphasis on frequent communication and including customers in the process of product development (statements 7, 12, Appendix 1),
- the firms which mainly cater for local needs have better results in modifying marketing in co-production with the clients, they focus more on opportunities and acquire more new clients (ANOVA, Tables 2-2a),
- firms which mainly cater for local customer tastes put more emphasis on the legitimization of the offering (ANOVA, Tables 2-2a),
- firms who mainly offer standard Georgian products prefer low-risk marketing (ANOVA, Tables 2-2a),

firms who offer products mainly adapted to local customer tastes have a higher social media marketing capability (Table 3).

Discussion and conclusions

Despite the crisis situation, the ethnic food market is growing at a fast pace in Europe, exceeding that of the rest of the world. As a new, growing segment of the food services market in Poland, ethnic restaurants are increasing their popularity among the population. The article examines the niche strategy used in the in the ethnic food market by the restaurateurs and ethnic food providers in Poland. It provides examples of the entrepreneurial marketing tools, the menu and location's role within the marketing-mix. It shows that a niche strategy accompanied by entrepreneurial marketing tools is helpful in sustaining business activity in this volatile and uncertain environment.

An interesting contribution regards the mix of competitive strategies applied by the Georgian restaurants in Poland. They both concentrate on this ethnic food niche and use the adaptation of products to the tastes of the local population. This mix of strategies can be classified as a "hybrid" strategy (Alnoor *et al.*, 2022).

It integrates a set of strategies including the niche and differentiation strategy understood in the classical sense of Porter's competitive strategies (Porter, 2006).

We found that such a hybrid strategy is connected with greater opportunity focus and quicker communication of restaurant owners with customers. It is also based on a stronger use of the social media tools. The companies with adapted menus acquire more new clients than the ones who focus only on the traditional Georgian products. Such a finding confirms the literature attributing better performance to firms who apply hybrid strategies contrary to the "pure" strategies of competition (Alnoor *et al.*, 2022). In addition, the study reveals the role of social media marketing capabilities as a driver of adaptation strategy. This can be explained by the fact that social media are an effective communication platform for entrepreneurs to connect with potential customers, to gain local insights and adjust their offers accordingly (Sharabati *et al*., 2024).

It is surprising that the restaurants and bakeries who choose the best locations, earn high marks in the rankings and offer high quality dishes in their menus, including original local teas, use a low-cost entrepreneurial marketing approach. However, this finding stays in line with the assumptions of theorists from the American Marketing Association (Whalen, 2016), treating entrepreneurial marketing as the right approach for demanding times and for acting in a volatile environment.

The study contributes to the theory by extending the entrepreneurial marketing concept on the ethnic SMEs operating in the food service industry. Moreover, the study empirically confirms the previously adapted measurement tools in the new environment of the Central and Eastern European market.

The study limitations regard the size of the sample and the cross-sectional approach. Thus, it is advisable to extend the analysis to another ethnic food market segment and to try to prolong the study to check the validity of results in a more stable economic situation.

Author Contributions

Conceptualisation, I.K.; methodology, IK; software, I.K., M.M.; validation, I.K., M.M.; formal analysis, I.K.; investigation, M.M.; resources, M.M.; data curation, M.M.; writing—original draft preparation, I.K., M.M.; writing—review and editing, I.K., M.M.; visualisation, I.K.; supervision, I.K., M.M.; project administration, I.K., M.M.; funding acquisition, I.K., M.M. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Declaration of competing interest

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

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Appendix 1.

The entrepreneurial marketing scale applied in the study and mean values in the sample (n=85)

Scale items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
			value	Std. Error.	value	Std. Error
1. We continually engage in improving the way products/services are marketed in our business.	**4.52**	1.285	-0.019	0.263	-0.452	0.520
2. Our business is frequently one of the first among competitors to alter its marketing methods. (e.g. discounts. loyalty programs. referral schemes. etc.).	**3.11**	1.440	0.627	0.263	-0.036	0.520
3. We consistently improve the approach to marketing our business.	**3.69**	1.497	-0.224	0.263	-0.823	0.520
4. We pursue untapped market opportunities regardless of budgetary or staff constraints.	**2.25**	1.181	0.756	0.263	-0.232	0.520
5. When new market opportunities arise. our business very quickly acts on them.	**3.70**	1.634	0.003	0.263	-0.749	0.520
6. Our business excels at identifying marketing opportunities (finding new market niches).	**3.65**	1.572	-0.093	0.263	-0.659	0.520
7. Our marketing activities are based on what customers really want from our products/services.	**4.77**	1.226	-0.398	0.263	0.335	0.520
8. We spend considerable resources to get to know our customers better.	**3.19**	1.632	0.384	0.263	-0.676	0.520
9. Our marketing efforts tend to have a low level of risk for our business.	**5.54**	1.236	-1.240	0.263	2.122	0.520
10. Our business typically incurs low costs in connection with new marketing activities.	**5.62**	1.455	-1.395	0.263	2.068	0.520
11. When we decide to undertake new marketing activities. we implement them in a phased approach rather than a one-off to reduce risk.	**4.37**	1.829	-0.627	0.263	-0.690	0.520
12. Communication with customers is a great way to get ideas for innovation (e.g. new product types., new packaging, new form of communication).	**4.85**	1.468	-0.684	0.263	0.594	0.520
13. Innovation is key to achieving a competitive advantage for our company.	**3.69**	1.521	-0.110	0.263	-0.346	0.520
14. We try to gain recognition for our offer through quality certificates, awards or participation in competitions.	**3.26**	2.007	0.464	0.263	-1.163	0.520

Source of the scale: Kowalik *et al.* (2022). Note: the respondents replied using a 7-point scale, where *"1" means definitely not, "2" – no, "3" - rather not, "4" - similar, average, hard to say, "5" -rather yes, "6" -yes, "7" - definitely yes.*

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