

# IS THERE A NEED FOR “HEALTHY” CHOCOLATE?



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## Systematic Literature Review and Consumer Research in Belgium and in Denmark

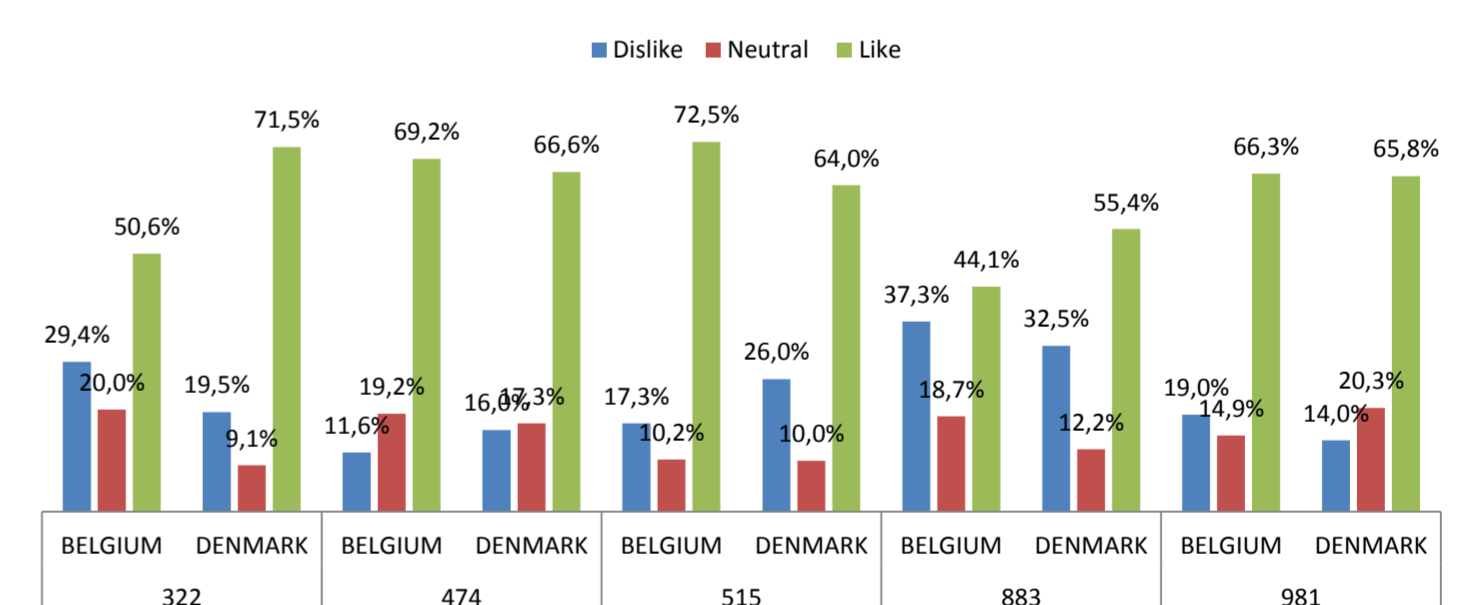
**Introduction:** Chocolate has especially properties that help to protect human body against cardiovascular diseases; it increases HDL cholesterol and decrease blood pressure. Chocolate consumption also helps to reduce stress, elevates mood and reduces tiredness.

**Objectives:** Analyze the relevance of a healthy chocolate based on consumer’s needs, expectations and perceptions.

**Methods:** The present project studies three areas related to chocolate: Chocolate and its relation to **health**, Chocolate **sensory characteristics and acceptance**, and **attitudes** towards Chocolate. A systematically literature review has been part of this study together with consumer research based on a questionnaire. The questionnaire includes a sensory test of **five different sugar-content chocolates** (Sugar reduced – 981 and 322, without added sugar – 883 and 474, and reference - 515). The questionnaire has been applied in Belgium and in Denmark among university students. A sample size of **215 participants** has been part of this study.

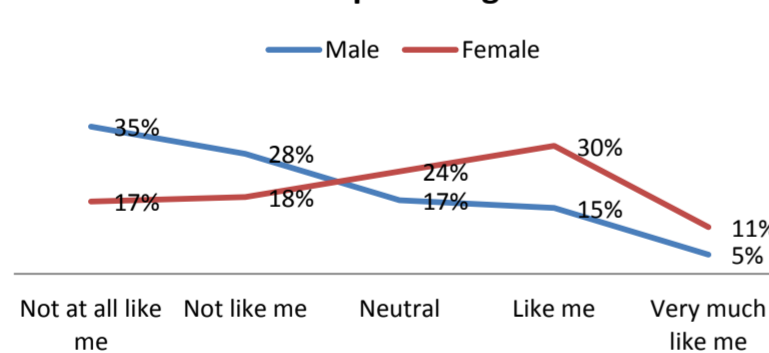
**Results:** There is a significant difference when comparing the consideration of **dark chocolate** as part of a **healthy lifestyle** among countries. 46.7% of the participants in Belgium consider dark chocolate part of a healthy lifestyle while in Denmark 68.2% does. Danes prefer to eat dark chocolate rather than milk chocolate, and Belgians prefer milk rather than dark chocolate. The liking of the five chocolate samples varies significantly among countries but not by gender. And as it has been found in the literature, there is a contrast when comparing the attitudes towards chocolate among gender. There is a tendency of women craving or feeling guilty after eating chocolate.

FIVE CHOCOLATES - LIKING

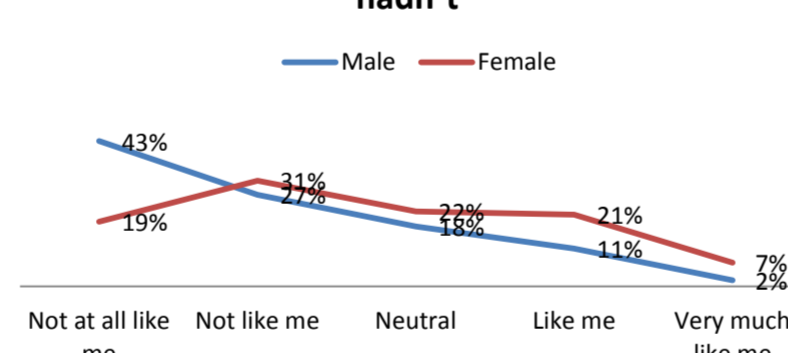


\*Liking of the five chocolate samples in Belgium and in Denmark

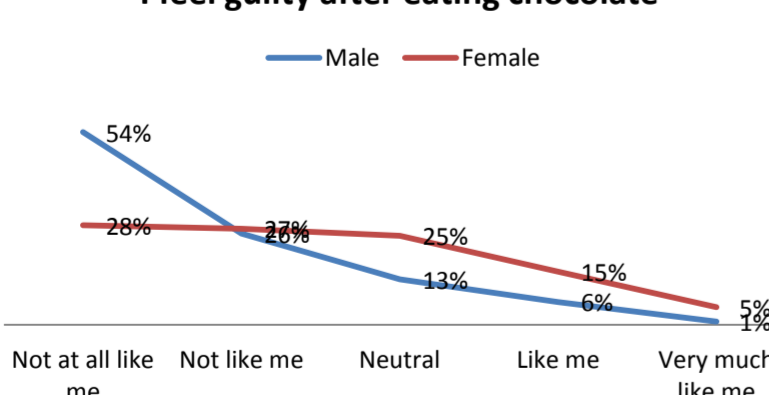
"My desire for chocolate often seems overpowering"



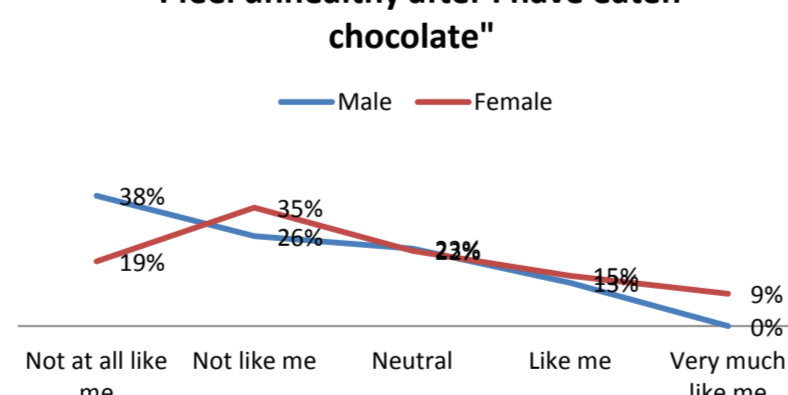
"After eating chocolate I often wish I hadn't"



"I feel guilty after eating chocolate"



"I feel unhealthy after I have eaten chocolate"



\*Part of the results of the Attitudes to Chocolate Questionnaire – comparison between genders

**Conclusion:** Based on this project it can be concluded that **there is a need for “healthy” chocolate**. The literature supports the health properties that chocolate consumption has and the consumers are willing to purchase a chocolate product with sugar and calories reduced.

**Keywords:** Chocolate, health, sensory characteristics, attitudes.

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