

Representations of conviviality: From the social imaginary of meals to food well-being

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Abstract

- **Research objectives**

This article seeks to study representations of conviviality in a meal context and its consequences on consumers' food well-being, in order to guide decision makers.

- **Methodology**

A qualitative study was conducted on a representative sample of 195 people in a controlled laboratory setting. The first task consisted of defining the notion of conviviality; the second was an exercise that required completing the gaps in two narratives about meals – a convivial one and a non-convivial one, respectively. A content analysis was then performed.

- **Results**

A conceptual multidimensional model of conviviality has been proposed. If the constructed image of the ideal convivial meal is guided by the French gastronomic meal model, this study reveals new associations and preferences for consumers, particularly regarding the pragmatic and emotional dimensions of conviviality.

- **Managerial / societal implications**

The utilization of conviviality and its imagery in social marketing could improve the self-assessment of the food well-being experienced by populations said to be fragile or at risk. In service marketing in particular, the user-friendly paradigm could help professionals better define and communicate the positioning of their offers and brands.

- **Originality**

This article connects conviviality and food well-being and proposes a thematic analysis framework to characterize and structure conviviality forms.

- **Keywords:** Conviviality, Gourmet meals, Food well-being, Social marketing.

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