

How Corporations Are Ruining Our Health

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Introduction

The choices that we make about our foods are not solely dependent on our personal preferences. Instead, we are often influenced by many marketing campaigns that sometimes use very effective means of marketing to sell their food items that do not necessarily help people improve their health but only increase the profit of such corporations. The documentary titled “How Corporations Are Ruining Your Health” by Real Stories (2017) is focused on the same idea to provide the audience with a better perspective of different marketing campaigns, especially with regard to food items and improve their decision-making.

Summary

The documentary provides many historical pieces of evidence to elaborate on the unethical practices utilized by large agricultural corporations together with the government to maximize their profit at the expense of public health. In this regard, it refers to the World War and economic revolution in the country to lay down the argument that the invention of more and more sophisticated machines and excessive oil supply led to the increased production of agricultural products. But soon, a time arrived when the local needs for specific food items reached their potential that was in fact, a threat for the large food corporation. So, at this stage, the government stepped in but instead of improving the quality of food, it focused on increasing their quantity and thus provided support to the virtual farmers of large corporations to maximize their production.

This way, the agricultural sector became purely a commercial sector where all businesses involved were only concerned with profit. Thus, a new era emerged in American history where organic foods were rapidly being replaced with artificially grown products having no taste or flavour and nor the necessary ingredients of organic food. Consequently, the food prices were lowered down heavily due to the mass production of the food items and artificially generated huge demand for processed food. But on the other hand, the average expenses on health increased greatly, which shows that the amount the public was paying for costly food items was now being paid for their health because of choosing cheap, unhealthy products.

However, a specific group of people opposed this industrialization of agriculture and offered organic food. This anti-corporate movement was led by Alice Waters who supported local farmers to grow food products without using any chemicals that were later served to her customers in her restaurant Chez Panisse. This movement that was started in California soon spread to the whole United States, therefore we can see many organic markets in different states. This way, a culture of eating healthy

foods that was lost in the late decades of the 20th century reemerged across various parts of the country.

However, the number of diseases for eating unhealthy food is still increasing because people have not fully adopted the organic food culture. Also, many organizations are still providing junk food to their customers following the same corporate business model, and people become very easy victims of their marketing campaigns. As shown in the video, the food industries utilized different marketing tactics, linking their marketing content with the cultural and personal values of the people and becoming highly successful in targeting their customers by presenting their products as a symbol of innovation and the necessity of time.

Also, capitalism worked in a very systematic way to create the demand for unnecessary food items at the mass level when all the corporations, including the government itself, perceived the food industry as the most profitable business. This shows that marketing plays a very important role in influencing people's lives and their habits. But as the video suggests, marketers need to change their focus from profit to public health and welfare. In this regard, the implication of this video from a marketing perspective is very bad because this presents the evil face of marketing campaigns to which the audience unknowingly becomes attracted as they do not have the necessary information to validate the facts.

So, as much as marketers need to understand their impact on society, they need to comprehend their responsibility. Surely everything that brings profit is not beneficial. With more and more such topics being discussed in media, the public becomes more aware of how effectively to respond to the marketing campaigns they are subjected to. So, marketers need to orient their marketing strategies towards the needs of the public and not the needs of the companies, which is surely for making a profit, not unethical in its essence but becomes evil when companies tend to focus only on this element.

From the customers' perspective, the documentary provides many valuable lessons to make better decisions about what we eat, when we eat, and how we eat. After watching the video, one can easily comprehend that whatever the large corporations say about their products is not always right because using influences and orienting their marketing content around comfort, facility, variety, price, and quantity does not mean that the product actually serves the purpose of what it is made from consumers' perspective.

Similarly, we need to promote local food production and local farmers by using their products so that we become assured that we are consuming organic food made purely for us and that does not involve hundreds of miles of transportation to reach stores and is always packed with tasteless agricultural ingredients. This does not mean that we should not buy products from large food brands, but what is actually required is to promote and consume healthy products not based on how good they look in the ads but on how healthy they are. This is the fundamental lesson from the documentary that invites us to break the cycle of industrialization of agriculture and help ourselves to eat healthy and fresh food

coming straight from the local farmers.

There are also many ethical issues that are presented in the documentary, which belong to all three stages of marketing, i.e., spreading awareness about the product, making people acknowledge the benefits of the products, and lastly, they are convinced that the product is right for them. The primary ethical issue that can be observed in the documentary is spreading misinformation about processed foods and artificial tastes. The documentary shows how different companies used to comfort in eating and accessing food used to market their products while arguing that they are as good as the original products. Similarly, discouraging local farming and self-farming by promoting corporate food culture is also an unethical attempt in which the government was also involved.

Conclusion

Industrialization not only facilitated our transportation and production needs but also impacted the clean and safe growth of food items. As a result, with the tremendously growing quantity of food items, the quality of food items exponentially decreased. However, the large corporation offering food items presented their products in a way that positively influenced the public through their marketing content ultimately led to the poor health of a large number of people. This shows that not only marketers need to improve their strategies and address such ethical issues properly, but also consumers need to prioritize their eating habits in a proper way.

References

Real Stories. (2017). How Corporations Ruined Food (Food Industry Documentary) – Real Stories. In *YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RwIWGkMxrE>