

Consumers' Behavior towards Organic Food

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Abstract: *Consumers' behavior towards organic food is influenced through marketing mix employed by marketers. This study is essential for the primary producer of organic food products because nowadays people are conscious about their health and aware of valuing themselves through proper diet and food to eat. The study employed the descriptive method which involves the description, recording, analysis and interpretation of the prevailing conditions. Out of 52,114 total population of the Municipality of Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, Philippines, the researcher chose 399 respondents from communities of the said City using the Sloven's Formula. The researcher also used simple random sampling. The overall findings revealed that four P's of marketing mix such as product, price, place and promotion were rated as moderate extent which means that the respondents were influenced most of the time on the purchasing behavior towards organic food. Based on the findings of the study, the majority of the respondents have a positive response or behavior towards organic food. However, promotion got the lowest overall mean among the 4 P's of marketing mix. Hence, there is a need for intensive promotion through consumers' awareness and advertising campaigns about the benefits and unique selling points of organic food compared to conventional food.*

Keywords: Food technology - organic food, descriptive design, Philippines

1. Introduction

Increasingly each year, people go to supermarkets in search of organically grown food. Once found only in health food stores, organic food is now a regular feature in most supermarkets. And that's created a bit of a dilemma in the produce aisle. On the one hand, you have a conventionally grown apple. On the other, you have one that's organic. Interest in organically produced food is increasing throughout the world. Global demand for organic products remains robust, with sales increasing by over five billion US dollars a year (Willer and Yuseffi, 2009).

The awareness of today's society on agriculture, health and the global environment has increased through government and other campaigns on the importance of healthier eating and lifestyle (Griffiths, 2010). Nowadays, people are conscious of their health. They are aware of valuing themselves through proper diet and food to eat.

The expanding consumer awareness for health food and the proliferation of herbal and natural medicine indicates an expanding market for organic products (Carating et al., 2010).

In Tandag City, this trend is becoming evident with changing lifestyle and preferences. The researcher chose this topic because the study is essential for the primary producer of organic food and also to the business sectors for better understanding about the promotion of organic food and the researcher is interested in this topic because there is no current study in the said location.

2. Materials and Methods/ Methodology

The study focused on the consumers' behavior towards organic food in Tandag City, Surigaodel Sur. The study focuses on what extent do the following factors affect the consumers' behaviour towards organic food regarding promotion. It also determined what proposals can be forwarded to promote the consumption of organic food.

Out of the 52,114 total population of the municipality, 399 respondents was the sample size used in getting the validity and credibility of the study.

Primary data was gathered from survey questionnaires while the secondary data were utilized through articles, published journals, magazines, newspapers, websites, unpublished master's theses and books.

The researcher of this study conducted the collection, tabulation, computation, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data. The researcher used the following statistical treatment such as a percentage of distribution, ranking and weighted mean.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Consumers' Behavior Towards Organic Food in Terms of Product

Criteria	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1) To what extent does the product attributes matter to me?	3.23	Moderate Extent
2) To what extent does the packaging of the product appeal to me?	2.97	Moderate Extent
3) To what extent does the uniqueness of the product affects my purchasing decision?	2.59	Moderate Extent
4) To what extent does the health benefits of the product influenced my buying decision?	3.33	Great Extent
5) To what extent does the brand of the product affects my buying decision?	2.89	Moderate Extent
Overall Mean	3.00	Moderate Extent

Table 1 presents the consumers' behavior towards organic food in terms of its product. The table shows that health benefits of the product affect the respondents' buying decision toward organic food with a highest weighted mean of 3.33 which means that the respondents' were at all times after of the health benefits they could get from a particular organic food. Moreover, uniqueness of the product got the

lowest mean of 2.59 with moderate extent. This implies that the consumers' do not matter much or less on the uniqueness of the product and they were influenced their purchase decision through the offering and features of the product compared to conventional food.

Table 2: Consumers' Behavior Towards Organic Food in Terms of Price

Criteria	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1) To what extent does the price competition of organic food to conventional food affects my buying behavior?	2.94	Moderate Extent
2) To what extent does the cost effectiveness affects my buying behavior?	3.10	Moderate Extent
3) To what extent does the cost and benefit of the product affects my buying behavior?	3.20	Moderate Extent
4) To what extent does my family budget affects my buying decision?	3.12	Moderate Extent
5) To what extent does my income affects my purchase decision?	3.11	Moderate Extent
Overall Mean	3.09	Moderate Extent

Table 2 reveals the consumers' behavior towards the price when buying organic food product. Among the criteria enumerated, cost and benefit of the product affect the buying behavior which got the highest mean of 3.20 while price competition of organic food to conventional food affect the buying behavior which got the lowest mean of 2.94 all of which were rated as moderate extent. This implies that the respondents' were wise enough to prefer to organic food regardless of the cost as long as they could get benefits from the products

Table 3: Consumers' Behavior Towards Organic Food in Terms of Place

Criteria	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1) To what extent does the accessibility of organic food in the market affects my buying decision?	2.96	Moderate Extent
2) To what extent does the assortment availability of organic products in my local region affects my purchase decision?	2.96	Moderate Extent
3) To what extent does the store atmosphere affects my buying behavior?	3.06	Moderate Extent
4) To what extent does the store loyalty affects my buying behavior?	3.03	Moderate Extent
5) To what extent does the store location affects my buying behavior	2.89	Moderate Extent
Total Average Weighted Mean	2.98	Moderate Extent

Table 3 shows the consumers' buying decision towards organic food in terms of place. Among the criteria enumerated, the store atmosphere got the highest mean of 3.06 while accessibility of organic food in the market tied with assortment availability of organic products in the

locality got the lowest mean of 2.96, the over-all findings were rated as moderate extent.

The result implies that the store ambience of an organic food influenced the purchase decision of respondents. A consumer who really wanted to buy organic food will consider the cleanliness and orderly displayed products.

Table 4: Promotion of Organic Food in Tandag City

Criteria	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1) To what extent does the word-of-mouth communication that influenced my buying decision?	2.75	Moderate Extent
2) To what extent does the government support for organic food influenced my buying decision?	2.88	Moderate Extent
3) To what extent does the product knowledge of organic food influenced my buying decision?	3.17	Moderate Extent
4) To what extent does the gourmet foods and celebrity chefs' introduction of organic ingredients influenced my buying decision?	2.67	Moderate Extent
5) To what extent does the promotion of organic food standards influenced my buying decision?	3.00	Moderate Extent
Overall Mean	2.89	Moderate Extent

Table 4 presents the assessment on the promotion of organic food. The table considered the product knowledge was the first ranked among the promotion factors. It had the highest weighted mean of 3.17 and was rated to a moderate extent. Data collected from the respondents indicated that most of the time the consumers' were influenced through their buying behavior It means that respondents are cognizant of the functionalities and product information of the goods they bought in the market.

Among the factors that were considered for promotion, the introduction of organic ingredients of gourmet foods by celebrity chefs to the mainstream got the lowest weighted mean of 2.67 and was rated as moderate extent. It means that most of the time, the respondents were influenced by this concern. The data implied that the promotions or endorsement of famous personalities were not influenced the consumers choices in buying organic food.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the majority of the respondents have a positive response or behavior towards organic food. However, promotion got the lowest overall mean among the 4 P's of marketing mix. Hence, there is a need for intensive promotion through consumers' awareness and advertising campaigns about the benefits and unique selling points of organic food compared to conventional food.

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