

FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER REPURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD IN BANGKOK, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT : The objective of this research is to study the relationships between independent or influence factors (attitude of buying organic food, ecological awareness, ecological consumer behavior, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, past experience and demographic factors) and dependent variable which is consumer repurchase intention towards organic foods in Bangkok, Thailand. The researcher collected data from 400 respondents who had purchased organic food by using the questionnaire survey method in 5 locations in Bangkok area. All of data were analyzed and summarized by applying the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

The results of this study indicated that the independent variable (attitude towards buying organic food, ecological awareness, ecological consumer behavior, perceived behavior control, subjective norms and past experience with organic food) have significant relationships between dependent variable (consumer repurchase intention towards organic food). And there are significant difference of consumer repurchase intention towards on education levels, occupations and monthly incomes. There are no significant difference of consumer repurchase intention towards on gender, age levels, marital status and shopping frequency. From this results of this research, it is useful for food manufacturers and organic food marketers in order to have a better understanding about consumers repurchase intention towards organic food in Bangkok, Thailand. And the marketing planners can create the suitable marketing strategies to attract more customers and keep exiting customers and extend their market size for the growing of organic food demand in the near future.

INTRODUCTION

The demand for organic food has increased in Thailand and international markets which has made companies increase their production capacity. People are more aware of the harmful effects of food which include chemicals and other toxic materials. Thailand is an export dependent country where the major sector of their economy is agricultural exports. As end consumers demanded more toxic free food and an increased standard of agricultural products, the importers began to ask for organic products.

In this study, the researcher concerned on repurchase intention of organic food. Jackson (1985) mentioned that "repurchase intention" as a "customers purchasing behavioral intention" that estimates the trend to for repeating, continuing, increasing, or decreasing the amount of service from the current supplier. The extent of repurchase intention are usually get from the researches of exiting customers evaluating their intention to purchase the same brand, product or service.

As technology becomes more and more developed, and more and more customers requires an organic and healthy lifestyle, many different types of products will be qualified for organic certification. Currently there are 9 main types of organic products existing in the market: Food and Beverages, Restaurants and other organizations which provide food services, Plants, Clothes, Body care products, Cosmetics, Toys, Seeds and gardening supplies, Pet products. In this research, the researcher only focused on

the organic food in Thailand. According to Allen and Albala (2007), organic food is the most popular type of organic products which refers to is without of artificial matters, it involves free hormones, and it is not produced by using radiations, is grown with the free of traditional agrochemicals, does not include the genetically modified elements and chemical and industry additional agent. The organic market in Thailand is still at a early, starting development stage, the most organic production systems are still primitive and producing without technology. Fresh fruit, vegetables and rice are the most organic products in the organic market in Thailand.

According to organic product backgrounds and methods in Thailand, the organic production systems can be divided into two categories: Self Sufficiency Oriented and Organic Standard Oriented. There are three groups of certification bodies which provide organic certification services to farmers and produces in Thailand. The three groups are: the Thai governmental certification bodies, the Thai private certification agencies and the foreign certification agencies. Around half of all organic farms have been certified by Thai governmental certification bodies, such as the Department of Agriculture.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Attitude: Attitude to behavior is defined by the total of the expected results, and is signified by an evaluation of the voice of the conclusion. Ajzen (1991) stated that self-identity attitude can be voiced by both positive and

negative sides to evaluate an appearance. Ajzen (1985) found that a person is more likely to address an inevitable reaction if he or she has a positive attitude towards addressing the reaction. Honkanen, Verplanken and Olsen (2006) found that the attitude towards organic food is strongly affected by the animal and environmental issues.

Ecological Awareness: Ecological awareness is separated into five classification of consumers attitude for environment. The first is true-blue greens, they are concerned with the environment very strongly; the second is greenback greens, they take responsibility for the environment depending on their willingness to pay; the third is sprouts, they are in the middle stage of being concerned with the environment and they also are in the middle level of the actional reaction; the fourth is grouse; they are adjusting their reaction of being concerned with the environment; the last is basic browns, they think the individual actions cannot help environmental issues (Johnson and Son, 1990).

Ecological consumer behavior: Pual and Rana (2012) stated that ecological consumer behavior means these consumers think if you improve yourself and implement the actions, this is a challenge, and these people are keeping ecological awareness in their lives. Ecological consumer behavior is when the consumers take action to purchase and the behavior is positive or has a less negative effect on the environment (Roberts, 1993).

Perceived behavior control: Perceived Behavior Control refers to the levels of control that a person feels through achieving an action (Chen, 2007). The connection between consumers' attitudes and intention is non-uniform since the intention of purchasing for organic products can perhaps be effected by factors for instance price and so on (Vermeir and Verbeke, 2006).

Subjective norms: Ajzen (1991) defined subjective norms are acting as the outer variables of the social infections which might influence customers particular behaviors. Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) stated that subjective norms are the people who have feelings on other persons' anticipation that people should or should not play in a particular way. Subjective norms imagines a person's rated social compression force to achieve an inevitable behavior. Subjective norms have an important impression on behavioral goals in the circumstance of behavior referring to skin management (Hillhouse et al., 2000).

Past experience: Past experience is defined as a customers' experience with the service organization and service crew (Devlin et al., 2002). The past experience is included in the previous case: reading back the consciousness of the manner may invite to enhance memory which will represent all details and the connection of every part to the overall modes (Zuckman &

Rock, 1957).

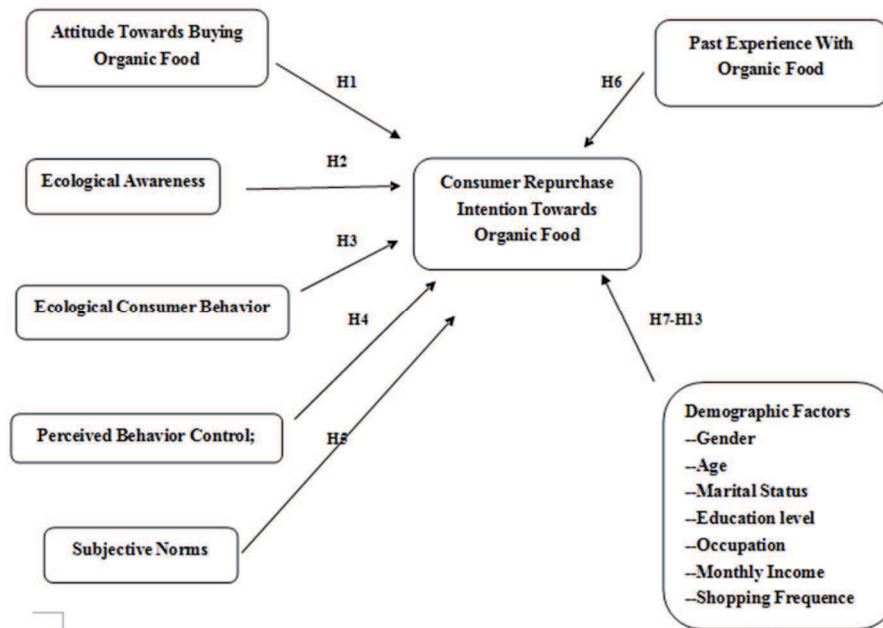
Demographic Factors: Gunter and Furnham (1992) stated that demographic factors are demographic identities of consumers. And the most popular approach to market segmentation is to separate consumer groups according to demographic variables.

Consumer repurchase intention: Consumer repurchase intention refers to explaining or introducing the individual evaluation about purchasing one specific product repetitively, and he or she has the willingness to purchase or buy this specific product in the future (Hellier et al., 2003). Some researches related marketing, for example: Anderson et al. (1994) and Heskett et al. (1994), they acknowledged that if the customers had good prior experiences, they would help to lead to consumption repeatedly in the future. Repurchase intention is one of the very important factors to influence and help the company increase profits and achieve sustainable growth (Henning-Thurau and Klee, 1997).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the relationship between attitude with buying organic food and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food.
2. To analyze the relationship between ecological awareness and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food.
3. To test the relationship between ecological consumer behavior and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food.
4. To find the relationship between perceived behavior control and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food.
5. To evaluate the relationship between subjective norms and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food.
6. To investigate the relationship between past experience and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food.
7. To identify a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on gender.
8. To identify a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on age.
9. To determine a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on marital status.
10. To compare a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on education levels.
11. To find a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on income levels.
12. To classify a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on occupation.
13. To identify a difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food based on shopping frequency.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: The modified conceptual framework of consumer repurchase intention towards organic products in Bangkok

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study the type of the used research was descriptive research. Descriptive research according to Robson (2002) is carried out when portraying an accurate profile of people, events or situations. Zikmund (2000) defined descriptive research as research which describes characteristics of a population or a phenomenon.

In this study, the respondent population of the questionnaire was made up by the consumers who have purchased organic food in the past. Hence, the sample should be a non-probability base. The target population was the consumers who already had an experience purchasing organic food and who are living in Bangkok, Thailand and have the demographic factors which the researcher previously set. The researcher will collect data from the places which are shown in the website (www.greennet.or.th). Based on the locations which have moderate organic range (20 - 100 organic items) and good organic range (100 - 200 organic items) in 5 locations in Bangkok area. This research requires a minimum of 384 samples. However, since there are some invalid respondents and for more convenience in collecting the data, the research decided to collect 400 respondents as sample size.

In this study, the researcher applied simple random sampling of probability sampling, quota sampling and convenience sampling of non-probability sampling. The questionnaire for this study has been developed using various previous studies incorporating all the potential components of the conceptual framework. The responses for all the factors were collected with a five-point Likert

scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher found that most respondents which are consumers who have purchased organic food were female that accounted for 57.8%, the majority of all respondents were in the age range between 26-35 years old that accounted for 39.5%, most respondents were single which accounted for 53.3%, those who held a Bachelor degree were the majority of all respondents and accounted for 48.8%. For the occupation, the highest percentage was business employees which accounted for 29.3%, the highest percentage which was 26.3% earned a monthly income of 30,000 Baht and above, the highest percentage was of shopping frequency was those in the range of 1-3 times per month which accounted for 54.5%. For the hypothesis testing, all the hypotheses were analyzed by using SPSS. There are 9 null hypothesis which were rejected from a total of 13 hypothesis. Attitude towards buying organic food has the strongest relationship with the respondents' consumer repurchase intention towards organic food (0.729), followed by the relationship between ecological consumer behavior and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food (0.343), the relationship between past experience with organic food and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food (0.334), the relationship between subjective norms and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food (0.258), the relationship between perceived behavior control and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food (0.217), the relationship between

ecological awareness and consumer repurchase intention towards organic food (0.202), and there is difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food in education levels, occupations and monthly income levels. There were 4 null hypotheses which failed to reject, which were there is no difference in consumer repurchase intention towards organic food in gender, age levels, marital status and shopping frequency.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When the consumers have a good and positive feeling or attitude about organic food, it might lead the customers to make a positive attitude toward a purchase decision. The marketers of organic food should provide more information about the process of organic food planting in terms of protecting the environment. The organic food products are not only healthier for the environment, they are also healthier for the consumers. So when the marketers make a good image of organic food toward environmental protection it will affect the consumer repurchase intention. The organic food marketers also should advertise organic food as a sign of eco-friendly products to further attract consumers. The successful green marketing is not only adding ecological particularity to a product, but also the marketers should integrate the green marketing mix and marketing strategies carefully. The marketers may create a membership program to conduct the consumers' positive feedback for purchasing organic food among the customers. The organic food marketers should make good

marketing strategies which include high quality products, reasonably priced products, promotion activities and advertisements to provide a good imagine to the consumers. If the consumers have a good experience of this organic food products, they will have a higher consumer repurchase intention of this product. When the organic food marketers create marketing plans, they should be concerned about the consumers' education levels, occupations and monthly income levels as demographic factors. The highest percentage of education levels was those holding a Bachelor's degree, the highest percentage of occupation was business employees and the highest percentage of monthly income level was 30,000 Baht and above. So the marketers should make the appropriate marketing strategies to the target consumers and to attract more consumer repurchase intentions.

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