

Chapter 3

Green Consumption: A Study to Understand Consumers' Organic Food Consumption

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this chapter is to reveal the profile of organic food consumers and the factors that affect consumers' motivation for organic food consumption as being one of the most important aspects of green marketing and green consumption. Therefore, this study first dealt with green consumers and green consumption and then, organic food consumption and the state of organic food market were evaluated and finally, an empirical research was conducted with 393 respondents in order to better determine the consumers of organic food consumption in Turkey. According to the findings, four motivations were found in influencing the behavior of organic food consumption. These are: health, ecological and social welfare, sensory appeal and natural contents. More specifically, this research reveals that those that have children participated in this research frequently consume organic food.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-2331-4.ch003

INTRODUCTION

Today's world witnesses the two sides of the technologic and global advances. Industrialization process stimulated the ultimate aim of increasing the well-being of the societies and improving existing conditions in 18th century, hence countries indifferently focused on integrating resources to production and consumption operations, without considering the potential social outcomes. Particularly after 1970s, the industrial revolution had resulted in an exponential increase in the human consumption of resources and an increase in health, wealth and population. That is to say, baby-boom period of post war time lead to excessive need for energy resources, and the higher need for more goods and services in many societies. In parallel, the attention kept focusing on the scarcity of the resources under the pressure of rapid consumption. In other words, research and development focused progress of countries and societies engender the inevitable dilemma of benefiting from the environment or exploiting it. However, benefiting from the nature, had been taken as a one-way approach, and humanity ignored to renew the resources, that had been consumed. The primary principle of economics scarcity of resources had been neglected, and by time nature called for aid. According to Bahro (1986), ecological problems signify the dead end of capitalism. Hence, extended consumption, without attempt to renew the natural resources is unfortunately threatening the well-being of next generations. In a reactive manner, societies tried to identify the environmental problems, and offer solutions to ensure the ongoing relationship between humanity and the nature.

The negative issues emerged in environmental socio-cultural and economic fields caused by the traditional business philosophy, which was first time recognized that there was a need for sustainable development at the Stockholm conference in 1972 (Mebratu, 1998). Later in the 1980s, sustainable development focused on the relationship between saving the Earth and meeting human needs. Brundtland at his report in 1987 used similar statements by expressing meeting today's human needs without compromising future generations' ability to meet their own needs at their time (Santori, et al., 2014). In parallel to this, Rio conference in 1992 and (Rio+10) Johannesburg conference in 2002 led to a sustainable development understanding, which was built on the three pillars of economic, environmental and socio-culture developments in order to meet human needs now and in the future. This sustainable understanding was later adopted by the whole world (Islam et al., 2003).

Growing awareness on environmental disruption in past decades expose an attention in this issue. Kirkpatrick (1990) stated this environmental attention as "the biggest business issue of the 1990s". According to another view, the concept of sustainability and green marketing has been known for a long time, but not necessarily by their current names. For example, in the early 1970s, Kotler & Zaltman (1971) put forward the idea of societal marketing which encompassed the idea of

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