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## Article

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# Online Advertising Impact in the Bio Products Decision Purchase Process

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**Abstract** As time passes by, people have become more and more interested in a healthy lifestyle. This is due to a number of external factors (stress, fatigue, sedentariness) that harm the general health of the body. The main idea of this paper is people are turning to various sources of information that are not necessarily scientifically grounded, their main source of information being the online environment to have a healthy lifestyle. For these reasons, we analysed the impact of marketing elements on the nutritional approaches adopted by the consumers and the reasons why they can easily accept information without scientific knowledge that may harm their health. For the same reasons, BIO products have reached in recent years, a more natural, healthier and less harmful idea for most of people with medium and high income.

**Key words** Bio products, decision purchase process, consumer behaviour

**JEL Codes:** M31

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## 1. Introduction

Natural products, also known as organic or BIO, are gaining more and more land. The reasons that have led to an increase in the share of these types of products are various. One of these reasons is related to mankind's desire for sustainability, to use technology to produce renewable goods, to protect the environment, and to increase the life expectancy of people, including their health. In order for a product to be considered organic/BIO/natural, it must be certified as such by an authority and must comply with certain standards, mainly not to be produced with the use of chemicals. In other words, only natural products are found in the end product and the raw materials of the product have not undergone chemical treatment on the part of humans. And for organic production, three conditions must be met (Yu *et al.*, 2018):

1. Do not use genetically modified products or organisms;
2. Do not use chemical fertilizers, pesticides or other types of additives and fertilizers;
3. To use technology based on sustainable agriculture and to keep the ecosystem intact, based on nature rules and ecological principles.

When referring to the designation of organic/BIO products, most consumers think about food because they are directly related to their health and are directly concerned with industrial products being less in their attention.

## 2. Literature review

Organic farming tries to meet consumers' requirements for natural products that do not have chemicals, and expand the agricultural sector, taking into account the protection of the environment (Stoian, 2003). Organic farming is considered to be an alternative to traditional farming; it focuses on obtaining products that are beneficial for the health of the population, protecting the environment (plants and animals). This type of farming involves the removal of chemicals, pesticides. Although it favours the health of consumers, the purchase of these products being disadvantaged by the higher prices of organic products (Popescu and Popescu, 2013).

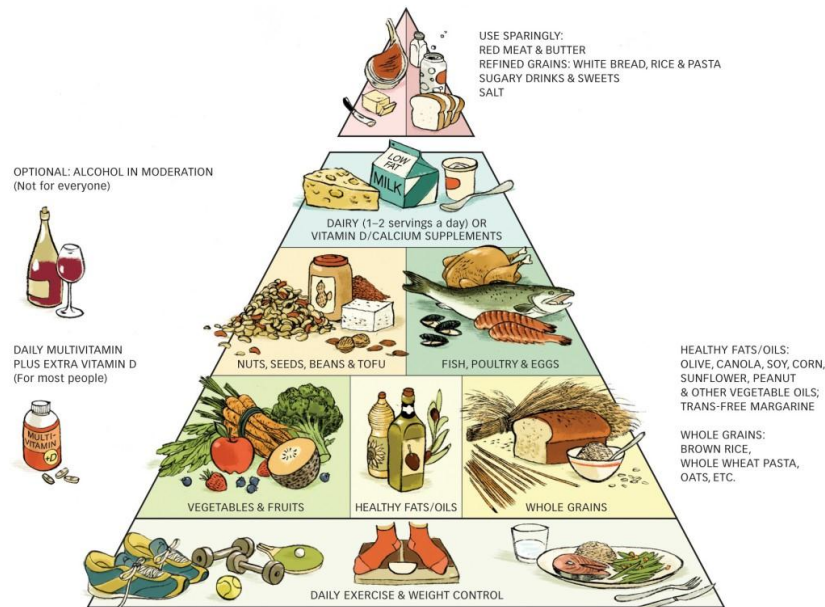
The practices of this type of farming emerged in the European Community at the beginning of the 20th century in developed and emerging countries as a result of multiple diseases caused by the contamination with chemicals (E. coli, Salmonella, and intestinal worms) and the lack of confidence of the population in respecting food safety measures (Vasile *et al.*, 2015). Being an extremely dynamic sector, there has been a steady increase in demand and supply for organic products, especially in the countries of the European Union. In Romania, organic farming has felt its presence after 2007 (when it joined the EU), Romania offers excellent conditions for nurturing organic products, the soils are fertile, facilitating the export market to the member countries of the European Union (Popescu and Popescu, 2013).

Currently, the global organic food market has reached \$ 85 billion (2017), after the \$ 20.2 billion at the end of the 20th century (1999). This increase was also due to the awareness of the benefits of consuming organic products: improving

health and protecting the environment, but also because it tastes better, have different flavors and looks better (Hidalgo-Baz *et al.*, 2017).

## THE HEALTHY EATING PYRAMID

Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health



**Source:** <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-eating-plate/>

Figure 1. The nutritional pyramid

Due to these features, but also because consumers have been found to be willing to pay more for organic products, large chain stores have reoriented and added organic product districts or have opened specialty stores exclusively for these types of products. Consumers are willing to pay more because they perceive products as being of greater value. Studies have also shown that consumers only pay more for certain types of food: natural yogurt, fruit, and vegetables and less for those who are considered to be vicious (chocolate, beer and juices). Another aspect to be considered in organic food is that they are perishable, so they do not have a long shelf life, so they cannot stay on the shelf for a long time, compared to other products (Ozinci *et al.*, 2017).

Organic food has also led to the development of organic agriculture, which has been supported in Europe by the European Union since the early 1990s (1991). Many countries have developed organic farming through EU funds, among the best examples of countries that have developed organic farming in Greece. Organic food crops include olive, wheat, and vines (Argyropoulos *et al.*, 2013).

### 3. Influencing factors in purchasing decisions

Consumers have always been influenced by many factors in the purchasing and consumption decisions of various product categories, both in online and in-house purchases.

The price also plays an extremely important role in the decision-making process because "consumers with a tendency to saving will have a larger portion of revenue in a savings account, their purchasing power and current consumption of market innovations in that period will be directly affected" (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Similarly, consumers' attitudes towards existing products on the market interact positively with family income. Thus, although revenue has a positive impact on market-leading products, revenue growth will change the attitude of consumers in the opposite direction - additional income allows the consumer to experience new products, innovations, despite of those to whom they are loyal.

Therefore, with the evolution of organic products, consumer familiarity has increased, making them almost commonplace. However, influence factors are still numerous.

"For example, in a shopping session, individuals discover that certain styles, colors, and sizes of products they are interested to have been exhausted. In this case, how willing I am to buy a single product full price when the discount amount it does not apply because they will not find enough products to meet promotion - "2 products 30% discount", "4 products 30% discount", etc. (Huang and Yang, 2015). Traders are likely consumer dissatisfaction when production is limited, the logic being that the same consumers feel their possibilities of choice constrained by the narrow range of products offered by the company, not possible to redeem. "The obvious implication is that consumers will accept easier campaign price-driven discounts instead of awareness campaigns. A discount on the product will benefit both the merchant and the consumer, it is disadvantageous that potential consumers to choose from a pre-existing product range to hit the target"(Huang and Yang, 2015).

In the long run, the consumer will be familiar with certain products and services, being faithful to a brand, a category of goods. Loyalty programs facilitate the creation of a relationship based on interactivity and customisation, considering that they are accompanied by direct marketing and communication techniques. Instead, they become strategic tools for managing customer relationships and heterogeneity. Based on information about consumer behavior on loyalty cards, they also serve as tools to individualize the marketing mix. To some extent, loyalty programs affect the purchasing trends for both market leaders and small businesses. Second, behavioral indicators show that loyalty program members and non-members show different purchasing trends (Meyer-Waarden, 2008).

#### **4. Influencing the decision to purchase BIO products online**

The decision to buy BIO products is based on the fact that people who make the purchase expect them to be healthier and safer than conventional products. Those who buy these products tend to have a higher level of education and income they cannot afford (Xie *et al.*, 2015). If online advertising, which is seen to a large extent by those who fit the description above, would be focused on supporting the idea that organic products are better in quality terms, making them more beneficial to the human body, and from a safety perspective, these products would have an increase in sales.

The main barriers to increase the market share of organic food are the lack of consumer knowledge, the relatively high price and the lack of availability on the shelves. Thus, informing consumers about the special characteristics of the organic production process, possibly lowering prices and, at the same time, increasing the shelf availability of organic products may turn out to be part of a promising strategy that aims to develop the market for organic food (Xie *et al.*, 2015).

According to the study by Xie *et al.* (2015) in China, 83% of respondents confirmed the need for improvement in the advertising of BIO products. Thus, by allocating more funds to the marketing department, which in turn will invest in various forms of promotion, companies will respond more effectively to buyers' needs with respect to products bearing the BIO label. From the words of Liuqing Yue *et al.* (2017), as advertising about organic products is richer, the confidence of buyers increases. They recommend that online trading websites aim to promote organic products through a variety of online product presentation formats and by presenting quality reviews aimed to decrease the consumer's fear of risk and increasing confidence in the online purchase of products, thus making their buying process safer, easier and more beneficial from the point of view of buyers.

The study by Bullock *et al.* (2017) found that promotion of personal and family health protection is most likely to increase the level of sales of organic products. Thus, by appealing to how BIO products support a healthy life both for the acquiring consumer and for his family, promotion can positively influence the decision to buy organic products.

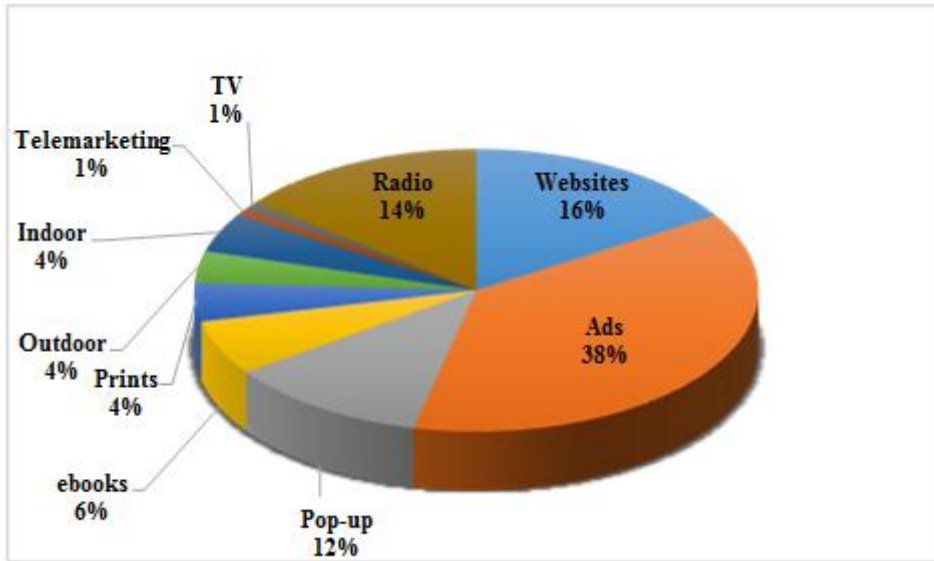
#### **5. Methodology research**

In the article we conducted a research on the impact of online advertising on the decision to buy bio products.

Research objectives include: identifying the frequency of buying organic products through online stores, the impact of online advertising on the purchase of bio products and identifying the most important sources of information on BIO products. To conduct the analysis, we conducted a quantitative research among 112 respondents, based on an online questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions, of which 7 were classification and identification based on psycho-demographic variables, and the remaining 16 questions related to the subject.

#### **6. Research findings**

After analysing and interpreting the results, we can see that most of the respondents choose to consume BIO products for the idea of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Source: Own author's research

Figure 2. Where did you inform the most about BIO products?

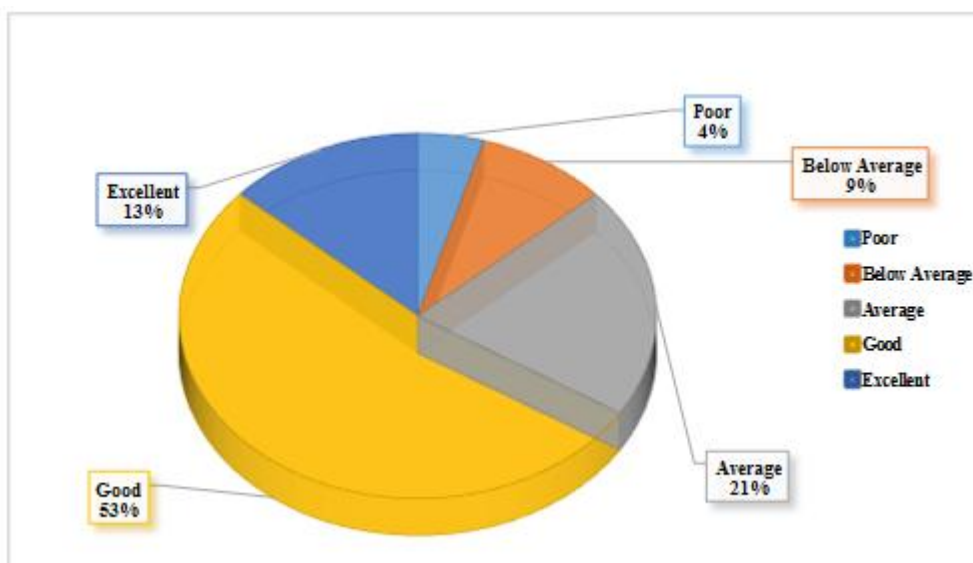
From the figure above, it can be observed that most respondents are informing about bio products from Ads which are the most effective in promotion (38%), followed by websites with 16%, pop-up (12%) and also radio is an effective traditional promotion tool (14%). In this figure we have been analysing two dimensions, both online and traditional effective tools in promoting bio products.

Table 1. Online versus traditional advertising

Online advertising				Traditional advertising					
Websites	Ads	Pop-up	ebooks	Prints	Outdoor	Indoor	Telemarketing	TV	Radio
16.07%	37.50%	11.61%	6.25%	4.46%	3.57%	4.46%	0.89%	0.89%	14.29%

Source: Own author's research

As we can see, the table reflects the most used advertising channels and methods in gaining the consumer's mind and heart.



Source: Own author's research

Figure 3. Advertisement's influence on decision in buying BIO products

From the figure above, 13% of respondents consider an excellent way to influence the buying decision of bio products, Good (53%), Average (21%) and very few respondents are influenced by advertising (Poor - 4%).

## 7. Overview results

We can conclude that visual marketing is a very effective method in influencing consumer behaviour in buying bio products and most people consider that online advertisement have a big impact on the bio market. In the last time, people are more and more interested in healthy food and also in raising their quality of life. We are living in a world full of visual marketing which have a big impact in our lives, and the businesses are exploiting a lot this into a great weapon of gaining profit and market share.

## 8. Conclusions

Consumers who have never heard the term "organic" or who do not know what the packaging indicates are really organic products tend to avoid buying these products (Xie *et al.*, 2015). The results of the study by Zander *et al.* (2015) show that barely 15% of the respondents knew the meaning of the organic logo in the EU. Better promotion of this logo and the values promoted by it could lead to a significant increase in its notoriety including, to a more efficient and better positioning in the minds of potential buyers if we choose to draw a perceptual map.

People who have frequently purchased organic food in the past have had much more positive views on this compared to people who rarely or not buy BIO products, according to a study by Hilverda *et al.* (2016). Thus, by promoting organic products in both online and offline environments, a long-lasting link can be created between consumers and brands, who have to "make the first step" in attracting customers, and they need a simple push to see quality and safety offered by BIO products, most of them by adding them to their shopping cart and also being used the engagement of consumers which implies also pull strategies. These strategies are leading to a both rational and more emotional engagement between consumers and brands which is the most efficient method to keep your customers and gain newer ones using just the "voice" of old customers.

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