



The Ethical Marketing Leadership in PRC Consumers' Purchase Judgment toward Thailand's Organic Rice Consumption

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Abstract

The research on the formation mechanism of ethical purchase behavior of organic agricultural products is a relatively new research trend, which will have great research potential in the future. This study aimed to analysis the key factors (ecological ethics, social ethics, and cultural ethics and international marketing ethics) are affected on Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption. The quantitative research which employed 35 instruments were questionnaires. The research samples consisted of 620 Chinese consumers from four major Chinese cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu), obtained by random sampling technique. Data analysis was using exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM). The results showed that the key factors (ecological ethics, social ethics, and cultural ethics and international marketing ethics) were positive affected on Chinese consumers' ethical judgment, and Chinese consumers' ethical judgment were positive affected on purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption. The key factors (ecological ethics, social ethics, and cultural ethics and international marketing ethics) were positive affected on purchase decision-making through Chinese consumers' ethical judgment as mediator. The strategic suggestions for Chinese consumers to build values and attitudes towards ethical consumption, cultivate ethical consumption lifestyles and improve consumers' ethical purchasing ability. For enterprises to set the reasonably price and improve the distribution channels of organic agricultural products of consumers' ethical perception, enhance the ethical scene marketing of organic agricultural products. For government and relevant organizations to improve trust mechanism and provide technical and policy support to the organic agricultural products consumption.

Keywords: 1) Thailand's organic rice 2) Marketing ethics 3) Ethical judgments 4) Ethical purchase decision-making 5) Chinese consumers' consumption

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Introduction

Agricultural modernization has impacted on social, ecological, and economic sectors that have awoken policymakers to a realization of the importance of organic agriculture and sustainable food production. Simultaneously, consumers have become increasingly aware of food safety and quality issues, and the citizens of developed countries have grown interested in organic products. Societies prioritize health, including children's health, and demand nutritious and naturally produced foods. Different organizations and policies thus have been established in developed countries to ensure safe food production through the adoption of organic agriculture, which is the sole solution to the problems originating from industrialized and conventional farming methods (Nicholas and Will, 2017, pp. 254-261).

In Thailand, rice is the main crop with 53% of farmland, 11.3 million units of the land area were allocated to rice production in 2017 (Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, 2018). Thailand is the world's largest rice exporter of China. The export value of Thailand's rice to China is 8,427 million baht in 2020. In 2021, export to China is 10,492 million baht. In 2022 (January-October), export to China is 8,721 million baht. Steadily in the top 3 of the rice exported country to the world's population (Thai Rice Exporters Association, 2023). China has its organic production, however, consumers' consumption does not meet its domestic demand for certain organic products. The growing demand for chemical-free and healthy food in China

and other developed countries reflects the presence of widespread organic food markets worldwide. This translates to tremendous potential for exporting Thai organic rice to China market.

In recent years, such shocking words as melamine, gutter oil, Sudan red, lean meat powder, and malachite green have been appearing in Chinese media with the unprecedented frequency of good practice. The unethical events associated with these terms have attracted ethical concern among consumers and further promoted the growth of ethical consumption in China. Chinese consumers have become more concerned about their health and the quality and nutritional value of their food. Growing health concerns means fostering an opportunity for the development of the green food market (Liu, et al., 2013, pp. 1237-1250). To better understand Chinese consumers' ethical purchase judgment and exploit the trade in organic rice products between Thailand and mainland China, would be crucial issues to study this title and gaps for research implementation and results.

Objectives of Research

The study is to study the key current situation factors of organic rice consumption in China with following objectives:

1. To study the consumer's ethical judgments influence on purchase behavior process associated with decisions concerning goods and service on perceived ethical issues.
2. To analysis the key factors (ecological ethics, social ethics, and cultural ethics and international marketing ethics) are affected on

Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption.

3. To find out the causal model of Chinese consumers' ethical purchase judgment decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption.

Literature Review

Living in a global environmental crisis that is the consequence of years of irresponsible production and consumption, this scenario has instigated a process of greater ecological awareness among people and the emergence of pro-environmental movements, increasing a new perspective of consumption patterns (Bengtsson, et al., 2018, pp. 1533-1547). In the food sector, from the sustainable perspective, organic foods, offer agricultural production based on pro-environmental and pro-social characteristics. With the growth of green consumers, there is also a significant increase in the demand for organic food (Lee and Yun, 2015, pp. 259-267). These green consumers are driven by changes in their attitudes, beliefs, values and motivations regarding food security and the consumption of certain food products (Simmonds and Spence, 2017, pp. 340-351). Marketing activities raise some undeniable disputed ethical issues regarding business. Whether it is advertising, retailing, pricing or promotion. Marketing has been charged with engaging in practices that involve dishonesty, manipulation, invasion of privacy, creating unsafe products, as well as the exploitation of children and vulnerable consumers. The justice of using sophisticated marketing

techniques in developing nations that lack experience and training regarding such forms of know-how marketing are important ethical challenges that will be increasingly heard (Ferrell, Fraedrich and Ferrell, 2021, pp. 208-305).

Examining consumers' awareness of organic food has been well-developed in North America and Western Europe (Bonti-Ankomah and Yiridoe, 2006, pp. 17-22). Only a handful of studies concerning organic food consumption have been conducted in Asian countries such as Japan, Taiwan, India and Thailand. As best as can be ascertained, very few studies of this nature have been undertaken in China (Yin, 2008, pp. 81-88; Yin, et al., 2010, pp. 1361-1367). Yin, et al. (2010, pp. 1361-1367) claim that none of the previous studies have analyzed factors that affect consumers' choice of organic food in the mainland Chinese market. Their study revealed that consumers' intention to purchase organic food was influenced by their level of income, degree of trust and acceptance of organic food, as well as health-related issues. Baoguo and Laksitamas (2020, pp. 111-118) had been explored Chinese consumers' attitudes, pre-evaluation and purchase intentions toward Thailand organic rice based on marketing ethics.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

This framework is embedded in three underpinning theories, which are: the consumer decision-making process (CDP) model developed by Schiffman and Wisenblit (2019, pp. 37-42), the theory of planned behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (2005, pp. 117-123). The four dimensions of the conceptual framework



are influenced by the consumer’s cognitive and evaluation of alternatives, ethical judgments and ethical purchase decision-making. Essentially, the proposed conceptual framework is a staged model which assumes that consumers move through a rational ethical problem-solving process in ultimately purchasing organic rice food. This problem-solving process in consumers' minds (cognitive and affective factors) involves the search and processing of information as suggested by the CDP model and by the TPB (beliefs, attitudes and norms). As a result of the extensive literature

review of organic food studies, it is decided to include the following relevant constructs which influence Chinese consumers’ ethical judgment, ethical purchase decision-making towards Thailand’s organic rice based on marketing ethics: ecological ethics, social ethics, and cultural ethics and international marketing ethics. The research conceptual framework and relevant hypothesis are developed in Figure 1. The research framework for Chinese consumers’ ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand’s organic rice consumption.

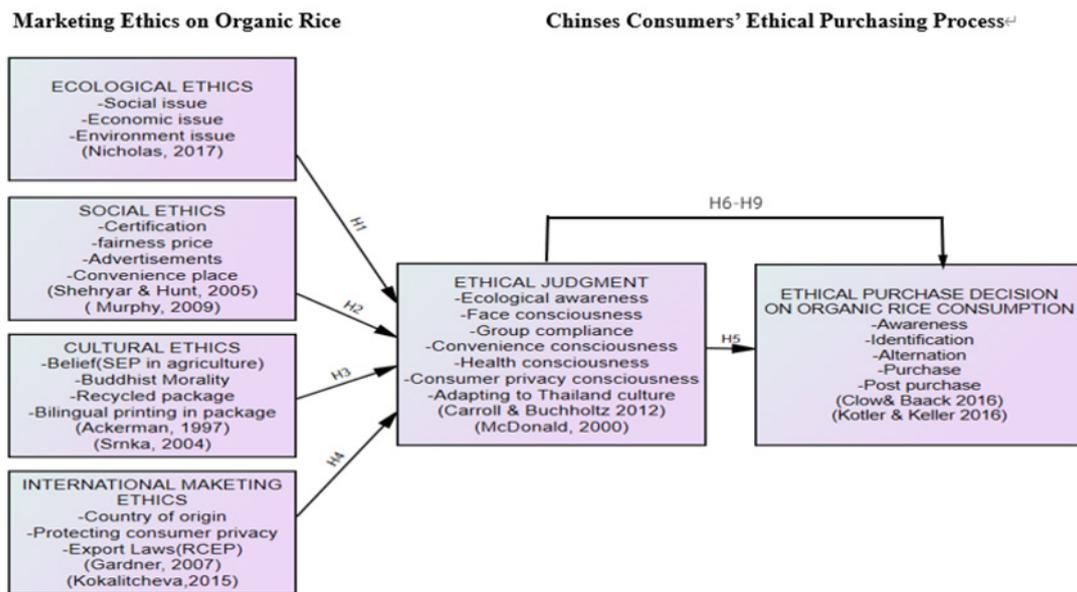


Figure 1 The research framework for Chinese consumers’ ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand’s organic rice consumption based on Nicholas and Will (2017, pp. 44-197) and Shehryar and Hunt (2005, pp. 275-287) and Murphy (2009, pp. 245-252) and Ackerman (1997, pp. 142-157) and Srnska (2004) and Kokalitcheva (2015) and Carroll and Buchholtz (2017, pp. 1-10) and McDonald (2000, pp. 89–104) and Clow and Baack (2015, pp. 82-92) and Kotler and Keller (2016, pp. 179-210)

Ecological Ethics

According to the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization, almost 25% of Thailand's greenhouse gases emissions come from the agricultural sector. Rice farming is

thought to release half of Thailand's methane emissions, which are a major climate threat. The overuse of such chemicals can give rise to a laundry list of social, environmental, and economic ills, including poor health among

farmers, mounting debt, infertile soil, and increased vulnerability to blights and extreme weather. Unsustainable farming hurts the national economy over the long term because of its personal financial impact, namely the continued poverty of farmers caused by high household debt. However, organic farming could help to address many of these ills. Organic practices are proven to improve soil fertility, foster biodiversity, increase yield (Nicholas and Will, 2017, pp. 248-261). Based on the above discussion, it is postulated that:

H1: Ecological ethics have positive affected on Chinese consumers' ethical judgment.

Social Ethics

A food product with a quality label, such as the organic label, is perceived as more "valuable" by consumers since the label "guarantees" quality in a more easily identifiable way (Krystallis, Fotopoulos and Zotos, 2006, pp. 81-106). Unfair pricing is a common problem of marketing ethics. Fairness judgments give rise to emotions that manifest themselves as consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the seller of the product (Xia, Monroe and Cox, 2004, pp. 1-15). Ethical issues in advertising arise as companies cross over the line in their attempts to inform and persuade, and sometimes entertain, consumer stakeholders (William and Vincent, 2012, pp. 297-306). Based on the above discussion, it is postulated that:

H2: Social ethics have positive affected on Chinese consumers' e Chinese consumers' ethical judgment.

Culture Ethics

According to Bodley (2011, p. 20), culture resides in learned behavior as well as in some shaping consciousness prior to behavior. Language, organization, and technology are probably the most important elements of culture. Culture has been identified as one of the important determinants of business ethical decision-making. Bartels (1967, pp. 20-26) was the first to recognize the importance of the role of culture in ethical decision-making in marketing. He notes that contrasting cultures of different societies produce different expectations and become expressed in the dissimilar ethical standards of those societies. Cultural and linguistic influences were considered by assessing equivalence across two pairs of countries having the same language but different cultures, and across countries differing in culture and language (Davis, Douglas and Silk, 1981, pp. 98-109). Religion and culture are interrelated constructs. Like culture, religion also affects the value system of its adherents. Religion provides the reason for being ethical and the points of reference for evaluating conduct (Schwartz and Huismans, 1998, pp. 88-107). Based on the above discussion, it is postulated that:

H3: Cultural ethics have positive affected on Chinese consumers' ethical judgment.

International Marketing Ethics

Country-of-origin (COO), a relevant attribute for organic food products. COO is an extrinsic quality cue that is not a physical part of the actual product like other extrinsic cues such as packaging, advertising, type of outlet, and brand name (Steenkamp, 1989, pp. 7-11).



The role of COO in shaping consumers' perceptions, preferences and buying behaviour is one of the oldest and most widely researched topics in the global marketing and consumer behaviour literature (Dekhili and Achabou, 2014, pp. 433-437). Technology has driven new and growing fields, which have significant implications for businesses and the ethical issues they eventually will face. In making ethical judgments, the prevailing norms of acceptability regarding technology must be tested by the principles of fairness and justice, protection of rights, utilitarianism, and other applicable ethical guidelines (Michael, 2016, pp. 511-533). The laws should be understood to be part of a larger moral vision rather than as an ordinary set of rules. Based on the above discussion, it is postulated that:

H4: International marketing ethics have positive affected on Chinese consumers' ethical judgment.

Ethical Judgments

Many consumers have dealt with motivations to purchase organic food, including health concerns, environmental concerns, food safety, sensory variables, ethical concerns or value structure (Baker, et al., 2004, pp. 995-1012). With knowledge of consumers' different ethical beliefs (environmental, political and religious), marketing communication can be based on a broader register than attitudes based on product attributes (Paul and Rana, 2012, pp. 412-422). The definitions of ethical judgments from two of the most oft-cited models of ethical decision-making: are the Hunt-Vitell model and Rest's four-component model. Hunt and Vitell (1986, pp. 5-15) define

ethical judgments as "the belief that a particular alternative is the most ethical alternative." Issues of fairness, justice, right, and wrong are central to the subject of ethics and evaluating the extent to which an action is right or wrong is the focus of ethical judgments (Carroll and Buchholtz, 2017, pp. 101-105).

Ethical Purchase Decision-Making

Hunt and Vitell (1986, pp. 5-15) developed a model of "General Theory of Marketing Ethics", describes the ethical- decision-making process for ethical judgment. This model explained "individual process of incorporating moral philosophies into ethical decisions for more cognitive perspective" (Ferrell, Greshamand and Fraedrich, 1989, pp. 55-64.). Hunt and Vitell (1986, pp. 5-15) suggested that individual will determine and will compare actual consequences going back into the construct of personal experience, industry, organization and cultural norms. Kelley and Elm (2003, pp. 139-154) offered insights on key elements of ethical decision-making models and criteria by which a model can be judged. Kelley and Elm (2003, pp. 139-154) described an increased focus on organizational factors that significantly effect on decision maker's experience of the ethical issue. Hoyer, MacInnis and Pieters (2012, pp. 183-296) suggested a complete model handle with the consumer behavior, their model explained that attitude in five steps: 1) detecting the problem. 2) search for information. 3) assessing the substitutes. 4) taking the decision. 5) post-purchase decisions. Silverman (2011, pp. 19-25) developed a decision-making model which consisted of five phases, The phases are problem recognition, seeking information,

evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase attitude. Based on the above discussion, it is postulated that:

H5: Chinese consumers' ethical judgment have positioned affective on ethical purchase decision-making.

Ethical judgment as a mediate effector

H6: The mediating effect of Chinese consumers' ethical judgment through ecological ethics positively affected on ethical purchase decision on organic rice consumption.

H7: The mediating effect of Chinese consumers' ethical judgment through social ethics positively affected on ethical purchase decision on organic rice consumption.

H8: The mediating effect of Chinese consumers' ethical judgment through cultural ethics positively affected on purchase decision on organic rice consumption.

H9: The mediating effect of Chinese consumers' ethical judgment through internal marketing ethics positively affected on purchase decision on organic rice consumption.

Methodology

1) The questionnaire's design

The questionnaire contains four parts. Part one, the basic information of respondents. Part two, key factors of marketing ethics (ecological ethics, social ethics, and cultural ethics and international marketing ethics) influence Thailand's organic rice consumption. Part three, factors influence PRC consumers' ethical judgment. Part four, factors influence PRC consumers' ethical purchase decision-making. The original survey instrument comprised 35 statements. Likert five-point Scale (5 - Point Scale) was used in the study.

2) Sampling design

The study of this research is equipped with qualitative and quantitative methodology. The qualitative research was operated by 9 experts interview and 50 personal online group discussions. Quantitative research was the collection of quantitative data via a survey. 50 valid online surveys as the pilot study to modify the survey instruments. Later 300 paper-based surveys (offline) were obtained from four major Chinese cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu). The 300 online surveys via the wjx platform (A professional questionnaire collection Platform in China). The online surveys were distributed to those taking part in the social media, WeChat platform. The missing items of the sample through online questionnaire were deleted. The paper-based surveys were implemented by distributing them in large supermarkets and conducting selective interviews.

3) Research Tool

The study investigated Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption. The full model data were analyzed by the SPSS23 and the evaluation of model fit was observed by the AMOS21. Data analysis using exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM).

Results

1) Descriptive statistical analysis

The respondents that were representative of Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making regarding Thailand's organic rice consumption. The profiles of the 620 respondents will be presented in Table 1.

**Table 1** Demographic characteristics of respondents (n=620)

Characteristics of sample		Sample Number (n=620)	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	325	52.42
	Male	295	47.58
Age group	18-30	156	25.16
	31-45	263	42.42
	46-60	189	30.48
	≥61	12	1.94
Education level	Senior school and below	31	5.00
	College or university	437	70.48
	Postgraduate or above	152	24.52
Income per month (RMB)	Under 2000	37	5.97
	2001-4000	46	7.43
	4001-6000	151	24.35
	Above 6001	386	62.25
Types of households	Single	113	18.23
	Single live with parents	80	12.90
	Couples without children	47	7.57
	Couples with children under 6 years	252	40.65
	Couples with children over 6 years	128	20.65

Table 2 showed that data cover a variety of respondent which were representative of Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption. Data indicated that more than half of the 620 samples were female (326 and occupied 52.42% respectively), 295 of them were male, occupied 47.58%. In terms of age, 156 of them from 18-30, occupied 25.16%, 31 to 45 followed, totally 263 and occupied 42.42%, the age of respondents from 46 to 60 was 189 occupied 30.48%. Regarding to the education backgrounds of respondents, (437) as 70.48% of them were College or university, (152) as 24.52% of them were Postgraduate

or above of respondents. From income side, 151 respondents' income between 4001 to 6000 (RMB) per month, occupied 24.35%, the majority of them above 6001 (RMB) per month, they were 386, occupied 62.25%. Types of households, single of respondents were 113 (18.23%), 80 (12.9%) of respondents were single live with parents, couples with children under 6 years were majority, they were 252 (40.65%), couples with children over 6 years were 128, occupied 20.65%.

2) Reliability and validity

The Item's Objective Congruence (IOC) Index is used as the basis for screening the item quality. In each item, the experts are asked

to determine the content validity score: The score = 1, if the expert is sure that this item measured the attribute. The score = -1, if the expert is sure that this item does not measure the attribute. The score = 0, if the expert is not sure that the item does measure or does not measure the expected attribute. The items that had scores lower than 0.5 were revised. On the other hand, the items that had scores higher than or equal to 0.5 were reserved (Rovinelli and Hambleton, 1977, pp. 49-60.). In this process, the questionnaire was checked by five experts from China, including two associate professors from a foreign language school and three doctors in a business school, all the questions were measured which related between contents validity and research objectives.

The questionnaires were pretested by a representative sample (n=620) from the population of this study. The results of the pretest were checked for their reliability by Cronbach's alpha was to be higher than 0.70 or 70 percent (Cronbach, 1990, pp. 190-207).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values exceeded the recommended value of 0.7. Bartlett's test of sphericity value was significant ($p < 0.05$) (Pallant, 2007, pp. 110-120). There were 30 observed variables to measure 6 latent variables, respectively, ecological ethics included 6 observed variables, and the summary Cronbach's alpha was 0.874. The summary of Cronbach's alpha to social ethics that included 5 observed variables was 0.769. The cultural ethics included 5 observed measurements constructs with 0.731 of Cronbach's alpha. The Internal marketing ethics included 3 observed measurements constructs with 0.849 of Cronbach's alpha. There were 6 measurements constructs to latent variable ethical judgment with 0.792 of Cronbach's alpha, and 5 measurements constructs to ethical purchase decision-making with 0.834 of Cronbach's alpha. According to the Table 2, the KMO of all dimensions in this study is greater than 0.7 and Bartlett's tests of sphericity were less than the significant level of 0.001, so there were suitable for factor analysis.

Table 2 Summary of Cronbach's alpha.

Dimension	KMO	Bartlett's test of sphericity		
		χ^2	df	p-value
Ecological ethics	0.874	1133.924	15	0.000***
Social ethics	0.769	784.322	10	0.000***
Cultural ethics	0.735	603.572	10	0.000***
Internal marketing ethics	0.823	1089.458	3	0.000***
Ethical judgement	0.812	975.65	15	0.000***
Ethical purchase Decision-making	0.834	1023.325	10	0.000***



3) Reliability and validity

For checking the constructs validity, exploratory factor analysis was used to analytical method. Exploratory factor analysis for multiple-item constructs is recommended before assessing reliability (Gerbing and Anderson, 1988, pp. 186-192). Varimax rotation was utilized to be able to maximize the sum of variance of required loading of the factor matrix (Hair, et al., 2010, pp. 90-152). Hair, et al. (2010, pp. 90-152) suggested that interpretation of factor loading depends on practical significance. There exists a rule of thumb for the significance of factor loading factor loading

greater than 0.6 were considered in order to meet the minimum level, more than 0.7 were considered more important, more than 0.8 or greater were considered practically significant. The 27 observed variables' factor loading between 0.653 to 0.843, all the factor loading more than 0.6, the AVE between 0.645 to 0.756 more than 0.6, and CR between 0.735 to 0.873 more than 0.7. All the model goodness fit statistics were in the accepted levels. That means 27 observed variables are suitable to structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, more details see Table 3.

Table 3 Factor loading and model goodness fit statistics of Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making process model (n=620).

Unobserved variables	Observed variables	Factor Loading: λ				
		AVE	CR	St. Loading Factor	Z	P
Ecological Ethics	EE1	0.675	0.819	0.743	--	--
	EE2			0.674	14.891	0.000
	EE3			0.684	14.695	0.000
	EE5			0.718	15.339	0.000
	EE6			0.695	14.899	0.000
Social Ethics	SE1	0.724	0.853	0.843	--	--
	SE2			0.774	17.891	0.000
	SE3			0.724	14.695	0.000
	SE4			0.738	15.339	0.000
	SE5			0.816	18.829	0.000
Cultural Ethics	CE1	0.645	0.779	0.738	--	--
	CE2			0.764	16.891	0.000
	CE4			0.662	14.635	0.000
	CE5			0.725	15.436	0.000
Internal Marketing Ethics	IME1	0.724	0.873	0.843	--	--
	IME2			0.774	17.891	0.000
	IME3			0.724	14.695	0.000

Unobserved variables	Observed variables	Factor Loading: λ				
		AVE	CR	St. Loading Factor	Z	P
Ethical Judgment	EJ1	0.675	0.735	0.721	--	--
	EJ2			0.653	14.591	0.000
	EJ3			0.682	14.795	0.000
	EJ4			0.718	15.539	0.000
	EJ5			0.745	16.199	0.000
	EJ6			0.826	18.942	0.000
Ethical Purchase Decision-Making	EPDM2	0.756	0.832	0.735	--	--
	EPDM3			0.672	14.891	0.000
	EPDM4			0.805	18.695	0.000
	EPDM5			0.735	15.703	0.000
Model goodness-of-fit statistics		Acceptable levels Criteria		Hypothesis model		
Chi-square statistic		-		158.341		
Df		--		86.000		
CMINDF		<3.00		1.841		
p-value		>0.05		p=0.143		
GFI		>0.09		0.941		
AGFI		>0.09		0.924		
RMR		<0.05		0.036		
RMSEA		<0.10		0.081		
CFI		>0.90		0.926		
IFI		>0.90		0.923		
NFI		>0.90		0.912		
TLI		>0.90		0.941		

Note: *p<0.05, **P<0.01, ***p<0.001

Results of hypotheses testing

The hypotheses mode for this study fitted data well as above. All structural paths shown in the model were statistically signifi-

cant at p<0.01. Structural paths and their estimates were summarized in Table 4 with results of hypotheses tests.

**Table 4** Summary of structural paths and hypothesis testing results, standard estimates (n=620).

H	From	TO	Hypothesis results				
			Direct effect	Indirect effect	Hypothesis relation	Hypothesis support	
H1	EE	EJ	0.219**	---	positive	Accepted	
H2	SE	EJ	0.298***	---	positive	Accepted	
H3	CE	EJ	0.467***	---	positive	Accepted	
H4	INM	EJ	0.606***	---	positive	Accepted	
H5	EJ	EPDM	0.773***	---	positive	Accepted	
H6	EE	EJ	EPDM	---	0.169**	positive	Accepted
H7	SE	EJ	EPDM	---	0.231***	positive	Accepted
H8	CE	EJ	EPDM	---	0.361***	positive	Accepted
H9	INM	EJ	EPDM	---	0.468***	positive	Accepted

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Conclusion and Discussion

All hypotheses were tested by using a structural equation modeling method, the results indicated that all hypotheses were statistically significant in the direction as expected. The results showed: that ethical judgment was positively impacted by ecological ethics ($\beta=0.219^{**}$), which is consistent with expectation. The result supported the previous studies that many of the consumer studies on organic food have considered factors that facilitate or limit organic food consumption. They have dealt with motivations to purchase organic food, including health concerns, environmental concerns, food safety, sensory variables, ethical concerns, or value structure (Baker, et al., 2004, pp. 995-1012). The ethical judgment was positively impacted by social ethics ($\beta=0.298^{***}$), the result supported the previous studies that organic food claim is another arena in which deceptive advertising claims are often made, consumers will have to shop carefully

and hope that the reputation of the seller is high enough to be conveying the truth (Alan, 2016). The ethical judgment was positively impacted by cultural ethics ($\beta=0.467^{***}$), the result supported the previous studies that showed that cultural characteristics effecting on decision-making, and Chinese consumers' ethical decision-making by integrating factors that affect Thai culture (Buddhism as religion, beliefs, values/norms). (Karande, Rao and Singhapakdi, 2002, pp. 768-791). The ethical judgment was positively impacted by international market ethics ($\beta=0.606^{***}$). The result supported the previous studies the goal of managers and businesses striving to be ethical should be to avoid harm and to do what is morally justified and fair. In making ethical judgments, the prevailing norms of acceptability regarding technology must be tested by the principles of fairness and justice, protection of rights, utilitarianism, and other applicable ethical guidelines (Michael, 2016, pp. 382-420). Ethical purchase

decision making positively impacted by ethical judgment ($\beta=0.773^{***}$). Ethical judgment as mediator: ethical purchase decision-making positively impacted by ecological ethics ($\beta=0.169^{**}$), social ethics ($\beta=0.231^{***}$), cultural ethics ($\beta=0.361^{***}$), and international marketing ethics ($\beta=0.468^{***}$). The results supported the previous studies on the roles of face consciousness and group conformity play differently and more significantly among Chinese consumers than Western consumers during the consumption process (Mak, et al., 2009, pp. 219-248). The procedure of ethical decision-making is comprised of the consideration of responsive behavior and people's choice of making decisions, rules and norms and moral standards compared to individual's actions and ethical theories as providing weighty principles toward decision-making (Carroll and

Buchholtz, 2017, pp. 183-200). The findings of the study indicated a strong positive effect of Chinese consumers' ethical judgment on their purchase decision-making. The key factors of ecological ethics, social ethics, cultural ethics, and international marketing ethics all have a positive effect on Chinese consumers' ethical judgment, which positively affected purchase decision-making through Chinese consumers' ethical judgment as mediators. In particular, the research revealed that international marketing ethics had the most pronounced impact, followed by cultural ethics, the effect of social ethics was found to be moderate, while ecological ethics had the least effect.

The final model of Chinese consumers' ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption is as Figure 2.

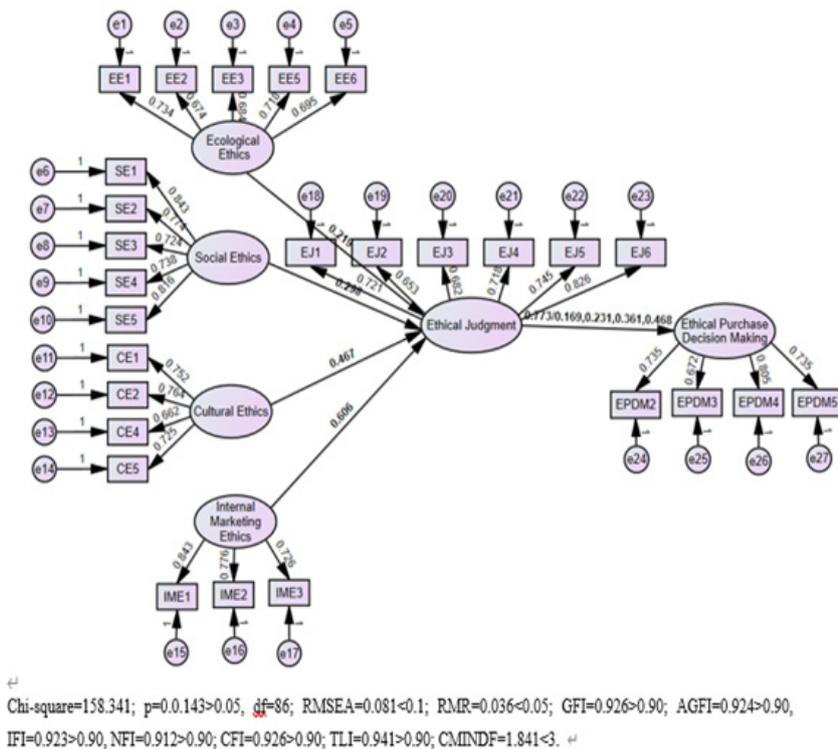


Figure 2 The final model Chinese consumer's ethical purchase decision-making toward Thailand's organic rice consumption.



Implication & Recommendation

Strategy recommendations for consumers: building values and attitudes toward ethical consumption formulating ethical purchase plans and implementing ethical consumption behaviors, which conform to their self-awareness and personal values. Cultivating ethical consumption lifestyles and shopping patterns. Based on establishing the values and attitudes towards ethical consumption, consumers need to formulate a clear purchase plan with operability, which will make ethical purchase behavior faster, easier and more purposeful.

Strategy recommendations for enterprises: improving the perceived value of organic agricultural products and increasing the consumers ethical purchase decision making. Chinese consumers' habit frequently purchases agricultural products, which should be fresh, delicious and nutritious and country of origin. What enterprises need to do is to enhance the brand awareness and perceived value of organic agricultural products, establish a positive public image, provide high-quality products, and supply reliable service guarantees and brand commitment. Enterprises should adopt the multi-dimensional marketing model of combining online and offline; improving the logistics efficiency to keep ethical agricultural products freshness; establishing traceable identification system to guarantee the consumers' legal rights and interests. Marketer fully demonstrate the benefits of organic agricultural product consumption and expand word-of-mouth effect. Highlight the characteristics and positive images of ethical agricultural

consumption to attract high consumption groups. This study released that group face consciousness and group conformity as Chinese typical cultural strongly affected on ethical purchase decision making. Marketer fully demonstrate the benefits of organic agricultural product consumption to consumers and expand word-of-mouth effect. Highlight the characteristics and positive images of ethical agricultural products to attract high consumption groups and drive other groups of the consumer.

Strategic recommendations to government and relevant organizations: strengthening the supervision and building ethical social norms. The government and relevant organizations guide consumers to shape their modern consumption concept by publicizing ethical consumption attitudes and beliefs. By emphasizing the personal interests (such as safety and health, quality, etc.) and social benefits (such as sustainability and morality) of organic agricultural products ethical consumption strengthens consumers' ethical awareness and participation. Providing technical and policy support. The government should build platforms providing ethical agricultural products with complete information on production, processing, packaging and transportation, which are convenient for consumers to complete ethical purchase decision making.

Recommendations

Firstly, carrying out and long-term follow-up research to obtain research data. Adopting a segmented survey method. In the first stage, psychological variables related to



consumers' ethical intentions will be investigated, and in the second stage, consumers' ethical purchase behavior in real living scenarios will be investigated. Using reach data to verify the causal effect between factors, and fully explore the gradual transition process from ethical intent to ethical purchase behavior.

Secondly, cross-cultural studies should be conducted to explore the ethical purchas-

ing behavior of organic agricultural products across different regions, cultures and customs. It is expected that the decision making mechanisms behind the behavior may be among different countries. Exploring key factors among different countries the cross-cultural ethical purchasing behavior of organic agricultural products will be the focus of future research.

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