

**Pro-social local food consumption motivations and behaviour:
An exploratory study of tourists departing Vanuatu**

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Background

Social marketing is regarded as a way to address social issues in order to boost people's quality of life and enhance society as a whole (Andreasen, 2006). While many social marketing studies address public health issues, Kotler and Lee (2009) regard social marketing as a fitting framework for activities focused upon reducing poverty in the developing world, such as developing sustainable agricultural-based enterprises that utilise indigenous, local food. Understanding the pro-social motivations that underpin decision making with regard to local food in concert with active-behaviours (e.g. seeking out local food) and passive-behaviours (e.g. noticing local food) of tourists; shape endeavours that seek to provide a way out of poverty in emerging economies. This research is set in the South Pacific Islands – namely the popular tourist destination of Vanuatu – and is part of a large project that centres on developing a sustainable, village-level enterprise for the local, indigenous Canarium nut. Stimulating demand for the local nut among the many tourists that visit is vital. The purpose of this study was to empirically explore the relationship between tourists' pro-social local food motivations and their self-reported behaviour. Two hypotheses frame this study being: **H1:** *Tourists' pro-social local food motivations are positively associated with active-positive behaviours towards local food;* and **H2:** *Tourists' pro-social motivations are positively associated with passive-positive behaviours towards local food.*

Pro-social food motivations matter. Today's consumers not only care about the physical properties of the food they select and eat (Briggeman & Lusk, 2011) but also about social and ethical circumstances pertaining to the food (Unnevehr, Eales, Jensen, Lusk, McCluskey & Kinsey, 2010). Key considerations of today's consumers include questions about who produces the food, how the food is produced, who benefits from their purchase, and where it comes from (Briggeman & Lusk, 2011). These pro-social food motivations are increasingly commonplace, steadily gaining momentum since the 1980's, particularly with the development of international certified food programs such as Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance and UTZ (Becchetti & Huybrechts, 2008). Literature from tourism and marketing-related certified food programs was reviewed (e.g. Garcia Gonzales, 2013; Castaldo, Perrini, Misani & Tencati, 2009; Varul, 2010) revealing that the link between tourists' pro-social local food motivations and behaviour toward local food, being the focus of this study, has not been empirically investigated. In terms of types of local foods from the developing world, coffee, chocolate, sugar and bananas are the most common in certified food programs (Fairtrade International, 2013). Nuts seldom feature as a certified food, with the exception of papers by Silvertown (2004) and Bounous (2006). Additionally, there are no studies of the South Pacific Islands beyond Garcia Gonzales (2013) study of internet-enabled sustainable tourism and Hutchens (2011) discussion of the success factors that underpin certified food programs.

South Pacific Island Canarium nuts are the focus of this study. Produced by the indigenous Canarium indicum tree, the nuts are a culturally important, traditional food of the Ni-Vanuatu (Melanesian people of Vanuatu) (Thomson & Evans, 2006). With rising world trade in tree nuts, the opportunity to assist in the development of a sustainable agricultural-based enterprise in Vanuatu is timely (Pacific Agribusiness Research and Development Initiative, 2012). The priority consumer market has been identified as the many tourists (n = 237,346) that arrive into Port Vila, the capital of the Vanuatu archipelago, on the main island of Efate. Australians on holidays are the largest cohort of tourists visiting Port Vila, with 59% being one-day cruise ship visitors (Pacific Agribusiness Research and Development Initiative, 2012).

Method

Departing tourists were intercepted by trained Ni-Vanuatu enumerators who administered the paper-based survey. Respondents were intercepted at 11 locations with this purposive, convenience sample approach resulting in a useable sample of 61 respondents (59% response rate). Screening questions ensured that respondents were over 18 years of age, tourists leaving Vanuatu, and were consumers or purchasers of nuts or value-added nut products. Respondents were relatively equally split in terms of gender (male = 30; female = 31) with 75.4% under that age of 44 years. Over half of the respondents were tertiary educated (57.4%) and described their household income as high (44.3%) or medium (39.3%). Most were Australian residents (67.2%) all of whom were from the east coast, namely Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales respectively.

Adapting existing scales (e.g. Birch *et al.*, 2012), two experts then reviewed the quantitative survey prior to administration. Each item was measured on 5-point Likert type scales as detailed in the Appendix. First, tourists' pro-social local food motivations scale consisted of five items ($\alpha = 0.82$) with standardised loadings ranging from 0.53 to 0.83. Second, departing tourists' self-reported behaviours with respect to local food from Vanuatu during their visit was initially measured with 8 items. Factor analysis indicated the final 7 item scale was measuring two constructs and adapting Barber's (1972) typology of political behaviour, the constructs were labelled: a) 'active-positive behaviour' whereby respondents actively sort out local food ($\alpha = 0.82$; items = 3; loadings 0.74 - 0.83); and b) 'passive-positive behaviour' being favourable undertakings such as noticing, identifying and having an interest in the background of local food ($\alpha = 0.84$; items = 4; loadings 0.72 - 0.80).

Results

Construct reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity was apparent with an absence of multicollinearity or common method bias (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). Composite scales were created prior to testing the hypotheses with the results of multiple regression analysis presented in Table 1. Both hypotheses were accepted.

TABLE 1: Multiple Regression Results

Hypothesised Relationship	β	F	Result
H ₁ Pro-Social Motivations → Active-Positive Behaviour	0.35***	8.25***	Accepted
H ₂ Pro-Social Motivations → Passive-Positive Behaviour	0.28**	4.82**	Accepted

*Standardised parameter estimates (β) are statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ ** and $p < 0.01$ ****

Conclusions

Theoretically, the paper introduces the notion of active- and passive-positive behaviours to the social marketing literature. It was found that departing tourists' pro-social local food motivations are positively associated with both active-positive and passive-positive self-reported behaviours. Furthermore, Hart and London's (2005) 'bottom of the pyramid' notion is applicable in terms of the practical implications of this study.

'Bottom of the pyramid' is typically associated with innovative approaches to marketing in emerging nations and to poverty alleviation. Thus, this study's assessment of active- and passive- positive tourist behaviour provides a new perspective to explain the behaviour of tourists, advantaging Ni-Vanuatu entrepreneurs by providing insight that can direct their efforts at the budding village-level, sustainable agriculture-based enterprises being built around the local Canarium nut.

Appendix

Pro-social local food motivations

($\alpha = 0.82$)

Question stem: “On a scale of 1 ‘not important at all’ to 5 ‘very important’, please rate the following attributes of local nut or local nut products that would encourage you to purchase or purchase more?”

Item	Loading
Knowing they are from a sustainable source	0.83
Knowing that purchasing them was supporting the local community, local retailers and local producers	0.80
Knowing they are indigenous to the region	0.69
They are easily recognisable as local Vanuatu food	0.64
Knowing they are an authentic Vanuatu product	0.53

Active-positive behaviour

($\alpha = 0.82$)

Question stem: “To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning local food from Vanuatu?”

Item	Loading
If local food had been promoted at Vanuatu restaurants; that would have positively influenced me to choose those restaurants.	0.83
When selecting from a menu during my visit to Vanuatu, I specifically looked for local food to order.	0.79
When purchasing food during my visit to Vanuatu, I specifically looked for local food to try.	0.74

Passive-positive behaviour

($\alpha = 0.84$)

Question stem: “To what extent do you agree with the following statements concerning local food from Vanuatu?”

Item	Loading
I am interested in learning about where the local food I eat comes from and how it is grown and/or produced.	0.80
Local food from Vanuatu was readily available at the places where I shopped.	0.75
Eating local food from Vanuatu did, or could have, made my visit more enjoyable.	0.73
Local food from Vanuatu was frequently included on the menus at eating out places on the island.	0.72

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