

**CONSUMER TRUST IN SUPERMARKET FOOD SYSTEM IN CHINA**

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Supermarket revolution has achieved a rapid diffusion since 1990s in China. Following a high penetration in citizen's daily life, changes brought by supermarket have become a prominent element of China's modern development. For Chinese urban consumers, weekly, one-stop food shopping trips in supermarkets have become more common compared to daily shopping trips to "farmers market" around neighborhoods which are traditional food retail venues. However, successive food scandals in the last decade have detrimented public confidence and trust in food system. As a typical developing country, China is portrayed as a low-trust society originally. Thus, consumer trust is more easily to destroy but more difficult to rebuild.

The current study investigated consumer trust in supermarket food system based on two perspectives of personal characteristics and food safety concerns. The city Nanjing was chosen for it is a typical modernized and developed city possessing typical urban supermarket growth and changes in food shopping. Through the open face-to-face interview with patrons inside supermarkets, a structural survey was completed to collect data, which applied visual analog scale to measure psychological variables reliably and validly, such as personality, consumer trust, etc. A too bit model was employed to scrutinize factors impact consumer trust in supermarket food system. Supermarket food consumers are categorized into 3 groups based on their trust level. Influencing factors are studied and compared across low, medium and high trust consumers.

Consumers who possess outgoing personality and have more interpersonal trust tend to trust more in the supermarket food system. Boutique supermarket features high quality imported foods gains higher level of consumer trust. Internet based social networks is merely significant to low trust consumers. Impacts of education, age and gender on trust are different among different consumer groups. After taking into account perceived risk of food safety issue and practical sickened-by-food experience, consumer trust has a distinct propensity to decrease. Conclusions from this study provide insightful thoughts to improve consumer trust during post-food scandal period in China.