

COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES AND VALUE CREATION IN SUSTAINABLE FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

**Proceedings of the 54th
SIDEA Conference - 25th
SIEA Conference
Bisceglie/Trani,
September 13th - 16th 2017**

**a cura di
Francesco Contò
Mariantonietta Fiore
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EXPLORING ITALIAN OLIVE OIL CONSUMERS' PURCHASING BEHAVIOUR: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION AND ORGANIC LABELS

by *Luigi Roselli**, *Giacomo Giannoccaro***, *Domenico Carlucci***
and *Bernardo De Gennaro***

1. Introduction

Since the first years of 90s, the European Union established two main quality schemes: geographical indications (GIs) and organic production (OP). Although, these two product categories still represent a small share of food market, quality certification schemes seems to sustain the food consumption pattern during the current economic crisis (ISMEA, 2014; ISMEA-Qualivita, 2017). There is a vast literature focusing on EU quality schemes applied to many food categories, including extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO) (e.g.: Scarpa & Del Giudice 2004; Aprile et al., 2012; Cicia et al., 2013; Di Vita et al., 2013; Carlucci et al., 2014; Panico et al. 2014; Del Giudice et al., 2015; Chinnici et al., 2016; Roselli et al., 2016; Boncinelli et al., 2017; Cavallo & Piqueras-Fiszman, 2017). However, in most of these studies GIs and OP have been separately analysed, under the assumption of independence. This paper aims to prove if there are some synergies between GIs and OP labels on olive oil products. Differently from previous studies, in this research the two certifications (GIs and OP) for olive oil products are simultaneously analysed while the independence from each other is checked. To reach this objective, the Italian olive oil consumers' purchasing behaviour has been investigated through a survey involving a national representative sample of primary olive oil purchaser for household members.

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2. Data and methodology

2.1. Data collection and data set

The survey was conducted during the period of January-February 2017 through a web-questionnaire administered by an agency specialised in market surveys. The target population was represented by household responsible for purchasing food and olive oil. The recruited sample was representative of the Italian population by age, gender, and geographical area. The collected information concerned socio-demographic characteristics, olive oil buying habits, purchasing motivations, attitudes and beliefs about food consumption and environmental issues.

We collected a data set containing 1,061 completed questionnaires. The sample was quite balanced with minor deviation respect to the Italian population. With reference to the gender, the sample was well adjusted around the fifty. The average age of respondents was 44-year-old, lower than the adult Italian population (51 years), in line with other on-line surveying to Italian food consumers. The average family size was of 3.2 members, a bit larger than the Italian statistics (2.4). The household with younger (< 18-year-old) members were 43% with an average of 1.5 young people. The educational level showed an unfair pattern with the primary level being underrated.

2.2. Empirical model

The main factors explaining the purchase of olive oil with GIs or/and OP were investigated through a bivariate probit model. The bivariate probit model is a joint estimation for two binary outcomes. That is, two binary choice models where the final observed outcome (to be buyer of olive oil with GIs or/and with OP) reflects a choice of two decisions instead of a single decision. These decisions may be correlated, with correlation ρ . This is a natural extension of probit model, which allows for handling more than one equation, with correlate disturbances. The Lagrange multiplier statistic is implemented for testing the absence of correlation in this model. Under the null hypothesis that ρ equals zero, the model consists of independent probit equations, which can be estimated separately.

The variables used in the model are shown and defined in Table 1. The two decision variables of the model are dichotomous variables. The first one, called GEOGRAPHIC, takes value one if the respondent states that she/he buys EVOO with Geographical Indications and zero otherwise. Similarly,

the second decision variable, called ORGANIC, takes value one if the respondent states that she/he buys organic EVOO and zero otherwise.

Tab. 1 – Variables coding in the bivariate model

Variable name	Type	Variable coding	Sample value (Std. dev.)
Dependent variables			
GEOGRAPHIC	dummy	1= respondent buys EVOO GIs; 0= otherwise.	0.89 (0.31)
ORGANIC	dummy	1 = respondent buys EVOO OP; 0= otherwise.	0.68 (0.46)
Independent variables			
area	categorical	1= North-West of Italy; 2= North-East of Italy; 3= Centre of Italy; 4= South of Italy.	26% 19% 23% 32%
retail channel	categorical	1= large retailer; 2= gourmet food store; 3= farm&mill gate; 4= on line & others.	69% 5% 23% 3%
frequency	ordinal	EVOO purchase frequency: 5= more times a month; 4= once a month; 3= once over three months; 2= once over six months; 1=once a year.	35% 33% 17% 8% 7%
age	continuous	Age of respondent	44 (14)
education	categorical	1= primary; 2= secondary; 3= tertiary.	11% 51% 38%
low income	dummy	Household monthly income: 1= if < 1,000 €; 0= otherwise.	0.11 (0.31)
household size	continuous	Number of household members	3.19 (1.17)
young	dummy	1= presence of young members; 0= otherwise.	0.40 (0.49)
donation	dummy	1= donation to environmental associations; 0= otherwise.	0.40 (0.49)
bitter taste	ordinal*	Importance of bitter taste in EVOO oil purchase.	4.12 (1.76)
green behaviour	ordinal*	Importance of environmental issues in food purchase.	5.87 (1.18)
health motivation	ordinal*	Importance of consuming EVOO for health enhancement.	5.97 (1.18)

*Likert scale from 1 to 7 where 7 means higher level of importance.

3. Results

The bivariate probit model was estimated in the STATA 14 computer program. Table 2 reports the estimated parameters.

The first result of econometric regression refers to the independence between GIs and OP. The ancillary parameter rho, which measures the correlation of the residuals from the two models, turns out significant. It means that errors for both equations are highly correlated. Consequently, the simultaneous estimation of both equations in the model is the appropriate approach to obtain consistent parameter estimates. Moreover, according to this finding the independence of both certifications in the purchase behaviour of EVOO is rejected.

Tab. 2 – Estimate parameters of the bivariate probit model

Variable	Coef.	SE	p-value	Coef.	SE	p-value
	Eq. (1): GEOGRAPHIC			Eq. (2): ORGANIC		
area (South):						
<i>North-West</i>	0.396	0.171	0.020	0.213	0.125	0.086
<i>North-East</i>						
<i>Centre</i>						
retail channel (large retailer):						
<i>gourmet store</i>				0.793	0.283	0.005
<i>farm&mill gate</i>	-0.461	0.165	0.005	0.467	0.141	0.001
<i>on line & others</i>						
frequency	0.125	0.058	0.031	0.291	0.049	0.000
age				-0.009	0.003	0.009
education (secondary)						
<i>primary</i>						
<i>tertiary</i>	0.279	0.131	0.034			
low income	-0.406	0.170	0.017	-0.259	0.148	0.080
household size				-0.095	0.045	0.035
young						
donation	0.292	0.132	0.028	0.385	0.096	0.000
bitter taste	0.072	0.034	0.038	0.085	0.026	0.001
green behaviour	0.114	0.057	0.047			
health motivation				0.109	0.047	0.022
Constant				-0.682	0.324	0.045
Number of obs. = 927						
Log likelihood = -788.55						
Wald chi ² test (32) = 191.94 Prob > chi ² = 0.000						
Wald chi ² of rho = 0; chi ² (1) 26.54 Prob > chi ² = 0.000						

The purchase of EVOO with GIs is not neutral across Italian areas. EVOOs with OP are mostly purchased at gourmet food stores and to a lesser extent at farm or mill gates.

As a whole, as the frequency of EVOO purchasing increases, the likelihood of being a buyer of EVOOs with two quality labels also increases. With reference to socio-demographic features, major likelihood of purchasing has been found for those who attained tertiary education level and are living with young people. Moreover, those who have donated to environmental associations and have pro-environmental food purchasing behaviour show higher likelihood of being a purchaser of EVOO with both certifications. By contrast, those with low income and living in family with large number of household members show lower probability. Also the respondent' age shows negative sign.

4. Conclusions

The results of the study confirm that there are significant synergistic effects between European quality labels in the olive oil market. This outcome has some practical implications for firms' competitive strategies. In fact, olive oil industry can use these insights to better tailor marketing strategies in order to meet the needs of consumers interested in both quality labels. For instance, according to our results it seems that the two labels satisfy the preferences of an emerging consumer segment of EVO oils, namely those of the demanding consumer. These are consumers who are positively attracted by experience attributes, such as taste and, at the same time, are sensitive to health and environmental concerns. Another important implication of our results concerns the methodological approach. Given the existence of dependence between the two food quality cues, should be taken into account when analysing olive oil consumers' purchasing behaviour. Finally, the main limits of this study are those typical of studies based on consumers' stated purchasing behaviour.

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This book contains the proceedings of the LIV Conference SIDEA and the XXV Convention SIEA, which were organized by the Department of Economics of the University of Foggia, for the first time, with the formula of a joint Conference titled “Cooperative strategies and value creation in sustainable food supply chain”, held in Bisceglie-Trani, from September 13th to 16th, 2017.

Cooperation in all its forms represents a valuable paradigm to define new horizons of development and build new organizational models of value creation according to a sustainable approach not referred to a single unit, but to the entire supply chain. Consequently, research perspectives affect the value added distribution issues along the value chain, the agricultural supply regulation, the social responsibility, the ability to offer a higher degree of food safety, and the promotion of organizational and social innovation.

Nevertheless, these concepts, which are valid in themselves, risk being infected by an exasperating interpretation of the current productivist logic and, thus, lose sight of the same value of those cooperative strategies and of the logic of fair distribution of the value, generated within the agri-food supply chains, and that this conference has debated.

Compared to all this, Italian agricultural economists wanted to reflect on how to bring the issue of cooperation back to the centre of economic logic and the governance of agri-food supply chains, also in relation to the use of environmental factors, which must be increasingly aimed at respecting the principles and values of the circular economy.

In this framework, the thematic areas, in which the First Joint SIDEA-SIEA Conference were structured, have allowed us to investigate the issue in all its aspects, starting from the analysis of the main production and consumption models, up to organizational models, forms of territorial, sectoral and environmental cooperation, and policies with which to add value to the supply chain.

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