

Abstract

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The Impact of Implementing the European Quality Labeling System on the Supply Chain Performance of Food Industry: An Empirical Study of Traditional Food Sector

The food industry nowadays is becoming customer-oriented and it needs faster response time to deal with the food incidents. There is a deep need for good traceability systems to help the supply chain partners to minimize the production and distribution of unsafe poor quality products, which in turn will enhance the food supply chain performance. The complexity of food supply chain imposes enormous challenges on the supply chain partners even the consumers. The current food labeling system cannot guarantee that the food is authentic, safe and with good quality. Therefore, the use of origin labels, mainly the geographical indications (GIs), allows the supply chain partners to define quality standards and defend their products' reputation. One of the most important issues in this context is the use of the Med-diet labeling system in order to enhance the overall performance of food supply chain in developing countries such as Egypt. Several studies have been proposed on the implementation of the European labeling system in developed countries while no studies discussed the use of quality labeling system in developing countries. This research represents a research schema about the implementation of Med-diet labeling system in developing countries. The research aims at investigating the impact of quality labeling system on the supply chain performance of traditional food sector in developing countries. The research demonstrated the implementation of quality labeling system at the Egyptian food industry to gain a comprehensive understanding of how the implementation will affect the overall performance of food restaurants in Egypt, while understanding the main challenges and barriers that faced the restaurants while implementing this system in the Egyptian food supply chain. An empirical study was conducted on the Egyptian traditional food sector based on a sample of seven restaurants implementing the Med-diet labeling system through a mix of qualitative and quantitative approach. First, in-depth interviews were carried out to analyze the Egyptian traditional food supply chain. Then, an applied framework was developed to link the quality labeling system and supply chain performance. Finally, a structured survey was conducted based on the applied framework to investigate the impact of quality labeling system on the supply chain performance. The results showed that the implementation of quality labeling system faced several challenges and barriers in the Egyptian food sector. The research highlighted the lack of information, transparency, and usage of traditional food in the Egyptian food industry. It also indicated that the quality labeling system has a great impact on the overall performance of the food supply chain. The research provides an original contribution to knowledge by creating a framework linking the European quality labeling system to the supply chain performance of food industry. The framework can be used as a supply chain performance management tool to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of food industry's supply chain performance. Moreover, the research proposed an applied framework linking Med-diet quality labeling system to supply chain performance of traditional food sector in developing countries generally and especially in the Egyptian restaurants.