



UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**CONSUMER DEMAND  
ON SAGO-BASED PRODUCTS IN KUCHING**

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*Photo: Sago Palm-CRAUN Research Sdn.Bhd*

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## ABSTRACT

Sago-based products are commonly known in Sarawak especially in Melanau community. These sago or sago-based products are their staple foods like 'linut' (mixture of raw sago starch with hot water to form 'glue-like') or sago snacks (tabaloi, sago pearls, kuih bangkit, etc).



*Photo: CRAUN Research Sdn.Bhd.*

The contribution of sago-based products business growth is supported by in understanding and analyzing the force that determine the demand for such products in the marketplace.

The sago-based products itself need to be revamped in order to stimulate the consumer to purchase backed by an aggressive promotion (trade shows, advertising), information service (disseminate the facts and benefit of sago-based products) and competitive price (to compete with other similar starch-based products).

Analysing all the factors require will establish the knowledge on the consumer demand in sago-based products that eventually will enhance the future growth in the industry.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 HISTORY OF SAGO

Sago is a powdery starch obtained from the pith of the trunk. Scientifically known as *Metroxylon sago*, which is claimed to be the most important palm exploited commercially for starch production of several species starch producing palm, it is a widely used for consumption purpose for the community of Melanau in Sarawak. According to Berkill (1966), sago was mentioned by Chinese writers in 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is a hapaxanthic (once flowering) and sroboliferous (suckering) feather leaf palm, which accumulates starch in its trunk during its vegetative phase of growth.

Sago can be found vastly in swampy area of Dalat and Oya at Sibu Division and Mukah Division, Sarawak. Apart from wild sago palm scattered, it is now planted by the smallholders in that particular area. Sarawak through its statutory body known as The Land Custody and Development Authority of Sarawak or termed PELITA has aggressively to cater and widening the scope of sago crops from providing expertise to develop sago plantation and has developed research and development for the crop.

Sago starch is a valuable source for carbohydrates. It is used widely in the food industries.

Products that had been produced from sago starch are monosodium glutamate (MSG), high fructose syrup, glucose, dextrose and products for local food industries such as tebaloi snack, sago pearl, sepit snack and much more.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This research is focused on the sago-based products, which is the most consumable products in terms of processed food and raw starch products for the local people and as an exported commodity for the state. There is a similar study, by *Sanzo, del Rio, Iglesias & Vazquez (2003)*, conducted an empirical study, carried out for traditional agro-food product, understanding as such those foods that have been elaborated from traditional raw materials using traditional production and/or transformation methods. Their concerns in the study due to the similar type of the products that are very well known during in the past (childhood) and they are aware that there is a link to the attitudes in the consumers. The followings are literature reviews based on related journals and books.

#### 2.2 CONSUMER DEMAND

According to Paul S. Marsden (1998) traditional techniques for understanding customer motivations and behaviours are often based on a highly rationalised conception of the human mind. In other words, it is assumed that customers consciously choose whether or not to adopt a particular product or service.

According to Noar and Schmutzler (1991), in their demand research in German Democratic Republic; demand is (rather than supply as before) was now established as the "starting point" of the planning process.