

A STUDY ON CONSUMERS PERCEPTION AND PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS

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Abstract: *The saying "Health is Wealth" emphasises the value of good health. People today suffer from poor health as a result of consuming harmful, tainted food products. People must consume and use organic products, which are produced or cultivated without the use of chemicals, pesticides, or fertilisers, in order to solve this issue. In order to protect the environment and ourselves, we must switch to organic farming. Due to the numerous health advantages that organic food provides, it has currently become fashionable to consume it. Organic food is completely natural and loaded with essential nutrients that the body needs. Thus, an effort has been undertaken to identify consumer preferences for organic products.*

Keywords: *Organic Products, Environment, Health Benefits, Nutrients*

Introduction

India has long practised organic farming. High yielding wheat and rice varieties, chemical fertilisers, and improved agronomic techniques were all introduced by the Green Revolution to boost Indian farmers' output and productivity. India's agricultural output increased immediately after the Green Revolution was put into action. Since the country's geographical and agricultural land cannot be expanded, the pressure to feed the growing population is focused on the requirement to increase agricultural productivity. As a result of this pressure, farmers are forced to look for assistance from chemical fertilisers, plant protection chemicals, etc. For the majority of organic farmers, using organic manure and natural plant protection techniques in place of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides is what organic farming entails.

Food is an essential aspect of everyone's lives. The term "organic food" describes produce or livestock that is raised on a farm without the use of synthetic fertilisers, pesticides, or genetically modified organisms. Certification as Organic is also necessary. Given the relative youth and modest size of the organic food sector, it is crucial that consumers are aware of its marketing gimmicks, restrictions, and potential advantages. According to consumer polls,

people are quite concerned about knowing about organic food products and the safety of the fruit they buy in supermarkets due to potential pesticide contamination.

Review of Literature

Chennakrishnan (2011)¹ outlined in his article "Banana: Go Organic; Medicinal and Nutritional Benefits of Banana," there is an increased demand for organically farmed bananas as a result of growing consumer appreciation for such crops. By promoting bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides, recycling the waste from environmentally friendly inputs, and establishing national certification programmes and accreditation agencies to certify organic products in the nation, India has the potential to become a significant exporter of organic bananas.

Moloy Ghoshal (2011)² in his article Green marketing was still in its infancy, according to "A Changing Concept in Changing Times". Green marketing, in the opinion of marketing academics, relates to eco-level and market segmentation as well as the function of structural variables and financial incentives in influencing consumer behaviour. Customers' satisfaction and better environmental quality are two goals that green marketing must comprehend.

K. Ratheesh Kumar (2017)³ highlighted in his study, "A Research on customer satisfaction towards organic food goods with special reference to Coimbatore city" has indicated that the primary data had obtained from selected respondents on Simple Random sampling procedures. Many approaches, including Chi-square Analysis and Average Ranking Analysis, were used to analyse this study. The findings showed that the majority of respondents, particularly those in urban areas, preferred organic food products. Because the availability of organic products is so limited in the research area, demand for them is rising but supply is quite meagre. The primary causes include a dearth of organic producers, the absence of suitable market infrastructure, a small number of shops, a lack of knowledge, etc.

Statement of the Problem

Many customers are turning to organic products as their worry about health issues and food safety grows. The desire for food free of pesticides and chemicals is increasing, which has been linked among other factors to the rise in organic product consumers. So, an effort has been undertaken in this study to assess consumer preference for organic goods.

Need for the Study

Most of the studies, according to the reviewed literature, concentrated on the influence of social and demographic factors on consumption behaviour, while only a small number of studies addressed the issue of why consumers were not willing to pay more for organic food despite being aware of its benefits. In order to learn more about consumer preferences,

justifications for purchases, and levels of satisfaction with organic products, the current study on "A study on consumer preference towards organic products" was conducted.

Objectives of the Study

- To comprehend the concept of organic food.
- To investigate the respondents' demographic characteristics.
- To find out the reasons for buying organic products.
- To determine the level of satisfaction towards organic products.

Limitations of the Study

- Purposive sampling is the methodology used in the study.
- The study was only conducted in the city of Coimbatore,
- The attitudes of the respondents could occasionally vary.
- The study's findings may therefore be applicable to the current situation.

Data and Methodology

Primary and secondary sources of data have both been used to gather the information. Purposive sampling was used to gather the study's primary data from 105 samples. A questionnaire was used to perform the test survey. The secondary data was gathered from a variety of papers and articles that were published in numerous journals, electronic journals, websites, magazines, etc.

Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Analysis

Demographic profile	Number of respondents N=105	Percent (%)
Age		
Less than 20years	13	12.4
21-30 years	36	34.3
31-40 years	41	39
Above 40 years	15	14.3
Gender of the Respondents		
Male	32	30.5
Female	73	69.5
Educational Qualification		
Primary	12	11.4
Secondary	16	15.2
Under Graduation	44	41.9
Post Graduation	33	31.4
Area of Residence		
Rural	27	25.7
Urban	78	74.3

Family Type		
Nuclear Family	64	60.9
Joint Family	41	39
Number of Members		
2	15	14.3
3	32	30.5
4	47	44.8
5	7	6.7
More than 5	4	3.8
Family Monthly Income		
Below ₹ 30,000	13	12.4
₹30,001-₹50,000	27	25.7
₹50,001-₹70,000	45	42.9
Above ₹70,000	20	19

The table displays the demographic information of the respondents used in the study, including age, educational attainment, family type, area of residence, family size, and family monthly income. 39% of the 105 participants in the study who were surveyed were between the ages of 31 and 40. The majority of respondents (69.5%) were female. Among the responders, undergraduates made up 41.9%. The majority of the population (74.3%) resided in urban areas. The majority of responders (60.9%) lived in nuclear families. 42.9% of respondents earn more than Rs. 50001-70000 a month, while 44.8% of respondents' families include four members.

Rank Analysis

Reasons for Buying organic Products

A list of eight statements was given to the respondents for ranking in order to study the reasons for buying organic products.

Reasons	Mean Rank	Rank
Better Taste	4.82	5
Chemicals and Pesticides Free	2.18	1
Fresh Products	6.75	8
Environment Friendly	6.11	6
Healthy	2.98	3
Keep the Family Safe	6.50	7
Natural	2.56	2
More Nutritious	4.10	4

The table lists the variables along with their average rank value. First rank is indicated by the lowest mean rank value, and final rank by the highest value. It may be inferred that the majority of respondents purchase organic goods because they are free of chemicals and pesticides, which has been put above all other considerations.

Chi-Square Analysis

Null Hypothesis -H₀: There is no significant association between monthly income and amount spent for purchasing organic products

Monthly Income	How much amount do you spent for purchasing organic products per month				Total
	Below 2000	2001-3000	3001-4000	Above 4000	
Below 30000	4	1	2	0	7
30001-50000	5	5	6	2	18
50001-70000	34	12	12	12	70
Above 70000	6	2	2	0	10
Total	49	20	22	14	105

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.588 ^a	9	.138

At a 5% level of significance, the estimated chi-square value is greater than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is an association between monthly income and the amount spent on organic food each month.

Null Hypothesis-H₀: There is no significant association between monthly income and frequent of buying organic products.

Monthly Income	How frequently you buy organic products				Total
	Once in a week	Once in a month	Once in a year	When needed	
Below 30000	1	0	0	6	7
30001-50000	0	7	0	11	18
50001-70000	7	17	8	38	70
Above 70000	0	0	0	10	10
Total	8	24	8	65	105

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.678 ^a	9	.054

At the 5% level of significance, the estimated chi-square value exceeds the value in the table. The null hypothesis is thus rejected. As a result, there is a connection between monthly income and how frequently people buy organic goods.

One Sample T-Test

Level of Satisfaction Towards organic Products

Factors	T-value	Df	Mean	Sig
Environment Friendly	-16.326	104	2.91	.000
Healthy	-35.950	104	1.46	.000
Good quality	-16.918	104	3.62	.000
Reasonable price	-4.037	104	4.60	.000
Easily available in the market	-17.663	104	2.95	.000
Good taste and smell	-18.281	104	2.88	.000
Well promoted	-13.890	104	3.06	.000
Prestige issue	-17.560	104	2.65	.000
Comes with good packaging	-15.849	104	2.92	.000
To support local farmers	-14.422	104	3.00	.000

The mean value in the table above is deemed significant, and the value under the significance column is below .05. The significant value for the level of satisfaction with organic products is below .05. As a result, these statements were considered important.

The statement's mean value implied that organic foods are healthful. Consequently, it can be said that organic products are better for the environment and for consumers.

Conclusion

It is concluded that buying organic food is primarily motivated by health. Consumers in India are aware of a variety of organic foods, but they believe that they are too expensive when compared to conventional goods. The rising need for food free of pesticide and chemical residues has been one factor in the rise in customer interest in organic food items. Hence, it is crucial to assist local farmers in producing more organic food, which should then be sold at the community market so small farmers may make a fair profit rather than being exported to other nations.

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