

An Empirical Study on Consumers' Attitude Towards Organic Food Products with Special Reference to Chennai City

Dr.K.Vinotha, Associate Professor, PG & Research Dept. of Commerce, Sri Kaniyaka Parameswari Arts & Science College for Women, Chennai.

N.Sabitha Rani, Research Scholar, Dept. of Commerce, Sri Kaniyaka Parameswari Arts & Science College for Women, Chennai.

Abstract

Organic foods are produced without the use of synthetic materials such as pesticides, antibiotics, and chemical fertilizers. Because of the increasing health risks, consumers are becoming more health conscious in the modern era. As a result, more organic food products are being consumed than ever before. In a nutshell, organic foods are minimally processed to retain the food's integrity and are free of artificial ingredients, preservatives, and irradiation. The producers have the ability to modify non-organic food products at the genetic or molecular level. This study aims to research about the key factors influencing consumers' attitude towards organic food products. The conclusion determined from the findings. Nowadays, a lot of people like organic food products over non-organic ones, and consumption has expanded to a point where it contributes to a clean environment. Other factors, such as taste, freshness, nutrition, and appearance, influence consumers' preferences for organic food products in addition to health, the environment, and food.

Keywords: -Organic foods, fertilizers, preservatives, clean environment.

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I. Introduction

India's economy is based on organic farming. Because of chemical contamination, consumers are turning to nature. It led to a shift in favour of organic goods. Food that has been farmed without the use of chemicals from seed to harvest is referred to as "organic food." Recently, organic food has become more popular. Organic foods that are produced without synthetic materials like pesticides, antibiotics, and artificial fertilisers are known as organic food items. These are environmentally friendly processes used to prepare organic fruits, vegetables, dairy products, rice, pulses, oil, beauty goods, and even ready-to-eat foods. This farming method aims to preserve the soil's ability to regenerate and reproduce, to sustain plant nutrition, to manage the soil, and to produce nutritious food that is resistant to disease. Customers prefer organic food products over conventionally grown alternatives based on a few general views about desirable characteristics. In addition to health, nutritional, and environmental benefits, customers are also influenced by a number of other factors, such as taste, freshness, appearance, colours, and other sensory qualities. As a result, the final two factors to significantly link with purchasing intention are health and food safety. The current study focused on consumer perceptions of organic products and was conducted with a sample size of 152 people who are familiar with organic products. The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Organically grown food has more nutritional properties, which would likely result in better public health if organic agriculture were consumed in the same quantities as conventionally grown agriculture is now consumed.

II. Review of Literature

Jabir Ali (2020), health consciousness is the primary motivator among consumers, influencing their willingness to pay. Other factors include product quality, taste, packaging, and price, as well as consumers' preference for a convenient shopping experience. Among the demographic variables influencing the purchase of health and wellness products, income and education are the most important.

Nayana Sharma and Dr. RituSinghvi (2018) investigated consumers' attitudes and behaviours toward organic food. The purpose of this research is to raise public awareness about the benefits of organic food products and encourage their use, while also motivating farmers to choose organic farming. According to the findings of this study, the market for organic products is rapidly expanding. This study provides critical information indicating that the demand for organic food will increase in the future.

Nandi, Bokelmann, Gowdru, and Dias (2016), organic consumers believe that organic foods are less likely to contain chemical residues than conventional foods. Environmental consciousness, trust in retailers, belief in high nutrient content, and market availability all influenced customers' willingness to pay a premium for organic foods. Income, family size, and gender are the most important demographic variables.

Kumar Bhattarai (2019) found that consumers who suffered from serious health problems as a result of eating conventional vegetables preferred to pay a premium for pesticide-free organic vegetables. Customers were willing to pay an additional 25% for these naturally grown vegetables.

Sangeetha (2018) investigated consumer preferences for organic food products in Tirupur, as well as the factors that influence consumers' use of organic food products. She used both primary and secondary data for this. Primary data was gathered through the use of a structured interview schedule based on a convenient sampling technique. We used percentage analysis, chi square analysis, point analysis, and rank correlation. She concluded that people nowadays prefer organic food products that are 100% environmentally friendly.

Dr. V Padmaja and Nikhil Parashar (2018) investigated the purchasing habits of organic food consumers. The study's goal is to identify the factors influencing purchasing behaviour for organic food products. To ascertain the effect of income and price on purchasing intent. The study's findings contributed to the conclusion that an individual's income has little influence on consumer purchasing behaviour for organic food products.

Objectives of the study

- To study the consumer attitude towards usage of organic food products
- To evaluate the factors, facilitate the consumption of organic products.
- To identify the factors influencing the opinion of respondents towards organic products

III. Methodology:

The study is based on primary data collected from 152 respondents in Chennai city by means of structured questionnaire. ANOVA was used to get the statistic result from respondents.

Table:1

Basics	Category	No.of respondents	Percentage
Age	Upto 25 years	35	23.33
	26-35 years	22	17.33
	36-45 years	35	23.33
	46-55 years	40	26.67
	Above 55 years	20	15.33
Gender	Male	40	26.67
	Female	112	76.67
Education	School level	30	20.12
	Graduate	80	54.33
	Professional	42	28.34
Marital Status	Married	94	61.89
	Unmarried	58	35.23
Occupation	Homemaker	71	49.56
	Professional	42	27.34
	Business	39	25.64
Monthly Income	Below 15000	21	16.67
	Rs.15001 -25000	51	32.43
	Rs.25001- 50000	80	54.33

Interpretation

It is inferred from the table personal information that out of the total respondents taken for the study 40% of the respondents are in the age group up to 46-55 years. 74% of the respondents are female. Out of the total respondents 53% of them are from school level. When marital status is concerned 62% of the respondents are married and 47% of the respondents are Home makers. 53% of the respondents belong to the monthly income of above Rs.25000.

Table: 2
Factors that influence the consumers towards usage of organic products

Various factors		Sum of square	DF	Mean Square	F	Significance
Organic food products are expensive	Between group	4.365	6	.736	4.123	.005
	Within group	31.214	146	.212		
	Total	35.579	152			
Less knowledge about organic products	Between group	.205	6	1.145	2.514	0.48

	Within group	55.763	146	.932		
	Total	55.968	152			
Availability of the products	Between group	3.951	6	.541	.108	.571
	Within group	57.015	146	.319		
	Total	60.966	152			

Interpretation:

From the above table it is inferred that the people dependent on non-organic food products is below .05. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in mean between the dependent and independent variable

Table:3
Consumers attitude towards organic food products

Various factors		Sum of square	DF	Mean Square	F	Significance
Organic foods offer balanced nutrition for human health.	Between group	.9712	6	2.145	2.112	0.51
	Within group	114.112	146	.972		
	Total		152			
Organic products have no side effects and provide health benefits. -	Between group	2.651	6	.621	1.925	0.53
	Within group	57.625	146	.871		
	Total	60.276	152			
Organic products, according to consumers, are extremely important for maintaining good health.	Between group	4.612	6	.912	3.715	0.17
	Within group	40.451	146	.241		
	Total	45.063	152			
Organic certification provides assurance against genetically modified organisms.	Between group	.415	6	.574	.154	.715
	Within group	48.012	146	0.315		
	Total	48.427	152			

Interpretation

From the above table, it is clear that the above factors that influence the consumers towards usage of organic food products is below .05. So, it can be concluded that there is statistical difference between people attitude and organic food products.

Findings

- Organic products are significantly more expensive than non-organic products. So that organic consumers do not purchase an increased quantity of products.
- There is a technological gap in the acquisition of organic products.
- The main reasons why consumers do not consume organic products are a lack of availability of organic products on a regular basis and a lack of options in organic products.
- The main issue for organic consumers is the inconsistency of organic product availability. Organic consumers will occasionally purchase non-organic products alongside organic products.
- One of the important factors influencing the purchase of organic products is the consumers' educational background. The results show that there are no illiterates among the respondents, and the vast majority of consumers are college graduates.

IV. Conclusion

Organic products are becoming incredibly popular; nowadays, almost all of our everyday products are available in organic form as well. Organic products are purchased by consumers because they are grown without the use of chemical pesticides and are also healthier. As a result, the current study's findings revealed that consumers' attitudes toward organic products are influenced by their eco-friendliness and health benefits. For a long time, the importance of organic food products was overlooked. As a result of environmental sustainability, emphasis is shifting away from conventional farming and toward organic food products. The study revealed that people were aware of images and availability, but were not completely loyal to organic food products. Other factors, such as taste, freshness, nutrition, and appearance, influence consumers' preferences for organic food products in addition to health, the environment, and food. The majority of consumers of organic food are educated, young people with high earning potential. In India, increased prices prove to be a barrier for the

common people, preventing them from being able to afford them. India will soon be a stronger market for organic goods because to the widespread government support and numerous new programmes.

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