

A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

Author 1: Mrs.D.Mythili,

Asst. Prof,

PSGR Krishnammal College for Women.

Author 2: Ms.S.Priya Dharshini,

Student,

PSGR Krishnammal College for Women.

Introduction

Organic product industry is rapidly growing sectors in the present modern world. An Organic food includes products obtained from a farming field which avoids using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, hormones and genetically modified organisms. The intention of consumers to purchase organic products has been an interesting study area and number of researchers has conducted several studies in understanding what motivates people to purchase organic product.

Organic farming is the backbone of the Indian economy. Due to contamination of various chemicals on consumer are diverted towards nature. It has resulted into shift towards organic products. 'Organic food' is food which is grown without use of chemical from planting seed to harvesting. Recent trend has inclined towards organic food. Due to human interference today new species is developed by unnatural selection. Awareness towards organic food is growing rapidly among people and consumers started to accept the fact that today non organic items carries contamination of chemicals and pesticides. Organic product is free from all the chemicals which generally used to grow crops like pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizers, which harm environment and harm human body as well. Generally, farming methods used for organic food production makes use of the developed modern technology and to offer a more sustainable solution to food production.

The present study is focused on consumer perception towards organic products and it has been carried out with the sample size of 146 respondents who are familiar with Organic Products. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Organically produced food has greater nutritional properties that would likely result in higher levels of public health, were organic agriculture to be consumed in the same quantities in which conventionally-grown agriculture is now consumed.

Statement of the Problem

The potential buyers using products which are harmful to the consumers have increased the perception of the consumer on organic products started buying and utilizing for their regular consumption. The researcher shows interest on the positive impact to the society thus this particular study has been carried out. Organic means working with nature. It means higher levels of animal welfare, low levels of pesticides, artificial fertilizers and more environmentally sustainable management of the land and natural environment. Hence, the present study is conducted to know the perception on organic products and factors that influence the customers to buy organic products.

Objectives of the Study

- To study and analyze about consumer perception and opinion towards usage of organic products.
- To find out how much interest consumer are having in organic product.
- To find out the intention of the customers in purchasing organic product.
- To identify the factors influencing the opinion of respondents towards organic products.

Review of Literature

Athena Prince (2018)¹, studied consumers' perception towards organic food products. The objective is to study the perception of consumers towards organic food products. To study the reasons contributing to the purchase of organic food products by the consumers. To study the problems faced by the consumers of organic food products. To study the level of satisfaction of consumers with the purchase and consumption of organic food products among the consumers'. The study found out that the main reason for the purchase of organic food products by the consumers was because they are considered to be safe. One of the major problems faced by the consumer was the high price of the product. The study also found out that majority of the consumers are highly satisfied in buying organic food products.

Dr. V Padmaja and Nikhil Parashar (2018)², studied Consumer Buying Behavior towards Organic Food Products. The objective of the study to identify the factors affecting buying behavior for organic food products. To determine the impact of income and price on buying intent. The result of the study has helped in reaching to a conclusion that income in an individual does not much influence over the buying behavior of consumer towards organic food products.

R. Ayswarya and Dr. S. Vasanthi (2018)³, studied the consumer preference towards organic food products. The objective of this study is to analyze the demographic profile of the consumers. To examine the consumer's preference towards organic products. The result of this study identify that respondents prefer organic outlets as their purchasing place. The respondent's preference is mostly due to nutritional value,

health benefits, natural appearance and palatability of the organic products. The promotion of organic products can be done through advertisement and distribution of samples of organic products free of cost.

Mr. R. Sangeetha (2018)⁴, studied the consumer's perception and attitude towards organic food. The objective of this study to find out the factors influencing consumer to buy organic food, to find out the opinion about the price of organic products, to find out the level of satisfaction of the consumers. The result of this research health is an important aspect in our life. So the level of consumption and perception towards the organic has been increased. Other than food safety, health and environmental consideration, several other characteristics such as nutritive value, taste, freshness influenced consumer preference.

Nayana Sharma and Dr. RituSinghvi (2018)⁵, studied the consumer's perception and behavior towards organic food. The objective of this study is to create awareness about the advantage of organic food products among people and promote its use whereas on the other hand there is a foremost need to motivate the farmers to opt organic farming. The result of this study shows that there is a rapid increase in market size of organic products. This study provides vital information that there will be more demand of organic food in the future.

Anca Gaberiala Petrescu, IonicaOncioiu and Marius Petrescu (2017)⁶, this study provides the insight into the attitude of consumers towards organic food. The objective of the study is to examine the sustainable organic food production from the perspective of consumer behaviour. Its main aim is the perception of the customer towards the food security of the organic products. The result of this study indicates the more positive attitude of the customers towards the organic food products will further strengthen their purchasing intensions.

Research Design

Descriptive research is used as the research design in the study. The study period of this study is from December 2019 to Feb 2020. The survey for the purpose of this study was taken among the consumers who are using organic products in Coimbatore city. A sample of 146 respondents is selected using convenience sampling technique.

Tools Used

- **Simple Percentage**
- **Correlation**
- **Chi- square**

Analysis

Percentage analysis

Table No: 1 Gender of the Respondents

Particulars	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Male	48	32.88
Female	98	67.12
Total	146	100

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation:

That above table shows that out of 146 respondents, 32.88% of the respondents are male and 67.12% of the respondents are female.

Table No:2 Age of the Respondents

Particulars	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 30 years	77	52.73
31-40 years	25	17.12
41-50 years	34	23.29
Above 50 years	10	6.85
Total	146	100

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that out of 146 respondents, 52.73% of the respondents belongs to less than 30 years of age group, 17.12% of the respondents belongs to 30-40 years of age group, 23.29% of the respondents belongs to 40-50 years of age group, and 6.85% of the respondent belongs to above 50 years of age group.

Table No: 3 Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Particulars	No.of Respondents	Percentage
High school graduate	10	6.85
Bachelor's degree	75	51.37

Master's degree	38	26.03
Others	28	19.18
Total	146	100

Source : Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table shows that out of 146 respondents, 6.85% of the respondents have finished their high school graduate, 51.37% of the respondents have finished their bachelor's degree, 26.03% of the respondents have finished their master's degree and 19.18% of respondents fall under others category.

Correlation

1. Correlation between intension of purchasing organic products and money spent on organic products

H_0 . There is no significance correlation between intensions of purchasing of organic products and money spent on organic products.

H_1 . There is a significance correlation between intensions of purchasing of organic products and money spent on organic products.

Table No: 4 Correlation between intension of purchasing organic products and money spent on organic products

		intensions of purchasing OP	money spent on OP
intensions of purchasing OP	Pearson Correlation	1	.750
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	146	146
money spent on OP	Pearson Correlation	.750	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	146	146

Source: primary data

Interpretation:

From the above table it is found that, highest correlation exists between intentions of purchasing organic and money spent on organic product ($r=1, p<0.000$). This implies that the intentions of purchasing organic products of the customers influence the money spent on organic products by the customers.

2. Correlation between awareness about organic products and customers opinion about organic products

H₀. There is no significance correlation between awareness about organic products and customers opinion about organic products.

H₁. There is a significance correlation between awareness about organic products and customers opinion about organic products.

Table No: 5 Correlation between awareness about organic products and customers opinion about organic products

		Awareness of organic products?	State your opinion about organic product?
Awareness of organic products	Pearson Correlation	1	.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.829
	N	146	146
opinion about organic product	Pearson Correlation	.018	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.829	
	N	146	146

Source: primary data

Interpretation:

Among the variables considered, no correlation exists between awareness about organic products and customers opinion about organic products ($r=1$, $p<0.000$). This implies that awareness about organic products among customers influence customers opinion about organic products.

Chi- Square

3. Association between Age and Reason to choose Organic Products

H₀. There is no significance relationship between age and the reason to choose organic products.

H₁. There is a significance correlation between age and the reason to choose organic products.

Table No: 6 Association between Age and Reason to choose Organic Products

	Age:	The reason to choose OP?
Chi-Square	406.603 ^a	362.562 ^b
Df	3	█
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

Source: primary data

Interpretation:

From the table above shows there exist positive significant relationship between age and the reason to choose organic products ($p < 0.000$), this implies that student age have more influence on the purpose of choosing organic products. Hence reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Findings

- Majority of the respondents (67.12%) are female.
- Majority of the respondents (52.73%) belong to less than 30 years old.
- Majority of the respondents (63.8%) have their family monthly income above 50,000.
- Majority of the respondents (51.37%) have a bachelor's degree as their educational qualification.
- All respondents (100%) are aware of organic products
- Majority of the respondents (65.1%) are interested in organic products
- Majority of the respondents (56.2%) have an intension of purchasing organic products if available conveniently
- Majority of the respondents (80.8%) believe organic products are better to the environment.

Suggestions

- As there exist a highest correlation between intension of purchasing organic products by the consumer and the money spent by them on organic products, it is suggest that the cost of the product can be reduced.
- As there is significant relationship between the age of the consumer and the reason they choose organic products. The products can be manufactured according the highest needs of the certain age group.

- There is a need to open organic products shops every extension areas in the Coimbatore city.
- Organic products produced must be according to the consumer's preference belonging to different age group.
- The price of the organic products can be reduced, as it decided the intension of the consumers to purchase the product

Conclusion

Consumer plays a major role in studying the perception towards Organic food products segment. The consumers of organic products need to be unique and dynamic according to the changing environment in order to satisfy with the fluctuating interest in the Organic products among urban buyers. The respondent without doubt attracted towards Organic products. So the marketers and producers must create promotions which are both realistic and grab the attention of the consumers and the product availability in terms of quantity, quality and variety are required to become successful in market of organic food products. Quality of the organic products affects consumers' perception with the factors including health and nutritional value, taste, and freshness of the food product. As results of environmental sustainability, importance is shifted towards Organic products rather than conventional farming. Consumers' willingness to purchase is influenced by limited and low supply and higher price of the products and very limited access and available information. Thus organic products play an important role in improving the perception of the end- users towards organic products.

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