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AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS IN TANJORE DISTRICT

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Abstract

An organic product is made from materials produced by organic agriculture. Most well known organic products are organic food items, however clothing and personal care items can also be made with organic agriculture. Organic food products are grown under a system of agriculture without the use of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides with an environmentally and socially responsible approach. This is a method of farming that works at grass root level preserving the reproductive and regenerative capacity of the soil, good plant nutrition, and sound soil management, produces nutritious food rich in vitality which has resistance to diseases. In this method growing plants take time to grow naturally and always good for health. Most of the country has its own organic products cultivation regulation monitor organic products. There are many benefits involving organic food products. Organic foods contain fewer pesticides. This means that things such as insecticide that is used in most agricultural practices are eliminated. People are concerned with these chemicals that are used to preserve foods are then being consumed by the people who purchase them. The important objective this study is to analyze the consumer preference towards organic products in Tanjore district. The study is confined with both primary and secondary data. In order to study the consumer preference

towards organic products in Tanjore district 250 organic product consumers from Tanjore district are randomly selected as samples using convenient sampling method. The collected data were analyzed with the help of various statistical measures such as Percentage, Garrett ranking and Chi-Square Test.

Key words: Organic products, Consumers, preference and benefits.

INTRODUCTION

An organic product is made from materials produced by organic agriculture. Most well known organic products are organic food items, however clothing and personal care items can also be made with organic agriculture. Organic food products are grown under a system of agriculture without the use of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides with an environmentally and socially responsible approach. This is a method of farming that works at grass root level preserving the reproductive and regenerative capacity of the soil, good plant nutrition, and sound soil management, produces nutritious food rich in vitality which has resistance to diseases. In this method growing plants take time to grow naturally and always good for health. Most of the country has its own organic products cultivation regulation monitor organic products. There are many benefits involving organic food products. Organic foods contain fewer pesticides. This means that things such as insecticide that is used in most agricultural practices are eliminated. People are concerned with these chemicals that are used to preserve foods are then being consumed by the people who purchase them. Farming without pesticides is also better for the environment. Fewer chemicals are being placed on the ground, entering the soil and water supply. Organic meats can also contain a lot more nutrients. Nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids were up to 50 percent higher in organic meats and milk than in conventionally raised products

One of the main reasons that deter people from organic products is costs. In 2015, on average, organic products were 47 percent more expensive. Organic products can vary a lot in price. According to a study performed by consumerreports.org, organic products compared to non-organic products ranged anywhere from 13 percent cheaper to 303 percent more expensive. The reason why organic products cost so much more on average is the production process. Many factors contribute to this cost. First, the demand for an organic product is larger than the number of organic products available. Without synthetic pesticides, quantities of foods will be smaller. This smaller production of organic food means an increased cost. Also, the amount of labour per unit of food is larger compared to the mass production of non-organic products.

OBJECTIVE

The important objective this study is to analyze the consumer preference towards organic products in Tanjore district.

METHODOLOGY

Sources of data

The study is confined with both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

The primary data is collected through a well structured interview schedule. Direct interview was also conducted among 250 organic product consumers in Tanjore district.

Secondary Data

The secondary data have been mainly collected from the books, journals, magazines, and also from the internet.

SAMPLING DESIGN

In order to study the consumer preference towards organic products in Tanjore district 250 organic product consumers from Tanjore district are randomly selected as samples using convenient sampling method.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

The collected data were analyzed with the help of various statistical measures such as **Percentage**, **Garrett ranking and Chi-Square Test**.

HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of the objective of the study, the following null hypothesis was developed for the purpose of the present study.

Ho There is no relationship between the personal factors and preference towards organic products

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected to study the objectives of the study are analyzed using suitable statistical tools and presented in the below tables:

Personal profile of the Respondents

The personal factors of a person is associated with their behaviour and hence the personal profile of the respondents is analyzed and presented in the below table.

Personal Profile of the respondents

Profile variables	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
GENDER	Male	169	67.6
	Female	81	32.4
	Total	250	100
AGE	Up to 35	82	32.8
	35 – 55	136	54.4
	Above 55	32	12.8
	Total	250	100
MARITAL STATUS	Married	153	61
	Unmarried	97	39
	Total	250	100
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	UG	144	57.6
	PG	54	21.6
	Others	52	20.8
	Total	250	100
	Private Employee	173	69.2

OCCUPATION	Government Employee	09	3.6
	Others	68	27.2
	Total	250	100
MONTHLY INCOME	Up to 25,000	151	60.4
	Rs 25,001 – Rs 50,000	70	28
	Above 50000	29	11.6
	Total	250	100
MONTHLY EXPENSES	Up to 5,000	87	34.8
	Rs 5,001 – Rs 10,000	112	44.8
	Above 10000	51	20.4
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary Data

Gender: It is inferred from the above table from the total 250 respondents 169(67.6 Percent) of the organic product consumers are male and the remaining 81(32.4 percent) of them are female.

Age : From the above table we came to know that, 82(32.8 Percent) of the respondents comes under the age group of up to 35 years, 136(54.4 Percent) of them belongs to the age group of 35 – 55 years and the remaining, 32(12.8 Percent) of the respondents comes under the age group of above 55 years.

Marital Status: The above table reveals that 153(61 Percent) of the respondents are married and the remaining 97(39 Percent) of the respondents are unmarried.

Educational qualification: Regarding the educational qualification of the sample respondents 144(57.6 Percent) of the respondents are under graduates, 54(21.6 Percent) of the respondents are Post Graduates and the remaining 52(20.8 Percent) of the respondents are having other qualifications such as high school, higher secondary education diploma, technical education etc.

Occupation: From the above table it is clear that, 173(69.2 Percent) of the respondents are private employees, 9(3.6 Percent) of them are Government employees and the remaining 67(27.2 Percent) of the respondents are house wives, students etc.

Monthly Income: It is inferred from the above table that, 151(60.4 Percent) of the respondents are earning Up to Rs.25000 per month, 70(28 Percent) of the respondents are earning Rs.25,001 – 50000, and 29(11.6 Percent) of the respondents are earning above Rs 50,000 per month.

Monthly Expenses: Regarding the monthly expenses of the borrowers it is found that, 87(34.8 Percent) of the respondents are spending Up to Rs.5000 per month, 112(44.8 Percent) of the respondents are spending Rs.5,001 – 10000, and the remaining 51(20.4 Percent) of the respondents are spending above Rs 10,000 per month.

Sources of information about Organic Products

The respondents get the information about the organic products available in the market through various sources. The respondents are also classified on the above basis and presented in the following table.

Sources of information about Organic Products

Sl. No.	Sources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Friends & Relatives	178	71.2
2	Advertisements	43	17.2
3	Others	29	11.6
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 178(71.2 percent) of the respondents said that they got information about the organic products through their friends and relatives, 43(17.2 percent) of the respondents came to know about the organic products through advertisements and the remaining 29(11.6 percent) respondents said that they got information about the organic products through other sources.

Years of using Organic Products

The sample respondents are also classified on the basis of the years of using organic products and presented in the following table.

Years of using Organic Products

Sl. No.	Years	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 5 years	72	28.8
2	5 – 10 years	161	64.4
3	Above 10 years	17	6.8
	Total	250	100

Source: Primary Data

It is revealed from the above table 72(28.8 percent) of them are using organic products up to 5 years, 161(64.4 percent) of the respondents are using organic products for 5 – 10 years and the remaining 17(6.8 percent) respondents of the respondents are using organic products for more than 10 years.

Organic products preferred by the respondents

There are many organic products available in the market. The ranks assigned by the respondents according to their preference given by them to the products are converted into scores using Garrett ranking technique and presented in the below table.

Organic products preferred by the respondents

Sl. No.	Products	Garrett mean Score	Ranks
1.	Fruits and vegetables	52.61	I
2.	Cereals and oils	51.92	II
3.	Meat and Meat products	51.55	III
4.	Bakery items	50.11	IV
5.	Baby foods	47.37	V
6.	Others	43.24	VI

Source: Computed Data

It is inferred from the above table the fruits and vegetables scores 52.61 and holds the first rank; cereals and oils scores 51.92 and holds the second rank and the meat and meat products scores 51.55 and holds the third rank respectively in the preference given by the respondents to the organic products.

Association between personal factors and the preference towards organic products Chi – square analysis

An attempt has been made to analyze the personal factors and the preference given to the organic products using chi – square test.

Age and Preference towards Organic products

The association between the age of the respondents and their preference towards organic products is analysed using chi-square test and presented in the below table.

Age and Preference towards Organic products [Chi-Square Test]

Chi-square value	Degrees of freedom	Table value	Inference
17.11	4	9.488	Significant

Source: Computed Value

From the above analysis it is seen that the calculated value (17.11) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (9.488), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus the age of the respondent has significant association with the preference towards organic products.

Occupation and Preference towards Organic products

The association between the occupation of the respondents and their preference towards organic products is analysed using chi-square test and presented in the below table.

Occupation and Preference towards Organic products [Chi-Square Test]

Chi-square value	Degrees of freedom	Table value	Inference
8.29	4	9.488	Insignificant

Source: Computed Value

From the above analysis it is seen that the calculated value (8.29) of Chi-square is less than the table value (9.488), and hence the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it is revealed that the occupation has no significant association with the preference towards organic products.

Sources of information and Preference towards Organic products

The association between the sources of information and the preference towards organic products is analysed using chi-square test and presented in the below table.

Sources of information and Preference towards the products [Chi-Square Test]

Chi-square value	Degrees of freedom	Table value	Inference
19.82	4	9.488	Significant

Source: Computed Value

From the above analysis it is seen that the calculated value (19.82) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (9.488), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It is found that there is a significant association between the Sources of information and their preference towards organic products.

Years of using organic products and Preference towards Organic products

The association between the years of using organic products and the preference given by the respondents towards organic products is analysed using chi-square test and presented in the below table.

Years of using organic products and Preference towards the products [Chi-Square Test]

Chi-square value	Degrees of freedom	Table value	Inference
21.73	4	9.488	Significant

Source: Computed Value

From the above analysis it is seen that the calculated value (21.73) of Chi-square is greater than the table value (9.488), and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is revealed that the years of using organic products has significant association with the preference towards organic products.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are:

- The researcher found that majority 169(67.6 Percent) of the organic product consumers are male.
- Majority 136(54.4 Percent) of the sample respondents belongs to the age group of 35 – 55 years.
- It is found that most 153(61 Percent) of the organic product consumers are married.
- From the total 250 respondents 144(57.6 Percent) of the respondents are under graduates.
- Most 173(69.2 Percent) of the respondents are private employees.
- It is found that 151(60.4 Percent) of the sample consumers are earning Up to Rs.25000 per month.
- Regarding the monthly expenses of the respondents 112(44.8 Percent) of the respondents are spending Rs.5001 – 10000 per month.
- The researcher found that from the total 250 respondents 178(71.2 percent) of the respondents said that they got information about the organic products through their friends and relatives.
- Majority 161(64.4 percent) of the respondents are using organic products for 5 – 10 years.
- The fruits and vegetables scores high and holds the first rank; cereals and oils scores and the meat and meat products and holds the second and third rank respectively in the preference given by the respondents to the organic products.
- The personal factors such as age, source of information and years of using organic products are dependent and the factor occupation is independent to the preference towards organic products.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the above study that there is a large demand for the organic products is found in the study area due to its health benefits. The personal factors play an important role in the preference towards the products and it also affect the demand of the products. But most of the people are not aware about these products and it is difficult to identify the organic products in the market. Hence it is suggested to create awareness about the products available to the consumers and the availability of organic products in the study area.

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