

A Study on Consumer's Perception towards Organic Food Products in Coimbatore

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Abstract: *Food is the means to our survival. We are alert of the fact that the food we eat is adulterated and contaminated, the reason behind this being the use of chemicals, etc. to ripen the fruits and retain the freshness of vegetables. This increasing awareness has caused shifts in consumers' tastes and preferences which have led to the domestic as well as global rise in demand for organic products. Awareness and knowledge has become a crucial factor in changing the attitude and behaviour of consumers towards organic foods, which in turn drives the growth in the organic food markets. This study attempted to gain knowledge about consumer perception towards organic food product consumption and socio-economic variables relate to consumer decision-making concerning the purchase of organic foods.*

Keywords: Organic Food, Awareness, Perception

1. Introduction

The organic food industry is growing at fast rate on a worldwide basis and is now has been the matter of much media attention over the past decade. Over the past several years, the organic food industry in India has been experiencing an annual growth between 20-22 per cent. India has the potential to be largest organic food producer. In India, there are over 15,000 certified organic farms and the number is growing fast over the year. Apart from this, there are many small farmers growing organic food by using the organic practices. Organic produce or products are those produced and processed through environment friendly techniques, non chemically treated, fresh or minimally processed, non pesticide, free from genetically modified organism, having organic certificates, traditional/indigenous products, herbal product and naturally grown.

The market of organic products is growing as the number of people willing to eat organic food and attitude towards organic food products is increasing. The future of organic agriculture will, to a large extent, also depend on favourable attitude and motivational factors towards organic food products. Organic consumer is that person who is responsible for buying food for the household and who buys organic food at least once or twice per month. So, if there are people who buy randomly or less than once a month then they are not considered regular organic consumers. An organic consumer has more positive beliefs concerning organic products.

2. Review of literature

Dr.Hema Gulati (2017) India is a country of villages and around 60 percent of its population are living in villages and depends on agriculture. The Indian economy is still depends on agriculture and it contributes around 14% to the country GDP. Production of organic products is also a part of agriculture. Now a day organic products are emerged as a growing sector in India. This study is conducted to examine the customer perception towards organic products in rural area of Haryana in India. The main aims of the study is to know that what customer actually behave towards organic

products. For the purpose of the study a sample of 110 respondents were taken.

Dr. H. M. Chandrashekar (2015) Availability of organic input and output is critical for improve of organic farming in the country. Development of efficient marketing system is the need of the hour for strengthening the organic production in India. This paper made a humble attempt to understanding the consumer perception about organic product and marketing in Mysore city. The results concluded that most of the consumer especially in urban people prefer organic food product. Marketing of organic product is so poor in study area so the demand for organic product is increases but supply is very low. The major reasons are organic producer are low, adequate market facility is not there, few number of shops, lack of awareness, and so on. Therefore if farmer as well as government give interest to organic farming easily enhancing good marketing system in Karnataka.

Thompson K, Engelken J (2016) The demand for organic food has been rapidly increasing worldwide, because of an improvement in the awareness of environmental problems, and health concerns. Although the demand for organic food is increasing, the popularity of organic food is not widespread and the perception of organic food varies in the wide public. This review shows that in Australia and other countries, there have been variation in people's understanding of organic agriculture and organic food, and differences in consumers' attitudes, motivations and behaviours within consumer groups and in different places, although there have been basic similarities. Consumers' perceptions have probably changed over time. A large proportion of consumers have been identified as having an understanding of organic food as being grown without chemicals, but the level of knowledge has been variable. 'Health benefits' was the first and primary reason for purchasing organic food, while 'high price' was the key deterrent to purchasing organic food. There have been various and even opposite findings related to the relationships between organic food consumption and personal elements such as age, gender, income, education, household with children and household size. In some countries, there was no link or minimal link, but several

links was found in others. Although most consumers exhibited positive attitudes towards organic products and expressed their purchase intentions, the level of their trust in organic labels and certifications are very important factors influencing purchasers' decision of buying organic food.

Objectives of the study

- To study consumers awareness towards organic products in Coimbatore.
- To examine the relationship between customers purchase decision making about organic food and socio- economic factors.

Research methodology

The study was based on primary survey of 100 respondents belonging to Coimbatore district using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to record the responses on organic food awareness, attitude and behaviours towards effectiveness of organic food products.

Sampling technique

Simple random technique is used for the study.

Period of the study

The study period starts from June 2018 to December 2018.

Sample

250 respondents were selected for the study from Coimbatore district.

3. Findings

- Types of food purchased by the customers are processed foods (Cereals) 25%, Fish/Meat/Sea Food (11%), Vegetables (42%), and other of 22%.
- The different factors that motivate to buy organic food instead of in organic food are self decision (26%), Friends (28%), Family (32%), Retailer (4%) and other (8%).
- 56% respondents have given the opinion organic food are pesticides/chemicals free, Eco friendly (64%) , More Nutritious (6%) and Costly (17%).

4. Suggestions

- Awareness and training program to farmer: Because more number of farmer is not grow without use of chemicals. Because farmer are go only production of high yield commercial crops so he will use more chemical fertilizer and pesticides. But some majority of farmer success in organic farming.
- Government support: Government is all so support to grow of organic farming and all so farmer through good organic product market facilities, financial support and so on
- Infrastructure facilities: Give to sport to post-harvesting facilities for organic forming. Because possible to decline in yield during the conversion period, there is need to provide some form of incentives to affected farmer.
- Package of product: Provide good packing facilities to specific product.

- Development of marketing: There is all very important is to develop more marketing area. Because there is no regulated market facility in organic product.
- Regulated market is all so give separate price facility and market facility in yard only.
- Because more number of consumer prefer organic product. But there no farmer, so it stimulate the farmer to grow the organic products
- Give free certification facilities: The increase frequency of viewing the advertisement of organic food products and better taste would influence the purchase organic food products.
- The influence of advertisement of organic food products with an increase in education found particularly among consumers.

5. Conclusion

From the analysis, it is incidental that socio- economic variables are associated with consumer positive attitude towards organic foods. Family, self decision and friends play a vital role in the purchase decision making process of organic foods. The factors eco friendly and chemical or pesticides free factor have a great impact on the decision making process. Some of the consumers are not still aware about the organic food which those sections are yet to derive the benefits of organic food consumption. Consumer attitudes towards different organic food products attribute i.e. health, safety, etc. and towards the environments are the most important factors that explain consumers' intention to purchase organic food products. The Government and NGO have to take essential steps in creating awareness in the minds of consumers on the qualities of using organic foods and lengthen necessary assistance in cultivating high quantum of organic foods by the greater part of the farmers.

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