

CONSUMERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD IN COIMBATORE CITY

S. Prakash¹ and Dr. M. Thyagarajan²

Research Scholar¹, Dr. SNS Rajalakshmi College of Arts and Science & Assistant Professor,
Department of Commerce, Sree Narayana Guru College, K. G. Chavadi, Coimbatore
Associate Professor², Dr. SNS Rajalakshmi College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore

ABSTRACT

The awareness on the harmful effects of chemicals present in food is increasing among the consumers. The trend towards purchasing organic food is growing among people. A study to identify what actually induces consumers to turn towards organic food is important. Some of the prominent motivating factors to purchase organic foods include environmental concern, health concern and lifestyle, product quality and subjective norms. This empirical study is aimed at identifying the purchase intention of consumers towards organic foods. The study predicts the purchase intention of consumers based on the influences of factors like environmental concern, health concern and lifestyle, product quality and subjective norms on the attitude towards organic foods. The results of the study show that quality of products, environmental concern, health concern and lifestyle are the most commonly stated motives for purchasing organic foods.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

The rapid growth in the industrial development together with the population explosion is increasing the pressure on the agricultural production methods to improve the yield of the crops. Many studies have raised concerns about the increasing levels of usage of chemical fertilizers to increase the yield of food production. The awareness on the harmful effects of these highly pollutant contaminant food products are growing among the consumers. As an alternative to these, more people are turning towards organic food products. Organic food comprises of those agricultural food products that are not treated with chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and other synthetic chemical substances during its production, processing and storage. In addition, organic food products are not containing genetically modified materials, with the purpose of reaching sustainable system of agriculture. In livestock breeding, organic method does not use growth hormones, antibiotics and other chemicals to enhance the growth. The growth and consumption of organic food products have been phenomenally increasing in the recent years due to the increasing of awareness.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF THE STUDY

Environmental Care Environmental care is one of the main motivational factors towards purchasing any product including organic products. Several studies have shown that organic production causes less harm to the environment. Consumer are increasingly getting environmental conscious and willing to contribute to protect the environmental via any means. Ling (2013) evaluated consumers' purchase intention of green products with an aim to examine drivers and its moderating variable that influencing consumers' purchase intention. **Health Concern And Lifestyle** Today's life is getting very competitive and demanding. Consumer has hardly time for physical activities but highly exposed to the diseases. Consumers are very much concern about their health and their food choice to stay healthy. Health concern has influence over consumer attitude toward organic food. Consumers' attitude towards organic food and their willingness to pay premium price by people in the capital of Egypt was explored by Mohamed et al. (2012). Health conscious lifestyle was found to be the foremost motivating factor of organic food purchase, as well as willingness to pay. Higher price tag and doubt about the genuineness of organic certification were found to be the prime barriers of purchase behaviour of organic food consumers. **Product Quality** Product quality refers to the value for money. Generally, organic consumer is less price sensitive and more concern over quality. Ozguven (2012) analyzed the motivation factors of consumers to buy organic food products in Izmir. Most of the respondent consumers preferred organic milk, fruit and vegetables. The results indicated that quality and price were more explanatory factors. Price and quality were found to have more significant relationship than other factors. **Subjective Norms** Subjective norms are one of the important factors which influence the consumer to purchase certain product. Especially, in a country where there is high social interaction. People tend to follow the reference group, leader who in turn influence the group towards the certain

behavior and action. J. Thorgosen et al., (2015) examined the factors influencing organic food consumptions in China market. The paper reported on the findings of the study into consumer perception toward beef and the influence of these perceptions on consumption. The influence of attitudes and important others (subjective norms) on intention to consumer were explored. The findings revealed that both attitude and the subjective norm influenced intention to consume, but it was attitude that was found to be of greater importance.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To know the demographic variables of the customers using organic products in Coimbatore city.

To find the awareness of consumer about the organic products.

To identify the factors influencing consumer to buy organic products

To identify the motivating factor that influencing of purchasing in organic products .

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The potential buyers using products which are harmful to the consumers have got awareness on organic products started buying and utilizing for their regular consumption. The researcher shows interest on the optimistic impact to the society thus this particular study has been carried out. Hence, the present study is conducted to know the awareness on organic food products and factors that influence the customers to buy organic products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Nature of Research Design The research design adopted in the study was descriptive design, which is concerned with the descriptive of a group. In descriptive research in such a way that the respondents is able to understand clearly what the researcher wants and provides distinct information to measure the data.

AREA OF THE STUDY

The population covers the customers of organic food in Coimbatore city.

SOURCES OF DATA

The study is based on primary data collection. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire prepared and contacted personally after their purchase of organic food. The secondary data was collected with the help of books, internet and journals.

SAMPLING DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The sampling technique in this project is convenient sampling. The sample size comprises of different types of users who are using organic food products. A sample of 50 respondents was taken into account for finding their uses for the organic food products.

TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The following are the tools applied on the respondents given by the respondents to analyze and derive the result.

1. Simple Percentage analysis
2. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of the sample of the study are presented in Table 1. The gender of the sample consists of 50 percent each of male and female consumers. Majority of the sample consists of married people (76 percent). The family type of the consumers shows that around 80 percent of the consumers come from nuclear family. Around 68% of the consumers had earning of less than twentythousand rupees per month. Majority of the samples are educated with at least degree graduates.

Table 1 demographic variables

Particulars	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	25	50.0
	Female	25	50.0
Age (years)	Below 25	2	4.0

	26-35	16	32.0
	36-50	15	30.0
	Above 50	17	34.0
Marital Status	Married 38 76.0	38	76.0
	Unmarried	7	14.0
	Widow	5	10.0
Religion	Hindu	24	48.0
	Muslim	16	32.0
	Christian	10	20.0
Educational qualification	Under graduate	6	12.0
	graduate	24	48.0
	Post graduate	8	16.0
	Professional/ technical	7	14.0
	Others	5	10.0
Monthly income	<20000	34	68.0
	20000-40000	11	22.0
	>40000	5	10.0
Family type	Nuclear	40	80.0
	Joint	10	20.0
Occupational status	Executive/senior manager	8	16.0
	Middle level Manager/Supervisor	23	46.0
	Clerical/other employee categories	6	12.0
	Professional	5	10.0
	Self-employed	4	8.0
	Agriculture/Animal husbandry	4	8.0

The reliability coefficient of the scale items is presented in Table 2. The values of Cronbach's for all the variables are well above the cut off limit of 0.6. The level of correlation between the variables is calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient and the value of the correlation coefficient, level of significance is also presented in Table 2. It can be found that significantly positive correlations exist between the constructs Health Concern & Lifestyle and Environmental Concern, Product Quality and Environmental Concern as well as Health Concern & Lifestyle. It is interesting to find that the dependent variable attitude and intention to purchase has significantly positive correlation with all the independent variables like Environment Concern, Health Concern & Lifestyle, Product Quality and Subjective Norms.

Table-2: Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations

Variables	Mean	Sd	Environmental Concern	Healthy concern life style	Product Quality	Subjective Norms	Attitude	Intention Purchase
Environmental Concern	3.85	0.42	(0.752)					
Healthy concern life style	3.74	0.41	.379	(0.799)				
Product Quality	4.09	0.49	.483	.433	(0.707)			
Subjective Norms	3.29	0.56	.079	.083	.092	(0.717)		
Attitude	3.64	0.52	.565	.326	.255	.300	(0.710)	
Intention Purchase	3.27	0.66	.409	.253	.181	.404	.562	(0.853)

Note: crobach a value for each construct is shown in parentheses

CONCLUSION

The overall awareness on organic food products among the public is increasing and their attitude towards purchase intention is positive. The results of the study further show that the reasons advocated by the consumers for buying organic food products are varied and primarily the motivations behind their decision to purchase include concerns for environment, health concern and lifestyle, food product quality and their subjective norms. Consumer behaviour involves the psychological processes that consumers go through in recognizing needs, finding ways to solve these needs; collect and interpret information; make plans and implement these plans, making purchase decisions and post-purchase behaviour. Consumer behaviour is the key to the impact that society has on the environment. Nowadays consumer behaviour is changing towards purchase of many environmental-friendly and organic products, due to awareness of environmental degradation and the related issues.

REFERENCE

1. Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 50(2), 179-211.
2. Chinnici, G., D'Amico, M. and Pecorino, B. (2002), "A multivariate statistical analysis on the consumers of organic products", *British Food Journal*, Vol. 104 Nos 3/5, pp. 187-99.
3. Cranfield, J. A., and E. Magnusson (2003). Canadian consumers' willingness-to-pay for pesticide free food products: An ordered probit analysis. *International Food and Agribusiness Management Review* 6 (4): 14– 30.
4. Govindasamy, R., and J. Italia (1999). Predicting willingness-to-pay a premium for organically grown fresh produce. *Journal of Food Distribution Research* 30 (2): 44–53.
5. Groff, A. J., C. R. Kreider, and U. C. Toensmeyer. (1993). Analysis of the Delaware market for organically grown produce. *Journal of Food Distribution Research* 24 (2):118–125.
6. Grunert, S., &Juhl, H. (1995). Values, environmental attitudes and buying of organic foods. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 16, 39–62.
7. Harper, G. C., &Makatouni, A. (2002). Consumer perception of organic food production and farm animal welfare. *British Food Journal*, 104(3/4/5), 287-299.
8. Institute of Food Science and Technology (IFST) (2005) *Organic food*, IFST, London.
9. John Thøgersen, Yanfeng Zhou, Guang Huang (2015) How stable is the value basis for organic food consumption in China? *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 1-11
10. Chandrashekar HM. Consumers Perception towards Organic Products - A Study in Mysore City, *International Journal of Research in Business Studies and Management*. 2014; 1(1):61-66.
11. Jasmin Pandiya, Nayankumar Vala. Profiling of Organic Food Buyers in Ahmedabad City: An Empirical Study *Pacific Business Review International* 2012; 5(1):19-25.
12. Mohamed Bilal Basha, Ramesh K. Consumer Attitude towards Organic Food in Trichy – South India 2014; 5(5):1-10.
13. Ramesh SV, Divya M. A Study on Consumers' Awareness Attitude and Satisfaction towards Select Organic Food Products with Reference to Coimbatore, *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies, (IJIMS)*. 2015; 2(4):81-84.
14. Shashikiran L, Madhavaiah C. Impact of Demographics on Consumers' Willingness to Pay Premium: A Study of Organic Food Products, *International Journal of Research and Development - A Management Review (IJRDMR)*, 2014; 3(3):17-18.
15. Suganya S, Aravinth S. Consumers Awareness and Attitude towards Organic Foods, *Journal of International Academic Research for Multidisciplinary*. 2014; 1(12):738-745.