

CONSUMER AWARENESS TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

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Abstract:

“Organic” or “Organically grown” foods are commonly represented as “food grown without pesticides”. Food is one of our major basic need to live in this world. We are aware that food we eat is adulterated and contaminated, the reason behind this is using chemicals, etc. to ripen the fruits and to 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. This study aims to know about awareness towards organic food products and socio economic factors which influence in taking decision towards buying organic food products.

Keywords: *Organic food, Awareness and Socio-economic factors.*

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.

Review of literature:

Ramesh & Divya (2015) have examined in their study entitled “A study on consumers’ awareness attitude and satisfaction towards select organic food products with reference to Coimbatore”. The adoption of organic production and processing is highly determined by market demand. The data was collected from 120 respondents by using convenient sampling techniques. Results indicated that the main causes for purchasing organic food products is an expectation of a healthier and environmentally affable means of production. Organic buyers tend to be older and higher educated than those who do not buy them. In addition, consumers’ faith in the realism of the goods and price are also issues. However, the main barrier to increase the market share of organic food products is consumer information.

Shashikiran. L, C Madhavaiah (2016) in their article on “Impact of demographics on consumers’ willingness to pay Premium: A Study of Organic food products” has concluded consumers have high positive attitude toward organic products and they exhibit an increase willingness to pay higher prices for these products. They concluded that 50% of the consumer’s don’t mind to pay even 50% higher cost for consuming organic food products as they look for good quality and healthy product. Marketing strategies for organic food product must be targeted towards those segments of consumers as they almost look for good quality appreciative of the positive attributes of organic food. Consumers preferring to buy organic products are willing to pay the additional cost. They often want some reassurance on the status of organic food products.

Hemapriya (2017) in their research paper “Impact of Socio Economic Factors on Purchase Behaviour of Organic Food Products” has concluded that consumer behaviour plays a major role in organic food segment. The marketers of organic foods need to be innovative and active in order to compete with the changing behaviour of consumer. The importance for organic food products was ignored for quite a long period. And as a result of environmental sustainability, importance is shifted towards organic food products rather than conventional products. They also concluded that the people were well conscious about images and availability of the product, but not loyal entirely to organic food products. Day by day the respondents attracted towards organic food products are growing so the marketers must create promotion which are both realistic and applicable, maintaining product availability in terms of volume and variety are required to become successful in marketing organic food products.

Objectives of the study:

- 1.To study the consumer awareness towards organic food products in Coimbatore district.
- 2.To know the socio economic factors influencing consumer towards buying organic food products.

Sampling Design:

Primary data was collected using convenient sampling method.

Sampling Size:

The data were collected using questionnaire method from 50 respondents. Since the study period is very short.

Sources of data:

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from consumers of various organic shops through questionnaire. The secondary data were collected from various journals, books, previous thesis work and also from websites.

Area of study:

The study is conducted in Coimbatore District using a structured questionnaire.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:**Table-1 Demographics of the Respondents**

Gender	Gender	No of respondents	Percentage
	Male	17	34.0
	Female	33	66.0
	Total	50	100.0
Age of the Respondents	Age	No of respondents	Percentage
	18-25	16	32.0
	25-35	6	12.0
	35-45	22	44.0
	Above 45	6	12.0
	Total	50	100.0
Marital status of the Respondents	Marital Status	No of respondents	Percentage
	Married	8	16.0
	Unmarried	42	84.0
	Total	50	100.0
Educational level of the Respondents	Education	No of respondents	Percentage
	Higher Secondary	12	24.0
	Under Graduate	21	42.0
	Post Graduate	17	34.0
	Total	50	100.0
Monthly Income of	Monthly Income	No of respondents	Percentage

the Respondents	Below 50000	14	28.0
	50000 to 100000	26	52.0
	100000 to 200000	3	6.0
	Above 200000	7	14.0
	Total	50	100.0

Source : Primary Data

The above table shows that females have more preference for organic products as compared to male respondents. More number of educated respondents prefers to buy organic food products. Age group of 35-45 prefers to buy organic food as compared to other age groups. Also, people of earning income group from 100000 to 200000 prefer to buy organic food.

Suggestions:

- ❖ Awareness and Training has to be given to Farmers.
- ❖ Government has to give financial support.
- ❖ Advertising need to be increased.
- ❖ Packaging has to be improved.

Conclusion:

Organic products are becoming more familiar nowadays, change in the habits of food consumption. Consumers willing to consume organic products because it is produced without using chemicals and pesticides. It is also identified that consumers were lack of awareness about organic products. Therefore, the research also suggests that marketers have to promote the availability of the organic products in order to increase the market size of products and at the same time consumers shall be informative regarding the product benefits.

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