



CONSUMERS BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN CHENNAI CITY

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Abstract:

In India, organic food market is in emerging stage has experienced steadfast growth in the past few years. The current growth in the organic market is driven by health factor and safe consumption. Day to day the environmental concern is increasing, Health issues are becoming consumer's priorities to purchase the products. Also consumers are focusing on the quality aspect of the products as well as their impact on the environment. These are the main driving force while purchasing the organic products. Thus, this research study has been undertaken in Chennai and to focus the consumer buying behaviour towards organic products. Organic food is absolutely natural and is packed with load of viral nutrients which is required by the body. Hence, an attempt has been made to reveal the consumer buying behaviour towards organic products in Chennai City.

Key words; Organic Food Products, Attitude of Consumers, Awareness, Buying Behaviour.

I INTRODUCTION:

India is a market destination for many types of product at the international level. In recent years, India has become one of the leading markets for organic food products. Over the past decade, the organic food market has emerged not only in developed countries but also in developing countries. The changing consumption patterns especially in case of food consumption could be one of the reasons for increasing demand for organic food products globally. Also, there have been significant and alarming concerns in respect to ecology and environment. The organic farming typically is done through organic manual with the help of natural resources, thus, resulting in food produce which are free from harmful pesticides and hazardous chemical residues. These organic products do not contain any artificial preservatives, industrial solvents or synthetic food additives while being processed. Organic farming has emerged as game changer in the field of farming. It has appeared as a replacement to the earlier alternative farming that uses all sorts

of pesticides and chemicals in its process. It is definitely a sustainable mean of farming which is not only economically but also environmentally effective. Since, no expense is required for pesticides, fertilizers and chemicals; it is a cost effective mean that also fetches higher prices than the other inorganic crops and vegetables. It also increases the soil fertility of the cultivated land.

II CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Benefits of Organic Food Products

India has full potential to produce all varieties and kinds of organic food products due to its abundant natural diversity and agro climatic conditions. In almost every part of the country, the inherited tradition of organic farming has become an added advantage. This provides an opportunity for the organic producers to tap the market that has witnessed accelerating growth in both domestic and foreign markets. Food that is produced without utilizing conventional pesticides can be labelled as organic food. "In provisions of food that approaches from existing animals – animal protein, eggs, and dairy category products, the animal necessity is not feeding antibiotics or development hormones" – Organic Foods Production Act, 1990. Organic foods are those that are environmentally secure, produced using environmentally sound methods that do not engage modern synthetic inputs such as pesticides and chemical fertilizers do not include genetically modified organisms, and are not processed utilizing the irradiation, industrial solvents, or chemical food additives¹.

Health Safety

Organic food is not manufactured or prepared by the method of biochemical pesticides or chemical fertilizers. It does not include any components of poisonous chemicals and may not influence human health in unhealthy ways. The completion of natural processes such as green compost to germinate the lands and crop revolution in pest and temperature control work well in creating safer, healthier, and smellier final food products. Furthermore, healthy foodstuff ultimately means healthy people and better nourishment for better maintenance for both people and animals.

Antioxidant content

The positive outcomes of antioxidants on overall well-being have been installed in numerous scientific investigations, particularly those collected from organic foods. It is because organic foods are available of foreign chemicals that generally react with vitamins, organic compounds, and minerals, thus reducing the primary positive consequences of antioxidants in food commodities. The studies suggest that the consumption of organic food can provide to more use of nutritionally beneficial antioxidants and limited susceptibility to heavy elements. The positive results of antioxidants gained from natural foods incorporate prevention of heart illness, cancer, eyesight problems, untimely aging, and cognitive breakdown.

Improved Heart condition

Preferential grazing on natural turf enhances the amounts of CLA found in animal products. The sun's strength is well understood in by natural grass through photosynthesis and is transformed into the most sought-after organic CLA by the herbivores that stuff on it. CLA is a heart-healthy greasy psychedelic with the potential of supporting cardiovascular strength, and it is discovered in more significant quantities in the meat and milk commodities of creatures that have been pastured in the free-range.

Antibiotic resistance

Humans are sensitive to different health concerns and circumstances, and most of the time; they have to take precautionary devices to guarantee they continue healthy. It is performed by preparing a variety of treatments and antibiotic prescriptions when a different strain of disease or bacteria is achieved. Similarly, non-organic food sources use vaccines, growth hormones, animal by products, and antimicrobials to manage and maintain animals. When humans attract non-organic group food products, they indirectly eat antibiotics, boost hormones, and vaccines, which diminish the resistant scheme on version of medicines, vaccines, hormones, and animal by-products treatment. It may change the privileged system, thereby presenting humans powerless to defend themselves against infections. The gain of organic foods is that their production methods do not require the application of antibiotics, increase hormones, animal by-products, or vaccines.

Better taste

Apart from nourishment, the crystal and sugar constructions in organic foods are delicious because the products are given more time to improve and grow. The advantage of fundamental and environmentally friendly farming production methods is exposed to be the understanding of the more excellent taste in organic food commodities. It is generally advised that the awareness of natural herbs and fruits are of immense quality connected to those that are conventionally produced.

Pesticide cutback

Organic foods are clear of pesticides, and that is why they are excellent for achieving higher overall health. As much as pesticides have the capability of having certain insects away from the products, they also have strong elements like organ phosphorus. These elements are lovely, and they are the mineral aggregates that make about some health anomalies in humans. Organ phosphorus, for example, is connected with various developmental diseases such as ADHD and autism. Organic food commodities, therefore, allow a more normal healthy living, particularly for children who are probably affected by the pesticide viruses during their developmental years.

Stronger immune system

The standard or industrial agriculture systems aim at improving production and spread product by all means needed. The notion of creating more seeds, more meat, and more essential fruits by genetic alterations and the value of growth hormones appears to explain some of the world's food vulnerability businesses. The consequences are not yet apparent, but in the long-term, the results are sensitive to allergens and a meaningful decrease in protected system health. By eating organic foods, the chances of a decline in secure system health are significantly reduced. Moreover, organic foods have quality and higher vitamin and mineral contents that accommodate to increase the human immune system.

Organic products are poison-free

Organic farming does not exercise any sort of hazardous chemicals to continue away insects and diseases. All the methods are simple and, thus, do not harm the consumer. Features such as biomagnifications are reduced via the process of organic agriculture as chemical pesticides, manure, herbicides, and artificial increase hormones are all banned on an organic farm. Consequently, physical food products are available for infection with healthharming chemical elements.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITRATURE

Sharma, Khare, Kautish, (2022)². This study looked at how attitudes and behavioural intentions towards organic foods were affected by instrumental and terminal values. It makes use of the Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB) model and Cognitive Hierarchical Model. A careful analysis of earlier investigations led to the discovery of the conceptual model. The Smart PLS programme for partial least square structural equation modelling is used to analyze the measurement and structural models. According to the results, attitude affects attitude, which then determines behavioural intentions for both terminal and instrumental value for organic food items. The instrumental value, however, had a more significant impact on both philosophical and behavioural goals compared to the terminal value. The study's conclusions should help organic food marketers create plans that are in line with both terminal and instrumental values through advertising.

Rukmani, Raju, (2022)³. Due to its advanced demographic dividend, greater purchasing power, and growing interest in certain organic commodities' purported health and wellness advantages, India's consumption of organic food and beverage has increased recently. Foods grown organically are becoming more and more popular every day because of their dietary and health advantages. India's economy remains centred on agriculture, which in 2020–2021 was responsible for 60 percent of all employment and 19.9 percent of the nation's GDP. India accounts for 30% of the world's certified organic producers, but only accounts for 3% (1.9 million hectares) of the 57.8 million hectares of land that is used for organic farming. Examining the factors that affect consumers' decisions to buy organic food is the main goal of the study. Geographically restricted to the GHMC region, this study is being conducted in Hyderabad, Tamil Nadu. By

exploring the many perspectives on organic food products from the perspective of the consumer, this study seeks to fill in the information gap. Exploratory and descriptive research approaches, both qualitative and quantitative, are used in the current study.

Parmar, S., & Sahrawat Dr, S. (2019)⁴ identified that customers accepted that organic category products provide to their more excellent health followed by quality of commodity and favor the flavor/texture/consciousness, and the identical mean values 1.48, 1.92, and 1.92, sequentially. Concerning favoring the organic merchandise over nonorganic commodities, customers contemplated that natural products favored health anxiety accompanied by fancying the flavor/texture/capacity and quality of merchandise and the similar mean value 1.48, 2.04, and 2.08 sequentially.

Tran, L. H., Freytag-Leyer, B., Ploeger, A., & Krikser, T. (2019)⁵ found that health benefits, awareness of environmental and social standards were facilitators of organic food buying intention. Although the high-level intention to acquire organic foods recognized in Vietnam, it was not turned into actual buying behavior. The principal barriers for the variance were excellent price and low-level availability of organic products or trouble to purchase in the market. Lack of faith insignificantly affected organic food preferences between Vietnamese consumers in this study. These empirical findings and suggestions are helpful for all athletes to crossed supply chains.

Bhatia, S., & Sharma, N. (2019)⁶ food is described as "organic" if the goods do not include artificial, manufactured fertilizers, pesticides, livestock, increase regulators, and poultry supplies additives. Besides producing a decisive impact on the atmosphere and variety of food, it also significantly commits to providing a producer self-reliant in his demands for agro-inputs and decreases also succeeds in decreasing the cost of production. The US Department of Agriculture sections food produce into the subsequent sections: 100% organic (Must include 100 percent organically created ingredients), Organic (Must consist of at least 95% natural ingredients), Made of organic components (Must include at least 70% organic components), Have some organic components (May include less than 70% organic components).

Ham, M. (2019)⁷ exhibits the results of the study exhibit that natural variables have a more substantial impact on the purpose of obtaining organic food, suggesting that it would be several benefits for organic food marketers and other interested stakeholders to promote the consumers' expectations concerning personal benefits obtained from natural food eating. The most substantial impact thereby relates to health gains, supported by the enjoyment of food and positive influences on adopting a coveted lifestyle. The results compared to extrinsic variables exhibit that organic food consumption may also be increased by emphasizing multiple advantages to be obtained by the local economy from this type of production. Nevertheless, when it comes to the effects of individual consumption on the environment and society, it is evident that consumers must be additional educated.

Patil, K., & Desai, N. (2019)⁸ point out that the terms similar to organic marketing and organic customer have developed and a group of work is complete to appreciate the consciousness stages of the customer, their approaches towards the organic products and their enthusiasm to recognize and reimburse a first-class for the organic products.

Manvi, S. (2019)⁹ Consumer's awareness towards organic food creations calculated by sixteen pieces on the five-point scale. The statistical method realized in the study is PCA, Cluster examination, and Decision. The examination point outs that the sixteen articles can be out of order into three main constituents, namely Health and Weight features, Sensory Appeal, and Extrinsic price, which additional guides to the main constituent that is powerful

B. Krishnakumare & S. Niranjana (2017)¹⁰ revealed that consumers' behaviour plays a significant role in organic food products segment. It was witnessed that there was the lack of trust on the originality of organic food products which was one of the reason for not buying the organic food products. Thus, suggesting ways to create trust among the consumers to enhance their purchase intention.

Madhaviah and Shashikaran (2016)¹¹ identified that the attitude of consumers were positively and directly influenced by the product dimensions. The results revealed that product related and regulatory dimension were significantly influencing the pre purchase evaluation and had great association with purchase behaviour. Also, it was learnt that food safety was the most important factor whereas price was less influential. The research study suggested leveraging the findings by educating the target audience (both existing and potential customers) by promoting trails of organic food products.

IV. NEED FOR THE STUDY

After reviewing the above literature, it can be stated that though consumers have positive and favourable perception towards organic food products, the demand for such products is not so evident. There could be many reasons for it. The previous studies have different samples from various cities with varied demographic composition. The findings of these studies may not hold true in the desired study area and its population. . The study has being intended to locate the reasons for the slow growth in the demand for organic food by examining the attitude, awareness, purchase intention and buying behaviour of consumers in Chennai City.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To study the consumers' awareness level and source of information about the organic food products in Chennai city.
- ❖ To identify the predominant factors which influence the consumers to buy organic food products in the study area.
- ❖ To study the consumers perceived motives for buying the organic food products

VI. METHODOLOGY

To test the above objectives both descriptive and analytical method were adopted. The study mainly depends on primary data collected through well-structured questionnaire. Information were also collected through informal discussions with the Consumers.

➤ Data Collection

The current study focused on the Consumers buying behaviour towards organic food product in Chennai City. The questionnaire was administrated to 230 organic food consumers in Chennai city.

➤ Data Analysis:

The data, after collection, has been processed through SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 20.0 computer packages. The information obtained from the Consumers were analysed using various statistical tools. Based on the analysis relevant interpretations were found and it was found to be a usable one for the objectives framed for the study.

VII. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

- The consumers are not aware of the features and benefits of organic food products in the study area
- There is no association between income level and spending on the purchase of organic food products
- The factors are not influencing the consumers to purchase organic food products in Chennai city.

VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATION

This study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods. In the second stage of the study, descriptive research is conducted using a survey approach. After completing the literature review, the researcher concentrates on the technique, developing objectives in conjunction with the problem statement and selecting a good research design. Chennai is the capital city of Tamil Nadu and has the most excellent population density. The study was limited to Chennai City. Additionally, the region of Chennai is split into four zones: East Chennai, West Chennai, North Chennai, and South Chennai. However, the survey will include 230 consumers, which is higher than the minimum sample size necessary 216 questionnaires were returned from the 220 persons contacted, with 208 containing the requisite coverage and information. There are 123 males and 85 females. The study's response rate is the Sampling Approach to adopt the Purposive sampling technique used to identify individuals who consume (or have consumed) organic foods. Primary data was obtained using questionnaires via Google Forms, Emails, and Whatsapp. Only a few responders had their opinions documented in a tangible questionnaire. The study employs the frequency approach, descriptive statistics, and factor analysis

8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMERS**Table No 8.1: Demographic Profile of the respondents**

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	123	59.13
	Female	85	40.87
Age	<20	92	44.23
	21-30	53	25.48
	31-40	36	17.31
	>40	27	12.98
Marital Status	Unmarried	94	45.20
	Married	108	51.92
	Divorced	5	2.40
	Widowed	1	0.48
Family	Joint	80	38.46
	Nuclear	128	61.54
Educational Qualification	Up to SSC	9	4.32
	SSC	9	4.32
	HSC	18	8.66
	Degrees Above	172	82.70
	Private Employee	103	49.55
	Self Employee	39	18.76

Occupation	Business	25	12.01
	Got Employee	16	7.69
	Housewife	14	6.74
	Student	11	5.28
Income	10001-20000	63	30.29
	20001-40000	51	24.52
	40001-60000	51	24.52
	above60000	43	20.68
Residential Area	North Chennai	57	27.40
	South Chennai	64	30.77
	East Chennai	63	30.28
	West Chennai	24	11.54
	Total	208	100.0

****Source: Primary data**

Table 8.1 indicates that the majority of the respondents are male (59.13%), married (51.92%), degree holders (82.70%) and hailing from nuclear families (61.54%). The sizable portion of the respondents are hailing from the age group of less than 20 years (44.23%), private employees (49.55%), earning a monthly income of less than Rs. 20,000 and residing in East Chennai (30.28%).

Table No 8.2 Distribution of Consumer Food habits Products and Awareness

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Food Habits	Only Vegetarian	57	27.40
	Both Veg & Non - Vegetarian	151	72.60
Earners in Family	Only One	69	33.17
	Two Members	76	36.53
	Three Members	40	19.24
	Above Three Members	23	11.06
Awareness on OFP	Yes	176	84.62
	No	32	15.38
	Total	208	100.0

****Source: Primary data**

According to the Table 8.2 most respondents consume vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals. 151 (72.60 %) fall under the vegetarian and non-vegetarian categories. Only 57 (27.40 %) of them are vegetarians, 69 (33.17 %) have only one earning person, and 76 (36.53 %) have two gaining members. Consumer awareness of Organic Food Products (OFP) indicates that most consumers are aware of OFP. They account for 84.62 % (176) of the total 208 responders. Only 15.38 % (32) are ignorant of the need to be made aware of products.

Table No 8.3: Motives to Buy Organic Food Products

Reasons for Purchase	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.E.	S.D.	CV	Rank
Maintain Good Health	208	1	5	3.2	0.08	1.592	0.50	6
Prefer Taste and Feeling	208	1	5	3.43	0.06	1.28	0.37	5
Pesticide Free	208	1	5	3.49	0.06	1.248	0.36	4
Quality of Food	208	1	5	3.69	0.06	1.223	0.33	1

Environmental Friendly	208	1	5	3.69	0.06	1.269	0.34	2
Fresh	208	1	5	3.67	0.06	1.24	0.35	3
Status	208	1	5	2.69	0.07	1.451	0.54	7

****Source: Primary data**

The data presented in table 8.3 shows the descriptive statistics like Minimum, Maximum Sum, Mean, Standard Error, and Standard Deviation on the Reason for purchasing Organic food Products. The coefficient of variation is the basis for assigning ranks to each statement. From the table, the Quality of food and Environment-friendly products are the significant reasons to influence consumers to buy organic food products. Fresh, Pesticide free products, preferred taste & feeling, Maintain good health and motivate consumers to purchase organic food products.

Table No. 8.4 Factors Motivate to Buy Organic Food Products

Factors Motivated	N	Mini	Maxi	Mean	Std. Deviation
It helps with weight loss	208	1	5	2.83	1.142
Helps Fight Diabetes	208	1	5	4.14	.927
Prevent Gallstone	208	1	5	3.74	1.001
Reduces high bloodpressure	208	1	5	3.77	1.029
It helps women enduremenstrual cramps	208	1	5	3.87	1.085
Protein-rich	208	1	5	3.87	.958
Healthy growth	208	1	5	4.12	.935

****Source: Primary data**

The above table shows the mean and standard deviation of the factors motivated to buy organic food products. The study finds that the Helps fight diabetes factor has the highest mean with 4.14, Healthy growth – 4.12, Protein rich, and Helps women endure menstrual cramps with an equal mean of 3.87. Reduces high blood pressure by 3.77 and Prevents gallstones having the lowest standard being 3.74. After analyzing the motivating factors, assessing the highly vital factors that motivate buying organic food products is essential.

IX. FINDINGS

The survey discovered that In the study, it was discovered that 123 (59.13 %) were male and 85 (40.87 %) were female respondents. Considering the age, most of the replies reside in the group of fewer than 20 years compared to every other age group. Marital status-wise, the majority of them were married (108, 51.92 %). (51.92%). A nucleus family comprised 128 (61.54%) of the respondents. The educational qualification of the respondents in the survey suggests that the majority of them, 172 (82.72 %), are well qualified with degrees and above education. The study was done at the Greater Chennai Municipal Corporation. The majority of the respondents are working as private employees. 103 (49.55 %) and neighbouring 63 (30.29 %) of their income fall under Rs. 10 001-Rs. 20 000. Based on the residential area of the respondents, most of the respondents belong to South Chennai, and 63 (30.28 %) live in East Chennai. The majority of respondents consume both vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals. 151 (72.60 %) fall under the vegetarian and non-vegetarian categories. Only 57 (27.40 %) of them are vegetarians, 69 (33.17 %) have only one earning person, and 76 (36.53 %) have two earning members. Consumer awareness of Organic Food Products (OFP) indicates that most consumers are aware of OFP. They account for 84.62 % (176) of the total 76 respondents. Only 15.38 % (32) of them need to be aware of organic food products. As a result of the survey, it is clear that food quality and environmental friendliness are the primary factors influencing customers to purchase organic food products.

X. CONCLUSION

Today's consumer lifestyles are dynamic and ever-changing. Growing health consciousness, more disposable income, and a rising number of contemporary retail outlets across the country all contribute to the organic food segment's rise. Most respondents claimed that purchasing organic food is motivated by food quality and environmental stewardship. Following that, it was discovered that the majority of consumers prefer organic food products. The study claims that food safety concerns significantly influence customer purchasing behaviour. It has been discovered that most consumers are pleased with organic food products. They are hesitant to buy organic food items for various reasons, including a need for more trust in organic food products. After analyzing the motivating factors, assessing the highly vital factors that motivate buying organic food products is essential. Most of the respondents consume organic food products to maintain good health and are willing to purchase them even when traditional alternatives are on sale. Moreover, organic food marketers and farmers educate customers and help them learn more about organic food products.

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