

Research Article

Consumer preference towards organic food

M.Tamilarasi, ph.d., Research Scholar (Part-Time), Dr. R. Krishnakumar, Associate Professor, PG and Research Department of Commerce

St. Joseph's College of Arts & Science (Autonomous), Cuddalore – 0607001.

Abstract

In Ancient period, Indian followed the organic farming cultivation, which led them to live long & healthy life. From 1960's Indian are more dependent on conventional foods and their nutrition level is too low. Moreover, the change in the pattern of food consumptions of people appears to be one of the biggest threats to leading a healthy life. The problem of the study is people are already living in the place which is polluted in all means – air, water and land and in-addition to that the food which they intake is also polluted with fertilizer, pesticides, etc., Increase in usage of fertilizers and chemicals disintegrations the environment and human being's health. In this Pandemic of COVID 19 worldwide teach us more on being hail & healthy. Now people are more aware about their health, so they are starting to shift to consuming organic foods. As a result of organic farming started booming in many countries. Organic is the term which is used frequently now-a-days by the consumers all over the world. This study is based on conceptual model. This research paper is an attempt to explain the organic food preference, Environmental consciousness, willing to pay, availability of organic food products etc.,

Keywords: *Organic Farming, Health Consciousness, Environmental Friendly Concerns, Organic food products.*

Introduction

With the awakening of Indian consumers to eat healthy, few restaurant owners have started serving the organic food to survive in the market. The rising preferences show that the organic food franchise in India can be a lucrative business proposal for the aspirants who want to get started with a business in the Food and Beverage industry

From the report of India organic food market is expected to exhibit a CAGR of 25.25% during 2022-2027. Keeping in mind the uncertainties of COVID-19, they are continuously tracking and evaluating the direct as well as the indirect influence of the pandemic. These insights are included in the report as a major market contributor. (India Organic Food Market Size and Growth Report 2022-2027, n.d.)

People prefer organic food for various reasons as they are healthier and no use of pesticides or fungicides when they are grown. Also these organic products are grown in land where there are not any traces of chemicals and organic animals also not treated with antibiotics and hormones. There is generally no chance of having chemicals in organic product. Today, consumers prefer to buy products that do not involve modern synthetic inputs and will be beneficial to them in the long-term. That's why organic product stores are continuously growing.

“Organic food” a buzzing word

Due to these covid 19 effects, all people change their eating habit. People are more conscious about their health, so they move on to take healthy foods i.e., organic food. This Organic food gives more nutrition compare to conventional food. Because of this reason “organic” become as buzzing word.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the purchasing behavior, preferences, and factors affecting consumers purchasing intentions with regard to organic food.

Statement of the problem

The global demand for organic products is growing at a very rapid rate. In recent years, interest towards organic products and buying has increased among consumers, it has a positive approach. Consumers are more reluctant to choose organic products. It has become very essential to know about the preference of organic products among consumers. Thus, this research paper has been undertaken about the perception of people towards organic foods.

Organic Food Preference

Consumers generally make their choices considering the product information, product attributes and evaluating the consequences of using the product. Consumers consider health as an important parameter and then they buy the product. There are various reasons consumer prefer to buy organic food. The consumers prefer organic food due to some of their demographic characteristics. Households with graduates were less likely to buy organic produce, while households with children under 18 were more likely to buy organic produce. Females and individuals with more education and income have more awareness and knowledge of food hazardous to health.

Organic Products are Healthy and Safe for Consumption.

Consumers always had a positive approach regarding the consumption of organic products and they consider it to be healthier than the conventionally grown products. Consumer's tend to see products which are termed as organic to be locally produced or imported, which provides detail information regarding the country from where the product is been produced, the level of freshness it posses and how far the product is been beneficial to their health.

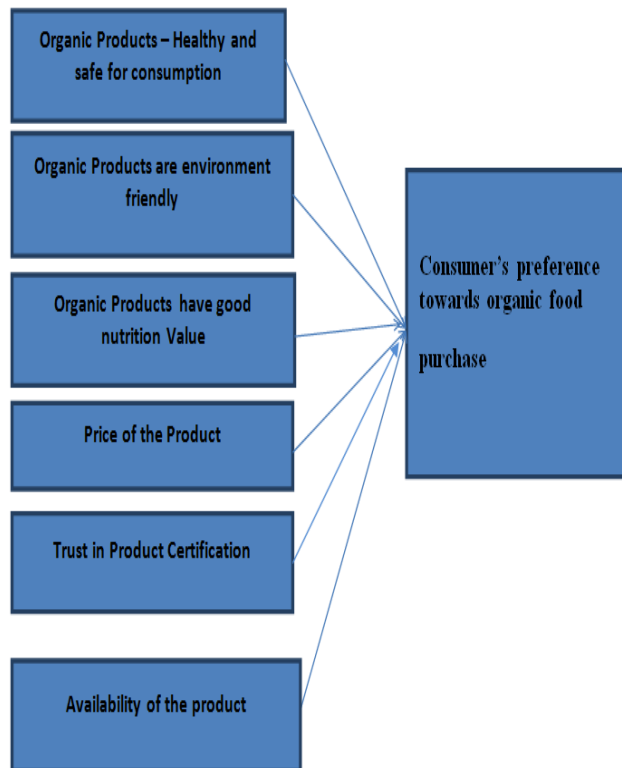
Environmental consciousness of the consumers

Consumer's attitude has progressed over the years mainly due to ethical concerns towards the environment. The increase in consumer consciousness for environmental concerns has raised the demand for environment friendly products. Gradually a transformation occurred in consumer's attitudes and purchase intentions when they realized the

harm caused to the environment as a result of conventional farming.

Consumer Ready to Pay Premium Prices

As per the survey, in Spain consumers are still adjusting with the higher prices of organic food and they are willing to pay similar to the existing prices. Organic food consumers give less importance to price as compared to the consumers who never purchase organic food earlier. The premium prices for organic food are justified by the food safety, taste and nature conservation. Few of the consumers feel that they have to pay higher price for healthier food and some consumers simply assume that organic food is not affordable.



Trust in Product Certification and Labels

Conceptual Framework

According to a research in Greek urban areas, factors such as food quality and security, trust in the certification, and in certain cases, the brand name had a higher correlation with the willingness to pay than did price or socio-demographic variables. The main constraint to the purchase of organic food is high premium prices, lack of information, lack of trust in organic certification quality and schemes. Also lesser availability of organic food contributes to the lack of purchase of organic food.

As per the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report, 14000 tonnes of organic food produce is from certified organic farms in India. But there are more organic farm areas than mentioned by FAO. Sometimes Organic food is not recognized though it has been grown in organic farms as farmers have not registered their name nor paid the registration charges for official certification.

Availability of the Organic Food Products

Non-availability of organic food in the store is one of the most important barriers for consumer's purchasing. The

consumer attitude is highly unfavorable towards organic food due to availability and price.

There are vital reasons like high price, satisfaction with conventional food, limited choice and availability, lack of perceived value and lack of trust which prevent consumers from buying organic food.

Conclusion and Managerial Implications

It is clearly seen that the Consumers prefer to buy organic food products because of their perception that the organic food products are healthy and safe, nutritious and environment friendly.

To attract more consumers to buy organic food products, marketers need to work on the strategies and design the elements of the marketing mix to make the organic products easily available to consumers. Also there is a need to build more trust among the consumers and get the proper government certification for the organic food products.

Reference

- Schleenbecker, R., & Hamm, U. (2013). Consumers' perception of organic product characteristics. A review. *Appetite*, 71, 420-429.
- Shafie, F. A., & Rennie, D. (2012). Consumer perceptions towards organic food. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 49, 360-367.
- Wee, C. S., Ariff, M. S. B. M., Zakuan, N., Tajudin, M. N. M., Ismail, K., & Ishak, N. (2014). Consumers perception, purchase intention and actual purchase behavior of organic food products. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research*, 3(2), 378.
- Basha, M. B., Mason, C., Shamsudin, M. F., Hussain, H. I., & Salem, M. A. (2015). Consumers attitude towards organic food. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 31, 444-452.
- Chandrashekar, H. M. (2014). Consumers perception towards organic products-A study in Mysore city. *International Journal of Research in Business Studies and Management*, 1(1), 52-67.