



CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CORPORATION

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Abstract: *Organic farming is a one form of agriculture and it has been developing rapidly. The consumer's interest and preference towards organic products has been increased nowadays. This research is descriptive in nature. Stratified simple random sampling technique has been used and fifty respondents were surveyed by using a well structured questionnaire. The findings of the study show that most of the respondents (52 per cent) are in the age group of below 30 years and more than three fourth of the respondents (76 per cent) are female. Majority of the respondents (70 per cent) are doing business/ employed, most of the respondents (74 per cent) make their purchase of organic products within 1 year. Therefore consumer's level of preference towards organic products are due to nutrition, health benefits and palatable etc.*

Keywords: *Organic products, consumer preference, purchase of products etc.*

INTRODUCTION

Traditional farming systems in India have been designated these days as organic farming. Over the past decades, the organic market is growing rapidly and the trend towards organic products has emerged due to the increased awareness about health, quality, safe and environment. India has become the largest exporters of organic products. Now a day's, preference for organic products is spreading in India. Consumers provide more attention towards organically grown products free from chemical pesticides and fertilizers so it prevents consumers from health problems. Organic products are classified as the healthiest type of product that any human being can consume and prefer for nutritional value and have a natural taste compared to conventional products. Thus, this research study attempts has been made to study on level of preference of consumers towards organic products.



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Organic products in India are growing in domestic market. The increase in awareness has caused shifts in consumers' tastes and preferences which led to the domestic as well as global rise in demand for organic products. Consumer prefers organic products over conventional products because they consider as health concerns, chemical free products and about the impact of the environment are some reasons. Therefore, this study is to gain knowledge about the demographic characteristics of respondents and about the level of preference towards organic products.

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 study has been undertaken in Tiruchirappalli Corporation and focuses on the level of preference towards organic products.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Lucimar Santiago de Abreu. et.al., (2008), study focused on the consumption of agro-ecological products, based on a socioeconomic and anthropological approach which focus was on the motivation and the spending practices in the metropolitan region of Campinas, Sao Paulo State, Brazil. The purpose was to confirm that what level the consumer behavior shows, cultural and economic values with reference to current ecological culture. Therefore, the understanding of the cultural dynamics of each and every expenditure process can give meaningful insight to the current circumstance of local relations and global exchanges.

Joris Aertsens. et.al., (2009), paper aims to provide an overview, within a framework linking Schwartz values theory and the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). It seeks to focus on the importance of affective attitude, emotions, personal custom, involvement and ambiguity related to organic food consumption. Both the values theory and the theory of planned behaviour have been referred to related theories for better understanding consumer's choice for organic food.

Douglas H. Costance and Jin Young Choi (2010), their paper investigates the predictors of interest and the perceived blockade to organic acceptance among pragmatic conventional producers in Texas, compared to organic and conventional producers. The results indicate



that more than forty percent of producers who currently have conventional operations have some interest in organic production. The paper concludes that increased institutional support facilitates organic adoption.

Jan P. Voon. et.al., (2011), study investigated the determinants of incentive to purchase organic food products among consumers in a Malaysian city, using a survey. This indicates the efforts to promote consumption should focus on influencing consumer attitudes.

Justin Paul and Jyoti Rana (2012), the present study is to know about the behaviour of consumers and their intention to purchase organic food. The study is also to determine the factors influencing consumer behaviour towards organic food. The result indicates that consumer attitude towards buying organic food are positively influenced by health, availability and education from demographic factors. The overall satisfaction of consumers for organic food is more than non organic food but the satisfaction level varies depends on different factors. This study suggests that retailers can develop strategies and effective marketing program to influence consumers positively.

Sonia Attanasio. et.al., (2013), their paper examines the consumer's intention to purchase the organic food products in Pontina Province, Italy and 280 respondents were interviewed using semi-structured questionnaires. Thus, the results indicate that the intention to buy organic products is influenced by the perception about the value of organic food products and belief on the health and safety of the product.

Ravi Nandi. et.al., (2014), paper examines to gain knowledge about consumers preferences regarding the organic products purchased in Bangalore, India. The results revealed that the most preferred purchase places for organic products were specialized organic stores and supermarkets.

Tah Poh Leong and Laily Paim (2015), study focuses on the analysis of the factors that affect Chinese college students and their intention to use organic food; 500 samples were assessed through an online questionnaire mailed. Thus the findings would assist increasing the local availability of organic food products in Malaysia

Tatiana Abusuniva (2016), study focuses on increasing consumer awareness about organic foods among Australia. The sample size chosen for the study is 1011 through online survey; based on demographic profile that support for the research hypotheses by revealing positive and significant effects of the healthiest, hedonism and trust on consumer purchase intention.



Bo Chen and Sayed Saghaian (2017), study examines the consumer preference for organic food can affect choice of retailing format in California. Thus the study findings are based on regular organic user (households) and are more likely to support organic specialty store and discount store. Whereas they shop less in warehouse clubs and convenience store. This has strong managerial implication for retailers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are

- To analyze the demographic profile of the consumers.
- To examine the consumer level of preference towards organic products.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The hypothesis framed for this study is

H₀: There is no significant association between occupation and level of preference towards organic products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is descriptive and survey method is used for this study to analyze the consumer preference towards organic products. Both primary and secondary data is used for this study. The analysis was made mainly using primary data. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire using Rensis Likert's Scale. Secondary data has been obtained from journals, websites and books. Fifty sample respondents were approached for the study and collected through stratified simple random sampling technique. Hence, for the purpose of the study, Tiruchirappalli corporation has been selected as an area of the study and population as per census 2011 is 9,16,857 approximately. This study has been conducted during the month of October 2017 to March 2017. The collected data will be analyzed with the help of statistical packages, namely SPSS 20.0 version by using statistical tools such as percentage analysis, one way ANOVA.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is confined to the geographical region of Tiruchirappalli city.
- The sample size is limited to fifty respondents only.
- The analysis is made based on the opinion given by the sample respondents in the study area.



ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data from the sample respondents have been analyzed and interpreted with the help of statistical tools like percentage analysis and one way ANOVA.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The demographic profile is analyzed with help of variables like age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, monthly income, family type, number of dependents, residential area, family annual income, number of years for which organic products have been purchased, frequency of purchase of organic products, expenditure on organic products in a month and place of purchase of organic products. The results of the analysis are discussed below

Table 1.1 Demographic profile

| Factors | Classification | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Age (in years) | Below 30 years | 26 | 52 |
| | 31-60 years | 24 | 48 |
| | Above 60 years | - | - |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Gender | Male | 12 | 24 |
| | Female | 38 | 76 |
| | Transgender | - | - |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Marital status | Married | 27 | 54 |
| | Unmarried | 23 | 46 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Educational qualification | SSLC/HSC | 5 | 10 |
| | ITI/Diploma | 4 | 8 |
| | UG/PG | 29 | 58 |
| | Professional | 9 | 18 |
| | Others | 3 | 6 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Occupation | Student | 13 | 26 |
| | Business/Employed | 35 | 70 |
| | Homemaker | 2 | 4 |
| | Retired | - | - |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Monthly Income (In rupees) | Below ₹50000 | 46 | 92 |
| | ₹50000- ₹100000 | 2 | 4 |
| | Above ₹100000 | 2 | 4 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Family Type | Nuclear | 37 | 74 |
| | Joint | 13 | 26 |



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|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| No. of Dependents | Less than 2 members | 14 | 28 |
| | 2-4 members | 24 | 48 |
| | Above 4 members | 12 | 24 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Residential area of the respondents | Urban | 31 | 62 |
| | Semi urban | 18 | 36 |
| | Rural | 1 | 2 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Family Annual Income (In rupees) | Below ₹ 200000 | 37 | 74 |
| | ₹200001- ₹400000 | 9 | 18 |
| | Above ₹ 400000 | 4 | 8 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Number of years have been purchasing for organic products | Below 1 year | 37 | 74 |
| | 1-2 years | 12 | 24 |
| | Above 2 years | 1 | 2 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Frequently of purchase organic products | Weekly | 13 | 26 |
| | Monthly | 17 | 34 |
| | Half yearly | 4 | 8 |
| | Occasionally | 16 | 32 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Spend for organic products in a month | Less than ₹ 500 | 24 | 48 |
| | ₹500- ₹1000 | 16 | 32 |
| | Above ₹ 1000 | 10 | 20 |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Purchase of organic products from | Organic outlets | 50 | 100 |
| | Super market | - | - |
| | Departmental stores | - | - |
| | Others | - | - |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that most of the respondents (52 per cent) are in the age group of below 30 years. More than three fourth of the respondents (76 per cent) are female. Most of the respondents (54 per cent) are married. More than half of the respondents (58 per cent) are under graduate/Post graduate. Most of the respondents (70 per cent) are doing business/employed. Majority of the respondents (92 per cent) earn a monthly income below ₹ 50000. Most of the respondents (74 per cent) belong to nuclear families. Most of the respondents (48 per cent) have got 2-4 members in family who prefer organic products. More than half of the respondents (62 per cent) are residing in urban areas. Most of the respondents (74 per cent) earn an annual income below ₹ 200000. Majority of the



respondents (74 per cent) make their purchase of organic products within 1 year. Most of the respondents (34 per cent) make their purchase of organic products monthly. Most of the respondents (48 per cent) spend less than ₹ 500 in a month for organic products and majority of the respondents (50 per cent) purchase organic products from organic outlets.

OCCUPATION AND LEVEL OF PREFERENCE TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS

In order to assess the significant difference between occupation and level of preference towards organic products one way ANOVA analysis is used. The result of the one way ANOVA analysis is given below.

H₀: There is no significant difference between occupation and level of preference towards organic products

Table 1.2 Occupation and level of preference towards organic products

| Safe consumption and health benefits | | Mean Square | F value | Sig. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------|-----------|
| Organic products are fresh and clean | Between Groups | .846 | 1.142 | .328 |
| | Within Groups | .741 | | |
| Quality of organic products is good | Between Groups | .678 | 1.784 | .179 |
| | Within Groups | .380 | | |
| Quantity of organic products is accurate | Between Groups | 2.279 | 3.914 | (.027)** |
| | Within Groups | .582 | | |
| Organic products are hassle-free from GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) | Between Groups | 2.170 | 3.785 | (.030)** |
| | Within Groups | .573 | | |
| Organic products have nutritional value | Between Groups | 2.600 | 5.854 | (.005)*** |
| | Within Groups | .444 | | |
| Organic products are palatable | Between Groups | 1.620 | 2.744 | (.075)* |
| | Within Groups | .590 | | |
| Organic products have a wealth of health benefits | Between Groups | 4.090 | 11.085 | (.000)*** |
| | Within Groups | .369 | | |
| Organic products appear to be natural | Between Groups | 2.392 | 6.842 | (.002)** |
| | Within Groups | .350 | | |
| Colors of organic products are attractive | Between Groups | 2.180 | 2.960 | (.062)* |
| | Within Groups | .737 | | |
| Texture of organic products is classic | Between Groups | 2.626 | 4.888 | (.012)** |
| | Within Groups | .537 | | |
| Organic products are produced without food additives | Between Groups | 2.309 | 3.173 | (.051)* |
| | Within Groups | .728 | | |
| Organic products attract older people than others | Between Groups | .310 | .382 | .684 |
| | Within Groups | .811 | | |
| Organic products are available at affordable price | Between Groups | 1.173 | .718 | .493 |
| | Within Groups | 1.633 | | |

Source: Primary data

Significant @ 0.001***, 0.05**, 0.010*



The above table elucidate that one way ANOVA is done for occupation and level of preference towards organic products. Since the “F” value are significant at 0.001, 0.05 and 0.10 per cent level for variables like quantity of the organic products is good, organic products are hassle-free from GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms), organic products have nutritional value, organic products are palatable, organic products have a wealth of health benefits, organic products appear to be natural, colors of organic products are attractive, texture of organic products is classic and organic products are produced without food additives. Hence the results of one way ANOVA reveals that null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and alternate hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. It is found that there is a significant difference between occupation and level of preferences towards organic products.

CONCLUSION

In current scenario, major cities across India have been aware of organic products and their preference also increased due to concern for health and the environment. The results from the present study identify that respondents prefer organic outlets as their purchase place. The respondents’ preference is mostly due to nutritional value, health benefits, natural appearance and palatability of the organic products. Thus, promotion of organic products helpsthe consumer through encouraging advertisements and can be done by distributing samples of organic products free of cost.

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