

CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

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Abstract

The food consumption pattern has witnessed a significant change over the past few years. Organic food products are becoming more popular as the consumers are primarily driven by personal health concerns. Organic food is a food produced by methods complying with the standards of organic farming. It features practices that cycle resources, promote ecological balance and conserve biodiversity. Organic foods are neither produced with the use of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides nor are processed using artificial preservatives, industrial solvents or synthetic food additives. In spite of growing awareness about the benefits of organic food products, the demand for organic food products is surprisingly low.

Keywords: Organic food products, Health Consciousness, Environmental Friendly Concerns, Subjective Norms, Willingness to pay

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. 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.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sharma et al (2016) found in the study that the consumers are fully aware of the benefits of organic food products on human health and also on the environment. The studies further stated that the consumers prefer organic foods and were even willing to pay higher prices as consumption of organic food helped in reduction of stress and maintain a healthy life. However; due to lack of availability of such products the purchasing rate was low. Thus, the study suggested the increase of availability of such products through proper marketing channel and effective supply chain management.

Madhaviah and Shashikaran (2016) 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.

B. Krishnakumare & S. Niranjan (2017) 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.

Dr. V Padmaja, Nikhil Parashar (2018) conducted the study to understand the consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products. It discusses about the topic and organic farming in India. It gives a detail briefing about the history of

organic food products as well as organic food industry. The objectives of this study are to analyse factors affecting buying behaviour for organic food products, the impact of income and price on buying intent of consumers and major constraints, which act as barrier in sale of organic product.

Lakshmi Prabha and Sindhuja (2019) highlighted in the study the positive perception and behavior of consumers towards organic products on account of health concerns. But, there seems to be low awareness level among consumers regarding its availability and product attributes. Therefore, the marketers need to focus on the supply patterns and increase the market size of products with effective promotional efforts.

Aarthi . M, Balusamy .S (2020) conducted the study which provides a better understanding of consumers' attitude, purchase intention and actual buying behaviour towards organic food products. For this purpose, a survey data were collected from 773 Coimbatore consumers through structured questionnaire. Statistical tools adopted to execute the results. And necessary findings provided with data interpretations.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the demographic and non- demographic composition.
- To describe the awareness and knowledge of the consumers regarding organic food products.
- To understand the consumer attitude, perceptions and buying behavior towards organic food products.
- To examine the factors affecting pre purchase evaluation and investigate the barriers to actual purchase of organic food products.

METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

In this research, study and analysis of conceptual and empirical literature has been done to form a relationship between factors affecting consumer's attitude and intention towards buying Organic Food.

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

After reviewing the existing literature, various significant indicators were revealed and on the basis of these indicators, a framework for evaluating the buying behaviour of consumers towards Organic Food can be established. The attempt here is to identify and understand the suitable indicators for the measurement of Consumers' buying behaviour towards Organic Food Products. The factors which affect the buying behaviour of the consumers to buying Organic Food can clearly be viewed from the figure given below. This framework represents a relationship between factors affecting attitude and Intention of the consumers towards Organic Food Products.

ATTITUDE INFLUENCES ON BUYING INTENTION

This implies that the more positive is the attitude the more would be intention to perform that behavior.

Below is the summarization of those studies that have done research on attitude and Intention

Attitude and Intention			
S.No.	Name of the Study	Attitude	Intention
1	"A study of Consumers Attitude towards Organic Products"	Yes	
2	"A study of consumers' attitudes and intention to buy organic foods for sustainability"	Yes	Yes
3	"A Study on Consumers' Purchase Intentions Towards Organic Products"		Yes
4	"An analysis of purchase intentions toward organic food on health consciousness and food safety with/under structural equation modelling"	Yes	Yes
5	"Analysis of Consumer Behavior of Organic Food in North Sumatra Province, Indonesia"	Yes	Yes
6	"Assessment of the consumer purchase intentions of organic food at the Hazel food market in Pretoria, South Africa"	Yes	Yes

.7	"Attitude and behaviour of consumers towards Organic Food : An exploratory study in India"	Yes	
8	"Attitudes and young consumers' organic food purchasing intentions"	Yes	Yes
9	"The advantages of an inclusive definition of attitude", Social Cognition"	Yes	Yes
10	"Personal determinants of organic food consumption: a review"	Yes	Yes
11	"Consumer decision making with regard to organic food products"	Yes	Yes
12	"Attitude toward organic foods among Taiwanese as related to health consciousness, environmental attitudes, and the mediating effects of a healthy lifestyle"	Yes	Yes
13	"Intentions of Indonesian consumers on buying organic food"	Yes	Yes
14	"Subjective norms, attitudes and intentions of Finnish consumers in organic food"	Yes	Yes

FINDINGS

During the review of the past researches, it has observed that, apart from the above mentioned demographic factors, some non-demographic factors also influence the consumer behaviour towards organic food products. One of the most important factors that influence the buying behaviour of organic food consumers is their consciousness towards health. It has been observed that, a health conscious person is more likely to have positive attitude and intention towards organic food. Another factor that contributes to establish positive attitude and intention for organic food is environmental consciousness. Respondents with more concern towards environment and sustainability showed more interest in buying organic food products. Several studies have shown that people sometimes buy organic food because the person who influences them is buying the same. Last but not the least, it can be inferred from the previous works that willingness to pay does have both positive and negative impact on attitude and intention of consumers towards organic food.

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CONCLUSION

With raising personal health consciousness and awareness regarding environment issues, consumers are bound to think about the alternative farming as against the conventional farming; wherein the agricultural produce are free from any chemical residue. Organic food products slowly but gradually has created its own niche in the market. Thus, there has been a considerable shift in the perception and attitude of consumers towards such products as they are healthy, nutritious, safe and grown with an environmentally and socially responsible approach. Such food products are preferred for the better human health and overall welfare. As it shown by the above statements that quality and health aspects act as a major motivator for the buyer to buy organic products. The environmental protection perspective further makes them more attractive to the consumers. Subjective Norms also plays a significant role in influencing consumers' attitude towards Organic Food Products. Further, Price or Willingness to Pay is one the most critical factors that influences the attitude of consumers towards Organic Food. Whereas, Demographic Factors like Age, Gender, Education, Children in Family and Family Income also play a vital role in establishing attitude of consumer towards Organic Food Products.

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