

The Buying Behaviour of Consumers Towards Organic Food: An Empirical Study

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Abstract: The concern for health and food safety have been rising day by day. Being free of harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides, organic food has positive health benefits. Consumers are from the threat of food poisoning and other harmful health problems arised by consuming food having harmful chemicals. The consumption of organic products in Indian has been growing significantly in the past five years. Consumers are willing to pay more for organic goods due to their health benefits. . Hence, the present study is concerned with analysis of consumers' buying behaviour towards organic products. The primary data was collected from the respondents with the help of a structured questionnaire. The results concluded that most of the consumer especially in urban area prefer organic food product. Marketers should pay attention on their marketing activities for strengthening the organic production in India.

Keywords: Consumers, Organic Products, Consumers Attitude, Marketing.

Introduction: Organic products are produced with an objective to produce healthy and quality foods without using harmful chemicals. Thus, organic food produced by natural way not only leads to good health but also brings significant benefits to environment as well (Zotos et.al. 1999). The interest of consumers for the organically produced foods has been increaaasing becauts todays consumer concerns about food safety, human health and the environment. Now a days, food consumption patterns are changing as a result of environmental issues and the concern of consumers towards the nutritional value of food and health issues. Quality and safety in food products attract consumers towards organic food which is

free from pesticides and chemical residues Baltas (2001).

The consumers attitude towards organic food directly influence consumer choice. Environmentally friendly products are sometimes more expensive to purchase than other alternative products. However, consumers who are sensitive towards health and environment are willing to pay a higher price for organic products. This can be a huge opportunity for the farmers to go for organic agriculture. This growing market for organic products is expected to continuously increase in the coming years which is indicating a potential market in this sector (Sheng *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, the concept of "organic food" seems to be well known to many consumers (Roddy *et al.*, 1996; Von Alvensleben, 1998), but still the number of consumers buying organic food is low.

Review of Literature: Consumers are now becoming more and more aware of health and this has increased the demand for organic products. Consumers have a favourable attitude toward health due to this they are more inclined towards organic. The continuous awareness of consumers towards health and environmental has changed

consumers' attitudes and purchase behaviour. Previous studies have shown that health is strongly connected to the organic food consumption and that it is the most important motive while purchasing organic products. Similarly, Wandel and Bugge, 1997 showed that health is strongly connected to the notion of organic food it the most important reason for purchasing and consuming organic products. It is also perceived to be tastier and environmental-friendly as compared to conventional product (Aertsens *et al.*, 2009). In line with that, organic food is perceived as "free from chemicals" and synthetic and artificial additives. Those who are more concerned about food safety and health hold a positive attitude towards organic food. (Devcich, Pedersen and Petrie, 2007). Moreover, demand for organic food seems to be positively related to income. Higher income groups are more likely to purchase organic food (Grunert and Kristensen, 1991). Consumers' choice for green products can be heavily influenced by the packaging too. Packaging is also an important factor that has a positive impact on the sale of product. According to Dantas *et al.*, (2004), packaging and labels have only a few seconds to make an impact on the consumer's mind with that

it must catch the consumer's eye, In case of green food it has influenced sales in a positive way.

Objectives:

1. To study the socio economic profile of the organic food consumers.
2. To examine consumer buying behavior towards organic food products.
3. To summarize the key findings and offer suggestions for the study.

Research Methodology:

Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data and the sources of secondary data were books, journals, report etc. The study was conducted at Rohtak city in Haryana. A total of 50 respondents were taken as sample and for the purpose of the study the respondents were selected conveniently from different retail outlets of organic products. The statistical tools used for the purpose of this study are simple percentages, Mean and frequency etc.

Results and Discussion:

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents is as:

S. No.	Demographic Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
1.	Age(years)	Below 20	10	20
		21-30	21	42
		31-40	12	24
		Above 40	07	14
2.	Gender	Male	19	36
		Female	31	62
3.	Occupation	Self-employed	06	12
		Professional	05	10
		Student	08	16
		Home-maker	20	40
		Others	11	22
4.	Marital Status	Married	29	58
		Unmarried	21	42

Table 1 shows that 42% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21 - 30 years, 62% of the respondents were female, 40% of the respondents were home-maker, 58% of the respondents were married.

Table 2: Reasons for purchase of the Organic Food Products

S.No.	Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Good health	28	56
2.	Quality	18	36
3.	Price	02	04
4.	Service	02	04
Total		50	100

The table 2 shows that the 56% of the respondents prefer organic food to maintain good health, 36% of respondents for its quality and other 4 percent of respondents to Price and last 4% of the respondent were prefers as good service provided by organic shop out of 50 respondents.

Conclusion and Suggestions: The results suggest that a large number of consumers in the selected areas value the environment and they are health conscious too. The consumers prefer organic food products for their good health benefits. This indicates awareness towards health and green products among consumers. As consumers are aware and concerned about the greenproducts, it creates an opportunity for

developing green marketing focusing on more consumers. Overall, this study clearly identified that consumers have positive behavior towards purchasing organic food products and when it comes to actual purchase good health and quality are still the key factors influencing their purchase decisions.

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