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A Study on Consumer Preference towards using the Organic Food Products in Coimbatore City

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A B S T R A C T

Heath is wealth, is a statement which denotes the importance of health. Now a day's people lack in health because of eating an unhealthy, food products which is grown or manufactured without use of fertilizers, pesticides and chemicals. So we must go organic farming to protect environment and ourselves. 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 preference towards organic products in Coimbatore.

1. Introduction of the study

The organic food industry in India has witnessed significant growth in recent years. The demand for organic food products has been increasing due to rising health consciousness, environmental concerns, and the perception that organic foods are healthier and safer than conventional foods. The scope of the organic food industry in India is immense due to the country's vast agricultural land and the growing awareness of the benefits of organic food products. India is also one of the largest producers of organic food products globally. Organic food products are available in various categories, including fruits and vegetables, grains and cereals, dairy products, meat and poultry, and processed food items. The organic food market in India is driven by both domestic and international demand. The domestic market is driven by an increase in the number of health-conscious consumers, while the international market is driven by growing demand from developed countries.

The government of India has taken various initiatives to promote organic farming and increase the production of organic food products. The National Program for Organic Production (NPOP) was launched in 2001 to regulate the certification of organic food products. The government has also implemented various schemes to provide financial assistance to farmers to convert to organic farming. Despite the growth of the organic food industry in India, there are still several challenges that need to be addressed. The lack of awareness and education about organic farming and products is a significant barrier. The high cost of organic farming and certification is also a hindrance for small farmers.

2. Statement of the problem

In India, the organic farming is a growing sector which is encouraged by the government and many private initiatives. The organic farm product concept has been developing and the consumer behavior is always changed towards to maintain their health. The organic farming concept is old concept, but the marketing point of 3 view that is new one to people. There are number of organic product brands available in Indian economy. The farmers have different purchase pattern towards price, package, availability, utility and quality etc. The consumers select particular brand of organic product for various reasons.

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3. Objectives of the study

1. To know about the socio economic profile of the respondents.
2. To identify the factors influencing the consumer preference towards using the organic food products.
3. To study the consumer satisfaction on using the organic food products.
4. To provide suggestions to the organic food product marketers.

4. Scope of the study

Eco-friendly products concept is evolving around the world that has come into existence due to the disturbances caused by the pollutants. This has significant effect in the health of the people who suffer with ailments that vigorously affect their natural system. Hence, the eco-friendly consumption which form the healthy side of life through Organic products, that replaces the artificial manuring that causes innumerable side effects in the body of the children and the grown-up as well. Organic promotion, thereby, helps in protecting the environment and the health of the people. The present study attempts to examine the consumer awareness and attitude towards Organic Products, which helps to understand the consumer's point of view perception towards the organic products in the Coimbatore municipality.

5. Research Design

A research design is simple the framework of plan for the study. The design may be a specific presentation of the various steps in the process of research. This includes descriptive design. The descriptive research includes survey and findings enquiries at different kinds. This study is made for the purpose to know the consumer preference on using the organic food products.

5.1 Sample Design
The method used to collect the sample from the total population is convenient sampling

5.2 Sample Size
The sample size is 160 respondents around Coimbatore City.

5.3 Area of Study
The survey for the research was conducted in Coimbatore City

5.4 Data Collection
Data collection is the process of collecting and analysing information on relevant variables in a predetermined, methodical way so that one can respond to specific research questions, test hypotheses, and assess results.
Data collection is of two types:
➢ Primary Data
➢ Secondary Data

5.4.1 Primary Data
Primary Data is the data that has been collected from the respondents who were using the organic food products. The research is focused on the consumer preference on using organic food products.

5.4.2 Secondary Data
Secondary data is the data that has been collected from the books and records.

5.4.3 Period of Study
The period of study is within 2022-2023

5.5 Tools of Analysis
Questionnaires were created in order to receive the necessary response required from the sample to achieve the study objective. Therefore, sampling method is used in order to collect data. The main statistical tools used for analysing primary data :

The statistical tools used for the analysis of data in this project are:
● Simple percentage analysis
● Ranking analysis
● Chi-square analysis

6.Limitations of the study

➢ Data was collected from Coimbatore city's only.
➢ The sample size was confined to 160 respondents keeping in view time and cost constraints.
➢ The statistical tool has its own limitations

7.Review of Literature

- Chakrabarti (2010) studied the consumers' attitude as the most important factor that persuades the buying process of organic food consumers. The study was based on descriptive survey and explanatory survey. The outcome of the research was that persuading customer importance towards organic food product had an important impact to the customer loyalty for the organic food products.
- Voon et al. (2011) examined the factors of readiness to buy organic food among consumers in a Malaysian city, while using questionnaire survey. The results reflected that hard work to encourage utilization progress should aimed on persuading consumer attitudes.
- Sakthirama and Venkatram (2012) studied that the buying purpose of organic consumers in Coimbatore city, India and the results shows that the buying purpose of consumers towards organic food products was prejudiced by the outlook and information and acquaintance to consumers.
- Padiya and Vala (2012) mentioned in their study at Ahmedabad, exemplified the organic food buyers as less thoughtful about price, supporters of quality and knowledge, generally get information from magazine, newspaper and at the point of purchase.
- Shafie and Rennie (2012) analysed that price was the obstacle factor with regards to organic food consumption.
- Balaji and Bhama (2012) analytically studied the consumer attitude towards the organic food in India. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the overall satisfaction of the consumer and the psychographic factors towards the organic food.
- Raghavan and Megeh (2013) analysed the buying purpose towards organic products in Chennai city. The results of the study showed that insights related to organic food product had the sturdiest association with the consumers purpose to purchase organic food.

7.1 Review of Gap:

A research gap is a question or problem that has not been answered by any of the existing studies of research within your field. Sometimes, a research gap exists when there is a concept or new idea that hasn't been studied at all. Sometimes you'll find a research gap if all the existing research is outdated and in need of new updated research. The previous research doesn't explored about improvement of organic food products. But now we identified and discussed about how the organic food products has been developed and the consumer preference on using the organic food products

8. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Analysis of Data is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and Modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, And supporting decision- making. Data analysis is a process for obtaining raw data and Converting it into information useful for decision-making by users. Data are collected And analysed to answer questions, test hypotheses or disprove theories.

Statistician John Tukey defined data analysis in 1961 as: "Procedures for Analysing data, techniques for interpreting the results of such procedures, ways of Planning the gathering of data to make its analysis easier, more precise or more Accurate, and all the machinery and results of (mathematical) statistics which apply to Analysing data."

The following tools were used:
• Simple Percentage Analysis
• Rank Analysis
• Chi-square Analysis

8.1 Simple Percentage Analysis

Percentage method refers to the specific kind which is used in making comparison between two or more series of data collected. Percentages are based on descriptive relationship. It compares the relative items. Through the use of percentage, the data are reduced in the form with base equal to 100%, which facilitate relative comparison.

Table no 1

Table showing the factors influencing consumer preference on usingorganic food products

Factors	Highly influential[1]	Influential[2]	Neither influentialnor not influential [3]	Not influential[4]	Highly not influential[5]	total	rank
health	111	40	6	3	2	231	6
hygiene	76	71	8	4	3	273	5
No adulteration	66	46	35	12	3	326	3
No artificial colours	68	50	27	13	4	321	4
No preservatives	74	51	1	12	7	313	5
Risk factor	61	45	31	18	10	366	1
taste	63	50	28	14	7	338	2

INTERPRETATION

The above table showing the factors influencing the consumer preference on using organic food products depicts that the 'risk factor' is ranked first, followed by 'taste', 'no adulteration', 'no artificial colours', 'hygiene', 'health'.

Table no 2

Table showing how likely you recommend the organic food products toothers by the respondents

Factors	Highly recommended [1]	Recommended[2]	Neither recommendednor not recommended [3]	Not recommended[4]	Highly not recommended[5]	total	rank
Millets/cereals	107	43	8	3	1	234	7
Oil	74	60	19	6	3	296	4
Snacks	68	49	30	11	4	320	2
Dairy products	70	65	19	7	1	290	5
vegetables	106	44	7	3	2	237	6
Fruits	109	41	7	3	2	234	7
medicines	67	58	27	7	3	307	3
Other	62	53	30	10	7	333	1

INTERPRETATION

The above table depicts that the other factor is ranked first, followed by ,snacks', 'medicines','oil', 'dairy products', 'vegetables', 'fruits'.

8.2 Chi Square Analysis

A CHI-SQUARE is a statistical tool commonly used for testing the independence and goodness of fit. Testing independence determines whether two or more observations across two populations are dependent on each other. Testing for goodness of fit determines if an observed frequency distribution matches a theoretical distribution.

Formula:

$$\text{CHI - SQUARE VALUE } (\textstyle\sum) = \frac{(\text{OBSERVED VALUE} - \text{EXPECTED VALUE})^2}{\text{EXPECTED VALUE}}$$

$$\text{EXPECTED VALUE} = \frac{\text{ROW TOTAL x COLUMN TOTAL}}{\text{GRAND TOTAL}}$$

$$\text{DEGREE OF FREEDOM} = (\text{ROW} - 1) \text{ x } (\text{COLUMN} - 1)$$

HYPOTHESIS

HO: There is no significant relationship between two factors.

H1: There is significant relationship between two factors.

Significance value for chi-square is 5% (i.e., 0.05). If the calculated value isLess than the table value, it is accepted. Else in another situation it is rejected.

Table no 1

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION QUALIFICATION AND THE CONSUMER AWARENESS ON USING THE ORGANIC FOODPRODUCTS

The respondent's education qualification and the consumer awareness on using the organic food products are cross tabulated from 160 respondents. A cross tabulation of chi square is required from SPSS a computer software

		How do you aware on organic food products?					Total
		word of mouth	friends/r elatives	advertise ment	social media	others	
what is the highest level of education you have completed	less than high school	2	2	0	4	0	8
	high school diploma or equivalent	4	6	8	8	0	26
	bachelor's degree	25	31	14	26	3	99
	master's degree	4	6	7	8	0	25
	doctorate or professional degree	2	0	0	1	1	4
Total		37	45	29	47	4	162

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.785[a]	16	.120
Likelihood Ratio	21.111	16	.174
Linear-by-Linear Association	.017	1	.896
N of Valid Cases	162	3	

15 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .10.

HYPOTHESIS

H0: there is no significance relationship between education qualification and awareness onusing organic food products of the respondents

H1: there is significant relationship between education qualification and awareness on usingorganic food products of the respondents.

Level of significance	= 5% or 0.05
Degree of freedom	= 16
Chi-square value x^2	= 22.785
Table value	= 26.296

INTERPRETATION

In the above analysis, the calculated chi-square value (22.785) is less than the table value (26.296) at the level of 5% significance. Hence, null hypothesis H0 is accepted, thus there is no significant relationship between education qualification and awareness on usingthe organic food products.

Table no 2

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION QUALIFICATION AND THEFREQUENCY OF PURCHASING THE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

The respondent's education qualification and the frequency of purchasing the organic food products are cross tabulated from 160 respondents. A cross tabulation of chi square isrequired from SPSS a computer software

		How frequently do you purchase organicfood products?					Total
		monthly	quarterly	half yearly	annual ly	rarely	
what is the highestlevel of education you have completed	less than high school	5	2	0	0	1	8
	high school diploma or equivalent	12	7	5	0	2	26
	bachelor's degree	42	19	20	4	14	99
	master's degree	11	5	5	0	4	25
	doctorate or professional degree	3	0	0	0	1	4
Total		73	33	30	4	22	162

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.159[a]	16	.907
Likelihood Ratio	13.382	16	.645
Linear-by-Linear Association	.850	1	.356
N of Valid Cases	162		

17 cells (68.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .10.

HYPOTHESIS

H0: there is no significance relationship between education qualification and the frequency ofpurchasing the organic food products of the respondents

H1: there is significant relationship between education qualification and the frequency ofpurchasing the organic food products of the respondents.

Level of significance or 0.05Degree of freedom	= 5% = 16
Chi-square value X^2	= 9.159
Table value	= 26.296

INTERPRETATION

In the above analysis, the calculated chi-square value (9.159) is less than thetable value (26.296) at the level of 5% significance. Hence, null hypothesis H0 is accepted, thus there is no significant relationship between education qualification and the frequency of purchasing the organic food products.

Table no 3

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANNUAL INCOME AND THE FREQUENCY OF PURCHASING THE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

The respondent's annual income and the frequency of purchasing the organic food products are cross tabulated from 160 respondents. A cross tabulation of chi square is required from SPSS a computer software

		How frequently do you purchase organic food products?					Total
		monthly	quarterly	half yearly	annually	rarely	
annual income	below 2,00,000	36	12	19	2	9	78
	2,00,001 to 4,00,000	21	9	6	0	4	40
	4,00,001 to 6,00,000	9	8	1	0	2	20
	above 6,00,001	7	4	4	2	7	24
Total		73	33	30	4	22	162

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.491[a]	12	.058
Likelihood Ratio	19.810	12	.071
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.395	1	.122
N of Valid Cases	162		

10 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .49.

HYPOTHESIS

H0: there is no significance relationship between annual income and the frequency ofpurchasing the organic food products of the respondents

H1: there is significant relationship between annual income and the frequency of purchasingthe organic food products of the respondents.

Level of significance	= 5%
or 0.05Degree of freedom	= 12
Chi-square value X^2	= 20.491
Table value	= 21.026

INTERPRETATION

In the above analysis, the calculated chi-square value (20.491) is less than the table value (21.026) at the level of 5% significance. Hence, null hypothesis H0 is accepted, thus there is no significant relationship between annual income and frequency of purchasing the organic food products.

9. Findings and Suggestions

The organic food products in India has witnessed significant growth in recent years. The demand for organic food products has been increasing due to rising health consciousness, environmental concerns, and the perception that organic foods are healthier and safer than conventional foods. In conclusion, the organic food industry in India has a vast scope for growth and development. There are some new findings from a survey among 160 respondents which shows that,

9.1 Ranking analysis

- The factors influencing the consumer preference on using organic food products depicts that the risk factor is ranked first, followed by taste, no adulteration, no artificial colours, hygiene, health
- The respondents likely recommend the organic food products firstly other factor, followed by snacks, medicines, oil, dairy products, vegetables and fruits to others
- The factors satisfying the consumers on consuming the organic food products depicts that the availability in market is ranked first and followed by affordability, quantity, taste, quality.

9.2 Chi-Square Analysis

- There is no significance relationship between education qualification and awareness on using organic food products of the respondents
- There is no significance relationship between education qualification and the frequency of purchasing the organic food products of the respondents
- There is no significance relationship between annual income and the awareness on using organic food products of the respondents
- There is no significance relationship between annual income and the frequency of purchasing the organic food products of the respondents

Suggestions

According to the above study the respondents has suggested that though there are many claims about organic in the market, there is no proper vigilance of controlling the organic standards, which needs to be regulated and it should be available in door step with affordable price. Some of the respondents has stated that the organic food is healthy with no side effects and it is good for the consumers as well as the farmers of India. Some consumers have given ideas to the growth of the organic food products to marketers that they need more innovation, affordability and availability of organic food products in local market.

Conclusion

The organic food products have grown rapidly in the recent years. The consumer preference on using the organic food products has increased due to nutritional benefit, taste and health. The consumer has started preferring the organic food, that are essential for our health. It should be pure organic without any adulteration, preservatives and artificial colours. Thus the customers have suggested various ideas for the marketers to improve the consumer awareness and preference on using the organic food products.

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Annexure

1. Age

    - Below 20 years

    - 21 to 30 years

    - 31 to 40 years

    - Above 40 years

2. Gender

    - Male

    - Female

    - Prefer not to say

3. What is the highest level of Education you have completed?

    - Less than high school

    - High School Diploma or Equivalent

    - Bachelor's degree

    - Master's degree

    - Doctorate or Professional degree

4. Occupation
   - Employee
   - Businessmen
   - Professional
   - Others

5. Annual Income
   - Below ₹2,00,000
   - ₹2,00,001 to ₹4,00,000
   - ₹4,00,001 to ₹6,00,000
   - Above 6,00,001

6. How many family members are in your home?\
   - Less than 2
   - 3-5
   - 6-8
   - Above 8

7. Marital status
   - Married
   - Unmarried
   - Prefer not to say

8. How do you aware on organic food products?
   - Word of mouth
   - Friends/relatives
   - Advertisement
   - Social media
   - Others

9. Where do you purchase the organic food products?
   - Local stores
   - Organic stores
   - Departmental stores
   - Online
   - Others

10.   Factors Influencing consumer preference on using organic food products

FACTORS	Highly influential	influential	Neither influential nor not influential	Not influential	Highly not influential
health					
hygiene					
No adulteration					
No artificial colors					
No preservatives					
Risk factor					
taste					

11.   On a scale of 1 to 5, how Important is it to you that your food products are Organic?

- 1 - Not at all Important

- 2 - Slightly Important

- 3 - Moderately Important

- 4 - Very Important

- 5 - Extremely Important

12.   How frequently do you purchase organic food products?

- Monthly

- Quarterly

- Half yearly

- Annually

- Rarely

13.   Would you think that the Organic food products are value for money?

- Strongly agree

- Agree

- Neither agree Nor disagree

- Disagree

- Highly disagree

14.   Do you trust the claims made by an Organic food product label?

- Yes, completely

- Yes, somewhat

- No, not very much

- Not at all

15. How likely do you recommend Organic food products to others?

FACTORS	Highly Recommended	Recommended	Neither recommended Or not recommended	Not recommended	Highly not recommend
Millets/cereals					
Oil					
Snacks					
Dairy products					
vegetables					
fruits					
medicines					
others					

16. Factors satisfying the consumers on consuming Organic food products

factors	Highly satisfied	satisfied	Neither satisfied not dissatisfied	dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied
Affordability					
Availability in market					
Quality					
Quantity					
Nutritional benefit					
taste					