A Study on Consumer Awareness and Attitude towards Organic Products

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to explore consumer awareness, attitudes, and behaviours towards organic products, an increasingly popular sector driven by concerns about food safety, environmental sustainability, and health. Conducted in Chennai with 91 participants using a convenience sampling method, the research found a significant awareness of organic products. Health benefits emerged as a key motivator influencing organic product purchases, indicating a strong inclination towards health-conscious choices. Despite positive attitudes, the study identified challenges such as limited product availability, quality concerns, and perceived higher costs associated with organic items. Statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between gender and knowledge about organic products, suggesting the need for gender-specific marketing strategies and targeted educational initiatives. To address these challenges and leverage opportunities, recommendations included launching educational campaigns, enhancing transparency in sourcing and production, diversifying product ranges, improving availability, implementing quality control measures, and optimizing pricing strategies.

INTRODUCTION

The hasty modernization and industrialization of the world during the twentieth century has seen the global population explosion. Due to technological advancement and increased mortality rates, the global population is ever growing, and this mounting population demands food supply that can match it. This has resulted in food production on an industrialized extent. Innovative implementations to supply as large an amount as is possible with as little input and as possible can only go so far as to satisfy the demand. Organic products have gained significant popularity in recent years, driven by growing consumer awareness of health, environmental sustainability, and ethical considerations. These products encompass a wide range of categories, including food and beverages, personal care items, textiles, cleaning products, and more. What distinguishes organic products from conventional ones is their production process, which emphasizes natural and sustainable practices while avoiding synthetic chemicals and genetically modified organism.

ORGANIC FARMING IN INDIA

India's organic food market has witnessed exponential growth after the pandemic. According to the 2022 survey conducted in 187 countries practising organic agriculture by the international resource data from the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FIBL) and International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)

TYPES OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Organic fruits and vegetable: This category includes a wide range of fresh produce, such as apples, bananas, strawberries, tomatoes, carrots, and leafy greens, which are grown using organic farming methods without synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. Organic fruits and vegetables are prized for their freshness, flavour, and nutritional content.

Organic Grains and Pulses: Organic grains and pulses encompass staple foods like rice, wheat, oats, lentils, chickpeas, and beans that are cultivated without synthetic inputs. These organic staples are rich in essential nutrients and are often preferred by health-conscious consumers for their purity and quality.

Organic Dairy Products: Organic dairy products include milk, cheese, yogurt, and butter derived from organically raised livestock. Organic dairy farming practices prioritize animal welfare, pasture access, and a diet free from antibiotics and synthetic hormones, resulting in high-quality dairy products with superior taste and nutritional.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify consumer awareness and knowledge about organic product.

2. To evaluate the factor that influence consumer decision to buy organic product.

3. To find the overall attitude towards organic product.

4. To identify the challenges faced by consumer while purchasing organic product.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. (Roshny Munshi 2020) "studied the Western Mumbai's Customers perception towards organic food products". They found huge demand for organic food products but there is lack of awareness and faith for the organic products which increased the gap.

2. (Silvia Cachero-Martinez 2020) discovered that among behavioural variables, contentment had the largest influence on purchase and WOM intentions.

3. (Dr. N. Savithri & B. Lavanya 2019) in their study "Organic food products: A study on perception of Indian consumers" found that the Consumers' overall preferences or factors to purchase for organic food products are Taste and Chemical Free.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

HO: There is no significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and their knowledge about organic product.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the gender and their knowledge about organic product**.**

SOURCES OF DATA

PRIMARY DATA

Primary data is the data that is collected for the first time through personal perspective, particularly for the research. It is also described as raw data for first-hand information.

SECONDARY DATA

Data collected from a source that has already been published in any form is called secondary data. The review of literature in any research is based on secondary data. Mostly from books, journals, and periodicals.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

The study utilized a questionnaire as its research instrument for data collection.

This questionnaire was designed in alignment with the study's objectives and was administered to consumers to gather their perspectives. The information was collected using a meticulously structured questionnaire.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

CHI-SQUARE

Chi-square analysis is a statistical method used to determine if there's a significant association between two categorical variables. It compares the observed frequencies of data with the frequencies that would be expected if the variables were independent.

CORRELATION

Correlation in research refers to a statistical measure that shows how two variables are related or connected to each other. It helps researchers understand whether and how changes in one variable might be associated with changes in another variable.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPREATION OF THE DATA KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ORGANIC PRODUCT

Table-1

PARTICULAR	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Highly knowledgeable	13	14.30%
Fairly knowledgeable	34	37.40%

| Moderately unknowledgeable	36	39.60%
Slightly unknowledgeable	7	7.70%
Completely unknowledgeable	1	1.10%
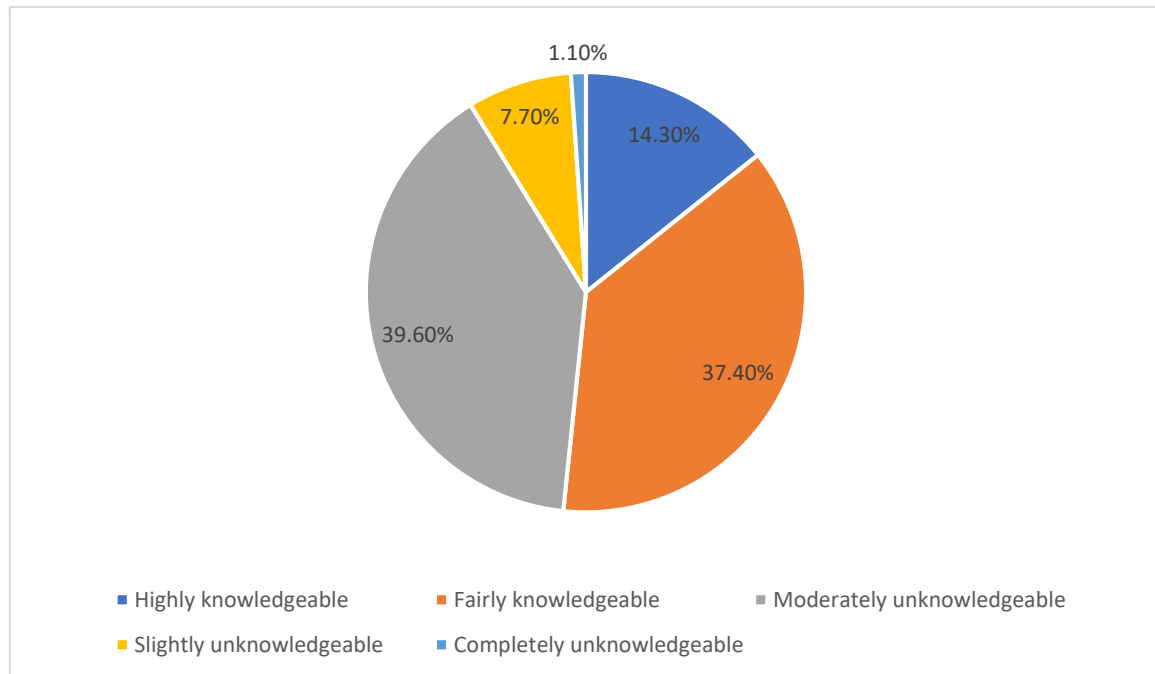
INTERPRETATION:

From the above analysis 39.60% of people moderately unknowledgeable about organic product,37.40% of the people fairly knowledgeable about organic product,14.30% of people highly knowledgeable about organic product,7.7% of people slightly unknowledgeable about organic product,1.1% of people compeletely unknowledgeable.

GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

TABLE-2

| S.NO	GENDER	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	male	54	59.30%
2	female	37	40.70%
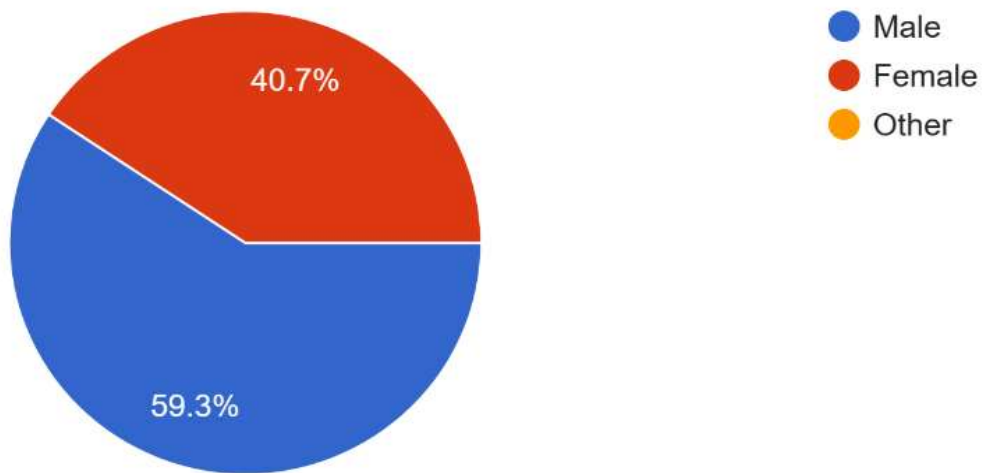
INTERPRETATION:

From the above analysis 59.3% of the respondents are male and 40.7% of respondents are female

FACTOR INFLUENCE DECISION TO BUY ORGANIC PRODUCT

TABLE-3

| PARTICULARS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Health benefits	58	63.70%
Environment factor	15	16.50%
Taste and quality	13	14.30%
Price	3	3.30%
Brand reputation	2	2.20%
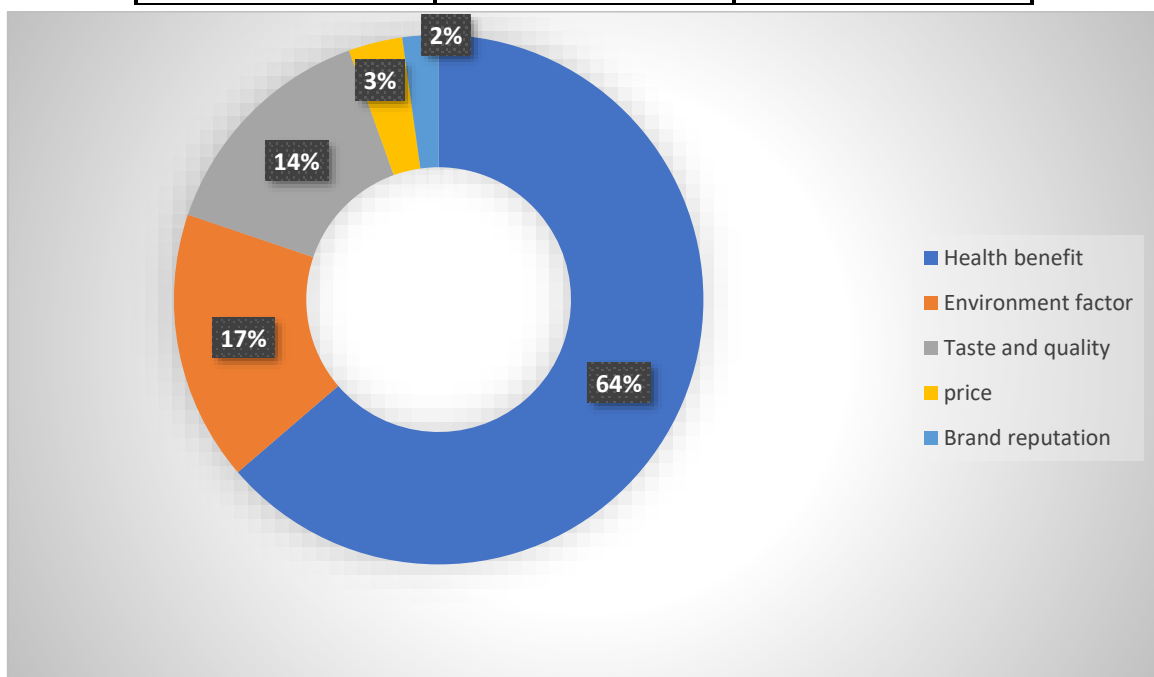
INTERPRETATION:

From the above analysis 63.70% indicated that health benefits were the most significant factor influencing their decision-making process. 16.5% of respondents for Environment factor, 14.3% of respondents for taste and quality,3.3% of respondents price and 2.2% for brand reputation.

OVERALL ATTITUDE TOWARDS BUYING ORGANIC PRODUCT

TABLE-4
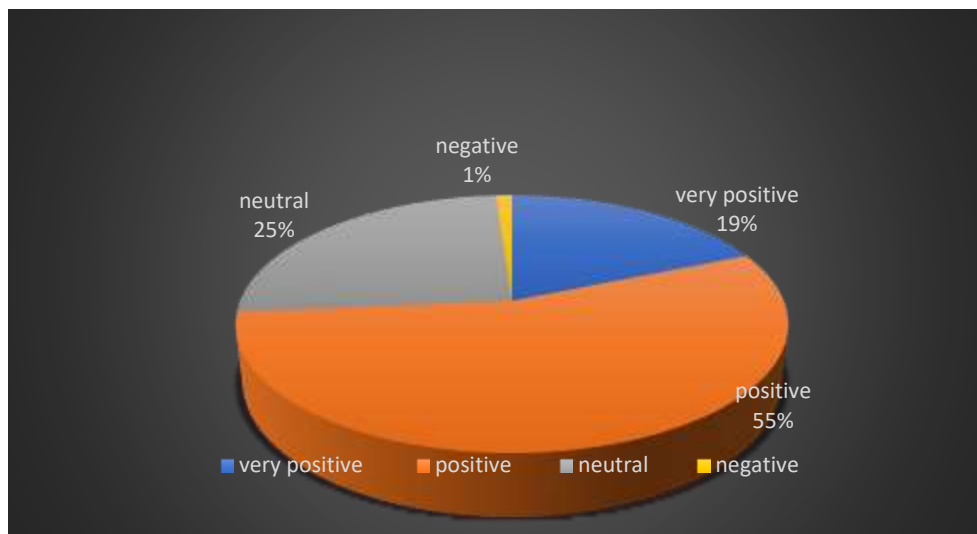
INTERPRETATION:

From the above analysis 18.5% of respondents have very positive attitude towards purchasing organic products,54.9% of respondents for positive,25.3% of respondent neutrally attitude towards purchasing organic products.1.1% were negative and 0 respondents for very negatively.

CHI-SQUARE WITH TABLE 1 AND 2

PARTICULAR	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Very positive	17	18.7%
Positive	50	54.9%
Neutral	23	25.3%
Negative	1	1.1%
Very negatively	00	00

O	E	O-E	(O-E)²	(O-E)²/E
7	7.7	-0.71	0.5041	0.0653

6	5.2	0.72	0.5184	0.981
21	20.	0.83	0.6889	0.0341
13	13.	-0.82	0.6724	0.0486
22	21.	0.64	0.4096	0.0191
14	14.	-0.63	0.3969	0.0232
3	1.7	1.22	1.4884	0.8361
0	1.2	-1.21	1.4641	1.21
1	2.9	-1.96	3.8416	1.98
4	2.0	1.97	3.8809	1.97
TOT				**6.25**

Calculated value :6.2538

DEGREE OF FREEDOM:

V=(r-1) x (c-1)

  =(5-1) x (2-1)

  =4 x 1

  = 5

Level of significance = 0.5

The calculated value is 6.25.

The table value at 5 level of significance is 11.07. Therefore, there is no significant.

C.V < T.V

 INFERENCE:

Therefore, There is no significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and their knowledge about organic product. NULL HYPOTHYSIS IS ACCEPTED.

X	Y	X^2	Y^2	xy
58	17	3,364	238	986
15	50	225	2500	750

13	23	169	529	299
03	01	09	01	03
02	00	04	00	00
TOTAL	∑ **(X)=91**	∑ **(Y)=91**	∑ **(X)² =3771**	∑ **(Y)² =3268**	∑ **(XY)=1077**

STEP: 2

STEP: 3

$$r = \frac{N(\sum xy)-(\sum x)\,(\sum y)}{\sqrt{N\sum x^2-(\sum x^2)}\sqrt{N\sum y^2-(\sum y^2)}}$$

r = **-2896/102.83*89.77**

r = **-2896/9231.05**

r = **-0.31**

The correlation coefficient can range from -1 to +1, with -1 indicating a perfect negative correlation, +1 indicating a perfect positive correlation, and 0 indicating no correlation at all.

STEP: 4

Correlation value of -0.31 indicates a moderate negative correlation between two variables. This means that as one variable increases, the other tends to decrease, and vice versa, but not perfectly so.

COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATION BETWEEN TABLE 3 AND 4

STEP: 1

AIM: To test whether, there is correlation between the factors that influence decision to buy organic products and overall attitude towards buying organic products.

The coefficient of correlation can be found out by using the direct method or when durations are taken from an assumed mean method.

X	58	15	13	03	02
Y	17	50	23	01	00

STEP: 2

X	**Y**	**X^2**	**Y^2**	**xy**
58	17	3,364	238	986
15	50	225	2500	750
13	23	169	529	299
03	01	09	01	03
02	00	04	00	00
TOTAL	∑ **(X)=91**	∑ **(Y)=91**	∑ **(X)² =3771**	∑ **(Y)² =3268**	∑ **(XY)=1077**

STEP: 3

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STEP: 4

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FINDINDS

1.39.60% of respondents moderately unknowledgeable about organic product.

2. 59.3% of the respondents are male.

3. 63.70% respondents preferred health benefits that influence there decision to buy organic product.

4. 54.9% of respondents view positive attitude towards purchasing organic products.

SUGGESTION

Given the moderate level of knowledge gaps identified, particularly among those who are somewhat or slightly unknowledgeable about organic products, there is a need for targeted educational campaigns. These campaigns can focus on debunking myths, highlighting benefits, and providing clear information about organic products

With a significant percentage of respondents valuing knowledge about the origin of organic products, companies should prioritize transparency in their sourcing and production processes. Utilizing QR codes, detailed product labels, or blockchain technology can provide consumers with the desired information about the origin and production practices.

The interest in exploring new types of organic products suggests an opportunity for companies to innovate and expand their product range. Research and development efforts should focus on introducing new organic products that cater to evolving consumer preferences

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to explore consumer awareness and attitudes towards organic products among a sample population. The findings indicate that the majority of respondents were young adults between the ages of 18 to 25. Additionally, a significant portion of the respondents were male, and a majority identified as students.

A large majority of respondents demonstrated awareness of organic products, with most preferring products grown without the use of pesticides. However, many respondents admitted to having only moderate knowledge about organic products.

When it comes to consumption patterns, a substantial number of respondents showed a preference for organic fruits and vegetables. Interestingly, many respondents believed it was important to know the origin of the organic products they purchased, even though a significant number rarely bought organic products.

Health benefits emerged as a major influencing factor for purchasing decisions. Many respondents cited health benefits as a primary reason for choosing organic products, and a substantial number agreed that organic products offer health benefits over conventional ones. Additionally, many sought information about organic products from friends and family.

REFERENCE

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