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Consumer attitude towards organic food products

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Abstract

The word "organic" refers to the way farmers grow and process agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy products and meat. Organic farming practices are designed to encourage soil and water conservation and reduce pollution. Farmers who grow organic produce and meat don't use conventional methods to fertilize, control weeds or prevent livestock disease. The present study focused on consumer attitude towards organic food products and carried out in Coimbatore City with the sample size of 150 household respondents who are familiar with Organic Food Products by adopting multistage sampling technique. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics.

Keywords: Organic Food, Health Consciousness, Nature.

1. Introduction

Organic farming was the backbone of the Indian economy and cow was worshipped (and is still done so) as a god. The cow, not only provided milk, but also provided bullocks for farming and dung which was used as fertilizers. Due to contamination of various chemicals on food consumer are diverted towards nature. It has resulted into shift towards organic food. 'Organic food' is food which is grown without use of chemical from planting seed to harvesting. Recent trend has inclined towards organic food. Nature is potential enough to grow life in it, from many years mankind is changing definition of ecosystem. Due to human interference today new species is developed by unnatural selection. Awareness of organic food is growing rapidly towards people and has started to accept the fact that today non organic items carries contamination of chemicals. Organic food is free from all the chemicals which generally used to grow crops like pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizers, which harm environment and harm human body as well. Generally, farming system used for organic food production makes use of the benefits of modern scientific methods and state of the art technologies to offer a more sustainable solution to food production (Institute of Food Science and Technology, 2005).

2. Review of Literature

Chandrashekar (2014) ^[1]. The advertisement of organic food products and better taste would influence the purchase organic food products. Mohamed and Ramesh (2014) ^[3]. the consumer attitude towards purchasing organic food products is strongly influenced by three variables namely health consciousness, environmental factors and safety considerations and health related reasons to purchase organic foods than environmental related considerations. Shashikiran and Madhavaiah (2014) ^[5]. Marketing organic products with standard packaging and a logo or statement confirming the organic status adds to the value of the products in terms of quality and social benefits, etc. Suganya and Aravinth (2014) ^[6]. Consumers who consider the food safety, quality and nutrition are becoming more important across the world, to achieve a higher degree of market share, organic marketers should introduce their products to a correct target group by adopting proper marketing strategies. Ramesh and Divya (2015) ^[4]. consumers' trust in the authenticity of the goods and price are considered as an important factor that was revealed as a barrier to the development of organic foods according to consumer information.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To know the demographic variables of the customers using organic products in Coimbatore city.
2. To find the awareness of consumer about the organic products.
3. To identify the factors influencing consumer to buy organic products.

3.1 Statement of the problem

The potential buyers using products which are harmful to the consumers have got awareness on organic products started buying and utilizing for their regular consumption. The researcher shows interest on the optimistic impact to the society thus this particular study has been carried out. Hence, the present study is conducted to know the awareness on organic food products and factors that influence the customers to buy organic products.

4. Research Methodology

Nature of Research Design

The research design adopted in the study was descriptive design, which is concerned with the descriptive of a group. In descriptive research in such a way that the respondents is able to understand clearly what the researcher wants and provides distinct information to measure the data.

4.1 Area of the Study

The population covers the customers of organic food in Coimbatore city.

4.2 Sources of Data

The study is based on primary data collection. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire prepared and contacted personally after their purchase of organic food. The secondary data was collected with the help of books, internet and journals.

4.3 Sampling Design of the Study

The sampling technique in this project is convenient sampling. The sample size comprises of different types of users who are using organic food products. A sample of 150 respondents was taken into account for finding their uses for the organic food products.

4.4 Tools for analysis

The following are the tools applied on the respondents given by the respondents to analyze and derive the result.

1. Simple Percentage analysis
2. Chi- square analysis

4.5 Limitations of the Study

1. The survey was limited to people residing in Coimbatore City only.
2. The number of respondents is 150 only.
3. The researcher has collected data by convenient sampling using questionnaire and there is a possibility of certain deviations.

Table 1: Simple Percentage Analysis

Factors	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	48
	Female	78	52
Age	Below 25 Years	75	50
	26 – 35 Years	54	36
	36 – 50 Years	12	8
	Above 50 Years	9	6
Marital Status	Married	57	38
	Unmarried	93	62
Nature of Family	Nuclear	90	60
	Joint	60	40
Members in the Family	Up to 3 Members	60	40
	4 to 5 Members	63	42
	Above 5 Members	27	18
Educational Status	School level	6	4
	College level	78	52
	Professional Course	54	36
Occupational Status	Others	12	8
	Agriculture	21	14
	Business/Professional	63	42
	Private Employee	42	28
	Government Employee	9	6
Monthly Income of the Family	House Wife	15	10
	Below Rs.10,000	9	6
	Rs.10,001 – 20,000	48	32
	Rs.20,001 – 30,000	27	18
	Above Rs.30,000	66	44

Sources: Primary Data

4.6 Chi Square Analysis

Table 2: Relationships between Monthly Income and Expenses

Monthly Income	Expenses				Total	Chi-Square Value
	Rs. 300 to Rs. 500	Rs.501 to Rs. 1000	Rs.1001 to Rs. 1500	More than Rs. 1500		
Below Rs.1000	3	3	3	3	12	.000
Rs.10001 to 20000	24	9	6	9	48	
Rs.20001 to 30000	9	12	6	0	27	
Above Rs.30000	9	27	18	9	63	
Total	45	51	33	21	150	

Source: Primary Data

Chi – Square Value - 16.6952381, DF – 9, Significance. 000
 $H_0 =$ There is no significant relationship between monthly income and expenses of the respondent.

The chi- square value was 16.6952381 and it was found to be significant at 5% level as the significance value is 0.000,

hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between monthly income and expenses.

Table 3: Age and Period of Consumption

Age	Period of Consumption					Chi-Square Value
	6 months	One Year	Two Years	More than Three Years	Total	
Below 25 Years	24	27	9	15	75	0.054
26-35 Years	18	27	6	3	54	
36-50 Years	0	6	3	3	12	
Above 50 Years	3	3	3	0	9	
Total	45	63	21	21	150	

Source: Primary Data

Chi – Square Value - 16.695, DF – 9, Significance. 054

H₀= There is no significant Relationship between Age and Period of consumption of the respondent

The chi- square value was 16.695 and it was found to be significant at 5% level as the significance value is 0.054; hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between respondent age and period of consumption.

5. Suggestions

1. Allocation of separate shares for organic food products in departmental stores
2. The study shows that further steps have to be taken to increase the awareness level of organic products. Government can increase the trend for consumption of organic foods by increasing public awareness (such as programs and advertisements in TV and other channels) and further government should come forward to provide subsidy for organic producers.
3. Organic food particularly fruits and vegetables are highly quality, nutritious and taste better. The same can be maintained to hang on to current customers and focus on new customers by increasing availability of the products.

6. Conclusion

The awareness about organic food products is increasing among the people and their intention to buy organic food is shaped by various beliefs. Their actual buying behavior is direct result of strong intent and attitudinal values towards the benefits of the organic products. An attempt has been made in this study to evaluate what influences the consumers to purchase organic food products. These people generally seeks information from newspaper, magazine and at point of purchase i.e. food vendor. In addition these groups of buyers are premium product consumers and prefer to shop from exclusive outlets and of course they love nature.

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