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## Impact of consumers attitude towards organic foods in South Coimbatore

**M Aarthi and Dr. S Balusamy**

### Abstract

This paper describes the findings from a survey conducted in South Coimbatore of Tamil Nadu people consuming organic food products. The consumption of organic food is on the rise due to increasing health consciousness among people regarding food intake, as well as to the growth of the organic agricultural sector. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the motivations factors of buying organic foods in consumers. The questionnaire included in a number of criteria that influence consumers when buying organic food. The result shows most consumers associate organic at first with milk, fruits and vegetables with organic products. Data were collected among 200 respondents in southern part of Coimbatore. So, research represents only the research samples. This is not generalized. According to factor analysing four factors are important for consumer to motivate buying organic foods. They are health, quality, price and food safety.

**Keywords:** Consumers attitude, organic foods, South Coimbatore

### Introduction

Organic agriculture is produced with an objective to produce healthy and quality foods without using synthetic chemical products. Thus, organic agriculture not only preserves the environment, but it also improves public health, bringing significant benefits both to the economy as well as to the social cohesion of rural areas. The interest of consumers and public institutions in organically produced foods has increased, mainly in developed countries, in response to consumers 'concerns about food safety, human health and the environment.

Consumers across the world have shown a rise in the organic food purchase with rising health concerns and cancer cases being reported far more prominently than earlier. Organic food industry, over recent years has shown a considerable growth globally, Organic food is considered to be a biggest market in growth stage. People are sensitive about nutrition and add value to the food that they consume. And increasing knowledge of human also leads to have safety and healthy food consumption. In this juncture it is necessary to investigate the motive or attitude formation towards consumption of organic food products. Individual and family health is given more concern; this development has motivated us to investigate to explore the information regarding organic food consumers.

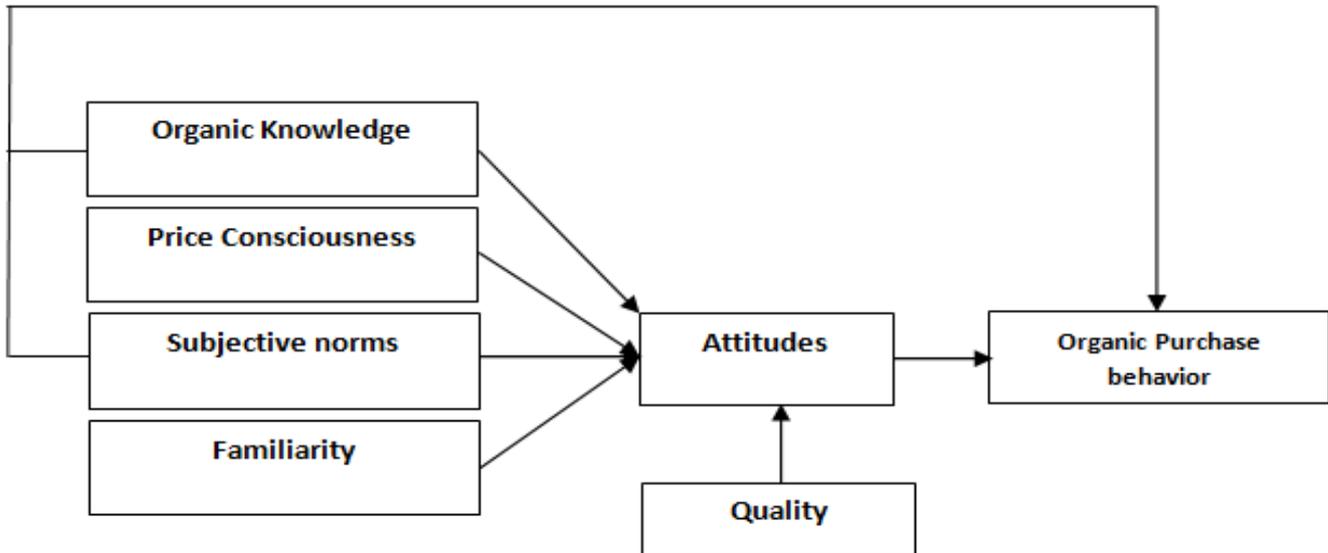
Organic produce or products are those produced and processed through environment friendly techniques, non-chemically treated, fresh or minimally processed, non-pesticide, free from genetically modified organism, having organic certificates, traditional/indigenous products, herbal product and naturally grown. The market of organic products is growing as the number of people willing to eat organic food and attitude towards organic food products is increasing. The future of organic agriculture will, to a large extent, also depend on favourable attitude and motivational factors towards organic food products. The increase of the environmental awareness had a considerate effect on consumer behaviour, with the green product market expanding at a remarkable rate. Therefore, in the past decades there have been an increased of production and consumption of organically-produced products which is seen as having less impact to the environment.

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## Organic purchasing Behaviours



### Statement of the Problem

Even considering the perceived health benefit, consumers are currently in a confused state of mind about the actual meaning and implication of “organic”. They are also not clear about the difference offered by products labelled ‘organic’ or ‘natural’. Despite the doubling of prices of these products in the past years, consumers are hesitating to buy organic food products. This was a reason to undertake this study.

### Objectives of the Study

- To study about consumer opinion and attitude of organic food products in South Coimbatore.
- To identify the factors influencing the consumers while buying organic food products.
- To offer suggestions based on the finding of the study.

### Review of Literature

This literature review aims to provide a detailed account of literatures on the consumer attitude towards organic food. In general, the consumers believe that organic food products are expensive.

Grunert and Juhl (1995), if a customer concerns for the environment then he/she knows that the “production, distribution, disposal and use of products result in external costs, and sees such costs negatively and tries to reduce them as much as possible through his/her personal actions”.

Huang (1996) noted that there is a strong relation between the growth in organic product consumption and the growth in environmental concern in the public.

Annelies Vermeir and Verbeke (2004), have proved that consumers weigh up health benefits of organic food products on a higher scale than its environmental benefits or benefit to the community in their decision to purchase organic food products.

Titians de Meters *et al* (2008) In this paper author target to investigate the consumers' decision-making process for organically produced foods in Italy. Finally, consumers who try to follow a healthy diet and balanced life are likely to have more positive attitudes towards organic food products and towards the environment, inducing a more likely intention to purchase organic foods.

Werner and Alvensleben (2011) stated that there is a relationship between the quantity of consumers concern for the environment and their motivation to buy products that are organic.

### Research Methodology

#### Area of the Study

The area of the study is Southern part of Coimbatore city.

#### Period of the Study

The study was conducted for a period of six months

#### Sources of Data

The study is based on primary data collection. The data has been collected from the users of organic food products. The secondary data was collected from the articles, journals, newspapers and various websites.

#### 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. The study is focused in Southern part of Coimbatore city with 210 questionnaires being circulated but resulted in 200 filled in responses complete in all aspects representing a response rate of 95%

#### Limitations of the Study

1. The area was wide since it is confined only to southern part of Coimbatore city, so results cannot be universally accepted.
2. The study is limited to the sample size of 200 respondents only. So, this cannot be a “full proof”
3. The researcher has collected data by convenient sampling using questionnaire and there is a possibility of certain deviations.

**Demographic Profile of Respondents**

| S. No. | Factor                  | Items               | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1      | Gender                  | Male                | 102       | 51         |
|        |                         | Female              | 98        | 49         |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 2      | Age                     | Below 25 years      | 26        | 13         |
|        |                         | 26-35 years         | 104       | 52         |
|        |                         | 36-45 years         | 64        | 32         |
|        |                         | Above 45 years      | 6         | 3          |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 3      | Education Qualification | No formal education | 2         | 1          |
|        |                         | School level        | 60        | 30         |
|        |                         | College level       | 100       | 50         |
|        |                         | Professional        | 38        | 19         |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 4      | Occupation              | Agriculture         | 6         | 3          |
|        |                         | Business            | 52        | 26         |
|        |                         | Salaried            | 102       | 51         |
|        |                         | Retired person      | 2         | 1          |
|        |                         | House wives         | 22        | 11         |
|        |                         | Self employed       | 16        | 8          |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 5      | Marital status          | Married             | 156       | 78         |
|        |                         | Unmarried           | 44        | 22         |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 6      | Family type             | Nuclear family      | 138       | 69         |
|        |                         | Joint family        | 62        | 31         |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 7      | Monthly Income          | Below 10000         | 4         | 2          |
|        |                         | 11000-25000         | 6         | 3          |
|        |                         | 26000-35000         | 182       | 91         |
|        |                         | Above 35000         | 8         | 4          |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |
| 8      | Residential Area        | Rural               | 30        | 15         |
|        |                         | Semi urban          | 96        | 48         |
|        |                         | Urban               | 74        | 37         |
| Total  |                         |                     | 200       | 100        |

**Primary Source Data**

From the above table it is cleared that 51% of the respondents are male and the remaining 49% of the respondents are female. The majority 52% of the respondents are belong to the age group of 26-35 years, 50% of the respondents are in college level, 51% of the respondents are salaried, 78% of the respondents are married, 69% of the respondents are belong to nuclear family, 91% of the respondents are belong to the income group of Rs.26000-35000 and 48% of the respondents are belong to semi urban.

**Distribution of the Sample Respondents Based On Study**

|       |  |                   |     |     |
|-------|--|-------------------|-----|-----|
| 1     | Awareness Experience                     | Less than a year  | 82  | 41  |
|       |  | 1-2 years         | 94  | 47  |
|       |  | 2-3 years         | 10  | 5   |
|       |  | 3-4 years         | 2   | 1   |
| Total |  |                   | 200 | 100 |
| 2     | Factors Influences                       | Advertisement     | 82  | 41  |
|       |  | Suggestions from  | 94  | 47  |
|       |  | Doctor advice     | 10  | 5   |
|       |  | Awareness program | 2   | 1   |
|       |  | Dietician         | 12  | 1   |
| Total |  |                   | 200 | 100 |
| 3     | Purchase Decision                        | Own               | 146 | 73  |
|       |  | Spouse            | 2   | 1   |
|       |  | Family Members    | 52  | 26  |
| Total |  |                   | 200 | 100 |
| 4     | Amount spent for every month             | Up to Rs. 2,000   | 18  | 9   |
|       |  | 2001-4000         | 174 | 87  |
|       |  | 4001-6000         | 8   | 4   |
| Total |  |                   | 200 | 100 |
| 5     | Usage frequency of organic food products | Weekly            | 22  | 11  |
|       |  | Two weeks once    | 50  | 25  |
|       |  | Monthly           | 56  | 28  |
|       |  | Quarterly         | 2   | 1   |
|       |  | As per need       | 70  | 35  |
| Total |  |                   | 200 | 100 |

The majority 47% of the respondents are aware about 1-2 year, 47% of the respondents are influenced through suggestion from friends, 73% of the respondents are taking decision their own, 87% of the respondents are spending Rs. 2001-4000 and 35% of the respondents are buying organic food products as per their need.

**Suggestions**

Consumers felt that there may be chances for prevalence of duplicate products. So, retailers may take steps to overcome the issue. All the food products are not available in organic brand. Price of the organic products is high compared to conventional products. So, price has to be reduced by the whole sellers & retailers.

**Conclusion**

To accomplish the objective of the study, the researcher must depend on both primary and secondary data. The demographic factors of the consumers are analysed considering the attitude which is an important measure that will help to understand the level of preference for the products is portrayed in the study. The attitude and preference to purchase organic food products was found to be satisfactory, however, based on the interference of the policy makers and initiative by the government will help to achieve good health situation by the consumers and prospering business by the producers and retailers promoting organic food products. Consumer behaviour plays a major role in Organic food products segment. The marketers of organic foods need to be innovative and dynamic to complete with the changing purchase behaviour in the Organic food products market among urban residents the study brought out the fact that the people were well aware of images and availability, but not loyal entirely to organic food products. Knowledge and awareness about organic products could affect attitudes and perceptions

about the product and, ultimately, buying decisions of the consumers. Consumers' willingness to purchase is influenced by limited and erratic supply, higher price of the products and very limited access and information.

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