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Market availability of organic food in the category of cereals, millets and pulses in Patna Sadar

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Abstract

Our mental, physical, psychological, emotional well-being depends on how food we eat is grown – organically or conventionally. The eco-friendly farming practices affect plants, animals and humans equally, positively and climactically. Organic food production has several potential benefits for human health. Certified organic products are those which have been produced, stored, processed, handled and marketed in accordance with precise standards and certified as “Organic” by a certification body. Organic food is universally accepted as safest for consumption due to its eco-friendly farming methods and nutritive values, which makes it more edible and nature fresh. By organic farming, organic food is produced. Organic farming was actually initiated as an answer to the environmental sufferings caused by the use of chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilisers. This study aims at studying the market availability of organic food in the category of cereals, millets and Pulses in Patna Sadar. For the purpose of this study, 60 shops (30 supermarket and 30 kirana store) from the six circles of Patna Sadar have been selected. In Patna, selling of organic food is increasing and so are its consumers. The organic food market in India is a niche market, with the market expected to see wider penetration in the coming years. Owing to the growing incidences of food adulteration, the demand for organic food is anticipated to rise in the coming years. The growing level of health consciousness in the country is a key factor driving the demand for organic food.

Keywords: Organic food, certified organic items, organic market, organic farming

1. Introduction

Consumers are usually anxious about food quality; production techniques and provenance and more often than not, trust organic foods easily. The food-related decision-making process is complex and is influenced by many determinants such as: Economic: Cost, income, and availability; Physical: Accessibility, education, and skills; Social: Culture, family, and meal patterns; Psychological: Mood, stress, and guilt and Personal: attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge about food. Various forms of food available in the present market can be raw, formulated, extruded, processed and organic. The word ‘organic’ describes the way in which agricultural foodstuffs are produced and prepared. Particular requirements have to be fulfilled in order to term items as ‘Organic’.

The organic food market in India is a niche market, with the market expected to see wider penetration in the coming years. Owing to the growing incidences of food adulteration, the demand for organic food is anticipated to rise in the coming years. The e-commerce industry growth also serves as an aid to enterprises as a way of appealing to potential consumers due to the lucrative offers and wider market penetration of the platforms. Consumers have their own reasons for going organic as well. For one, they want to enjoy food that is free from chemicals used in pesticides or conventional fertilizers. Others just want to be healthier or try something new. Living a healthy life is becoming increasingly important. In present scenario, being a smart consumer helps to combat several difficulties while shopping. A smart consumer takes care of several things before making any purchase. Firstly, consumers should research before buying, whether they can afford any particular product or not. Secondly, before buying consumers should go through available reviews of the product for better clarification. Thirdly, consumers should purchase from a reputable brand which maintains the quality of the product. Fourthly, consumers must be aware of facilities such as refund, exchange, return as well as warranty prior to buying products. Many sellers do not provide smooth return options for its customers which can be problematic.

Consumers of organic food are preferring online purchasing due to unavailability but most of the consumers are not comfortable with online shopping which leads to product drop out.

2. Review of Literature

Bhattarai K (2019) ^[1] reported in the research article titled “Consumers’ Willingness to Pay for Organic Vegetables: Empirical Evidence from Nepal” that consumers are ready to pay more for organic vegetables as they are more concerned regarding their health issues and want to avoid different vegetable borne diseases. There is a necessity for sufficient supply of organic vegetables.

Elayaraja M & Vijai C (2020) ^[3] reported in the research article entitled “Organic farming in India: Benefits and Challenges” that there is developing significance on health benefits as people are becoming aware regarding organic foods. Organic farming developed products should be more available to the consumers.

Erdal B & Turhan S (2020) ^[4] reported in the research article titled “Consumer Behaviour and Purchase Intention for Organic Food” that university graduates are more interested in purchasing of organic food and there is continuous increase in the demand of organic food among people. Most consumed organic products are milk and dairy products. Knowledge and awareness level of people regarding organic food needs to be measure for understanding their buying behaviour.

Gunaseelaprabhu K & Ramya J (2019) ^[5] reported in the research article titled “On Recent Trends in Consumer Perception and Behaviour Towards Organic Food” that food consumption practice is changing worldwide among people. The health issues and environmental hazards have been the driving forces behind the shift towards the consumption patterns. The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides to keep away the bugs in turn affect the humans and soil too. Hence a consumer prefers to go for quality food taking and his perception towards organic food is based on more desirable characteristics such as nutritive value and taste.

Malkanathi *et al.* (2021) ^[6] reported in the research article titled “Consumers’ Awareness on Organic Food: Case of Urban Sri Lanka” that in most of the urban consumers are aware of organic food while their purchasing intentions are affected because of high cost of organic food. Consumers having higher education and high monthly income seemed more likely to purchase organic food. Majority of consumers purchase conventional food than organic food. Positive approaches need to be implemented for the growth of organic food market.

Sivaranjani R & Thayammal IP (2022) ^[7] reported in the review article titled “A Study on Consumer Preference Towards Organic Food Products in Tirunelveli” that a growing number of educated people prefer to purchase organic food over conventional food. Fresh vegetables and fruits are the most preferred organic food followed by milk and milk products. Consumers prefer organic food based on

their perception that organic food is healthy, safe and environmentally friendly.

Thamaraiselvi *et al.* (2020) ^[8] reported in the research article titled “Consumers’ Preference towards the Usage of Organic and Non-Organic Food Products” that organic food products proceed without the use of synthetic pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers while non organic food products use synthetics. Many consumers prefer organic food products over non organic food products that helps to provide unpolluted environment. Apart from health, environment and food, some other characteristics like taste, freshness, nutrition and appearance also influencing the consumers to prefer organic food products.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Objective

To study the market availability of organic food in the category of cereals, millets and Pulses in Patna Sadar.

3.2 Research Method

- The locale of the study was Patna Sadar.
- Organic cereals, millets and pulses can be purchased via two modes: Online and In-store. For the purpose of this study, 60 shops (30 supermarket and 30 kirana shop) from the six circles (New capital circle, Patliputra circle, Kankarbagh circle, Bankipur circle, Patna city circle and Azimabad circle) of Patna Sadar were selected by purposive sampling technique.
- Data for the study in the present research were collected by doing regular visits to the shop. The availability of organic food in the category of cereals, millets and pulses in the shops were checked according to the list prepared.
- After the collection of data, analysis of data was shown through graph using percentage

4. Results and Discussion

The present research was conducted in order to study the market availability of organic cereals, millets and Pulses in Patna Sadar. The information obtained from this study and their analysis is as follows:

4.1 Organic food available in the category of Cereals, Millets and Pulses are as follows

Cereals: Whole wheat multigrain flour, whole wheat flour, barley flour, maida, sattu, sooji, oats, daliya, maize flour, rice flour, white rice, brown rice, basmati rice, black rice, idli rice, dosa rice, sona masoori rice, parmal rice, puffed rice, poha and quinoa.

Millets: Little millet, jowar millet, bajra millet, foxtail millet, kodo millet, ragi millet, buckwheat millet, amaranth millet, proso millet, barnyard millet and brown top millet.

Pulses: Moong dal, green moong (whole), chilka hara moong dal, arhar/ toor dal, masoor dal, urad dal, mixed dal, chana dal, brown chana, kabuli chana, rajma, soyabean whole and besan.

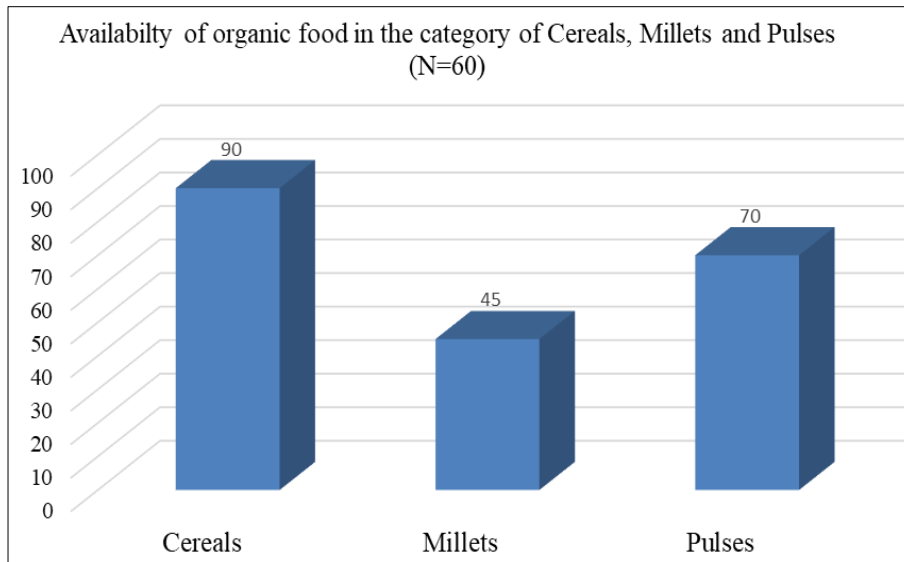


Fig 1: Market availability of Organic food in the category of Cereals, Millets and Pulses

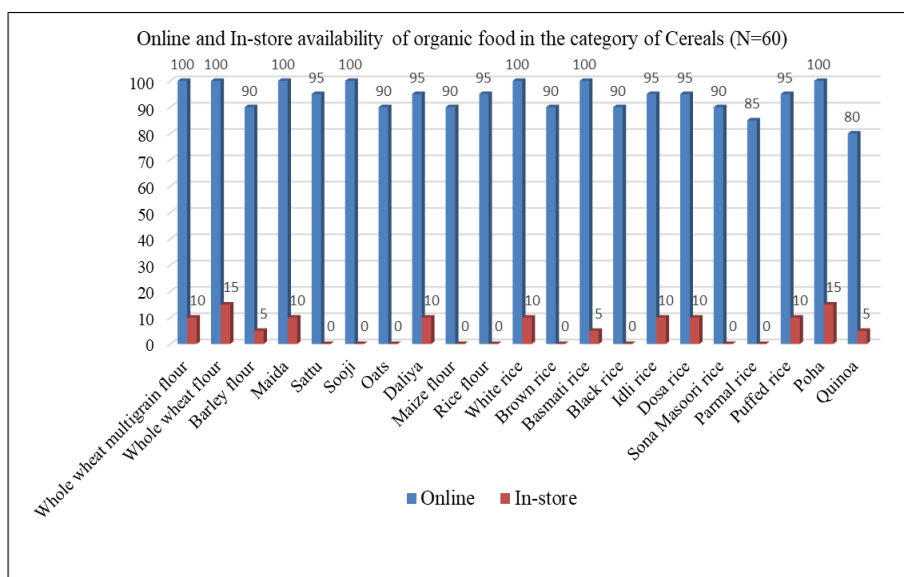


Fig 2: Online and In-store availability of organic food in the category of Cereals

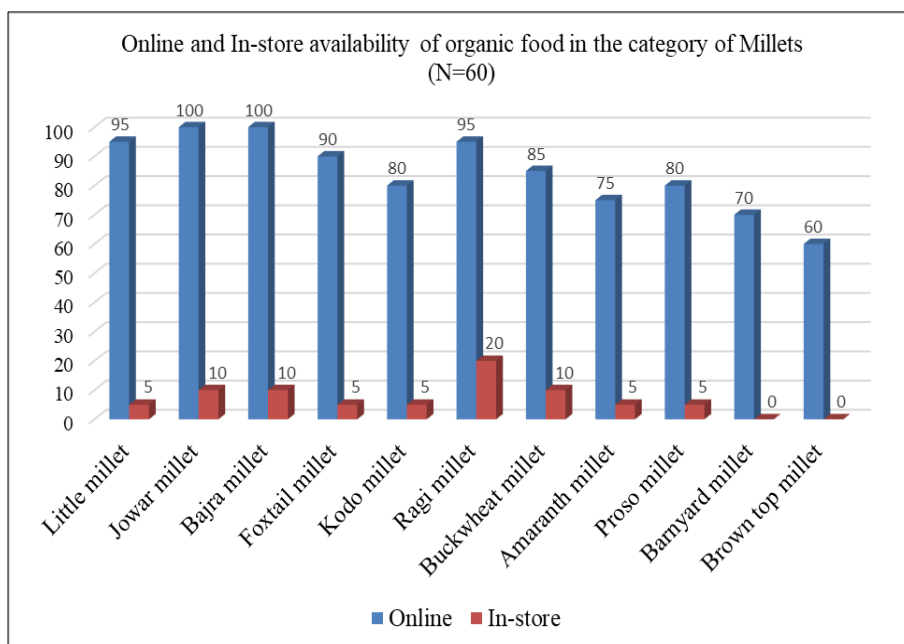


Fig 3: Online and In-store availability of organic food in the category of Millets

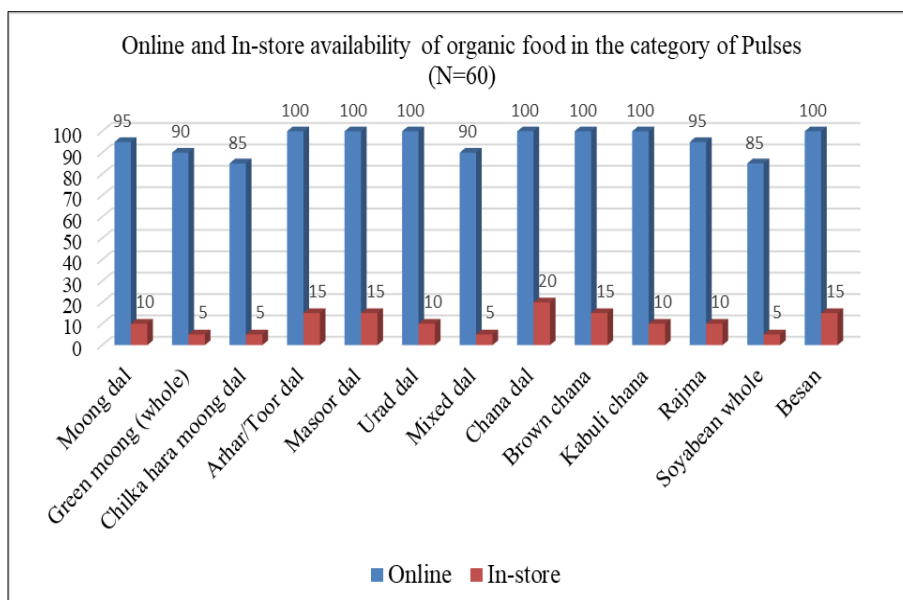


Fig 4: Online and In-store availability of organic food in the category of Pulses

Above figures represent the online and in-store availability of various organic foods in the category of cereals, millets and pulses in Patna Sadar. A market survey of 45 organic food items (21 cereals, 11 millets and 13 pulses) among 60 shops (30 supermarket and 30 kirana store) was conducted. In line with the findings of Darga, A. & Pendli, A. (2019) [2] in which he stated that various products are available in the organic food market which helps consumer to know different types of organic products. There is a tremendous change in the last few years in the awareness of the consumers regarding organic food. In Patna Sadar, the online delivery service of organic foods is good as compared to in-store availability. Lack of awareness and knowledge regarding various categories of organic food among consumers was observed. Lesser availability and higher cost of organic food affect the purchasing intentions of consumer. Especially organic millets were less popular among the consumers. Availability of one or two brands of organic food at kirana shop was there which offers no choice for consumers to choose right food for them. Now a days, consumer refer digital media which provide enough information regarding different brands of organic food and they demand for particular brand at the shop but unavailability of more brands was there which affects the consumption of organic food. Online availability of organic food helps consumer to choose particular brand of their choice with doorstep delivery. Consumer can explore organic brands available in the market. Price comparison can be done easily also product reviews can affect their decision making. In-store availability of organic food provides better consumer service such as immediate home delivery, returning items facility, better interaction with the salesman and clarification of query, better experience of the product and store environment.

5. Conclusion

- Online availability of organic food in the category of cereals, millets and pulses in the market was good while in-store, very few items were available. 90% organic cereals, 45% organic millets and 70% organic pulses were available in the market of Patna Sadar.

- Online delivery service of organic food was good as compared to in-store availability.

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