

CUSTOMERS AWARENESS TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS - A STUDY IN VILLUPURAM DISTRICT

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Abstract

"In a nutshell, organic foods are minimally processed to maintain the integrity of the food and are free of artificial ingredients, preservatives, and irradiation." Organic products are obtained through environmentally friendly processes, such as cultivation techniques that take into account both the attributes of the final product and the methods of production. A diverse range of organic and non-organic food consumers were approached and questioned in order to obtain their observations and perspectives on organic food. Organic food consumers do not all have the same approach to organic food. As a result, the statistical process helps us understand the relationship and model of consumer behaviour trends in organic food in India.

Keywords: Organic Products; Consumers; Behaviour; Health; Retail store etc.

Introduction

Because different countries have different standards for products to be certified "organic," there is no common definition of "organic." In a nutshell, organic foods are minimally processed to preserve the integrity of the food and are free of artificial ingredients, preservatives, and irradiation. Organic products are obtained through environmentally friendly processes, such as cultivation techniques that take into account both the attributes of the final product and the methods of production.

A diverse range of organic and non-organic food consumers were approached and questioned in order to obtain their observations and perspectives on organic food. Organic food consumers do not all take the same approach to organic food. As a result, the statistical process aids us in comprehending the consumer's relationship and model.

Over the last few decades, there has been a sea change in the way people think about agriculture and food marketing. Previously, the seasons and climate of an area determined what would be grown and when, but now it is the "market" that determines what it wants and what should be grown. The emphasis is now on quantity and "outer" quality rather than intrinsic or nutritional quality, also known as "vitality." Pesticide

The environment. Pesticide use has resulted in massive levels of chemical build up in our environment, including soil, water, air, animals, and even our own bodies. Fertilizers have a short-term effect on productivity but a long-term negative impact on the environment, where they remain for years after leaching and running off, contaminating ground water and water bodies. The use of hybrid seeds and the practise of monoculture have posed a serious threat to local and indigenous varieties, whose germplasm may be lost forever.

Indian civilization thrived on organic farming and was one of the most prosperous countries in the world until the British took over. In traditional India, all agriculture was done organically, with fertilisers, pesticides, and so on derived from plant and animal products. Organic farming was the backbone of the Indian economy, and cows were (and still are) worshipped as gods. The cow not only provided milk, but also bullocks for farming and dung for fertiliser.

Organic farming has been practised in India for thousands of years. The fantastic 1. High premium: Organic food is typically priced 20-30% higher than conventional food. This premium is critical for a small farmer whose income is only enough to feed his or her family for one meal.

2. Low capital investment: Unlike chemical farming, organic farming typically does not necessitate a large capital investment. Furthermore, because organic fertilisers and pesticides can be produced locally, the farmer's yearly costs are also low. Agriculture is heavily reliant on external factors such as climate, pests, and disease. Furthermore, most small farmers rely on natural rain for water. As a result, in the event of a natural disaster, pest or disease attack, or irregular rainfall, result, put it into practise.

5. Traditional knowledge: Small farmers have a wealth of traditional knowledge within them and within their community. The majority of this traditional knowledge cannot be applied to chemical farming. However, when it comes to organic farming, farmers can use traditional knowledge. Furthermore, in the case of organic farming, small farmers are not reliant on those who provide chemical know-how.

SI.No	Products	SINo.	Products
1	Bajra-mustard-wheat	11	Bajra
2	Chilly	12	Mustard
3	Cereals	13	Til
4	Pulses	14	Wheat
5	Kholar	15	Cumin
6	Maize	16	Moong
7	Ginger	17	Soybean
8	Bharatpurbajra	18	Large cardamom
9	Alwar	19	Passion fruit
10	Wheat and bajra	20	Cotton grass

2. STUDY SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE

With rising concerns about health and food safety, many consumers have turned to organic products. The increased consumer interest in organic food has been attributed, among other things, to the growing demand for food free of pesticides and chemical residues. Organic food promotes a healthy balance of humans, other living organisms, and nature. It also encourages the use of no artificial preservatives and the preservation of food's originality. This prevents the excessive use of harmful ingredients and, as a result, ensures health.

Purpose of this study was to learn about consumer attitudes toward organic food product consumption and to see if there was any potential for changing their behaviour. The study's rationale is that environmental consideration can only come from well-informed citizens who are aware of, and fully committed to, their rights to good health and the environment. However, before changing any behaviour, it is necessary to assess the current level of consumer awareness and knowledge. As a result, consumer attitudes, perceptions of organic food products, willingness to pay for organic food products, and intention to purchase organic food products

2.1. STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. Assessing and evaluating the factors that promote the consumption of organic products in the study area.
2. Examine potential markets for organic products.
3. To investigate consumers' attitudes toward organic products in the study area.
4. Synergy with life forms: Organic farming involves synergy with various plant and animal life forms. Small farmers can understand this

3. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from selected consumers using Simple Random Sampling techniques and Retail Outlets of Organic Products, Organic Products Marketing Agencies, by administering structured questionnaires. Secondary data was gathered from the Department of Horticulture and Organic Farming Certification Agencies.

3.1 Sample Design

The following sample size will be used to collect primary data in order to understand the demand factors for organic products and customer awareness of organic products in the villupuram district.

SI.No	Name of the Retailers	No.of Customers
1	Village Natural Foods	50
2	Ezhil Organic farm	50

3.2 Analytical Statistical Tool

SPSS, Multivariate Analysis, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), and will be adapted to analyze consumers' responses to organic products in the Villupuram District.

3.3 THE STUDY'S LIMITATIONS

The research was limited to Village Natural Foods and Ezhil organic stores in the Villupuram District, as well as organic products. The conclusion based solely on the responses of the respondents in the study area.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

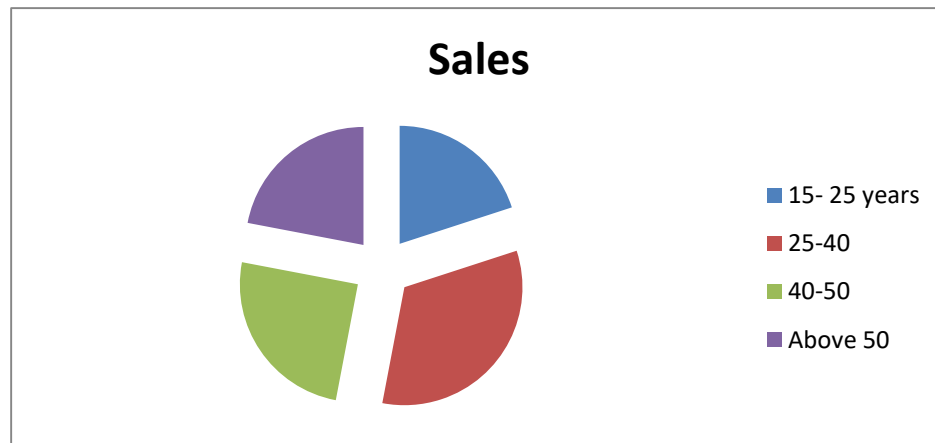
Table 1: Respondent based on Gender

SL	Gender	No.of respondents	Percent age
1	Male	59	59
2	Female	41	41
Total		100	100

The above table1 reveals that the 59 percent of Respondents were belonging to Male, remaining of the 41% of the respondents were Female. Majority of the male respondents were purchased organic products.

Table2. Respondents on their Age

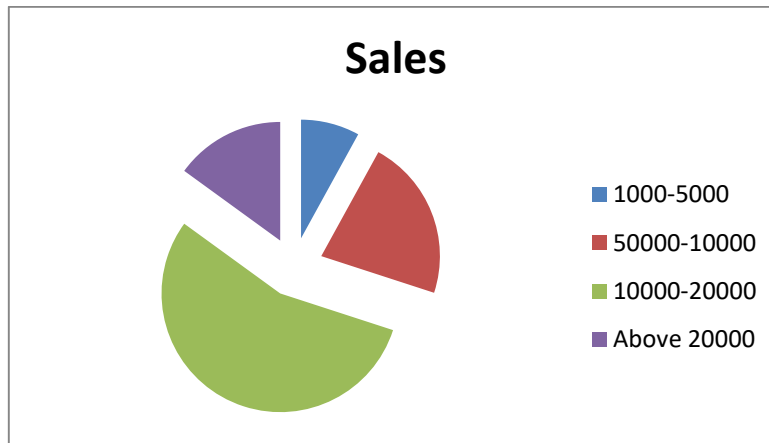
SLN O	Age	No. of Respondent	Percent age
1	15-25years	20	20.0
2	25-40	33	33.0
3	40-50	25	25.0
4	Above50	22	22.0
Total		100	100.0



The table 2 shows that 20 percent of the respondents are in the age between 15-25 years old, 33 percent of respondents are in age between 25-40years, 25 percent of respondents are in 40 to 50 years old age and remaining 22 percent of respondents are above 50 years old out of 100 respondents. The ages between 40-50 years are well aware about organic products, and they are the head of the family, so that they purchase more in the study area.

Table3.Monthly income of the respondents.

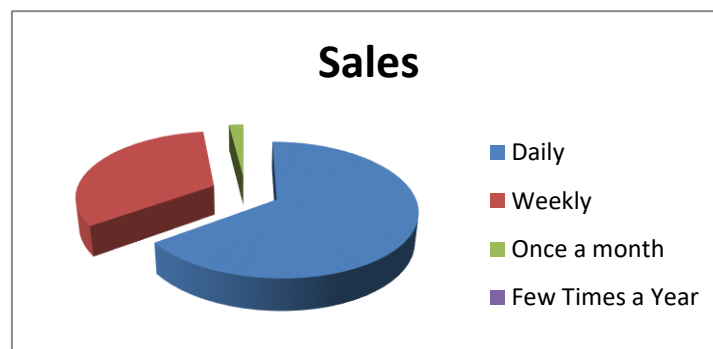
SI NO	Income of the Family	No of Respondent	Percent age
1	1000-5000	8	8.0
2	5000-10000	22	22.0
3	10000-20000	55	55.0
4	Above20000	15	15.0
Total		100	100.0



The above table 3 shows that 8% of respondents are having monthly income between Rs 1000-5000. 22% of respondents are having income between Rs 5000-10000, 55% of respondents are having in come between Rs 10000-20000 and rest 15% of respondents are having income above 20000, out of 100 respondents considered for study.

Table4.The classification Respondents based on frequently purchase of products

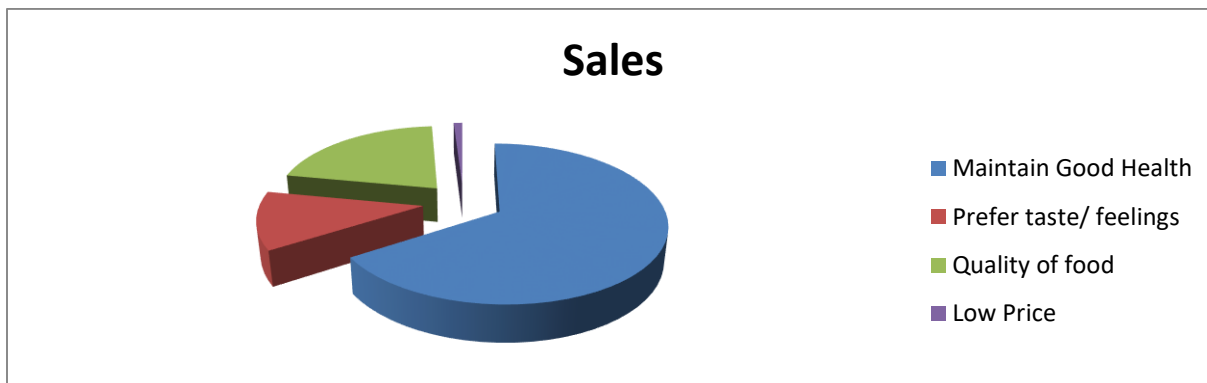
SLN o	Duration	Noof Respondents	Percent age
1	Daily	65	65.0
2	Weekly	33	33.0
3	Once a month	2	2.0
4	Few Times a Year	0	0.0
Total		100	100.0



The table 5: shows that the 65 percent of respondents are buying Daily Organic products, because most of the organic products are perishable in nature, 33 percent of Respondents are weekly once purchasing and remaining 2 percent of respondents once a month a purchasing of organic products out of 100 Respondents.

Table 5.Reasons for purchase of the Organic Products.

SLN o	Reasons	Noof Respondent s	Percent age
1	Maintain Good Health	66	66.0
2	Prefer taste/feelings	12	12.0
3	Quality of food	21	21.0
4	Low Price	1	1.0
Total		100	100.0



The table 5 describes that the 66 percent of respondents prefer organic food to maintain good health, 12 percent of respondents prefers for its taste and other feelings, and 21 percent of respondents are prefers to Quality of food and remaining 1 percent of the respondents were prefers as low price out of 100 respondents.

5. FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

1. The main problems of organic consumer are irregular availability of organic products, sometimes the organic consumer would purchase non organic products along with organic products.
2. Organic products are more expensive than non-organic products. As a result, organic consumers will not be purchasing a greater quantity of products.

3. There are a limited number of organic products available on the market.
4. There is a lack of consumer awareness of organic products.
5. The organic products are not properly certified for many organic certified agency or authority.
6. The number of organic product shops in the city is limited.
7. There is a lack of technology for the procurement of organic products.

5.1 Suggestions:

1. There's any need to open organic product marketing shops in each extension area of the Vilupuram District. The creation of awareness of organic products among consumers is required.
2. Sustained improvements in product features would result in increased consumption of organic food products.
3. The increased frequency of viewing organic food product advertisements and better taste would influence the purchase of organic food products. The impact of organic food product advertising on education, particularly among consumers.
4. Variables such as familiarity, personal ideology, social interaction, and monitoring habits had a greater influence on buying organic food products.
5. Customers' familiarity with organic food products is determined by marketer promotional efforts.

5.2 Conclusion

For a long time, the significance of organic food products was overlooked. As a result of environmental sustainability, emphasis is shifting toward organic food products rather than conventional farming. The study revealed that while people were aware of images and availability, they were not entirely loyal to organic food products. Without a doubt, the respondent was drawn to organic food products. As a result, marketers must devise promotions that are both realistic and moral, and product availability in terms of volume and variety are required to be successful in marketing organic food products. Consumers are willing to pay a price premium of 5-50 percent for organic products, which could be viewed as an investment in human health. Knowledge and awareness about organic products may influence consumers' attitudes and perceptions of the product, and, ultimately, their purchasing decisions.

Vegetables, followed by fruits and beans, are the most preferred and highly demanded commodities at the moment, and the price of vegetables, particularly leafy vegetables, is higher than that of other normal vegetables. However, quality factors influence consumer preferences for organic products, with the most important being health and nutritional value, taste, and freshness and overall appearance. Consumers' willingness

to buy is influenced by limited and erratic supply, higher product prices, and very limited access and information.

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