

TURNING OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

The word organic product means using natural way, pesticide free, additive- free, chemical free, non chemical, natural. Organic farming protects soil, reduces pollution and results in healthy food -grains, fruits and vegetables etc. Organic products are made up from materials produced by organic agricultural. The objective of the present paper is to know about reasons for turning of consumers' towards organic food products and the basic reasons behind use of such products in India. Consumers' interest in organic food items is increasing in almost all the countries developed or developing because of health awareness among consumers. But the market share of such consumers is still insignificant as the share of organic food market is much smaller than the total food market. In Indian context, there is irregularity in the supply of organic products. Packaging for organic food products is not proper. Only a few farmers do organic farming. Cost issue is also important factor in purchasing the organic products. As the supply of organic food products is not sufficient, the prices of these products go high. The present study concludes that the consumers are turning towards organic food products because of their impact on consumers' health and on sustainable development of agriculture. Moreover people are more preferring organic food products due to harmfulness of pesticides, fertilizers etc. in inorganic food products.

Keywords: Food Products, Organic, Consumers.

Introduction: Food is one among the three elements viz. air, water, food those are means to our survival. Food is a basic necessity product and majority of our food is adulterated. How can we live a long, healthy and prosperous life with adulterated and contaminated food? The answer to this question is a key point of turning people towards organic products. Fertilizers, pesticides are used for more production; chemicals are used to ripen the fruits and to maintain the freshness of

fruits and vegetables. Hence we are eating a slow and steady poison with our food. This will be harmful for our health in long run whose negative results are not seen immediately. But now-a-days, people are becoming aware of the fact of harmfulness of pesticides, fertilizers etc.

The word organic product means using natural way, pesticide free, additive-free, chemical free, non chemical, natural. Organic farming protects soil, reduces pollution and results in healthy food -grains, fruits and vegetables etc. Organic products are made up from materials produced by organic agricultural. There are different types of organic products. However organic products are more known for food items like organic grocery, organic vegetables, organic certified food etc. Most appropriately organic products can be explained as any product that is made on cultivated organically most of the countries have a very strict food safety and security guidelines to protect the consumers from consuming harmful products.

India is a large country and also an agricultural country comprising approx 62 percent of population engaged in agriculture in some direct or indirect way. India is second largest country in terms of population after China. Thus India has large number of consumers and producer of food products as well. Hence the study of consumer behaviour, awareness and attitude towards organic food products has become more important in this context.

Objectives of the Paper

The objective of the present paper is to know about reasons for turning of consumers' towards organic food products and the basic reasons behind use of such products in India.

Review of Literature

Camelia Orion et.al (2017) conducted a study on "Consumers' Attitude towards Organic Products and Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Romania". The study indicated that the consumption of organic food has increased because of its impact on consumers' health and on sustainable development of agriculture. The results of the study are important as they provide information for decision makers and development of short value chain in order to support the small farmers and local products.

Mohammed Basha et. al. (2015) conducted a study on "Consumer Attitude towards Organic Food" The main emphasis of the study was to determine why the consumers turn towards organic food products. The research identifies the motivating factors that influence the purchase of organic food. This study also evaluates the subjective norms of organic food consumers. It identifies the relationship between environmental concern and attitude towards organic food products.

Kumar Sathyendra and Chandershekhar H.M (2015) conducted a study entitled "A Study on Consumer Behaviour towards Organic Food Products in Mysore City". This study emphasizes to gain knowledge about two aspects; one consumers' attitude towards organic products and other market potentials of organic food products. The study finds that professional

people are more preferring organic food products. Moreover, organic products are not regular in supply. The advertisement of organic products is very low and their cost is very high as these are less in supply as compared to their demand.

Paul Justin and Jyoti R. (2012) conducted a study on, “Consumer Behaviour and Purchase Intention for Organic food”. The purpose of the study was to understand the behaviour of ecological consumers and their intention to purchase organic food. The study aimed to determine the factors influencing consumer behaviour towards organic food. The study indicates that overall satisfaction of consumers for organic food is more than inorganic food items but the satisfaction level varies due to different factors. This study suggests that retailers can develop effective marketing program and strategies to influence consumers positively. They can make these products easily available to attract consumers to buy organic products.

Why People are turning towards Organic Food-products in India:

In earlier time, human beings used to eat organic food products but with the increase in population, the food demands raised. To fulfill the increased demand of food items and agricultural food-grains it became imperative to increase production of vegetables and food-grains etc. This led to use of malpractices i.e to use of chemical based pesticides and insecticides, fertilizers to increase the production. After using this adulterated food for a long time people came to realize its harmful effects on health. That is why people are turning towards organic food products. Organic farming is another area for cutting down costs, improved soil fertility and increased farm income. The government is also promoting organic farming through adoption of organic villages by making cluster of 50 acre each and arranging certification under “Paramparagat Krishi Yojna”.

Consumers’ interest in organic food items is increasing in almost all the countries developed or developing because of health awareness among consumers. But the market share of such consumers is still insignificant as the share of organic food market is much smaller than the total food market. Even in the countries like Switzerland, Austria, Denmark organic food consumption is very small. In Indian context, there is irregularity in the supply of organic products. Packaging for organic food products is not proper. Only a few farmers do organic farming. Cost issue is also important factor in purchasing the organic products. As the supply of organic food products is not sufficient, the prices of these products go high. As the consumption of food products is regular in nature as these are basic necessity products; the lower and middle class income groups hesitate to buy these because of high price. Besides, the advertisement and other promotional efforts are much lower or negligible as compared to the conventional products. According to a report on economic viability of organic farming (2016), the green revolution has led to reduced genetic diversity, soil erosion, water shortages, reduced nutritious crop availability. Organic farmers are not able to find consumers for their produces. Market for organic farm products is not sufficient in Haryana. There is lack of financial incentives for

adoption of organic farming. Besides few farm products sellers use organic labels as marketing strategy and charge higher prices from consumers. Farmers have higher level of general environmental awareness and concerns than non- farmers. Organic farms are more dependent on hired labour. Organic farming is labour intensive than conventional farming. Women have higher level of environmental concern regarding organic farming. Consumers' interest in organic products in Haryana is increasing. The main source of information about organic products is advertisement, shops, media, and consumers of organic products. Increase in demand for organic products is associated with customers' education and increase in their awareness about the quality of farms products and their contribution to human health. The perceived importance of organic food has a positive impact on actual purchasing behaviour. Altruistic motives positively affect the perceived importance of organic food and organic purchasing behaviour.

Reasons of Purchasing the Organic Food-products:

- **Eco- Friendly:** Organic farming is treated as environment friendly. As pesticides and fertilizers pollute environment and erode soil and organic farming does not contain these harmful contents. Thus organic products through this organic farming are environment friendly.
- **Rich in Nutrition:** Organic food products have higher nutrients, minerals than conventional food products as the soil loses its minerals because of high use of fertilizers and pesticides in conventional food products.
- **Free from preservatives and better in taste:** Organic food products are free from artificial preservatives and these food products are considered to be tastier than the non-organic ones. These products provide natural taste, not artificial made that is found in GM Food and other conventional foods.
- **Animal friendly:** Animals are fed natural diet under organic farming. No antibiotics are given to animals and birds and they are kept in free range conditions.

Conclusion: So the study concludes that the consumers are turning towards organic food products because of their impact on consumers' health and on sustainable development of agriculture. Moreover people are more preferring organic food products due to harmfulness of pesticides, fertilizers etc. in inorganic food products. According to a report on global market for organically produced foods is estimated to increase \$102 billion by 2020. The future scope of the organic agriculture largely depends on the consumers' demand. Thus, it is important to know the interest of consumers towards organic food items. Although the size of organic food market is growing as consumers are becoming more aware about their health and for nutritious food than before but this demand is still very low as compared to the demand of conventional food products.

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