

A Study on Consumer Awareness Towards Organic Food Products In Thoothukudi City

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ABSTRACT

The consumer's perception is your reality. - Kate Zabriskie. Nowadays consumers perception about conventional food products are changing, they are well aware of the fact that the food we eat is adulterated and contaminated, the reason behind this being the use of chemical, etc. to ripen the fruits and retain the freshness of the vegetables. This can prove deadly to our health in the long run, rather than benefiting us. Now a days there is a increasing trend is seen under a system of agriculture without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides with an environmentally and socially responsible approach. The increasing consciousness about health is the main reason for changing the attitude and awareness of the consumers towards organic food products from conventional food products. The study attempted to gain knowledge about consumer awareness and perception towards organic food product consumption and how socio-economic variable related to consumer decision making concerning the purchase of organic goods Organic products are produced using natural ingredients, without harmful pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Nowadays awareness about organic products increasing rapidly due to increased health consciousness of the consumers,

Keywords: *Organic, Fertilizers, Organic product certification*

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is presently shifting in to rework into active productive and profitable sector owing to ever-increasing demand for food and food products. So as to coup with the food production target, a lot of stress is perhaps going to be to agricultural contributions. The employment of substances as plant production practices acts as associate degree insurance against the danger of losing not solely the crop however additionally cash spent on advanced technology used as inputs in achieving higher production. Developing country like india should come forward to take necessary steps to motivate the organic agriculture and make these organic agricultural products to be available to the deep corner of the city.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sudhalakshmi et al., (2014) in their papers reveals that the growing awareness about the implication of global warming, non-bio degradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc, both marketer and consumers are switching to eco-friendly products and many companies have accepted their responsibility not to harm the environment and not to waste the natural resources.

Paul et al., (2012) in their study shows that the health, availability and education from demographic factors positively influence the consumer's attitude towards buying organic food but the overall fulfillment of

consumers for organic food is more than inorganic foods. Several studies agreed on the socio-demographic profile of organic food buyers. The proportion of people consuming organic food has been found to rise with an increase in income

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the socio-economic status of the organic consumer in the study area.
2. To analyse the consumer awareness towards organic food products in Thoothukudi city.
3. To examine the factors influencing the consumer towards organic food products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both Primary and secondary data were used in this study. Primary data were collected by means of well structured Interview schedule. Thirty organic consumers of Thoothukudi city were selected for this study by stratified random sampling method to express their opinion and awareness about organic food products. Secondary data related to organic food products were collected from various reputed journals, articles and from various websites. The area of the study is confined to Thoothukudi city. Statistical tools like percentage, ranking techniques and chi-square test were employed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

The demographic characteristics of organic product consumers are given below

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

VARIABLES	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
AGE		
Below 30 years	9	30
31-40 years	7	23
41-50 years	10	33
Above 50 years	4	14
Total	30	100
GENDER		
Male	16	54
Female	14	46
Total	30	100
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	20	67
Unmarried	10	33
Total	30	100

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION		
Higher Secondary	6	20
Under graduate	9	30
Post graduate	12	40
Others	3	10
Total	30	100
OCCUPATION		
Agriculturist	3	10
Salaried people	8	27
Entrepreneurs	9	30
Home makers	6	20
Professional	4	13
Total	30	100
MONTHLY INCOME		
Upto 20000	1	3
20000-30000	6	20
30000-40000	12	40
Above40000	11	37
Total	30	100
ORGANIC PRODUCTS BOUGHT SO FAR		
Organic fruits and vegetables	8	27
Milk and milk products	2	7
Cereals and pulses	5	16
Organic grocery	4	13
Other organic foods	6	20
All the above	5	17
Total	30	100
BRAND OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCT YOU USE		
India organic	5	17
24 Mantra	3	10
Nature land	4	13
Organic tattva	2	7
Pro Nature	5	16
No specific brand	11	37
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

TABLE NO 1

The above table shows the demographic profile of the organic food consumers taken for the study. It has identified that most of the 33 per cent whose age group is under 41-50 years. 54 per cent of the respondents are male. About 67 per cent of the respondents are married. Further, about 40 per cent of the respondents are post graduate. 30 per cent of the respondents are entrepreneurs. Majority 40 per cent of the respondents monthly income is above Rs.30,000 to 40,000 and 27 per cent of the respondents are frequently buying organic fruits and vegetables. Majority 37 per cent of the respondents do prefer no specific brand.

SATISFACTION LEVEL TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

Table 2 shows the simple ranking method in respect of degree of organic food products. It is revealed that majority of the respondents given first rank to taste and second rank is given to quality. Goodwill is given third

rank followed by package and quantity is given fourth and fifth rank respectively. Product availability is given sixth rank followed by colour and price is given seventh and eighth rank respectively.

AWARENESS LEVEL TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

VARIABLES	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
Price	51	12.75	VIII
Colour	79	17.25	VII
Quality	99	24.75	II
Quantity	82	20.50	V
Package	88	22.00	IV
Goodwill	95	23.75	III
Product availability	80	20.00	VI
Taste	101	25.25	I

Source: Primary data

TABLE NO 2

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN AWARENESS LEVEL AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

The association between demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, education, occupation and annual income and awareness level was interpreted through chi-square analysis using SPSS and the results are presented in the Table 3.

H₀: There is no association between awareness level and demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study area

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN AWARENESS LEVEL AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

VARIABLES	CHI-SQUARE VALUE	DF	P-VALUE
Age	1.418	6	0.000*
Gender	0.317	2	0.000*
Education	1.628	6	0.000*
Marital Status	0.800	2	0.000*
Occupation	2.965	8	0.000*
Monthly Income	10.185	6	0.000*

Source: Calculated from Primary Data.

Note: * significance at 1% level.

TABLE NO 3

The chi-square value calculated for each variable included under the demographic characteristics was focused as follows: age 1.418, gender, 0.317; education 1.628, marital status 0.800, occupation, 2.965 and monthly income, 10.185. The p value was .000 for all the demographic characteristics which was less than the level of

significance 0.010. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there was a statistically significant association between awareness level and demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, marital status, occupation and monthly income of the respondents.

SUGGESTION

- Organic products price should be reduced so that it can be affordable to low income group.
- More retailers should come forward to sell organic food products therefore it can be available anywhere.
- Awareness and training programs should be initiated by the governments to encourage farmers to cultivate the organic food products and also subsidies should be given to the farmers who involve in organic cultivation.

4. CONCLUSION

From the analysis it is incidental that socio economic variables are associated with consumers positive awareness towards organic food products. The study reveals that there was a statistically significant association between awareness level and demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, marital status, occupation and monthly income of the respondents. Respondents are very well aware of the organic food products and they are ready to spend much for their health, so the government should take proper awareness program to encourage former to cultivate the organic food products rather than conventional food products. If the organic food products are available at cheaper rate it can be affordable to both middle and low-income groups.

5. REFERENCE

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