



A STUDY ON CONSUMERS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN ERODE DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Organic is a growing market throughout the world, as more and more people vegetables, cereals, pulses that are produced through the use of natural fertilizers. Even though there is a growing consciousness for health, well-being, consumers are still hesitant to consume organic products as they are not aware of the availability of organic food products and the belief that organic products are high priced and not purely organic. The study aims at understanding the consumer awareness and attitude towards organic food products. The objectives are to examine the organic consciousness, level of awareness, attitude, preference of the respondents and their valuable suggestions. For this study, primary data have been collected from 180 sample respondents by using convenient sampling method. Such collected data have been analysed with the help of various statistical tools like Simple Percentage Analysis, Chi-Square Analysis, Factor Analysis and Weighted Average score ranking analysis. The study suggests that proper offering products, at a proper price and quality, can increase the level of satisfaction of the consumers towards organic food products.

KEYWORDS : Organic, health, availability, satisfaction, awareness, attitude, preference

INTRODUCTION

Organic foods are minimally processed to maintain the integrity of the food without artificial ingredients, preservatives or irradiation. Organic products are obtained by processes friendly to the environment, by cultivation techniques that consider both the attributes of the final product and the production methods. Processed foods which are high in saturated fats, sugar and sodium, and low in essential nutrients are not only responsible for over weight problems but have been also shown to be major contributors to a number of health problems including diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. To make things worse, there are also various artificial preservatives, flavor enhancers and a number of other chemicals with dubious effects on health. On the other hand, unprocessed foods are not as healthy as they seem to be either because most of them are conventionally grown which means with the use of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, antibiotics, growth hormones and who knows what else. Fortunately, there is a safer and healthier alternative- organic food.

Organic foods are foods that are produced using methods that do not involve modern synthetic inputs such as synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Organic foods are also not processed using irradiation, industrial solvents or chemical food additives. Organic foods were historically grown on small, family-run farms, limiting the sale of these goods to small grocery store and farmer's markets. Organic food advocates claim that organically grown foods are safer and more nutritious than foods raised through non organic methods such as pesticide and non-organic fertilizer use, or antibiotic and hormone use. Many people don't trust these chemicals and don't want to put them into their bodies. Since virtually all non-organically produced foods contain residues of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals, the only way to avoid them is to buy organic foods. To be certified as organic, food products need to come from farms and processing plants that are certified as organic.

The inspectors make sure that only organic methods are used and that the environment is not contaminated with pesticides, synthetic fertilizers or other non-organic compounds. The main idea of organic food production is avoidance of all non-organic farming methods which means that the use of

pesticides, artificial fertilizers, antibiotics, growth hormones and similar things is strictly forbidden. Instead, organic food producers use all natural farming methods such as crop rotation, composting, companion planting and stimulating biodiversity. As a result, organic products pose no risk of pesticide residues or presence of other potentially harmful chemicals. Organic food products are not allowed to contain any genetically modified ingredients nor artificial additives. Although conventionally grown food is claimed to be safe, absence of all non-natural ingredients makes organic food without a doubt healthier and safer choice because the long term effects of those "safe" doses of pesticides, preservatives and other chemicals remain unknown.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The market for organic food products in India has emerged because of the profitable export potential available for the producers. Incidentally, in India, most of the organic produce is grown to be exported to the global market. The rest is sold at predetermined retail outlets. So, if the trend for organic products is growing among producers then, its benefits must naturally reach the local population of a country. This will also ensure that the food products are nutrient rich as processing required would be minimal from the point of origin and consumption. This study has been made to conduct survey among the consumers of organic products in Erode City. As environmental sustainability is an important issue, in this regard there is a need to study the organic products and also to review the role of organic products in the environment. By keeping all these in mind, the present study has been undertaken to find out the level of the consumers' satisfaction towards organic food products.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

By realising the significance of the review of the previous study, the following reviews have been made.

Meenakshi Saratha and Linda Marry Simon (2015) conducted a study on customer satisfaction level on green products with special reference to Coimbatore district. They proved that now-a-days companies with the help of advertising started to educate the consumer about the benefits of Green products.

Bambang et al. (2017) made a study on green product and its

impact on to customer satisfaction. The respondents for this study were 130 respondents who had been pick up randomly to make the questionnaire. The data were collected and analysed by using statics program Social Sciences (SPSS). The tests used for analysis. They reported that the higher facility of green products provided by the hotel can increase customer satisfaction level.

Ratheesh Kumar (2017) conducted a study with consumer satisfaction towards organic food products with special reference to Coimbatore city. The study was based on primary date. The required primary data have been collected 100 sample respondents through questionnaire such collected 100 sample respondents through questionnaire such collected data have been square statistical tools like simple percentage, chi-square analysis and average ranking analysis he found that the major reasons are organic producer are low, adequate market facility is not there, few number of shops, lack of awareness and so on. Therefore it former as well as government gives interest to organic farming easily farming easily enhancing good marketing system in Tamil Nadu.

Kalaiselvi (2018) made a study with on consumer satisfaction towards organic food products with special references to Erode District. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. The required primary data have been collected from 200 sample respondents through as well structure questionnaire. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, newspapers and websites. Such collected data have been like analysed with the help of various statistical tools simple percentage analysis, chi-square analysis, factor analysis and weighted average sure ranking analysis. The result revealed that were aware well of images and availability but not loyal entirely too organic food products in Erode city.

Abisha and Kannan (2018) conducted a study on consumer satisfaction towards organic products in Palakkad district-Kerala. For their study, they have collected data from 250 sample respondents. They found that the main reason for purchasing organic food products is an expectation of a healthier and environment friendly means of production.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Consequences of these reviews, a research gap have been identified. Accordingly, this study has been conducted to identify the level of the satisfaction of consumers towards organic food products.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

To examine the association between the level of satisfaction of the consumers towards organic food products and their personal variables (Age, Gender, Marital status, Educational Qualification, Occupation, Nature of family, Size of the family, Number of earning members in the family, Annual income, Annual expenditure), a null hypothesis has been framed and same has been tested with the help of chi-square test at 5% level of significance.

METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS

To attain the framed objective, the required primary data have been collected from 180 consumers by using convenient sampling technique. In Tamil Nadu, there are 37 districts. Out of them, Erode district has been selected due to its agricultural dominance. Of them, Gobichettipalayam taluk is familiar with agriculture. Hence, this taluk has been purposively selected. In the selected Gobichettipalayam taluk, there are two blocks (Gobichettipalayam and T.N. Palayam). From each block 90 respondents have been selected. Thus, sample size of the study is 180. The required primary data have been collected by using a well-structured and pre- tested interview schedule.

Such collected data have been analysed with simple percentage analysis, chi-square test and factor analysis and weighted average score ranking analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
SATISFACTION LEVEL

To measure the satisfaction level of the organic food consumers, Likert's 5 points scale has been followed. Accordingly 28 statements have been given in the interview schedule and the same has been properly quantified. As per quantification, those who scored 84 and above are grouped as more satisfied and those who scored below 84 are grouped as less satisfied. Accordingly the Table 1 has been prepared.

Table 1: Level of Satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	No. of Consumers	Percentage (%)
Less Satisfied (Score less than 84)	122	67.78
More Satisfied (Score 84 and above)	58	32.22
Total	180	100

Table 1 reveals that majority(67.78%) of the consumers are less satisfied about organic food products. Consequence of this study, a null hypothesis has been framed. This null hypothesis has been tested by using chi-square test at 5% level of significance.

1.ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE SOCIO ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

Table 2 shows that association between the socio economic characteristics and level of satisfaction.

TABLE 2: SATISFACTION LEVEL OF THE CONSUMERS ABOUT ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

Factor	DF	TV	CV	Result
Age	2	5.991	3.166	Accepted
Gender	1	3.841	2.142	Accepted
Educational Qualification	2	5.991	13.605*	Rejected
Marital Status	1	3.841	8.251*	Rejected
Occupation	4	9.491	16.019*	Rejected
Nature of family	1	3.841	0.303	Accepted
Size of the Family	2	5.991	2.620	Accepted
Number of earning members in the family	2	5.991	9.168*	Rejected
Annual income	2	5.991	2.456	Accepted
Annual expenditure	2	5.991	12.913*	Rejected
Area of Residence	1	3.841	1.052	Accepted

Note: * =Insignificant @ 5%level

Table 2 exhibit that the satisfaction level of the organic food consumers and socio economic characteristics like Educational Qualification, Marital status, Occupation, Number of earning members in the family and Annual expenditure are insignificant whereas, socio economic characteristics like Age, Gender, Size of the family, Nature of family, Annual income and Area of Residence are significant.

2.rotated Component Matrix Of Satsfaction Variables

To measure the level of satisfaction of the consumers towards organic food products with the help of factor analysis. Table 3 depict that rotated component matrix values.

TABLE 3: ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

S.No.	Factors	Component			
		Product design and its brand image	Quality and price	Product variety and packaging	Eco friendliness and easy availability

1	Brand Name	0.755			
2	Price		0.876		
3	Availability in Shops				0.564
4	Taste			0.453	
5	Different Size of packs			0.657	
6	Quality		0.754		
7	Advertisement	0.965			
8	Flavour			0.654	
9	Smell			0.832	
10	Packaging			0.357	
11	Discount		0.924		
12	Trust	0.874			
13	Health Care				0.598
14	Quantity	0.543			
15	Eco- Friendliness				0.325
16	Variety			0.764	
17	Certification	0.654			

Table 3 found that the level of satisfaction of the respondents towards organic products in Erode district varied and it was classified into four categories. Consumer satisfaction towards organic products in the present study composes four factors namely, product design & its brand image, quality and price, product variety and packaging and availability of the product.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

It is found that most of the consumers less satisfied towards organic food products. Hence, it is suggested that offering the proper products, at a proper price and quality, can increase the level of satisfaction of the consumers and the marketers may introduce some special offers to attract the organic food consumers and introduce luxurious shops and packages to cover all consumers.

Consumer satisfaction plays a vital role towards organic food products. The importance of organic food products was ignored for quite a long period. As a result of environmental sustainability, importance is shifted towards organic food products rather than conventional food products. The present research focused to examine the consumer satisfaction level towards organic food products in Erode District of Tamil Nadu. By offering better, diversified and customized organic farm services to fulfil the needs and wants of the consumers, adopting an appropriate selling by the organic farms, adopting sophisticated user friend approaches and creating a trust in the minds of the consumers on the organic farms.

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