

**ARE THE CONSUMERS AWARE ABOUT THE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS?  
EMPIRICAL STUDY ON MYSORE CITY**

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**Abstract:**

In both established and emerging nations, organic farming is one of the industries that is expanding quickly. Consumers have started focusing more on healthful foods, high-quality foods, and foods with high nutrient value that come from unpolluted areas in recent years. The way people think and what consumers want will greatly influence the future of organic cultivation. Hence this paper made an attempt to understand the consumer's awareness level and the preference about organic food products in Mysore city. A questionnaire was used to gather the data for this project, and descriptive statistics and one sample test were used to evaluate the data. According to the research, consumers in Mysore City's chosen organic stores are conscious of and favour organic food items. They also exhibit a favourable mindset towards them.

**Key words:** Organic food, buying behavior, consumer preference, awareness

**Introduction:**

People are living with aims and targets to accomplish in today's world of rapid technological advancement, which has been followed by mental tension and disease. The advancement of medical technology has improved human life expectancy, but good living has gotten worse. As a result, people have begun to distinguish between nutritious food and harmful food. They began looking for chemical-free, nutritious food as a result of this impression. The hunt for nutritious food comes to an end with organic food items. People transition from a conventional to a contemporary way of living as a result of cultural shift. It's one of the things that influences people's decisions to purchase goods. However, people are now more aware of the reasons why fast food is consumed. People are turning to organic food items as a result.

People now prefer to purchase sustainable food items. The creation of organic food is crucial to civilization. These products are free from the chemicals. In India organic food production is playing a vital role. Now people are realizing the value of organic food products. It includes healthy products which are chemical free and added natural resources. Natural food is of high

quality and offers customers nutritious food as well as pleasure. Due to their hectic schedules and the digital age, people are looking for wholesome meals to ingest. Due to their knowledge of the benefits of natural foods alone, physicians, for example, prefer that newborns drink organic bovine milk rather than maternal milk. People's decisions to purchase organic foods are influenced by societal and environmental variables too though.

Consumers are the center of marketing activities, so it's important to analyze their behavior. Consumer behavior is the study of how people decide what they need, want, buy and act concerning their purchase intentions. Consumer behavior is one of the crucial aspects of marketing. Understanding consumer behavior is always been fruitful to the strategist to formulate marketing strategies based on what their potential consumers expect from the product or service. It also helps to understand their response to these strategies and the attributes of the product or service offered. The study of Consumer behavior takes into account various behavioral aspects of consumers including their attitude, perception, personality, motivation, intentions, and so on. Consumer behavior is an interdisciplinary concept drawn from psychology, sociology, anthropology, etc. it forms the basis for formulating the right marketing strategy for the target audience. Consumer attitude and purchase intentions have a major impact on consumer behavior.

The management procedure that results in the purchasing action is a component of consumer behaviour. The research explores how people's perspectives occasionally shift. Along with bodily progress, it also involves a clouded mental process (by choice). It could be defined as the power exchange that occurs in the middle of the process of usage, within the buyer himself and his circumstances. Sustainable fruits, veggies, grains, coffee, tea, pluses, cereals, seasonings, and sugar are among the culinary items that are currently on the market.

### **Review of Literature:**

Wee, Ismail, and Ishak(2014), This research sought to understand how customers' perceptions of product safety, health, environmental impact, and animal care affected their decision to buy organic food goods. 288 individuals made up the study's group, which was chosen using an easy selection technique. Percentage analysis, multiple regression, and ANOVA were used to evaluate the data. This research came to the conclusion that buying behaviour is influenced by confidence. Those with greater levels of confidence tend to buy organic foods more frequently. Hossain, Lim(2016), The study's overarching goal is to evaluate how consumers in the emerging market are currently spending their money on organic products. Around 105 individuals were chosen at random to receive a questionnaire in Penang, Malaysia. SPSS version 21.0, Cronbach's alpha, correlation, multiple regression were used for analysis. The study concluded that consumer can shift their purchasing patterns and become more aware of the food products that they consume. The manufacturers and marketers of organic food products can implement suitable strategies by knowing the main concerns of the consumers towards organic food.

Rengeswari, T (2017), According to the research, factors like perceived health, product trait, societal wellbeing, product feature, and supply affect consumers' decisions to purchase organic food goods. The study also emphasised that secondary motivations for purchasing organic food include nutritious worth, natural components, food safety, and knowledge. On the basis of the

random selection technique, 250 samples were collected. Data analysis methods included factor analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The research came to the conclusion that it is important to focus on assurance verification and the price of products, which should be reduced.

Singh (2017), The research looked at the variables affecting consumers' real purchasing decisions regarding organic goods. Through the use of an organised form, poll results from 611 Indian customers were gathered. The data was analysed using a wide variety of techniques, such as component analysis, t-tests, analyses of variance, and hierarchical multiple regression. It is found that health consciousness, education, subjective standards, price, and access are the five most important variables in determining customers' preferences for organic food goods. In order to successfully sell organic food products, the author concluded that organic food product marketers need to segment their target audiences and craft persuasive advertising campaigns.

Parashar, V(2018), The research looked at the variables affecting consumers' real purchasing decisions regarding organic goods. Through the use of an organised form, poll results from 611 Indian customers were gathered. The data was analysed using a wide variety of techniques, such as component analysis, t-tests, analyses of variance, and hierarchical multiple regression. It is found that health consciousness, education, subjective standards, price, and access are the five most important variables in determining customers' preferences for organic food goods. In order to successfully sell organic food products, the author concluded that organic food product marketers need to segment their target audiences and craft persuasive advertising campaigns.

Devi, M (2018), The research looked into how people in Tamilnadu's main towns choose to purchase organic food. The author said that the consumers prefer organic fruits and vegetables because of the belief that it is healthier and pesticide free. There was 200 respondents to fill the questionnaire of the study. Simple statistical methods, such as proportion analysis and the Mann Whitney U test, were used to analyse the data. The author came to the conclusion that there is a sizable variation between purchasing behaviour variables like quality and health advantages across salary categories. It was also found that organic food consumers had a high influence on buying behavior toward organic food products.

Musnadi, Irawati (2019), In order to ascertain the impact of health issues, environmental concerns, product quality, and expertise, this study examined customer buying behaviour. There were 310 organic food eaters included in the study from Aceh, Indonesia. The data was analysed using structural equation modelling and confirmatory factor analysis. The author came to the conclusion that three preset factors—health worries, product quality, and knowledge—have an impact on customers' attitudes and plans when it comes to buying organic goods. Therefore, buyer behaviour and goals are the primary indicators of whether or not they will choose and utilise organic goods.

Nagarajun, A (2019), This study discussed how people in the Erode area purchased sustainable goods. In order to understand customer motivations, buying habits, and levels of happiness with organic goods, the author looked at consumer knowledge of buying organic food items. As a selection, 240 individuals were used. Chi-square analysis and MANOVA were used to analyse the research. The research has also confirmed that while consumers are conscious of pictures and availability, they are not wholly devoted to organic food items. As a result, the author came to the conclusion that marketers need to develop promos that are both practical and moral in order to persuade customers to purchase organic food products.

The majority of studies, according to the literature review, have examined how consumers in many developed nations, as well as a few locations in India, choose to purchase organic food products. However, no study has specifically examined how consumers choose among organic food products. The goal of the current research is to evaluate customer preferences for different organic food items as well as the degree of consumer knowledge in the metropolis of Mysore.

### Research Questions:

The study developed the following research queries in light of the knowledge deficit:

1. What is the awareness level among consumers about organic food products?
2. What are the variety of organic food product preferred by the consumers?

### Objectives:

The following goal guided the study's implementation:

1. To analyze the awareness level about organic food products.
2. To find out the product preference for variety of organic food products among consumers.

### Research Hypotheses:

The following theories are created in order to fulfil the goals of the research:

1. H<sub>0</sub> : “ The consumers are not having awareness level about organic food products”
2. H<sub>0</sub> : “There is no product preference for variety of organic food products among consumers”

### Data and Methodology:

Both direct and secondary data were used to inform the current research. With the aid of an organised form, primary data is gathered through a poll technique from Mysore city's customers. Using the convenience selection technique, customers were chosen. In the chart below, the respondent's information is listed.

**Table 1: Respondents' details**

Demographic Profile	Group	No of Respondent Collected	The response rate in %
Gender	Male	21	52.5%
	Female	19	47.5%
Age (in years)	Below 20	7	17.5%
	20-30	28	69.17%
	30-40	3	7.5%
	Above 40	2	5.9%

Marital status	Married	8	21%
	Unmarried	32	79%
Educational Qualification	Under Graduate	20	53%
	Post Graduate	12	29%
	Diploma	4	11%
	Professional	4	6%
Occupation Status	Student	21	54.16%
	Employee	9	21.67%
	Self Employee	6	11.4%
	Professional	4	8%
Residential Area	Urban	29	72%
	Semi Urban	11	28%
	Total	40	100

Source: Author compiled

**Table 2: Segregation of Respondents of the Consumers of Organic shops of Mysore City**

Sl No.	Organic Shops Selected for the study	No. of Male Respondents	No. of Female Respondents	Total
1	Simple Soul organic store	5	6	11
2	VIVID Naturals	2	4	6
3	Ayuh Organic	5	4	9
4	Nisarga Organic	5	3	8
5	CH4 Organic and Naturals	4	2	6
Total		21	19	40

Source: Author compiled

The table 2 shows the segregation of respondents of the consumers identified in organic shops in Mysore city such as Simple Soul organic store, VIVID Naturals, Ayuh organic, Nisarga

organic, CH4 Organic and Naturals .The classification of respondents are based on actual data collected through survey.

### Results and Discussions:

Table 3, shows responses of consumers in relation to awareness among them regarding organic food products. The survey received 40 responses. There is knowledge of organic food items, according to all the answers. There is no doubt that all customers are aware of organic food items.

**Table 3: Awareness among consumers of Organic Food Products in Mysore city**

Awareness of Organic Food Products	Consumers	Percentage
Awareness	40	100%
No awareness	-	0
N	40	100

Source: Author's Compiled

**Table 4: Source of awareness to the customers in Mysore city**

SI No	SOURCES	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
1	TV	22	55%
2	Newspaper	2	5%
3	Friends and relatives	11	27.5%
4	Super market	2	5%
5	Internet ads	3	12.5%
		40	100

Source: Author's Compiled

Table 4, shows the source of awareness to the customers in Mysore city. 55% of consumers prefer TV as the media to get information about organic food products, then followed by friends and relatives (27.5%), internet ads (12.5%), news paper and super market (5%).

**Table 5: Results of one sample t-test regarding preference among varieties of Organic Food Products in Mysore city**

Factors	Options of food items	N	S.D	Mean	t-value	Sig. (two tailed test)	Results
Preference towards organic food products	Fruits & Vegetables	40	0.99472	4.4000	6.294	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected
	Pulses & Cereals	40	0.48936	4.6500	15.079	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected
	Coffee & Tea	40	0.44426	4.7500	17.616	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected
	Grains	40	0.44426	4.7500	17.616	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected
	Spices	40	0.88852	4.5000	7.550	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected
	Jaggery	40	0.74516	4.6500	9.903	0.000	H <sub>0</sub> is rejected

Source: SPSS

Figure 5 displays the findings of a group t-test with a 5% threshold of significance on customer choice for various organic food items. The findings show that all of the types' p-values are less than 0.05, so all of the clients have positive attitude towards the preference among varieties of organic food products by consumers of Mysore city. H<sub>0</sub> is therefore disproved, and the alternative theory is adopted.

The finding of the study are summarized as follows:

- With reference to the first objective the study found that there is good awareness among varieties of organic food products by the consumers in Mysore city. The major source of media through which the consumers are getting information about organic food products are TV (55%), then followed by friends and relatives (27.5%), internet ads (12.5%), news paper and super market (5%).
- The research discovered that customers have a favourable mindset towards a range of food items, including fruits and veggies, legumes and cereals, coffee and tea, grains, seasonings, and sugar, with regard to the study's second goal. The demand for organic food products is growing quickly throughout the city as more people start to favour certain kinds of organic food products.

**Conclusion:**

The public thinks that pesticides aren't used on organic foods, making them healthy. Demand for the organic food products and awareness level on organic food is expanding rapidly in and around the world. People consume while observing, using, or building goods. Customers lead is a decision process and bodily development. So, the present study concludes that consumers have good awareness about organic food products, they also have positive attitude towards variety of food products i.e fruits and vegetables, pulses and cereals, coffee and tea, grains, spices and jaggery. raising consumer knowledge of the benefits of producing organic food with a focus on long-term, healthful organic consuming.

**Limitations:** The present study is focused only on analyzing the preference and awareness of organic food products in the limited area i.e only Mysore city.

**Future Scope:** The direction of future research can be on availability of organic food products and government support towards organic agriculture for the larger scope.

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