



Perception and Buying Behaviour among Consumers in Cochin towards Organic Fruits and Vegetables

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Abstract:

Consumer buying behavior refers to the actions of consumers in the market place and the underlying motives for those actions. Consumption pattern, among Indian consumers are rapidly changing nowadays as a result of environmental issues, concern about the nutritional value of food and health issues. Issues such as quality and safety in food attract consumer interest and affect buying behavior towards organic fruits and vegetables. Research on consumer preferences and demand for organic fruits and vegetables is increasingly attracting academic interest. Although the concept of 'Organic fruits and vegetables' seem to be familiar, the proportion of consumers who purchase them on a regular basis is small in number. The increased consumer's interest in Organic Food has been attributed among others to the growing demand for food free from pesticides and chemical residues.

Keywords: Organic fruits and vegetables, Consumer, Purchase, Production, Health, Price, Buying behaviour

I. INTRODUCTION

There is no common definition of "Organic" due to the fact that different countries have different standard for products to be certified "Organic". In simplest words Organic fruits and vegetables are minimally processed to maintain the integrity of the food without artificial ingredients, preservatives or irradiation. Organic fruits and vegetables are obtained by processes friendly to the environment, by cultivation techniques that consider both the attributes of the final product and the production methods. Organic fruits and vegetables are obtained by the processes friendly to the environment. Consumers everywhere know very little about the production process, as there is no identification with the product and its producer. This might be true for India as well, and therefore leads to low levels of confidence in organic production, which would indicate that there is not enough information on the consumers' side about organic production.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tregear (1995) concluded that Health concern is the most important factor that effect the purchase of Organic fruits and vegetables

Shafie and Rennie (2012) found that price was the restrain factor towards Organic food Consumption

Fotopoulos and Krystallis (2002) discovered that Income appears to effect mainly the quantity of Organic fruits and vegetables bought and not the general willingness to buy. Higher Income households do not necessarily indicate highly likelihood of Organic purchases. Some lower income segments see to be more retrenched buyers

Gupta (2009) explored that the quality of Organic fruits and vegetables was one of the important parameter for food product purchase decision.

Sakthirama and Venkatram (2012) concluded that purchase intention of consumers towards Organic fruits and vegetables were influenced by attitude, knowledge, and familiarity to consumers

Padiya and Vala (2012) concluded that Organic Food Consumers are less price sensitive, believers in quality and information and generally seek information through Newspapers, Magazines at the Point of Purchase

III. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The market for Organic fruits and vegetables has increased considerably over the years due to consumer's awareness of both health and environmental issues. This growth in demand is expected to continue in coming years, even though situation differs from one country to another in terms of type and quantities of production. A consumer oriented approach to understanding Organic products is important not only in its right but also in terms of a response to shifting market dynamics. Nevertheless to increase the consumption of Organic fruits and vegetables, many efforts are needed to communicate its benefits to consumers.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As the Indian Society becomes more and more concerned with the safety, nutritional value, and and production, it is important that we gain an understanding on consumer awareness level and perception towards Organic fruits and vegetables. It is also important to find out how consumer perception about Organic fruits and vegetables influence their buying behavior. This study

is conducted to determine factors effecting choice of Organic fruits and vegetables.

V. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To determine the factors effecting the choice of Organic fruits and vegetables
- To know the consumer perception towards Organic fruits and vegetables
- To identify the mode of buying of Organic fruits and vegetables

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study, Primary data was collected through questionnaire distributed among 60 respondents in Cochin city .The sample selection was made by way of Snow Ball Sampling. Secondary data was obtained through internet.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1:Factors Which Influence Purchase Decision

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Health	45	75
Taste	14	23.33
Price	0	0
Promotional tools	1	16.67
Total	60	100

Interpretation:It can be understood that Health is the major factor that leads to the purchase of Organic Fruits and vegetables

Table 2: Availability Of Organic Fruits And Vegetables

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Easily available	17	28.33
Not easily available	36	60
No availability	7	11.67
Total	60	100

Interpretation: Consumers are of the opinion that Organic Fruits and Vegetables is not easily available as inorganic

Table 3:Price Of Organic Fruits And Vegetables

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
High	43	71.67
Same as inorganic	10	16.67
Affordable	7	11.66
Low	0	0
Total	60	100

Interpretation: Majority of the consumers is of the opinion that Price of Organic Fruits and Vegetables is High.

Table 4:Quality Of Organic Fruits And Vegetables

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Supreme quality	21	35
Good quality	36	60
Same as inorganic	3	5
Low quality	0	0

Interpretation: Most of the consumers are of the opinion that Organic Fruits and Vegetables is of Good Quality

Table 5: Place of Purchase of Organic Fruits and Vegetables

Particulars	Respondents	Percentage
Branded shops	18	30
Local retailers	40	66.67
Organic trade fests	2	3.33
Total	60	100

Interpretation : Most of the consumers buy Organic Fruits and vegetables from Organised Retailers .

Table 6: Frequency of Purchase on basis of Duration of Purchase

Frequency Of Purchase	Duration Of Purchase			
	Weeks	Less Than 1 Year	1-2 Years	Above 2 Years
Daily	0	1	0	4
Once in a week	0	25	8	2
Once in 2 weeks	2	4	3	0
Occasionally	0	1	10	0
Total	2	31	21	6

Interpretation: Most of the consumers have started to purchase Organic Fruits and Vegetables for less than 1 year and among this consumers, majority of them make their purchase Once in a week

Table7: Perishability on the basis of Pesticide Content

Perish ability	Pesticide Content		
	Pesticide free	Less pesticide content	Don't know
Longer life	0	3	3
Same as inorganic	0	16	0
Shorter life	22	16	0
Total	22	35	3

Interpretation: Majority of the consumers said that Organic Fruits and Vegetables is of Less Pesticide Content and among these consumers ,most of them believe that it is of Shorter Life when compared to Inorganic Fruits and Vegetables

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

- Organic Fruits and Vegetables is not easily available as Inorganic. If the availability is increased more people will start consuming it.
- The number of Branded Shops, which sells Organic fruits and vegetables, is less. This should be increased

➤ The price charged for Organic fruits and vegetables is High, which is not affordable to low income groups. The price charged should be reduced by increasing supply

IX. CONCLUSION

On the basis of analysis and findings, it can be concluded that nowadays there is an increasing demand for organic fruits and vegetables .Even though the availability is less; most of the consumers are ready to purchase it at least once in a week. Most of the consumers are of the opinion that pesticide content in organic fruits and vegetables is less and it is of high nutritional value. Health consciousness is the major factor that affects the purchase of Organic when compared to Inorganic .Most of the consumers make their purchase through organised retailers. The study points out that price charged for Organic fruits and vegetables is high and lowering price can attract more people towards it. Consumers are willing to pay for good quality organic products

X. LIMITATIONS

The scope of this study is limited to consumers in cochin city. The survey is subjected to the bias and prejudices of consumers. The people who consume own cultivated fruits and vegetables were not included in the study

XI. REFERENCES

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