CONSUMER AWARENESS OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Abstract

The adoption of organic production and processing is highly determined by market demand. Therefore this is reflected in consumer's awareness towards organic food products. This research result indicated that the main reason for purchasing organic food products is an expectation of a healthier and environment friendly means of production. Methodology of the study,   Research design is the basic frame work which provides guide lines for the rest of the research procedure. The research design used in this study is descriptive research design, since it describes clearly the characteristics of the sample as expressed by the respondents. The data collected for the study includes primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from the respondents through questionnaire. The secondary data was collected from company''s publication in the form of annual report, Journal publication. Government report and academic research findings are also taken into consideration for this present study. Suggested this study, Regarding general factors contributing to the popularity of green cosmetic products, important factors are; Organic Product Knowledge, Branded Organic Cosmetic Products, Reliability of Organic Cosmetic Product and Organic Products expensive. Pertaining to general factors impacting organic food products, factors such as; Organic Food Products' Nutritional Taste, Organic Food Products are healthier, Lack of information and availability of Organic Food Products, Organic Food Products are safe and expensive and Branded Organic Food Products' Look and Quality impact the respondents' decision for buying organic products. Conclude this study, Each and every organization of today has better knowledge about their environmental responsibility. They have realized that mere importance of their own responsibility towards the society and the environment is not sufficient.

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Keywords: organic products, agriculture, food products, etc.,

1. INTRODUCTION

Farm produce in India was always well-regarded, valued and cultivated with the understanding towards sustainability of bio-network, the planet and future generations. However, the face of the Indian agriculture has changed drastically over few decades. The food available in market is laden with chemical fertilizers and pesticides to achieve early and abundant produce. Though by virtue of chemical fertilizers the production and productivity of crops has increased, the increased use of pesticides has posed many environmental and health problems. The chemical fertilizers and pesticides used over a long period of time have adverse toxic effects on the production potential of the land and the ultimate consumers of the products. The increased consciousness towards healthy lifestyle has seen organic farm production and trade emerging as an important sector in India as in other parts of the developing world. Organic food is grown with nil or minimal use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and in its processing no chemical, artificial colour or flavouring is used either as processing aid or as additive. These foods are cultivated using organic manures, bio-fertilizers and bio- pesticides. Organic products are being seen as a natural choice by consumers and producers. Increasing awareness towards nutritious, tasty and healthy food and changing lifestyle are surging the demand for organic food, particularly across the metro cities which has nearly quadrupled the size of organic foods in India in the last few years. Majority of the demand for organic food is being contributed by cities such as Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Gurgaon, Bengaluru and Pune. Consumers are consciously opting for healthy eating habits which is driving entrepreneurship in organic foods. As per the study prepared by industry body Assocham and TechSci Research, the size of the Indian organic food market, which is highly unorganised, was $0.36 billion (2014), and organic pulses and food grains took the lion's share of the market. According to the study, India's organic food market has potential to grow more than 25 per cent annually to touch $1.36 billion by 2020, provided there is more awareness about these products and the government incentivises region-specific organic farming to ensure consistent growth in future.

I.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Keeping the risky effects of inorganic fertilizers and also the agro-chemicals on setting similarly as on the person, therefore, it's associate degree pressing would like for the developing

country like India to shift the organic agriculture from the present inorganic agriculture as most of the cultivable soils in India contain organic carbon below the brink level and majority of the farming community is resource poor and get of fertilizers and chemicals in adequate quantities is on the far side their capability. Agriculture is far and away the foremost vital occupation of the individuals of this region. The foremost of the farmers of this region square measure typically tiny and marginal in nature and square measure economically not sound and so, they can't afford to shop for the adequate quantity of fertilizers and chemicals necessary for the crop production. Organic Agriculture can be a production system that avoids or for the foremost half excludes the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and growth regulators. The foremost aim of organic agriculture is to substantiate sustained productivity, environmental protection and making on the market food and food merchandise raised with none reasonably chemicals. Agriculture is primarily applied biology and is probably to attain success once it accepts and follows principles like. a) On farm waste exercise, b) Non-chemical weed management, c) Biological tormenter management, d) Integrated nutrient management for sustaining soil fertility and crop productivity With increasing health consciousness and concern for setting, organic farming system has been drawing attention all over the world. Organic farming will be a holistic production management system that promotes and enhances agro-ecosystems health additional as bio-diversity, biological cycles and soil biological activities. As a result, there is widespread organic movement and enormous demands for organic merchandise.

I.3. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The term organic is rooted in bio from Greek bios meaning life or way of living. Organic food products was first coined in the 1940s and refers to food raised, grown and stored or processed without the use of synthetically produced chemicals or fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, Fungicides, growth hormones and regulators or generic modification . Roddy, view organic food products as a product of organic farming . Thinks the term organic 'is best thought of as referring not to the type of inputs used, but to the concept of the farm as an organism, in which all the components —the soil, minerals, organic matter, Microorganisms, insects, plants, animals and humans —interact to create a coherent, self-regulating and stable whole. Reliance on external inputs, whether chemical or organic, is reduced as far as possible. Organic Farming is

a certifiable farm management system with controls and traceability that is in harmony with the local environment using land husbandry techniques such as soil-Conservation measures, crop rotation and the application of agronomic, biological and manual methods instead of synthetic inputs. This is different from Traditional Farming, which is often subsistence oriented using few or no purchased inputs.

I.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the socio econoomic conditions of selected respondents in the study area.

 2.To study consumer awareness about organic food products of selected respondents in the study area.

I.5. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

　　There is no relationship between organic consumers' socio economic conditions and level of awareness of Coimbatore District

I.6.METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Research design is the basic frame work which provides guide lines for the rest of the research procedure. The research design used in this study is descriptive research design, since it describes clearly the characteristics of the sample as expressed by the respondents. The data collected for the study includes primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from the respondents through questionnaire. The secondary data was collected from company''s publication in the form of annual report, Journal publication. Government report and academic research findings are also taken into consideration for this present study. The study is descriptive in nature, with the convenience sampling method being adopted. Since the population of the study is found to be infinite. The researcher has selected 440 as the sample size. The study area was Coimbatore District. The sample size was confined from the Demorgans table. Descriptive statistics, Multiple Regression and ANOVA has used in this study.

I.7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETRATION
TABLE NO.1
SOCIO ECONOMIC VARIABLES OF RESPONDENTS

S.No.	Socio Economic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	**GENDER**		
	Male	238	54.1
	Female	202	45.9
	Total	440	100.0
2	**AGE**		
	Upto 18 years	75	17.0
	18 years to 30 years	97	22.0
	30 years to 50 years	220	50.0
	51 years to 70 years	29	6.6
	Above 70 years	19	4.3
	Total	440	100.0
3	**EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION**		
	Upto Higher secondary	88	20.0
	Degree	154	35.0
	Master Degree	88	20.0
	Professional degree	66	15.0
	Other courses	44	10.0
	Total	440	100.0
4	**OCCUPATION STATUS**		
	Employed	208	47.3
	Business	126	28.6
	Profession	41	9.3
	Student	43	9.8
	Housewife	18	4.1
	Others	4	.9
	Total	440	100.0
5	MONTHLY INCOME		
	Upto Rs.20,000	234	53.2
	Rs.20,001 to Rs.40,000	50	11.4
	Rs.40,000 to Rs. 60,000	50	11.4
	Above Rs.60,000	106	24.1
	Total	440	100.0
6	RESIDENTIAL STATUS		
	Urban	272	61.8
	Rural segment	168	38.2
	Total	440	100.0

Source: Primary Data.

From the above table shows that, 54.1 percent of the respondents are male and 45.9 percent of the respondents are male. The majority of the respondents are male (54.1 percent). It is clear that the respondents belong to the age group of Upto 18 years 17 percent, 18 years to 30years (22. percent) 30 years to 50 years (50 percent) 51 years to 70years (6.6 percent) and above 70 years (4.3 percent). Maximum of the respondents belong to the age group of 30 to 50 years (50 percent). It is clear that the educational level of the respondents is Upto Higher secondary (20 percent), Degree holders (35 percent), Master Degree level (20 percent), and Professional level (15 percent) and other courses 10 per cent. Majority of the respondents belong to the degree education level (35percent). It is clear that the respondent Occupational level of the respondents is Employed 47.3 percent, Business (28.6 percent), Professional 9.3 percent, student 9.8 per cent, Housewife 4.1 percent and others (9 percent). Maximum of the respondents belong to the occupational status of Employed   47.3 percent. It is clear that the monthly income of the respondents is to Upto Rs. 20,000 (53.2 percent), Rs. 20,001 to Rs. 40,000 (11.4 percent), Rs. 40,001 to Rs. 60,000 (11.4 percent), and above Rs. 60,000 (24.1 percent). Maximum of the respondent's annual income is upto Rs.20000 53.2 per cent. It is clear that, Residential status of the respondents, 61.8 per cent of the respondents are residing at Urban and 38.2 per cent of the respondents are rural segements. Majority of the respondents are residing at Urban (61.8 per cent).
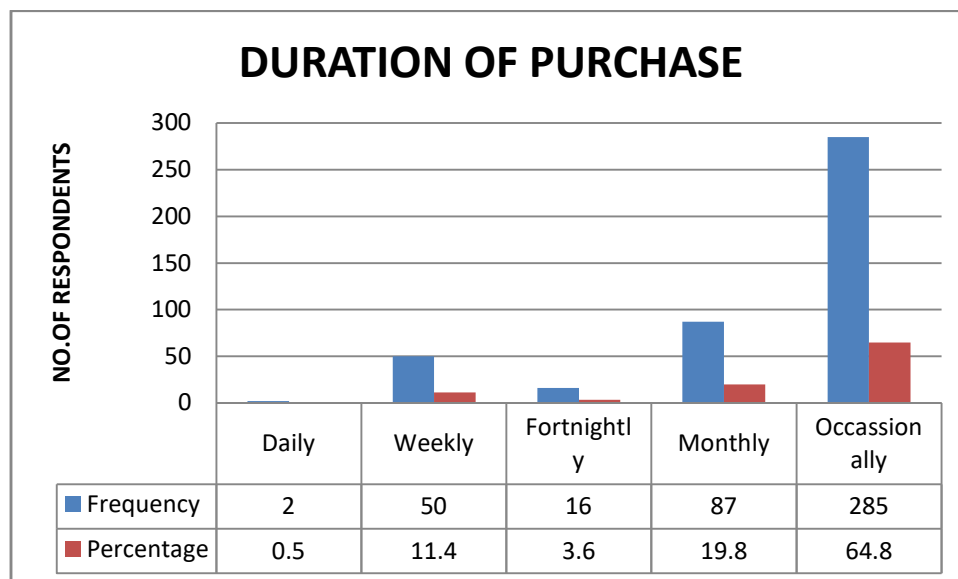
DURATION OF PURCHASE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

S.No.	Duration of purchase	Frequency	Percentage
1	Daily	2	.5
2	Weekly	50	11.4
3	Fortnightly	16	3.6
4	Monthly	87	19.8
5	Occassionally	285	64.8
	Total	440	100.0

Source: Primary Data.

From the above table shows that, 5 percent of the respondents are purchase organic products Daily, 11.4 per cent of the respondents are Weekly, 3.6 per cent of the respondents are fortnightly, 19.8 per cent of the respondents are monthly and 64.8 per cent of the respondents

are Occassionally. The majority of the respondents are purchase organic products occassionally. (64.8 percent).

Chart no.1

	Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Occassionally
Frequency	2	50	16	87	285
Percentage	0.5	11.4	3.6	19.8	64.8

iii) MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Multiple regression co-efficient measures separately the relationship between two variables in such a way that the effects of other related variables are eliminated, In other words, it measures the relation between a dependent variable and a particular independent variable by holding all other variables constant. Thus, each multiple regression co-efficient measures the effect of its independent variable on the dependent variable. Multiple regression analysis of awareness of purchase towards cause related organic products (Y) was performed with variables and Gender(X_1), Age(X_2), Educational Level (X_3), Occupational status(X_4), Monthly Income(X_5) and Residential status (X_6) the following regression model is fitted for performance:

$$X = b0 + b1X1 + b2\ X2 + b3\ X3 + \ldots\ldots$$

Where b1, b2… and b9 are partial regression coefficients; bo-constant the results are presented in the following table.

TABLE NO.3

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: AWARENESS OF PURCHASE

	Standardized Coefficients			S/NS
	Beta	t	P.value.	
(Constant)		14.880	.000	**0. 70**
Gender	-.022	3.473	.637	**0. 57**
Age	.153	2.944	.003	**5.430**
Educational qualification	-.032	3.696	.487	**.000**
Occupation	-.152	-2.907	.004	**0. 70**
Monthly Income	.010	4.208	.836	**0. 57**
Residential status	.043	4.920	.358	**5.430**
R Square				**0. 70**
Adjusted R Square				**0. 57**
F Value				**5.430**
P.Value				**.000**

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA   **p <0.01, *p<0.05 S-Significant NS- Not significant

TABLE NO.2 (a) ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P.VALUE	S/NS
Regression	32.090	6	5.348		.000**	
Residual	426.526	433	.985	5.430		S
Total	458.616	439				

**p <0.01, *p<0.05 S-Significant.

It is clear that, the Adjusted R Square value of model accounts for 70 per cent of variance – a good model and the Standardized Beta Coefficients give a measure of the contribution of each variable to the model. A large value indicates that a unit change in this predictor variable has a large effect on the criterion variable. The t and Sig (p) values give a rough indication of the impact of each predictor variable namely Gender, Age, Educational Level Occupational status, Monthly Income and Residential status. It found that p value suggested that a predictor variable is having a large impact on the criterion variable. Hence, over all ANOVA

results, which assesses the overall significance of this model (F- 5.430, p value- 0.00, p<0.01). This model is statistically significant.

Hence, it can be concluded that there is significant relationship between gender,age,occupation status, monthly income and residential status they have significant relationship between average organic products awareness. Average awareness differs among different categories of socio-economic group, since the purchase of duration differed among persons. The differences may differ based on their own convenience.

SUGGESTION OF THE STUDY

➢ Communication strategies for the purpose of spreading environment knowledge and creating environmental concern need to focus on the educational background of the target group than considering the other demographic variables.

➢ Government and business houses may consider the point that print media and websites seemed to be the least important source of spreading awareness about eco-friendly products and hence these media should be used sparingly in their mass communication efforts

➢ Regarding general factors contributing to the popularity of green cosmetic products, important factors are; Organic Product Knowledge, Branded Organic Cosmetic Products, Reliability of Organic Cosmetic Product and Organic Products expensive. Pertaining to general factors impacting organic food products, factors such as; Organic Food Products' Nutritional Taste, Organic Food Products are healthier, Lack of information and availability of Organic Food Products, Organic Food Products are safe and expensive and Branded Organic Food Products' Look and Quality impact the respondents' decision for buying organic products.

➢ Because positive attitude of consumers towards environmentally friendly products has not been found to be significant, consumer counseling programs are encouraged. Eco-labeling criterion should be standardized so that consumers may not be confused about claims of green products. Companies should assume at least some responsibility for environmental deterioration. As consumer awareness and purchase intent of organic products has been found to be positively correlated. So the producers can provide more

value to their customers by highlighting the characteristic of being a "organic product" producer. Consumers are aware of organic products and they have the attitude towards the environment but an attitude to purchase a organic product does not exist, so the companies producing "organic products" may develop programs in communities to develop the attitude towards organic products. The consumer may be aware through programs about the purchase of organic products and how this purchase will contribute to the environment.

CONCLUSION

Each and every organization of today has better knowledge about their environmental responsibility. They have realized that mere importance of their own responsibility towards the society and the environment is not sufficient. Many top companies around the globe have launched its footstep towards the environmental responsibility. Environmental degradation taken into its consideration by companies leads to production of new organic products. This helps the company to gain sufficient reputation from the public. In turn this will increase its sales volume and profit. Hence, if all the companies makes effort to increase its responsibility towards the environment, it can surely help prevent environmental degradation and conserve ecology.

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