

# A Study on Awareness and Challenges of Organic Products Among the Students with Reference to Coimbatore City

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## Abstract

Organic farming is in a nascent stage in India. About 3.67 Million hectares of farmland was under cultivation, as of March 2020, according to the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. The growth story of organic farming is unfolding with increasing demand not only in India but also globally. India ranks first in number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming. Denmark and Switzerland had the highest per capita consumption of organic food of any country in the world in 2019. At present India exports more than 300 types of organic products to more than 20 countries in the world, but it has a less numbers to its own domestic market of organic products. There is a lag in purchasing or adoption of organic products in the domestic market these are mainly because of, the lack of awareness among the consumers or students, its contribution towards health benefits, high pricing of the products, and the availability in the market. And also, to determine the relationship between the kinds of organic products the students buy and its benefit. The findings of the study reveal that students agreed that organic products contribute to their health, quality of product, the taste/texture/feeling. This study analysed the students' level of awareness and what would increase their level of trust in organic products in Coimbatore District. Thus, awareness acts as a crucial factor in changing the attitude of students towards organic foods.

**Keywords:** Organic Products, Organic Farming, Awareness, Attitude and Preference

## INTRODUCTION

In the present world there are more specializations in every sector to match the demands of the growing population. Industrial development has taken fast speed to cater these demands of the rising populations. To increase the yield of crops, various chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and other substances available in markets were started put to use by farmers community a few years ago. But increased level of using fertilizers and pesticides started showing harmful effects to human beings as well as the

environment. In each and every product we use there are some hazardous chemicals are present. But at present people are becoming aware of the harmful side effects of these hazardous chemical side effects, so gradually they are turning towards the organic products. "Consumer awareness of organic foods is the first step in developing demand for organic products" (Briz and Ward, 2009). People nowadays are not concerned about the price but concern over quality. Some of the prominent motivating factors to purchase organic foods include environmental

concern, health concern and lifestyle, product quality and subjective norms.

Definition of the word “Organic”, an ecological management production system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity. It is based on the minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance “ecological harmony” (National Standards Board of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA)). All organic product consumers are not having the same method of approach towards organic things. Subsequently the statistical process guides us to comprehend the relation and the model of the consumer awareness trends in organic products in Coimbatore. Organic products are nominally treated to retain the reliability deprived of synthetic constituents, additives or contamination. Organics are usually packaged in brown or green, with labels that are cleaner looking. These products are found by the methods which are environment friendly, by farming technology that study features of the ultimate product and the production process. Both in developed and the developing countries, demand for organic food/products are gradually increasing with an annual average growth rate of 20-25%. There is a rapid growth of organic farming in the agriculture sector.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Awareness and analysis of organic products performance has been researched and discussed by researched by research scholars in many countries including India. A brief writes up highlighting such notable work which studies the perceived quality, buying behaviour and emotional value of organic consumers and their impact on sustainability of organic are as follows.

1. **Shayista Akhtar and Gazala Nisar (2016)** aims to study the awareness towards organic foods: a comparative study amongst

adolescents with Srinagar district of Kashmir. The main scope this study made an attempt on awareness of organic food among the adolescents. The major findings of this study were adolescents having awareness about organic foods. However, adolescents’ girls were more aware than adolescents’ boys.

2. **Priya and Parameswari (2016)** in their study revealed that consumer attitude towards organic products. The main objective of the study to find out the awareness of consumer about the organic product. The major findings of the study revealed that awareness about organic food is among the people and their intention to buy organic food is perfectly shaped by the beliefs. Finally, they concluded that strong intent and attitude values towards the benefits of the organic product.
3. **S. Amudha and Dr. M. Kanagarathinam (2017)** focused to study on consumer awareness towards organic food products in Coimbatore city. The main objective of this study to ascertain the consumer awareness towards organic foods products. The major findings of this study were most of the consumers do not aware of availability of product in market.
4. **Aishwarya and Vansathi (2017)** analysed that the consumer perception towards organic products in Tiruchirappalli Corporation. The main objective of this study to examine the consumer perception towards organic product which relate to demographic profile of the consumer. The major findings of this study towards organic products relates to eco-friendly and health benefits.
5. **Chaitra Bharath and Chandrashekar (2018)** focused on

the consumer awareness of organic certification of food products in Mysore city. Objectives of the study to evaluate the awareness among the organic food consumers regarding the certification of organic food. The major findings of this study were lag in adoption of organic food and lack of awareness on premium price has be charged on the organic food products.

6. **Padmathy and Saraswathi (2019)** conducted a study on the topic of “A Study on the Consumers' Buying Behaviour Towards Organic Food Products in Thanjavur District”. The study investigates the relationship between variables that affect consumers “buying behaviour for organic products and identifies the price levels consumers prefer to pay for organic products in the district. The findings of the study reveal that there is significant relationship between the variables which affects the buying behaviour for organic products.
7. **Uma and Selvam (2015)** conducted a study on the topic of “Analysis of Awareness among Consumers towards Organic Food Products: With Reference to Vellore Organic Consumers Perspective”. The aim of this study is to analyse consumer awareness on organic food products with reference to Vellore City, Tamilnadu. The finding of the study shows that organic food consumption is increasing due to environmental and health concerns associated with food products. The organic food products will expand to grow by overcoming the hindrances and also problems on implementing agricultural market in India.
8. **Chandrashekar (2005)** in his study attempted to gain knowledge about consumer attitude towards organic food product consumption and to see whether there is any potential this might have for changing their behaviour. The rationale for carrying out this study is that consideration for the environment could come only from well-informed citizens who are aware of, and fully committed to their rights to a quality health and environment. Nevertheless, before any behaviour can be changed, it is necessary to evaluate the current state of consumers' awareness and knowledge. Therefore, consumer's attitude, perception towards organic food products, willingness to pay for organic food product and intention to purchase organic food will be the main agenda of this study
9. **Priya and Parameswari (2016)** in their study on Consumer attitude towards organic food products. International Journal of Applied Research. The potential buyers using products which are harmful to the consumers have got awareness on organic products started buying and utilizing for their regular consumption. The researcher shows interest on the optimistic impact to the society thus this particular study has been carried out. Hence, the present study is conducted to know the awareness on organic food products and factors that influence the customers to buy organic products.
10. **Sreenivasa (2012)** in his study indicated that organic farming should be taken as means of enhancing soil fertility, soil health and productivity without causing environmental pollution. High cost of chemical fertilizers,

indiscriminate use of pesticides which affected human health, biodiversity in addition to environmental pollution and global warming due to rise in carbon pool, methane etc. are causing major concern to the society in general and farmers in particular.

### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

In India, organic food produce market has persistent growth in the past few years. Nowadays the consumer moved the organic produce for the health and safe consumption of food. All people are focusing on the green feature products and wish move on eco-friendly products. Because they know the information from social media and they learn what problems going on related to health. Based on this main reason they view point on organic products. This research has undertaken among general public and mainly focused their awareness and attitudes towards organic products.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To assess the attention and consumption of organic merchandise in Coimbatore.
3. To analyse the awareness level about organic products among the students.
4. To analyze the potential for organic products in the Indian domestic
5. To analyse the factors influenced to purchase organic products among the students.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Primary Data**

Primary data is the data collected from the respondent for the first time, it is original in nature. For the purpose of collection of primary data, a well-structured questionnaire focuses primarily on population consisting of college

students as consumers of organic products in Coimbatore city. One hundred and two responses were received through the questionnaire. It also comprises of closed ended as well as open ended questions. In close ended questions, checklist questions and multiple-choice questions are used and various statistical techniques using SPSS were applied for the data interpretation and analysis.

#### **Secondary Data**

The secondary data are collected from the past records, books, journals, magazines, web and all other published data.

#### **SCOPE OF STUDY**

The main aim is that the predictors of consumer behaviour must be understood to achieve this and to eliminate the present barriers to organic products. Peoples concern for health and life style goes on increasing day by day that have attracted them towards to more intake of organic products. However, it is essential to find the present state of awareness of organic products among the students.

#### **OVERVIEW OF TOPIC**

Organic farming, or eco farming, is a mild and environmentally friendly form of agriculture. It is implemented without the use of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, hormones, antibiotics and preservatives not only in plants but also in animals. At recent times famers are converting their land into organic farm, supermarkets are adding the organic food options, in online shopping also added the organic products and stand-alone organic shops doors are opened. Therefore, this research to gain valuable information of students' awareness and attitude towards organic products. There are three main categories of organic products they are

- Agricultural products (e.g., fruit, vegetables, honey, cotton).

- Animal products (e.g., eggs, meat, farmed fish).
- Processed products (mainly foods such as bread, cheese, oils, etc.).

### Sample size

The study was conducted with a sample size of 102.

### Sampling Technique

Non-random sampling i.e. convenient sampling method was followed in selecting the sample. The samples were drawn from consumers residing in Coimbatore city.

### TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

The statistical tools used for the purpose of this study are Simple Percentages, Mean, 'F' test, Chi-Square test, Weighted Average and Garrett Ranking Technique.

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was confined to Coimbatore city. Hence the generalization of the study may not hold good for the entire universe.
2. The elicited opinion of respondents may not hold good at all times.
3. Convenient sampling method was adapted. So, the selection of sample may not represent the entire population.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETAION

**TABLE 1 : DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Female	40	39.2
	Male	62	60.8
<b>Age</b>	17-19	2	2.0
	19-21	82	80.4
	21-23	11	10.8
	23-25	7	6.9
<b>Education Qualification</b>	Graduate	16	15.7
	Post Graduate	4	3.9
	Professional Degree	8	7.8
	Under Graduate	74	72.5
<b>Family Monthly Income</b>	10,000-30,000	34	33.3
	30,000-50,000	23	22.5
	50,000&above	45	44.1

From above table it is inferred that out of 102 respondent's 60.8 percent were male respondents and 39.2 percent were female respondents. Majority of respondents were male respondents with 60.8 percent. It is also inferred that, majority of respondents fall under the age of 19-21 with 80.4 percent, 10.8 percent of respondents under the age of 21-232, 6.9 percent of respondent under the age of 23-25 and finally 2 percent respondents under

the age 17-19. It also reveals that 15.7 percent respondents were Graduate, 3.9 percent were Post Graduate, 72.5 percent were under graduate and 7.8 percent were professional degree holders. When it comes to their monthly family income level it is inferred that 33.3 percent of respondents gets the income of 10000-30000, 22.5 percent gets the income of 30000-50000, 44.1 percent of respondents

gets income of 50000 and above per month.

**TABLE 2 : AWARENESS LEVEL OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
1.	Awareness about Organic Products	Maybe	9	8.8
		No	5	4.9
		Yes	88	86.3
2.	Source of Information	Television Advertisements	30	29.4
		Educational events	25	24.5
		Friends / Relatives / Acquaintances	76	74.5
		Health Magazines	30	29.4
		Others	17	16.6
		Not Sure	13	12.7
		No	2	2.0

The above table indicates that the most of the students are aware of the organic products with count of 88, five of the respondents are not aware and nine of the respondents are of not sure whether

they are aware of the products. Their source of information on organic products, majority of them were through their friends, relatives, acquaintances.

**TABLE 3 : STUDENTS VIEW ON ORGANIC PRODUCT**

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage	
1.	Do you think organic food is healthier and more nutritious?	Agree	23	22.5
		Disagree	2	2.0
		Neutral	19	18.6
		Strongly agree	49	48.0
		Strongly disagree	9	8.8
2.	Organic food product does not have any side effects?	Agree	22	21.6
		Disagree	4	3.9
		Neutral	33	32.4
		Strongly agree	34	33.3
		Strongly disagree	9	8.8
3.	I would agree to pay even extra price for environment friendly products to save our environment?	Agree	27	26.5
		Disagree	6	5.9
		Neutral	26	25.5
		Strongly agree	33	32.4
		Strongly disagree	10	9.8
4.	Ensures health and safety of the generations to come?	Agree	24	23.5
		Disagree	3	2.9
		Neutral	21	20.6
		Strongly agree	47	46.1
		Strongly disagree	7	6.9
5.	I want to be part of	Agree	66	64.7

	<b>organic movement by using organic products</b>	Strongly Disagree	1	1.0
		Disagree	6	5.9
		Neutral	29	28.4

From the above table it is inferred that out of 102 respondents 48 percentage students strongly agree that organic food is more nutritious, 9percentage disagree the view that the organic food is more nutritious. 21.6 and 33.3 percentage of students agree and strongly agree that organic food does not have any side effects. 26.5 and 32.4 percentage of respondents agree to pay extra money for organic product to contribute to the wellness of our environment. 69.6 percent of the respondents agree that consumption

of organic products ensures health and safety of the generations to come, 20.6 percent are neutral. And 64.7 percent of the students wants to be a part of organic movement by using the organic products, 28.4 percent are neutral and 5.9 percent doesn't want to be a part in this movement.

**TABLE 4 :  
TOWARDS  
ORGANIC**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Expensive	47	45.0
Low	3	3.0
Moderate	53	52.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**OPINION  
PRICE OF  
PRODUCTS**

The above table states that 45 percentage of the respondents fell the price of organic product is expensive. 52 percentage of the respondent's opinion

towards the price is moderate and the rest states that they are lower and neither moderate nor expensive.

**TABLE 5 : USAGE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

<b>Usage</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1-3 years	35	34.3
3-6 years	8	7.8
Less than a year	41	40.2
More than 6 years	18	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the above table it is inferred that the usage of organic products of the respondents' is high of 40.2 percentage in less than a year, 34.3 percentage of respondents are using it for 1-3 years, 7.8 percentage of the them

have been using for three to six years and 17.6 percentage of the respondents have been using organic products for more than six years.

**TABLE 6 :**

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
None	12	11.8
Once in a month	53	52.0
Once in a week	21	20.6
Twice or thrice in a month	16	15.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **FREQUENCY OF BUYING ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

From the above table reveals that 52 percentage of the respondents buy organic products once in a month, 20.6 percent purchases once in a week, 15.7

percentage twice or thrice in a month and rest 11.8 percentage does not purchase the organic product or may be more than the intervals in the questionnaire.

**TABLE 7 : PLACE FOR BUYING ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

<b>Place</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Farm	23	22.5
Local shops	27	26.5
Online	17	16.7
Retail shops	35	34.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The above table reveals that most of respondents purchase organic product from the retail shops, 26.5 percent buy from their near by local shops, 16.7of them purchase their essential organic products

through online and the other 22.5 percentage of the respondents directly purchase the organic products from the farms.

**TABLE 8 : REASONS FOR CHOOSING ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Health concern	67	65.7
None	2	2.0
Prefer the taste/ texture/ feeling	7	6.9
Quality of products	26	25.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the above table indicates that most of the respondents prefer organic products for health concern as it is more nutritious than other products. 6.9

percentage choose the taste/texture/feeling of organic product and 25.5 percentage respondents choose the reason the quality of the organic product.



**CHI-SQUARE TEST****AGE AND USAGE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

Ho : There is no significant relationship between Age of the respondents and Usage of Organic products.

	Value	df	Asym. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	16.275 <sup>a</sup>	9	.061
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	15.225	9	.085
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	102		

From the above table it is inferred that the chi square value 0.061 is greater than the level of significance value at 5 percent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between age and usage of organic products.

**EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND AWARENESS ABOUT ORGANIC PRODUCTS**

Ho : There is no significant relationship between Educational Qualification of the respondents and Usage of Organic products.

	Value	df	Asym. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	13.482 <sup>a</sup>	6	.036
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	12.251	6	.057
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	102		

From the above table it is inferred that the chi square value 0.036 is less than the level of significance value at 5 percent level, null hypothesis is accepted. So, there is no significant relationship between education qualification and awareness of organic products.

**FAMILY INCOME AND FREQUENCY OF PURCHASE**

Ho : There is no significant relationship between Family Income of the respondents and frequency of purchase.

	Value	df	Asym. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	2.302 <sup>a</sup>	6	.890
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	2.266	6	.894
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	102		

From the above table it is inferred that the chi square value 0.890 is greater than the level of significance value at 5 percent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between family income and frequency of buying of organic products.

**EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

Ho : There is no significant relationship between Educational Qualification of the respondents and sources of information.

	Value	df	Asym. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	41.560 <sup>a</sup>	7	.998
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	40.950	7	.999
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	102		

From the above table it is inferred that the chi square value 0.998 is greater than the level of significance value at 5 percent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between education qualification and sources of information about organic products.

	Value	df	Asym. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	8.538 <sup>a</sup>	6	.201
<b>Likelihood Ratio</b>	9.594	6	.143
<b>N of Valid Cases</b>	102		

### FAMILY INCOME AND OPINION ABOUT THE PRICE OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Ho : There is no significant relationship between Family Income of the respondents and Opinion about the price.

From the above table it is inferred that the chi square value 0.201 is greater than the level of significance value at 5 percent level, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between family income and opinion about the price of organic products.

### ANOVA TEST GENDER AND AWARENESS ABOUT ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relation between gender and the level of awareness about organic products. Alternate Hypothesis (H1): There is significant relation between gender and the level of awareness about organic products.

Particulars	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.891	2	.446	1.884	.157
Within Groups	23.422	99	.237		
Total	24.314	101			

From the above table it is inferred that the chi square value 0.157 is greater than the level of significance value at 5 percent level, the null hypothesis is

rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between Gender of the respondents and the level of awareness about the organic products.

### LEVEL OF SATISFACTION TOWARDS APEDA SCHEMES PROVIDED TO ORGANIC EXPORTERS

S.NO	Government Incentives	Arithmetic Mean	Rank
1.	Allowances	4.71	I
2.	Inputs Such Seeds	4.08	II
3.	Training	3.91	IV
4.	Fertilizer	3.63	VI
5.	Potential Storage	2.91	VII
6.	Easier Credit	3.98	III
7.	Foreign Investors	3.70	V
8.	High Premium in the Market	2.65	VIII

From the above table it can be understood that Allowances is the first

rank given by the respondents to scheme provided by organic exporters followed by

Inputs Such Seeds.

### CHALLENGES FACED BY THE ORGANIC PRODUCT EXPORTERS

S.NO	Challenges	Arithmetic Mean	Rank
1.	Unstable of Market Price	3.71	IV
2.	Storage and Warehouse Problem	4.31	I
3.	Marketing Problem	3.98	II
4.	Government Slandered and Certification	3.63	V
5.	Quality and Standards of products	3.80	III
6.	Documentation Process	2.30	VI

From the above table it can be understood that Storage and Warehouse problem is the first rank given by the respondents to the challenges faced by the organic exporters followed by Marketing Problems.

### FINDINGS

- ❖ 60.8% of the respondents are male and 39.2% are female. 80.4% of the respondents belongs to the age group of 19-21 years and 72.5% of the respondents are under graduates.
- ❖ 44.1% of the respondent's family monthly income are above Rs 50000 and 74.5% of the respondents are came to know about organic food product through the source of friends/relatives and acquaintances.
- ❖ 86.3% of the respondents are aware of the organic products. 45.2% of respondents' opinion on the price of organic products are high.
- ❖ 65.7% of respondents choose organic products to improve their health and 64.7% of them believe that organic products are free from hazardous chemicals
- ❖ 52% of the respondents purchase organic products once in a month and 34.3% purchase it from the retail shops.
- ❖ 69.6% of respondents prefer organic vegetables and 68.6%

choose organic fruits for purchasing in the category of organic products.

- ❖ The chi square value 16.275 is lesser than the level of significance value 16.9 at 5 percent level where the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant relationship between age and usage of organic products.
- ❖ The chi square value 13.482 is greater than the level of significance value 12.6 at 5 percent level where it has failed to reject null hypothesis. So, there is no significant relationship between education qualification and awareness of organic products

### SUGGESTIONS

The study shows that further steps have to be taken to increase the awareness level of organic products. Government can increase the trend for consumption of organic foods by increasing public awareness (such as programs and advertisements in TV and other channels) and further government should come forward to provide subsidy for organic producers. Organic food particularly fruits and vegetables are highly quality, nutritious and taste better. The same can be maintained to hang on to current customers and focus on new customers by increasing availability of the products. More people opt for organized organic outlet, hence,

proper display, arrangements, showcases, etc. activities will definitely attract the consumers towards their attitude to go for organic food products. Cooking time is more for organic products. Therefore, fast food is preferred by customers. Something should be done to speed up the cooking time of the organic products.

## CONCLUSION

The organic products are becoming very popular among the peoples. They wish to found the regular usage product in the market as the organic quality. They are well aware about the health and safety consciousness. So, this result from this present research study as the students are aware about the organic product. The main source of getting awareness through social media. The social media plays a vital role for awareness of organic products. There is more number organic shop located in the Coimbatore City, through the promotion of that shop the general people are got some knowledge thoughts about the organic products. The peoples started search on organic products benefits and its usage from the web, magazines, social media etc. The main source of awareness of organic products among the students are through social media and public promotion.

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