

A STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS

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Abstract - This study has been conducted to understand the consumer buying behaviour towards organic products. Employing a descriptive research design, the investigation aims to understand the preferences, attitudes, and motivations guiding consumer decisions in purchasing organic products. The sample method utilised probability sampling, resulting in a sample size of 245 respondents. Moreover, factors such as perceived awareness, health consciousness, environmental concerns, price, and Trust and brand reputation significantly influence consumer behaviour towards organic products. Statistical analyses, including the Normality test, Mann – Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis H test, Spearman's correlation and Friedman test, provide valuable insights into the distribution and associations among variables.

Keywords: Organic products, Buying Behaviour, Attitude of Consumers

I. INTRODUCTION

There is no common definition of “organic” because different countries have different standards for products to be certified “organic”. In simplest words, organic products are minimally processed to maintain the integrity of the products 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. Consumer behaviour has become an important and popular object of scientific research. This is influenced by the growing importance of health care, including concern for a high level of physical fitness. The relationship between health and physical activity and human nutrition has become evident. These are inseparable elements when considering problems related to a healthy lifestyle.

Crafting Strategies for Organic Product : Understanding Consumer Preferences

Health Consciousness: In today's health-conscious society, consumers are increasingly wary of artificial chemicals in their food. They prioritise products that promote well-being and are perceived as safer alternatives. Highlighting the nutritional superiority of organic produce, rich in vitamins,

minerals, and antioxidants, can further resonate with health-conscious consumers who prioritise quality nutrition.

Awareness: Consumers must first be made aware of the benefits of organic products. This involves educating them about the health advantages, environmental sustainability, and ethical considerations associated with choosing organic.

Environmental Concerns: In today's environmentally conscious society, consumers are increasingly concerned about the impact of their purchasing decisions on nature. Organic products resonate with these concerns as they are produced using sustainable farming practices that prioritise soil health, biodiversity, and natural resource conservation.

Price: Price sensitivity is a significant factor influencing consumer purchasing decisions, especially when it comes to organic products, which are often perceived as more expensive than their conventional counterparts. To overcome this barrier, businesses can implement pricing strategies that make organic products more accessible and affordable to a broader range of consumers.

Trust and Brand Reputation: Trust is essential in the organic market, where consumers are increasingly scrutinising product labels and certifications. Establishing trust and building a positive brand reputation are critical for businesses introducing organic products. This involves being transparent about sourcing and production practices, obtaining reputable organic certifications, and consistently delivering high-quality products that meet consumer expectations.

II. NEED OF THE STUDY

The study of consumer buying behaviour towards organic products is essential for businesses aiming to capture a growing market segment. By investigating consumer preferences, motivations, and decision-making processes, businesses can tailor their product offerings and marketing strategies effectively. Identifying key demographic trends and segments within the consumer base enables targeted outreach and engagement. Moreover, assessing factors such as pricing sensitivity, product availability, and trust in certifications helps businesses address potential barriers to purchase. Ultimately, the study aims to provide actionable insights that empower businesses to meet consumer needs, enhance their competitiveness, and drive sustainable growth in the organic products market.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of awareness among consumers regarding organic products and their benefits.

- To investigate the influence of health consciousness in consumer preferences for organic products.
- To understand the extent to which environment concerns influence consumer choices for organic products.
- To examine the influence of perceived price and availability on Consumer purchasing decisions related to organic products.
- To analyse the relationship between consumer trust and brand reputation while purchasing organic products.

IV. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study on consumer buying behaviour towards organic products encompasses an investigation into the motivations, preferences, and attitudes guiding consumers' purchasing decisions. It involves exploring various factors influencing consumer choices, such as health consciousness, environmental concerns, price sensitivity, and trust in organic certifications. The study aims to analyse demographic characteristics, assess the impact of marketing strategies, examine the role of product packaging and labelling, and investigate the influence of digital platforms and social media. By comprehensively examining these aspects, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into understanding and predicting consumer behaviour towards organic products in contemporary markets.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. Sangeetha Natarajan (2016)- This study addresses the growing importance of food safety and the increasing preference for organic products among today's consumers in India. Factors such as changing lifestyles, heightened health awareness, and the expansion of modern retail outlets are driving the rapid growth of the organic food market. Through an exploratory research design and primary data collected via self-structured questionnaires, the study investigates consumer awareness, preferences, motives, and attitudes towards organic food purchases. Analysis techniques including Likert's Five-point scaling, summary statistics, Chi-square, correlation, and path coefficient analysis were employed, with findings illustrated through bar charts for visual clarity.

Anupam Singh, Priyanka Verma (2017)-This study looked at why people buy organic products. They surveyed 611 consumers in India and found that factors like health consciousness, knowledge about organic food, subjective norms, price, and availability influence people's attitudes towards organic food. These factors also affect whether people plan to buy organic food, but their attitude

and intentions mediate this relationship. Additionally, age, education, and income play a role in whether people actually buy organic food. The findings help organic food companies, retailers, and regulators understand consumer behaviour better and provide guidance for expanding the organic food market.

B. Krishnakumarea and S. Niranjana (2017)- This study, conducted in Tamil Nadu's Tirupur district, examines consumer buying behaviour towards organic food products, surveying 240 respondents divided equally between (120 organic and 120 non-organic consumers). Utilising chi-square tests and MANOVA analysis, it explores awareness levels and demographic associations with organic food understanding. Results indicate distinctions between organic and non-organic consumers based on gender, family income, education, and occupational status. Additionally, psychological factors like attitude, perception, belief, and intention favour organic food consumers in Tirupur district.

N Sharma, R Singhvi (2018)- Consumer preferences are shifting towards organic food for health and environmental reasons, yet its popularity is hindered by lower productivity and higher prices. Raising awareness about organic food benefits is crucial, along with incentivizing farmers to adopt organic farming. Studying consumer perceptions can provide valuable insights for the organic food industry's growth, especially in India. Existing literature highlights global and Indian demand for organic products and factors influencing consumer perceptions. Addressing these gaps is essential for the present investigation to contribute meaningfully to the understanding and promotion of organic food consumption practices.

S Pahari, I Ghosal, B Prasad (2023)- This study delved into Indian consumers' intentions to purchase organic food online, identifying key factors influencing these decisions and examining the link between buying intentions and attitudes towards organic food. Through surveys with regular organic food buyers, factors like perception and health consciousness emerged as significant influencers of attitudes towards organic products, ultimately shaping consumer purchasing behaviour. Additionally, the study revealed that online organic food purchases were associated with enhanced health and mental satisfaction for customers. These findings hold both theoretical and practical significance, aiding organic food stakeholders in crafting targeted marketing strategies to address consumer concerns and capitalise

Kalyani R, Prabhavathi, Y (2023)- This study examines Indian consumers' perspectives on organic food, drawing data from 120 shoppers in Bangalore. Results indicate that while consumers perceive organic food as healthy, they are deterred by its higher cost. Key factors driving purchases include health benefits, quality, and certification. Branded organic stores are favoured, with social media playing a significant role in information dissemination. Purchase frequencies vary, with daily purchases of fruits and vegetables and occasional juice buys. Overall, safety is paramount,

with personal, psychological, and social factors influencing buying decisions, contributing to the development of a comprehensive consumer behaviour model for organic food products.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

The descriptive research design which is Descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with delivering the characteristics of a particular individual group.

PROBABILITY SAMPLING

Probability sampling is a sampling technique where a researcher selects a few criteria and chooses members of a population randomly. All the members have an equal opportunity to participate in the sample with this selection parameter. The selection of a sample from a population, when this selection is based on the principle of randomization, that is, random selection or chance.

PILOT STUDY

This pilot study with 30 customer respondents aims to determine the appropriate sample size, identified as 245. Through surveys and interviews, we gather insights to refine our sampling strategy and ensure representativeness by using the below formula.

$$n = (Z^2 * (PQ)) / E^2$$

$$n = (1.96^2 * (0.80*0.20)) / 0.05^2$$

$$n = (1.96^2 * 0.1600) / 0.05^2$$

$$n = 245$$

n is the required sample size.

- Z is the Z-score corresponding to your desired confidence level.
- p is the estimated proportion of the population with the characteristic of interest.
- E is the margin of error.

SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size is defined as the number of observations used for determining the estimations of a given population. The size of the sample has been drawn from the population. The sample size for This study is 245.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

NORMALITY TEST

NULL HYPOTHESIS(H0): The data follows normal distribution

ALTERNATE HYPOTHESIS(H1): The data does not follow normal distribution

Tests of Normality

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|------|--------------|-----|------|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| AWARENESS | .514 | 245 | .000 | .422 | 245 | .000 |
| HEALTH | .192 | 245 | .004 | .935 | 245 | .000 |
| CONSCIOUSNESS | .172 | 245 | .000 | .949 | 245 | .000 |
| ENVIRONMENT | .147 | 245 | .000 | .954 | 245 | .000 |
| CONCERNS | .126 | 245 | .000 | .977 | 245 | .000 |
| PRICE | | | | | | |
| TRUST AND BRAND | | | | | | |
| REPUTATION | | | | | | |

INFERENCE:

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) is less than 0.05 i.e., $P < 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis that the sample follows a normal distribution was rejected. The alternative hypothesis is accepted. The sample data deviates from the normal distribution.

NON-PARAMETRIC TEST

MANN-WHITNEY U TEST

H0: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of men & women with respect to the factors.

H1: There is a significant difference between the mean rank of men & women with respect to the factors .

Test Statistics

| | AWARENESS | HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS | ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS | PRICE | TRUST AND BRAND REPUTATION |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Mann-Whitney U | 7049.500 | 6925.500 | 6965.500 | 6.864E3 | 7036.000 |
| Wilcoxon W | 12302.500 | 12178.500 | 12218.500 | 1.716E4 | 12289.000 |
| Z | -.726 | -.684 | -.608 | -.792 | -.474 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | .468 | .494 | .543 | .428 | .635 |

INFERENCE

The Mann – Whitney U test was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) for all the variables is more than 0.05 i.e., $P > 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) is accepted. There is no significant difference between the mean rank of men & women.

KRUSKAL WALLIS H TEST

H0: There is no significant difference between the mean rank of the age with respect to the factors such as health consciousness, awareness, environment concerns, price, trust and brand reputation.

H1: There is a significant difference between the mean rank of the age with respect to the factors such as health consciousness, awareness, environment concerns, price, trust and brand reputation.

Test Statistics

| | AWARENESS | HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS | ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS | PRICE | TRUST AND BRAND REPUTATION |
|-------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| Chi-Square | 3.948 | 9.902 | 17.824 | 5.686 | 7.993 |
| df | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .267 | .019 | .001 | .128 | .046 |

INFERENCE

The Kruskal Wallis H test was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) for all the variables is more than 0.05 i.e., $P > 0.05$. Therefore the alternative hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference between the mean rank of the age with respect to the factors.

SPEARMAN’S CORRELATION

H0:There is no relationship between the factors such as consumer buying behaviour in organisations.

H1:There is a relationship between the factors such as consumer buying behaviour in organisations.

Correlations

| | | | AWARENESS | HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS | ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS | PRICE | TRUST AND BRAND REPUTATION |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| Spearman's rho | AWARENESS | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .013** | .021** | .024 | .031 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .843 | .747 | .711 | .624 |
| | | N | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 |
| HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS | HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS | Correlation Coefficient | .013 | 1.000 | .563** | .480** | .413** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .843 | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | | N | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 |
| ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS | ENVIRONMENT CONCERNS | Correlation Coefficient | .021 | .563** | 1.000 | .547** | .373** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .747 | .000 | | .000 | .000 |
| | | N | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 |
| PRICE | PRICE | Correlation Coefficient | .024 | .480** | .547** | 1.000 | .437** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .711 | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| | | N | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 |
| TRUST AND BRAND REPUTATION | TRUST AND BRAND REPUTATION | Correlation Coefficient | .031 | .413** | .373** | .437** | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .624 | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | | N | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 | 245 |

INFERENCE

The correlation was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) for all the variables is more than 0.05 i.e., $P > 0.05$. There most exists a strong correlation between health consciousness, awareness, environment concerns, price, trust and brand reputation.

FINDINGS

Majority (58.4%) of the respondents are female. the majority (38.8%) of respondents belong to the age group between 26 - 30 years. It is clearly shown that the majority of respondents are unmarried (53.1%). the majority of the respondents are private employees (53.1%). The majority of the respondents earn between Rs30,000-40,000 (57.6%). The majority respondents of the survey are aware of organic products (86.9%). the majority of respondents of the survey are compared to non-organic products and organic products (67.8%). the majority of respondents of the survey consider reputation when purchasing organic products (70.6%). the majority of respondents from , 56% of respondents from agree believe organic products improve overall health .It is clearly shown that the majority of respondents from 54% of respondents from agree buying organic products supports environmental sustainability. It is clearly shown that the majority of respondents from 60% of respondents agree the higher price of organic products somewhat deters my purchase. It is clearly shown that the majority of respondents strongly agree 49% of respondents brand reputation is influenced by organic product purchases. The Mann – Whitney U test was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) for all the variables is more than 0.05 i.e., $P > 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. There is no significant difference between the mean rank of men & women. The Kruskal Wallis H test was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) for all the variables is more than 0.05 i.e., $P > 0.05$. Therefore the alternative hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference between the mean rank of the age with respect to the factors. The correlation was conducted on the sample data, and it is found that the significance value (P value) for all the variables is more than 0.05 i.e., $P > 0.05$. There most exists a strong correlation between health consciousness, awareness, environment concerns, price, trust and brand reputation.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on a study on consumer buying behaviour, health consciousness product development should prioritise the development of organic products tailored to address specific health concerns prevalent among consumers, aligning with the majority demographic's emphasis on perceived health benefits and overall wellness. Offer promotional discounts and loyalty rewards to incentivize trial and repeat purchases, addressing price sensitivity concerns and encouraging consumer adoption of organic offerings. Focusing on social media platforms where your target consumers are most active, using SEO strategies to improve organic search rankings, and employing content marketing to educate consumers about the benefits of organic products might increase engagement and sales.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research project explores the consumer buying behaviour towards organic products via a survey conducted among a sample of 245 individuals. The results of the survey provided valuable insights into the factors influencing the purchase and consumption of organic products among consumers. We can see that a significant portion of consumers are gravitating towards organic products because of their perceived efficacy, all-natural composition, and lack of negative side effects. Organic items were reportedly used by most responders for skin care, cosmetics, and health supplements. This suggests that organic goods are becoming more popular as a safe and reliable substitute for Western medication. Consumers are willing to pay extra for better-quality products, but excessive pricing can refrain them from making a purchase. The study also highlights the impact of online marketing and social media on consumer behaviour towards Ayurvedic products. This study can be useful for organic product manufacturers to understand consumer preferences and build effective marketing strategies to promote their products.

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