

FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMER'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN TUMAKURU DISTRICT

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Abstract: Organic food advocates claim that organically grown foods are safer and more nutritious than foods raised through non organic methods such as pesticide and non-organic fertilizer use, or antibiotic and hormone use. Food preferences, choices and eating habits are notoriously hard to change as they are a central aspect of people's lifestyles and their socio-cultural environment. The main objective of the study is to explore the factors influencing customer's perception towards buying behaviour of organic food products in Tumakuru district. Cluster sampling was adopted for the purpose. Tumakuru district was chosen as major study area. This region was divided into 4 clusters being north, south, east, west. A total of 240 consumers having a habit of consuming organic food products as study population. The data has been collected through issuing structured questionnaire. Regression analysis was used as statistical tool. It is found that, Variables of consumer factors such as customers eating habits, preferences for organic food, consumer lifestyle, preference to locally produced food, seeking nutrition food, symbol of social status were used to predict buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru districts. Similarly, the variables of marketing factors such as organic food product price, availability of organic food products, quality of the organic food products, company's ethical policies and product packaging were used to predict buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru districts.

Keywords: Customer, Perception, Organic, Food, Products, Tumakuru

INTRODUCTION

Food consumption patterns are changing as a result of health and environmental issues. Interest in organically produced food is increasing throughout the world. Global demand for Organic food products remains robust, with sales increasing by over five billion US dollars a year (Abhinav Gupta, 2016). In India, rapid socio-economic development has been accompanied by modernization and industrialization of agricultural food production. The drastic shift towards organic food eventually increase the growth of organic food markets. Organic food also promotes a balance of nature, living organisms, environment and human beings (Anand D, and V.S. Palaniammal, 2016). It also prevents production of food from no artificial preservatives and highly maintain the originality of food. This prevents excess usage of harmful ingredients and thereby promotes health. Consumers, also have concerns on production process of organic foods, primarily the certification and authenticity of organic food has to be improved. Thus, organic foods are considered as more nature friendly, more

nutritious and healthy when comparing to conventional foods (Budi Suprpto and Tony Wijaya, 2012). Organic foods are foods that are produced using methods that do not involve modern synthetic inputs such as synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Organic foods are also not processed using irradiation, industrial solvents or chemical food additives. Organic foods were historically grown on small, family-run farms, limiting the sale of these goods to small grocery store and farmer's markets (M. Aarthi, S. Balusamy, 2020). Organic food advocates claim that organically grown foods are safer and more nutritious than foods raised through non organic methods such as pesticide and non-organic fertilizer use, or antibiotic and hormone use. Many people don't trust these chemicals and don't want to put them into their bodies. Since virtually all non-organically produced foods contain residues of pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals, the only way to avoid them is to buy organic foods. To be certified as organic, food products need to come from farms and processing plants that are certified as organic. Consumers who consider health to be of paramount importance, however, do not mind shelling out a little more for organic food products (Padmathy and R.Saraswathy, 2016). Organic farming has the capability of alleviating many pressures that weigh down on current farmers and farming practices. Demand for organic food products and awareness level on organic foods is increasing rapidly around the developed world. Consumers in developed countries and also in few developing countries have become more health conscious and they have started spending on greener, healthy and natural foodstuffs. (Priya and M Parameswari, 2016) found that six significant factors were found to influence the attitude towards organic food, health, consciousness, and product information, value for money, accessibility and trust. Result of the study showed that women and younger consumers showed a positive attitude towards organic food and perceived consumption of organic food to be healthier food option. They were keen on getting product information and compared labels while selecting nutritious food. Women perceived consumption of organic food to be a healthier option. (Vinay Raj, 2020) concluded that consumers are very much aware that organic food are good for health, these products are free from chemical which resulting in no side effects and do not cause harm to the consumers. The consumers living in urban Areas are more aware about organic food helps to reduce stress level and maintain an energetic lifestyle. Another factor this study found that respondents are willing to pay even higher prices because of it is beneficial for health (Adel S. and Foster C., 2005),

LITERATURE REVIEW

The increase in awareness has caused changes in consumers' tastes and preferences which led to the domestic as well as global rise in demand for organic foods. According to a survey, early 30.4 million hectares were allotted for producing these organic food products. Consumers, today, have a clear cut knowledge about genetic manipulations, food production technology and impact of food on human health Bonti-Ankomah S. and Yiridoe E. K., 2006). The organic food market has grown continuously over a past decade, but the total share of organic food is still low compared to total food market. Now-a-days, organic food product sales were raised to 3% of global food sales with the estimated annual growth of approximately 50%. Therefore, higher prices of organic food products comparing to conventional products, market demand and Government support for organic producers have turned organic production into lucrative system for the producers. (Govindasamy R, DeCongelio M. & Bhuyan S., 2008) in their final report on Meta-analysis, noted down

following points regarding consumer's perception & preferences regarding organic food. Consumers tend to buy organic food on the grounds of quality, naturally grown, and healthier food. Some studies had indicated that some consumers from the same state have clear idea of organic food and some have vague idea about it. Though consumers had shown willingness to pay premium price, very few were ready to pay high premium. (Manaloor V, Srivastava D., 2016) made a study with on consumer satisfaction towards organic food products with special references to Erode District. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. The required primary data have been collected from 200 sample respondents through as well structure questionnaire. The result revealed that were aware well of images and availability but not loyal entirely too organic food products in Erode city (Pandurangarao D, Chiranjeevi K, 2020). Organic food products among all types of consumers have healthy opinions. Purchasing organic food products through online mode improves the quality, reduces time and increases customer satisfaction. The level of customer satisfaction towards online Organic food products depends on the time, needful, and ordering options available in the mobile application or websites, which plays the important role in attracting new customers and retaining the existing ones. Organic food products promote a balance of human, other living organisms and the nature (Aarthi and Balusamy, 2018). It is with rising concern of health issues and food safety; many consumers have turned their site to Organic food products. 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 promotes no artificial preservatives and best maintain the originality of food. This prevents excess use harmful ingredients and thereby ensures health. This study attempted to gain knowledge about consumer's organic product consumption (Balachandran V, 2012). Organic marketing will be successful only if the marketer understands the organic product awareness and their behavior. It is also necessary to evaluate the current state of consumer's awareness and knowledge. Therefore, consumer's awareness, willingness to pay for organic food products and satisfaction towards organic food products will be the main agenda of this study.

(Chithra and Chandrashekar, 2018) study aimed to understand peri-urban areas consumers 'perception of organic food and the importance of organic certification in customers 'decisions for obtaining insights into their consumption of organic food. (Jyoti Ranaa and Justin, 2017) found that customers' interest in food quality and safety has decreased in recent decades as a result of several food disputes and growing environmental consciousness throughout the course of his research on the quality of organic food and its impact on human health. It is well recognized that meals grown organically satisfy these needs (Kalaiselvi. S, 2017). Organically produced milk typically has a higher level of dry matter, fat, calcium, essential vitamins, and healthy conjugated linoleic acids than milk produced conventionally. Organic crops also contain less nitrates and chemical pollutants than conventional ones (CLA) (Konda Kalyani, 2017). Organically grown oxen, pigs, and sheep exhibited higher unsaturated fatty acid content and a higher fatty acid ratio but lower total lipids and saturated fatty acids. Numerous studies have compared the advantages of organic vs. conventional diets in health (Krishnakumare.B and S. Niranjana, 2017).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India, organic food products are in developing stage which were encouraged and supported by government and various other private initiatives. The consumers are also changing drastically towards consuming organic foods because most of the consumers want to maintain their health and they try to avoid various diseases caused by inorganic food. The consumer behavior also changed towards buying organic foods after consuming by themselves and their families. Hence, the research was conducted to know the satisfaction level of consumers towards organic food as consumers got awareness about those organic foods and most of them started to buy organic food for their regular consumption and research concludes to explicit about the positive impact of organic food and its satisfaction level to the society. The market for organic food products in India has emerged because of the profitable export potential available for the producers. Incidentally, in India, most of the organic produce is grown to be exported to the global market. The rest is sold at predetermined retail outlets. So, if the trend for organic food products is growing among producers then, its benefits must naturally reach the local population of a country. This will also ensure that the food products are nutrient rich as processing required would be minimal from the point of origin and consumption. This study has been made to conduct survey among the consumers of organic food products in Tumakuru District. By keeping all these in mind, the present study has been undertaken to find out the factors influencing customers buying behaviour of organic food products in Tumakuru district. The study is conducted to know the problem faced by the using non Organic food products which has chemical fertilizers input to get more yield of the products today the world requires new discussion and innovation which are leads to the potential buyers usage of harmful to the consumers have got perception towards Organic food products started buying and utilizing for their regular consumption the researcher shows interest on the positive impact to the society thus this particular study has been carried out.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1.To explore the relationship between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.
- 2.To explore the relationship between Marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

HYPOTHESES

- H01: There is no significant relationship between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.
- H1: There is a relationship between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.
- H02: There is no significant relationship between Marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between Marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to find out and analyze the factors influencing customer's perception towards buying behaviour of organic food products in Tumakuru district. The

study is confined to exploring the influence of factors such as consumer factors and marketing factors on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research methodology was followed to attain the framed objective; the required primary data have been collected from 240 consumers by using convenient sampling technique. In Takakura District, the required primary data have been collected by using a well-structured and pre- tested interview schedule Such collected data have been analysed with regression analysis.

POPULATION, SAMPLING METHOD AND SAMPLE SIZE

Cluster sampling was adopted for the purpose. Tumakuru district was chosen as major study area. This region was divided into 4 clusters being north, south, east, west. A total of 60 consumers having a habit of buying and consuming organic food products as study population. The respondents who extended full cooperation to provide the information completely were included for the study. The sampling technique in this research is cluster and convenient sampling. The sample size comprises of different types of users who are using organic food products. A sample of 240 respondents was taken into account to find out the factor that significantly influence buying organic food products in Tumakuru District.

DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data

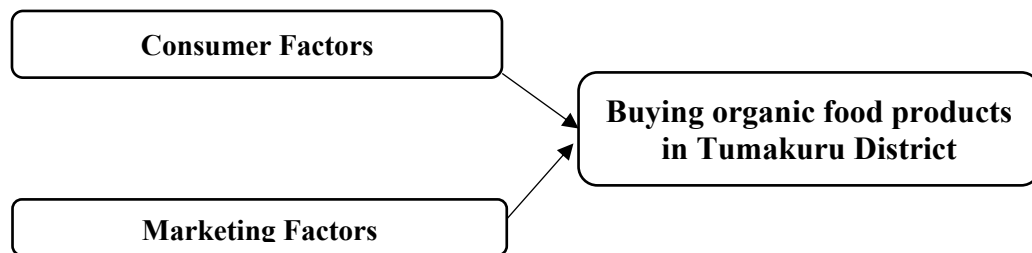
The first time data has been through a self-administered structured questionnaire, which was developed and asked to be filled out. Personal interviews were also done with respondents. A structured questionnaire was prepared containing the "5-point Likert scale." A semi-structured interview with open-ended discussion was conducted in the Kannada language, which is the official language of Karnataka state.

Secondary Data

The following are the sources from which the secondary data was collected, such as information that has been gathered from selected peer-reviewed articles from bibliographic databases (Emerald, Sage journals online, Science Direct, Scopus, Taylor & Francis online, Web of Science, and Wiley (online library). Peer-reviewed journals were considered based on their knowledge validity and their highest impact on the research field. Online E-Sources, Published reports, journals, theses, magazines, research articles, newspapers, etc.

DATA ANALYSIS

Multiple regression analysis was used as the main statistical tool to find out the factors influencing customer's perception towards buying behaviour of organic food products in Tumakuru district. The reliability analysis is used to establish both the consistency and stability of the research instrument. Consistency shows how well the research instrument measures the model and the conceptual framework.

Figure 1.1 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The focus of this research was to study factors influencing customer's perception towards buying behaviour of organic food products in Tumakuru district only. A general limitation in the literature on the topic is the inability to obtain a clearly defined measure of factors affecting buying behaviour of organic food products. However, this approach has limitations for groups of organic food consumers. The limitations of this study include the author's constraints in gathering comprehensive data on organic food products only. The limitation of expenditure survey is that it tends to underestimate expenditures on organic food products if the value of food produced gathered locally is not recorded or recalled. Moreover, a significant limitation of this study is that all the information was self-reported and was based on subjective perceptions. one of the limitations of this study are the data used, which are slightly “outdated” and may not fully reflect the current realities due to time difference. Advanced statistical tools might have used for the study. The other pertinent variable for the study might have missed. The information given by the respondents might be biased because some of them might not be interested in giving correct information.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CONSUMER FACTORS.

H01: There is no significant relationship between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

H1: There is a significant relationship between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.664 ^a	.441	.419		.78875	
ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	112.892	9	12.544	20.162	.000 ^a
	Residual	143.091	230	.622		
	Total	255.983	239			
b. Dependent Variable: Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.235	.171		30.690	.000
	Customers Eating Habits	-2.161	.769	-1.875	-2.810	.005
	Preferences for organic food	-4.594	1.309	-3.894	-3.510	.001
	Quality Of Life	-1.112	.973	-.933	-1.144	.254
	Consumer Lifestyle	4.801	1.333	4.025	3.602	.000
	Preference to Locally produced Food	3.801	1.065	3.181	3.569	.000
	Health Conscious	-1.000	.595	-.836	-1.680	.094
	Seeking Nutrition food	-1.765	.730	-1.521	-2.419	.016
	Symbol of Social Status	1.928	.658	1.725	2.930	.004
	Demand for organic food products	-.661	.403	-.556	-1.640	.102
a. Dependent Variable: Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products						

The regression analysis shows that, the value of “R” indicates high degree of correlation co-efficient (.664^a) between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district. R² measure the variation explained by the regression model is (.441) being moderate indicating model fits the data well. Significant of F change is less than 0.05 which indicates consumer factors have significant relationship with Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products. 9 variables of consumer factors were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru districts.

Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products = (5.235) + **(-2.161* Customers Eating Habits)** + **(-4.594* Preferences for organic food)** + (-1.112* Quality

of Life) + ***(4.801* Consumer Lifestyle) + (3.801* Preference to Locally produced Food)*** + (-1.000* Health Conscious) + ***(-1.765* Seeking Nutrition food) + (1.928* Symbol of Social Status)*** + (-.661* Demand for organic food products).

Since the above regression model indicates the consumer factors and the values are highlighted in bold and italic are < than p value 0.05. Therefore, hypothesis statement. i.e, H1: There is a significant relationship between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district. is accepted.

MARKETING FACTORS

H02: There is no significant relationship between Marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

H2: There is a significant relationship between Marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district.

Model Summary							
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1		.771 ^a	.595	.577	.67319		
ANOVA ^b							
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	152.205	10	15.220	33.586	.000 ^a	
	Residual	103.778	229	.453			
	Total	255.983	239				
b. Dependent Variable: Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products							
Coefficients ^a							
Model			Unstandardize d Coefficients		Standardize d Coefficients	t	Sig.
			B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)		2.465	.347		7.099	.000
	Organic food Product price		.081	.071	.107	1.144	.025
	Companies marketing strategies		.028	.075	.029	.369	.712
	Availability of organic food Products		.238	.096	.229	2.469	.014
	Quality of the organic food products		.117	.061	.164	1.912	.057
	Advertising appeal		-.022	.049	-.025	-.450	.653
	Government encouragement for the companies		-.018	.074	-.022	-.246	.806
	Companies ethical policies		.242	.099	.231	2.444	.015
	Companies environmental concern		.156	.103	.181	1.519	.130

Product packaging	- .22 7	.086	-.263	-2.635	.009
a. Dependent Variable: Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products					

The regression analysis shows that, the value of “R” indicates high degree of correlation co-efficient (.664^a) between marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district. R² measure the variation explained by the regression model is (.595) being moderate indicating model fits the data well. Significant of F change is less than 0.05 which indicates marketing factors have significant relationship with Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products. 9 variables of marketing factors were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru districts.

Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products = (2.465) + (.081* ***Organic food Product price***) + (.028* Companies marketing strategies) + (.238* ***Availability of organic food Products***) + (.117* ***Quality of the organic food products***) + (-.022* Advertising appeal) + (-.018* Government encouragement for the companies) + (.242* ***Companies ethical policies***) + (.156* Companies environmental concern) + (-.227* ***Product packaging***). Since the above regression model indicates the consumer factors and the values are highlighted in bold and italic are < than p value 0.05. Therefore, hypothesis statement. i.e, H2: There is a significant relationship between Marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru district. is accepted.

FINDINGS

Variables of consumer factors such as Customers Eating Habits, Preferences for organic food, Consumer Lifestyle, Preference to Locally produced Food, Seeking Nutrition food, Symbol of Social Status were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru districts. Variables of marketing factors such as Organic Food Product price, Availability of organic food Products, Quality of the organic food products, Companies ethical policies and Product packaging were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Tumakuru districts

SUGGESTIONS

From the above research, it is clear that there is a positive influence of the consumer perception on their purchase decision of organic food products. Majority of the consumers are switching over from the conventional products to environmental sustainable food products. This is found is almost all the categories of products. FMCG category is not an exception to this. So, the manufacturers and traders should concentrate more on the production and marketing of organic food products which are healthier for the consumers and eco-friendly. Even if the price is slightly high compared to the conventional products, most of the consumers are ready to purchase the ecofriendly

products in the interest on environment and health.

CONCLUSIONS

Organic product consumption is increasing because of concerns over environmental and health issues associated with food production. The increase in consumers' interest in Organic food products has been attributed among other issues to the growing demand for food free from pesticides and chemical residues. With the present study an attempt is made to describe the existing situation regarding. The main motives to purchase Organic food products are health and environmental benefits, plus support for local or small farmers. In addition, an important factor that was revealed as a barrier to the development of organic product is customer information. Increased consumer awareness of organic labeling and their trust in organic labels as well as increasing the availability and range of Organic food products, may be the most effective way of increasing their market share. The study found that the groups of buyers and non-buyers the main barrier of organic product market share is the information available and customer perception and satisfaction is the valuable information that can be used by policy makers in organic farming at the national and regional level.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

Further research can be done on making comparisons of customer's sustainable food consumption pattern across the districts of Karnataka for the better policy making food products manufacturers. Future researchers can substantiate the research findings by conducting similar studies in various cities. This survey should cover a much wider range of areas. The study suggests that similar studies should be conducted following the conceptual model of environmental food supply, which will better identify the gaps left in the empirical research on the said subject. Moreover, sustainable food consumption was the least studied component and study related to food security can be done, so future research must consider it to fill the left research gap.

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