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डॉ. बी.एल. भादानी

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CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

In this research paper, we review and discuss the factors, which affect the change in the consumer behavior-towards organic food. We extracted various research papers & articles from various studies conducted in different countries. It was found that consumers were showing more preference for organic food over the conventionally grown food. Shifting in attitude is due to the rising incidence of lifestyle diseases, such as heart disorders and depression. Organic foods refer to foods grown by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and conservation of soil and water to preserve health and environmental quality for future generations. The current global scenario of rising eco-awareness of consumers and market trends for organic foods exhibit a global rise of eco-consumerism focusing on organic foods. According to Batra and Kazmi (2004), consumer behavior is "the mental and emotional processes and the observable behavior of consumers during searching, purchasing and post consumption of a product and service".

The organic foods are perceived as more nutritious, healthy, and nature-friendly than conventional food. Consumers, therefore, are switching over to organic food products and are willing to pay a premium price. The purpose of this study is to examine the factors influencing the consumers' actual buying behavior towards organic foods.

Introduction:

Organic farming is a form of agriculture that depends on various techniques such as vermicomposting, crop rotation, green manure, Animal Husbandry, Bio fertilizers and biological pest control. Organic farming is the form of doing crop/plant cultivation by using organic manures which are ecofriendly manures that supports the life of soil and other useful organisms in the soil. Organic farm production and trade has emerged as an important sector in India As in other parts of the developing world, and is seen as an important strategy of facilitating sustainable development. The development of organic agriculture in India is receiving increasing attention among the farmer/ Producers, processors, trader, exporters and consumers.

Madhusudhan L (2016) "Organic Farming-Ecofriendly Agriculture" In present world most of the consuming food contains harmful chemicals which are causing various diseases unknowingly or neglected knowingly this can be reduced by organic farming. It was found that practice of organic farming would help the soil to maintain the fertility and can get good quality of food products which are also healthier.

Literature Review:

The organic farming is an old concept in India in terms of the extensive farming carried out in the country. The increasing export market coupled with government's support has driven the market. An analysis of the drivers explain the factors for growth of the industry including the huge export market, organized retail enhancing distribution network, government initiatives and increasing health consciousness among consumers. The key challenges identified encompass high prices of organic food, lack of integrated supply chain and difficulties for farmers, certification barriers.

Alexia Hoppe, Luciana Marques Vieira & Marcia Dutra de Barcellos (2013) "Consumer behavior towards organic food in porto alegre: an application of the theory of planned behavior". The aim of the study was to investigate consumer's decision making process, attitude & value towards organic food products. Organic food products are tastier, more natural and environmentally friendly.

Oliver (1993) found that Food quality is a relevant attribute in buying organic food. It is the relationship between expected quality and perceived quality that determine consumer satisfaction. The label guarantees that the consumer is buying an organic product.

Shepherd; Magnusson and Sjöden (2005) have revealed that benefits to health are more related to attitudes and behavior in relation to organic food than environmental issues. As Thøgersen (2000) stated that consumers were focusing only organic certification while purchasing organic food products.

Canavari and Olson (2007) found that purchasing & consuming organic products as an indicator of their status symbol in certain countries like Italy and United States. It portrayed the purchasing power and luxurious lifestyle of consumers with greater disposable income. Gracia and Magistris, (2007); Santucci (1999) proposes that consumers with high income consume organic food products with an intention to showcase their level of awareness, attitude as well as status symbol.

Doorn et al (2011) found that consumers concern for health, environmental consciousness and the need for quality products are the main factors which prompted them to pay an extra premium while purchasing them.

Loureiro et al (2001); Nair (2005), proposed that the increased consciousness on consumer well-being, food safety and environmental awareness has resulted a gradual grow thin people's preference for organic products. Consumers always had a positive approach regarding the consumption of organic products and they consider it to be healthier than the conventionally grown products.

Consumer's tend to see products which are termed as organic to be locally produced or imported, which provides detail information regarding the country from where the product is been produced, the level of freshness it possess and how far the product is been beneficial to their health.

Squires (2001) claimed that purchase pattern, knowledge and awareness are slightly higher in developed countries in comparison with developing countries. He also stated that in countries like India, low awareness level is one of the main reasons for the organic products to still remain in its primary developing stage.

Chouichometal (2013) found that the socio-demographic variables had great impact on the consumers while purchasing organic products in Bangkok. Three kinds of peoples were studied in the research. First who have heard about organically produced products, the second being those who have heard but have not purchased them and the third being those who have both heard as well as consumed or purchased them.

Rushdi Ahmed & Khadiza, Rahman (2015) Understanding the Consumer Behaviour towards Organic Food: A Study of the Bangladesh Market. Researcher found the various factors that influence consumer buying behaviour of organic foods in Bangladeshi Supermarkets. It was found that lack of availability, limited range of products, high price and high regard for certification labeling were major challenges while purchasing organic products. Maximum number of respondents were in the favor of consuming organic products because of healthier containing high values of nutrition. It was found in the research that the consumers were unaware of the importance of rules related to certification and policies in the market for organic-products.

Jyoti Rana & Justin Paul (2017) : The Researcher published an article on the topic "Consumer behavior and purchase intention for organic food: A review and research agenda". They found that highlights that consumers in developing countries are keen to purchase organic food, which is quite popular in developed countries. Researcher suggested that organic food should be made available in different retail

store formats, but biggest challenge in organic food products are high price in comparison with inorganic products.

Konda Kalyani (2017) The Researcher published a research paper titled "Consumer Perception towards Organic Food Products in India". It was found that Consumers' were preferring organic food products because of a general perception that organic foods have more desirable characteristics than conventionally-grown alternatives. Consumers were choosing organic food products because of health, food safety and environmental, nutritive value, taste, freshness & appearance. Most people feel that there should be some kind of verification system for organic products. Therefore, we need a proper system in place for consumers to feel confident about the quality of organic food. This is only possible when the government will set standards for organic farming. Mass-media could also be helpful to alter the perception for organic foods consumption in India.

Dr.Roshni Rawal, Prof. Bhavika Ganatra, Prof. Dr. S.G. Desai (2017) "Organic Products: Change in the Consumer Buying Behaviour and Its Sustainability in the Market (Through Distributor's point of view)"

This study will cover points like: factor consideration for selling of organic products, awareness level for organic products and reasons for change in the buying behaviour. Efforts are being made to understand how organic marketing as a strategic tool will survive in a globalized market. The study brought out the fact that distributors consider the importance of the product they sell to the customers and reflect the change in customer's attitude to the preference of organic products. It is also observed from the study that distributors have change in their business due to the change in customers diverting towards organic products. Better Promotions and advertising has to make to increase knowledge regarding organic product as to make a common term in the market for users and distributors. There has to proper and conventional tools used for proper distribution of the products. Companies should use better marketing tools as to educate the distributors regarding products environmental impact and customer's health. Market research and proper marketing strategies are very necessary tools today to survive in the market. Companies should clearly define its communication and parameters towards better growth and sustainability.

J.Padmathy & R.Saraswathy (2016) " A Study On The Consumers' Buying Behavior Towards Organic Food Products In Thanjavur District ". This study was conducted to find out the relationship between the variables that affect consumers 'buying behaviors for organic food products, in Thanjavur District. The results suggest that a large number of consumers in the selected areas value the environment and have a typical buying behavior. The consumers prefer organic food products for their survival. This indicates green product awareness among consumers. As consumers are aware and concerned about the green products, it creates an opportunity for developing green marketing focusing on more consumers. Overall, this study clearly identified a positive relationship between the variables or factors which affect consumers buying behavior for green products. Consumers buying behavior acts as a predictor and has a direct influence on the decision process when purchasing of organic food products. The results provide reasonable support to all the hypothesized relationships. It was also identified that while consumers have positive behavior towards purchasing organic food products, when it comes to actual purchase, price, environmental concerns and quality are still the key factors influencing their purchase decisions.

Annunziata and Vecchio (2011) analysed consumer attitudes and the factors that influences the consumers' attitudes toward functional foods in Italy, based on a primary survey of 400 households. The study also indicated that the consumers were not very clearly informed about the concept of functional foods and generally perceived them to be food items that are inherently healthy in themselves. The study stressed the need for educating the consumers about functional foods by means of labeling information, education campaigns and clearly defined government policies to curb false health claims.

Pelletier et al. (2013) analyzed the attitudes of young adults toward organic, locally available, and sustainable food products with respect to high dietary quality of the food. It was found that the preferred characteristics of foods for the young consumers included more fruit and vegetable servings, high fiber content, less added sugar, less sweetened drinks and low fat in the food.

Chakrabarti and Baisya (2009) investigated consumer purchase behaviour for organic foods by constructing a model based on various variables like consumer innovativeness; the related perceived risk and personal influence; and the demographic characteristics and time of adoption. There were two influences innovativeness of the consumer and the personal influence variable which played an important role in explaining the diffusion of innovation in case of organic food products. It was concluded that the retailers should design marketing strategies for the consumer.

Chen and Lobo (2012) It was found that product attributes, regulatory framework and lifestyle were the major factors that directly and positively affected the organic food purchase decisions of Chinese consumers. They concluded that since the consumers had little clarity about the term 'organic', marketers of organic food products should attempt to leverage on these findings by educating both existing and potential consumers by means of educational campaigns, accurate labeling information along with a certification logo as a sign of quality. Government agencies should focus on the need to regulate the organic food market and enhance the inspection and certification processes.

Guilabert and Wood (2012) found that the importance of organic certification in winning the consumer belief on health benefits of organic labeled products. It was found that the consumers' taste discriminations were influenced by prior beliefs about health and organic foods. The study provided insights on public policy for strengthening organic food labeling process and certification programs.

Kareklas et al. (2014) it was found that the consumers' beliefs that organic foods are healthier than other conventional food products (egoistic factor); and that organic foods are produced in an environmental friendly way (altruistic factor), influenced or shaped the attitudes and purchase intentions of the consumers towards organic food products. Thus, health as well as environmental concerns together drives the consumers towards making organic food purchases. The study also provided empirical evidences that those advertisings that highlighted both the egoistical and altruistic concerns of the consumers, were most effective in shaping the attitudes of the consumers towards organic food and in turn, led to purchase intentions for organic food products among the consumers.

Krivy and Mecking (2011) observed that the purchase behaviour of the consumers for organic food products was depends on environmental and health consciousness.. The study revealed that organic food consumption was more closely associated with health consciousness rather than environmental concerns. Eating healthy food had a stronger effect on the purchase behavior of the consumer with regard to organic food products. Household income had a strong effect on expenditure on organic food.

Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) studied various factors such as health consciousness, food safety concerns and ethical self-identity played very important towards the purchasing of the organic food products. Respondents were more concern over the safety of food, such as residues in food from fertilizer, artificial additives, preservatives and chemical sprays. They found that that advertiser of organic products should highlight the perceived benefits of organic food products when marketing these products to consumers since consumption of organic food is affected by ethical values and food safety concerns.

Paul and Rana (2012) analyzed the purchase intentions and purchase behavior of ecological consumers for organic food products. They also tried to determine the factors which influenced the behavior of the consumer towards organic food products. They found that the organic food purchase decision was basically based on these factors like health, availability and education. The study suggested that the retailers can play very important role to educate & promote organic food products to the consumers which are beneficial for the health.

Suh et al. (2012) analyzed the attitudes and perceptions of Korean consumers for organic food products and the factors that affect their choices for these foods. Researcher suggested future study can be done on perceptions, attitudes and purchasing intentions of the consumers for organic products.

Andreas Aigner, Robert Wilken and Sylvie Geisendorf (2019) Author published an article on the title "The Effectiveness of Promotional Cues for Organic Products in the German Retail Market". They suggested that other promotional strategies can be studied for future research. Promotional strategies depend upon the price of organic product. They advised that not only retailer & producers should design promotional strategies, public institution give inputs on Promotional activities. Future research could extend the framework and its application by considering more expensive organic and conventional products such as (organic) meat or fish.

Devakumar G., Sunil Kumar B. K., Sunil Pawar, Supeel H.S., Kiran V.E., Bharath Kumar B.V., Akshay Vinayak Bhat, Pooja Aruli Bhat (2016) "An Empirical Study on Green Marketing Strategies for Market Sustainability with Respect to Organic Products". Researchers suggested that companies should prepare green policies for distinctive advantage and impact in the market place related to Organic products. Creation of internet sites about organic products leads to awareness among the consumers.

Chaitra Bharath, H.M. Chandrashekar (2018) "A Study on the Consumer Awareness of Organic Certification of Food Products in Mysore City". The researcher suggested that Government should provide organic farmers certification at subsidized rate. Consumer should get quality product with the right price.

Mohammad Altarawneh (2013) "Consumer Awareness towards Organic Food: A Pilot Study in Jordan". The awareness of organic food is based on the demographic conditions.

S.V.Ramesh and M.Divya (2015) "A study on consumers' awareness attitude and satisfaction towards select organic food products with reference to Coimbatore". Researcher suggested that awareness program is very much important for the awareness of organic products. Organic producers should design some Positioning strategies for the awareness of organic products. Producers should influence consumer beliefs for more consumption of organic products.

Dr.S.Karthikeyan (2017) "Consumer Awareness towards Organic Food Products in Udumalpet Taluk". Researcher had considered health & environmental issues were the main concern for the consumption of organic food products. Researcher has taken organic food products consumed by Udumalpet Taluk only. Researcher has taken demographic conditions to study the awareness levels of organic products classified as rural, semi-urban & urban.

Saloni Mehra and P.A. Ratna (2014) "Attitude and behaviour of consumers towards organic food: An exploratory study in India". Researcher found that positive attitude was shown by women and younger consumers towards organic food. Consumers were ready to pay high price for organic products. Researcher suggested that SEM & Conjoint Analysis can be study for actual consumer behavior of Organic products.

Anssi Tarkiainen & Sanna Sundqvist (2005) "Subjective norms, attitudes and intentions of Finnish consumers in buying organic food". They suggested that the role of subjective norms could be examined for different types of organic products, and in different decision-making situations. Only organic bread and flour product were considered for this research. Researcher studies two factors age and gender for this study.

J.Padmathy & R.Saraswath (2016) "A study on the consumers' buying behavior towards organic food products in thanjavur district". They found that marketing mix needs to be design while formulating marketing strategies for the organic products buyers. Market segmentation is important factor for selling organic products. It was found that there is no significant association between Gender and factors determining consumer Behavior towards organic food products. They found that marketing mix needs to be design while formulating marketing strategies for the organic products buyers.

According to Zeinab and Seyebeh (Grunert and Juhl, 1995), described that a consumer who is more concern about the environment as a consumers "who knows that the distribution, disposal, production, and use of the products result in the external costs, and they will see such actions". The product that is environmentally friendly has produced with chemical free which is using the method that does not harm the environment. Hence, this is also one of the factor influence the consumer behaviour to purchase organic foods.

Zeinab and Seyebeh (Werner and Alvensleben, 2011) also pointed out the relationship among the amount of consumers' concern for the environment and the motivation to purchase products that are organic.

Conclusions

Consumer behavior is playing the major role while buying organic product. So the organic shops and product supply is limited but demand for it is more so farmer and all so government are think to improve or increasing production of organic product as well as good packaging, quality and market system it helps to improve the standard of living farmer and all it healthy to environment and all so it helps to government.

The findings of this study showed an alignment between positive attitude and consumption behavior among the consumers. Individual attitudes towards buying organic food are primarily based on beliefs about benefits (healthy, at first place, as well as environment friendly and natural), while beliefs about visual or risks are much less influential (such as less attractive and not been really organic). The knowledge of attributes more valued by consumers can help retailers to play the role of coordinators of this supply chain stimulating producers to adhere to organic certification, helping them to upgrade their production practices and improve their income. The Study had revealed that consumers behavior plays a major role in organic food products segment The majority of organic food consuming respondents believed that organic food products contained nom pesticides. Consumers were ready to pay high price for organic products. Organic producers should design some Positioning strategies for the awareness of organic products. Producers should influence consumer beliefs for more consumption of organic products. Creation of internet sites about organic products leads to awareness among the consumers.

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