



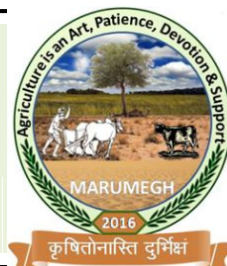
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CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

Ms.Pooja Arya

Research Scholar, Department of Resource Management and Consumer Science
College of Community and Applied Sciences, Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture
&Technology, Udaipur- 313001 (Rajasthan) India

*Email: parva090@gmail.com

Abstract: -Organic food products concept is evolving around the world that has come into existence due to the side-effects of the chemical contents in the food products. This has significant impact on the people health who suffer with ailments that chronically affect their natural system. Hence, the food product consumption which forms the healthy side of life through Organic food products, that replaces the artificial maturing which causes innumerable diseases to the immune system of the children to the grown-up. Organic food revolution and organic advertising is to protecting the people's health and the environment as well. This review study attempts to examine the consumer awareness, attitude, and preference for Organic Food Products, which helps to understand the consumer buying behaviour towards the organic foods.

Keywords:-consumer behaviour, organic food, consumer awareness, attitude, and preference etc.

Introduction

The term organic is rooted in 'Bio' from Greek 'bios' meaning life or way of living. Naturally grown food products was first coined in the 1940s and refers to food raised, development and stored and/or prepared without the use of artificially produced chemicals or fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, growth hormones and regulators or generic modification.

Naturally grown foods refer to vegetables, fruits, fish, dairy items and meats that are developed or through organic farming, and are not processed or refined. It is one of those food sources that advance environmental adjust, biodiversity conservation, and reusing of resources.

Forecast and Opportunities- 2020, worldwide naturally grown food market is projected to register a CAGR of over 16 Percent during 2015 – 2020. Development in the market can be credited to developing health concerns among consumers and expanding awareness with respect to wellbeing benefits of natural food. Other components driving natural food sales across the globe include increasing income levels, progressing standard of living, and government activities aimed at empowering far reaching appropriation of natural products.

Consumers across the globe are getting to be progressively wellbeing conscious, which has resulted to alter in their tastes and inclinations. A developing number of consumers are moving towards utilization of naturally grown foods in place of conventional food, to avoid adverse health impacts caused by chemical additives or hereditarily modified ingredients show in inorganic food. Moreover, the increasing popularity of organically grown products has essentially extended the accessibility of the availability of organic food over the globe. With organic food products becoming easily accessible, worldwide organic food product market is expected to witness remarkable development over the estimate period.

The Indian organic food product market was INR 2,700 cr. (US\$ 415 million) in 2015, as an insignificant 0.5% of the worldwide market. The worldwide organic food market at USD 90 billion in 2015 has been growing at a CAGR of 12 Percent for the last fourteen years. The Indian organic food product market is huge driven by exports to developed nations with exports having doubled from INR 1,155 cr. in the year 2012-2013 to INR 2,100 cr. In the year 2014-15; however the vast domestic organic market remains largely undiscovered. The Indian market has the potential to grow to above INR 50,000 cr. In the year 2025, both export & residential markets are crucial for this to happen. Different Indian states are looking to implement policies to progress the cause of organic farming with Sikkim taking the lead to end up India's to begin with completely natural state in January, 2016 with 75,000 hectares certified natural. Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan have made essential progress to turn to natural farming.

Consumers include different types of foods in their shopping baskets that may include food that is healthy to food that is indulgent; food that is expensive to food that is cheap; or food that is conventional to food that offers some added health benefits. Health and Wellness foods are generally included in the diets of people who perceive these to provide health benefits beyond basic nutrition. Researchers have been trying for long to comprehend the food choices of people and their perceptions and attitudes towards health and wellness food products.

Consumers' Perceptions and Attitudes towards Purchase of Health and Wellness Food

A number of studies have been conducted in various parts of the world, which have tried to study the perceptions and attitudes of the consumers towards various types of health and wellness food products. A number of researchers have tried to understand the behavioural aspects related to purchase intentions of the consumers for health and wellness food products, by studying the interaction between lifestyles, values, attitudes, perceptions and habits of the consumers. From among these, attitudes and values are significant guiding forces with respect to general behaviour of human beings, as well as food purchase and consumption behaviour in particular. Most of the studies have been conducted for a single type of health and wellness foods, especially functional foods and organic food products.

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. Cluster analysis revealed three groups of respondents, categorized on the basis of demographic characteristics with different confidence levels, satisfaction, and health perception of functional food. 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.

Badrie *et al.* (2007) analysed the perception, opinions, choices and motives of the exercise enthusiasts in West Indies, regarding improvement of health through the consumption of functional foods, using primary survey of 120 respondents through structured questionnaire. Results of the study indicated that only 50 percent respondents were aware about functional foods and they perceived these to be costlier, helped in prevention and cure of diseases, were important for elderly people, and were to be taken after consultation with medical practitioners. The consumers attributed performance enhancement and health benefits to be the main drivers behind their consumption of functional foods. When the consumers' responses on their agreement with the manufacturers' health-claims about functional foods were analysed, 39 percent respondents agreed that the manufacturers exaggerated the health-claims about the products.

Consumer's interest in organics, analysed the association between consumer attitudes about organic farming and their organic food's purchase behaviour, and the reasons why the consumer's views about organic farming may not result in consequent consumption behaviour with regard to organic food products. Results of the study showed that although people value organic farming methods, they actually do not end up buying organic food products. They postulated that the consumers who were non-buyers of organic foods would buy organics if they did not face barriers like price, location of the store, availability of the products, availability of relevant information, doubts regarding authenticity of organic production, or uncertainty in purchase decision-making due to availability of excessive and confusing information. They concluded that for devising effective marketing strategies and regulatory policies with regard to organic food products, it is important to identify the consumers who value organic production methods and systems. Bellows *et al.* (2008) suggested that the organic food market segment can be broadened by informing the consumers regarding organic foods and developing appropriate marketing and merchandising strategies.

The role of functional foods in the diets of modern consumers and the relative important of the nutritional attributes vis-à-vis aesthetic qualities in the consumption of functional foods and how these nutritional and aesthetic qualities affect the consumption pattern of the consumers for these food items. Cornish (2012) demonstrated that many consumers believe nutrition as central to health, and health claims by the producers are a motivating factor for consumption of functional food products.

Consumers give value to the technology used for production of functional foods, irrespective of the perceived health benefits of the ingredient added during production. Labrecque and Charlebois (2011) study provided insights for the functional food manufacturers for understanding the perceptions of the consumers regarding the health benefits associated with functional foods in today's world in a better way.

Majority of the consumers were highly aware of the benefits associated with organic food consumption and had purchased organic foods at least once. But, in spite of their awareness, they still had deep concerns about quality and food safety issues since they had little knowledge about how actually the organic production and processing takes place and

what essential quality and food safety attributes they should look for, while purchasing organic food products. The analysis significantly confirmed that there is a need for a new positioning and marketing strategy for organic food products (Naspetti and Zanolli, 2009).

Factors Affecting the Purchase of Health and Wellness Food

The factors affecting purchase intentions of the consumers for organic food products using primary consumer survey of 250 respondents in Malaysia by Azamet *et al.* (2012). They conceptualized the empirical model based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which postulates that the behaviour of an individual is directly affected by his intentions. They proposed five factors that are likely to affect purchase decisions for organic food products. These were attitude, health awareness, subjective norm, personal norm and the perceived behavioural control. The results of the study indicated that from among these, all factors except health awareness were significantly affecting the purchase decisions of the consumers. 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.

Chung, *et al.* (2012) analyzed the purchase intentions of Chinese consumers for imported soy-based dietary supplements (DS), based on the theory of planned Behaviour and the Health Belief Model, using primary survey data from 215 respondents. Results indicated that the factors that had a significant influence on the purchase intentions of the consumers for these food products were attitudes of the consumers towards soy-based dietary supplements, subjective norms and perceived behavioural controls. Goetzke and Spiller (2014) concluded that the motive behind purchase of both organic and functional foods is the same, that is, health. However, the purchase of these products varies across different lifestyles.

Gottschalk and Leinster (2013) suggests that regional production, adequate communication and information regarding the products, and the opportunity for the consumers to compare the organic food items with other conventional food products can lead to increased sales for organic food products.

One of the important factors that influenced the purchase decisions of the consumers was healthfulness, beside others. In addition, price was also increasingly becoming more and more important whereas, taste, by and large, was the most important factor considered by the American consumers while selecting food and beverages. Kapsak, *et al.* (2011) study highlighted that according to market information sources, functional food was included in the food choices of the consumers even during difficult economic conditions. The factors which led to generation of consumers' interest in functional foods included demographic patterns, dedication to healthcare and marketing through social media.

Income did not affect the organic food purchase although it significantly affected how much the consumer spent on organic food products. Krivy and Mecking (2011) study revealed that organic food consumption was more closely associated with health consciousness rather than environmental concerns and the motivation to eat healthy food had a stronger effect on the purchase behaviour of the consumer with regard to organic food products. Similarly, Higher education also affected the purchase of organic products positively. Household income had a strong effect on expenditure on organic food, but it did

not have a significant impact on the probability of being a regular consumer of organic food products.

Retailers can stress the health benefits and quality aspects of organic food products in order to influence the consumers positively, which may lead to increased sales of organic food products (Paul and Rana, 2012).

Conclusion

Awareness about organic food products is growing day-by-day. The adoption and cultivation based on chemical fertilizers are gradually and marginally declining because of the level of awareness among consumers that enhanced the cultivating habits among farmers which itself is a good sign for the growth of the organic food products in the era of chemical revolution. The knowledge and attitude to prefer the organic food products are at the other end that leads towards consumption of these products. The poverty situation had forced the people of India to select only the available products instead of opting alternative choices. Consumer perception of organic farming may be related to the availability of organic products in a specific area. Growth in the popularity of organic products may be correlated with more positive perception of organics and greater intentions to buy them.

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