

## A STUDY ON CUSTOMER'S BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS BUYING OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN SHIVAMOGGA DISTRICT

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**Abstract:** Organic food proponents assert that foods cultivated organically are safer and more nutrient-dense than those produced using non-organic practices, such as the use of pesticides, non-organic fertilizers, antibiotics, and hormones. Since food choices, eating habits, and preferences are fundamental to people's lifestyles and sociocultural surroundings, they are infamously difficult to alter. The study's primary goal is to investigate the variables affecting Shivamogga district consumers' perceptions of and purchasing patterns for organic food goods. To achieve this, cluster sampling was used. The district of Shivamogga was selected as the primary research area. This area was separated into four groups: east, west, south, and north. The research sample consisted of 240 customers who regularly eat organic food products. By using a standardized questionnaire, the data was gathered. The statistical tool that was employed was regression analysis. Variables of consumer factors such as Consumers food habit, Organic food Priorities, Customers' taste and preferences, Preference to Locally produced Food, Quality and ingredients in food, Symbol of Social Status were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga districts. Variables of marketing factors such as Affordable Value, Access to organic food Products, Quality of the organic food products, Companies concern for customer's health and Companies Labelling and packaging approach were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga districts were used to forecast consumer purchasing patterns for organic food products in Shivamogga districts.

**Keywords:** Customer, Behaviour, Organic, Food, Products, Shivamogga

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental and health concerns are causing changes in the way people eat. Food grown organically is becoming more and more popular worldwide. With sales rising by more than \$5 billion annually, the demand for organic food

items is still strong worldwide (Abhinav Gupta, 2016). In India, the modernization and industrialization of agricultural food production has coincided with the country's rapid socioeconomic development. The market for organic food eventually grew as a result of the significant move towards organic food. Additionally, eating organic food supports the harmony of the environment, living things, humans, and nature (Anand D. and V.S. Palaniammal, 2016). Additionally, it keeps food from being produced without artificial preservatives and preserves its authenticity. This promotes health by preventing the overuse of dangerous chemicals. Customers are also worried about how organic food is produced; in particular, they want to see improvements made to the certification and authenticity of organic food. Accordingly, compared to conventional meals, organic foods are thought to be healthier, more nutrient-dense, and more environmentally friendly (Budi Suprpto and Tony Wijaya, 2012). Foods grown without the use of contemporary synthetic inputs, such as chemical fertilizers and synthetic pesticides, are referred to as organic foods. Additionally, industrial solvents, chemical food additives, or radiation are not used in the processing of organic foods. tiny, family-run farms have traditionally produced organic foods, which were only sold at farmer's markets and tiny grocery stores (M. Aarthi, S. Balusamy, 2020). Organic food proponents assert that foods cultivated organically are safer and more nutrient-dense than those produced using non-organic practices, such as the use of pesticides, non-organic fertilizers, antibiotics, and hormones. Many individuals don't want to put these substances into their bodies because they don't trust them. Purchasing organic food is the only method to avoid the residues of pesticides,

fertilizers, and other chemicals found in almost all non-organically produced foods. Food items must originate from organically certified farms and processing facilities in order to receive their organic certification. However, consumers who value their health highly are willing to pay a little bit extra for organic food items (Padmathy and R. Saraswathy, 2016). Many of the stresses that now affect farmers and farming methods might be lessened by organic farming. Around the developed world, there is a sharp rise in both the demand for and awareness of organic food items. More health-conscious consumers in developed and some developing nations have begun to spend money on natural, healthier, and more environmentally friendly meals. According to (Priya and M. Parameswari, 2016), attitudes toward organic food, health, consciousness, and product information, as well as value for money, accessibility, and trust, are all influenced by six important elements. The study's findings demonstrated that younger and female customers had a favorable opinion of organic food and thought it was a healthier choice. When choosing wholesome foods, they were careful to read labels and obtain product information. Women believed eating organic food was a healthier choice. (Vinay Raj, 2020) came to the conclusion that customers are well aware of the health benefits of organic food since it is devoid of chemicals that might hurt them or produce adverse effects. Urban consumers are more conscious of the fact that eating organic food lowers stress levels and promotes an active lifestyle. Additionally, this study discovered that respondents are prepared to spend even more since it is good for their health (Adel S. and Foster C., 2005).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The demand for organic foods has increased both domestically and internationally as a result of changes in consumer tastes and preferences brought about by increased knowledge. A survey indicates that 30.4 million hectares were initially set aside for the production of these organic food items. Today's

consumers are well-informed about food production technologies, genetic engineering, and the effects of food on human health. Yiridoe E. K. and Bonti-Ankomah S. (2006). Although the market for organic food has expanded steadily over the last ten years, its overall market share remains small. Sales of organic food products have increased to 3% of worldwide food sales in recent years, with an anticipated 50% yearly growth. Therefore, market demand, government assistance for organic growers, and the higher pricing of organic food items relative to conventional ones have made organic agriculture a profitable system for the producers. (Govindasamy R, DeCongelio M. & Bhuyan S., 2008) in their final report on Meta-analysis, highlighted down following factors regarding consumer's perception & Organic food Priorities. Because organic food is higher quality, naturally grown, and healthier, consumers are more likely to purchase it. According to some surveys, some customers in the same state have a clear understanding of organic food, while others have a hazier understanding. Even though customers had demonstrated a desire to pay higher prices, relatively few were prepared to do so. Therefore, market demand, government assistance for organic growers, and the higher pricing of organic food items relative to conventional ones have made organic agriculture a profitable system for the producers. (Govindasamy R, DeCongelio M. & Bhuyan S., 2008) in their final report on Meta-analysis, highlighted down following factors regarding consumer's perception & Organic food Priorities. Because organic food is higher quality, naturally grown, and healthier, consumers are more likely to purchase it. According to some surveys, some customers in the same state have a clear understanding of organic food, while others have a more hazy understanding. Even though customers had demonstrated a desire to pay higher prices, relatively few were prepared to do so. The time, necessity, and ordering alternatives offered in the mobile application or websites determine the degree of consumer

satisfaction with online organic food goods. These factors are crucial for drawing in new clients and keeping hold of current ones. According to Aarthi and Balusamy (2018), organic food items support the harmony of humans, other living things, and the environment. Many people have shifted to organic food items due to growing concerns about food safety and health risks. The rising desire for food free of pesticides and chemical residues, which encourages the use of no artificial preservatives and best preserves food uniqueness, has been one of the factors contributing to consumers' increased interest in organic food. This guarantees health by preventing the overuse of hazardous substances. The goal of this study was to learn more about the use of organic products by consumers (Balachandran V, 2012). Only when the marketer comprehends the awareness of organic products and their behavior will organic marketing be effective. Assessing the present level of customer awareness and expertise is also essential. Therefore, the primary focus of this study will be customer knowledge, willingness to pay, and happiness with organic food items. In order to learn more about how consumers in peri-urban regions perceive organic food and the significance of organic certification in their choices, Chithra and Chandrashekar (2018) conducted a research. During the course of his research on the quality of organic food and its influence on human health, (Jyoti Ranaa and Justin, 2017) discovered that consumers' interest in food safety and quality has declined in recent decades due to a number of food disputes and increased environmental consciousness. Meals produced organically are known to meet these demands (Kalaiselvi, S., 2017). Compared to commercially produced milk, organic milk usually has greater levels of dry matter, fat, calcium, important vitamins, and beneficial conjugated linoleic acids. Additionally, compared to conventional crops (CLA), organic crops have lower levels of nitrates and chemical contaminants (Konda Kalyani, 2017). Sheep, pigs, and oxen raised organically had lower

levels of saturated fatty acids and total lipids, but greater levels of unsaturated fatty acids and a higher fatty acid ratio. The health benefits of conventional and organic diets have been evaluated in several research (Krishnakumare.B and S. Niranjana, 2017).

### 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Organic food products are still in their infancy in India, despite government and private sector encouragement and assistance. Because most consumers desire to preserve their health and attempt to prevent numerous ailments caused by inorganic food, they are also radically shifting their consumption habits toward organic foods. Following their own and their families' consumption, consumers' behavior also shifted toward purchasing organic foods. As a result, the study was carried out to find out how satisfied consumers were with organic food. After consumers learned about organic foods, the majority of them began purchasing them for regular consumption, and the study's findings make clear the benefits of organic food and how satisfied society is with it. India's market for organic food items has grown as a result of the manufacturers' lucrative export prospects. By the way, the majority of India's organic product is farmed for export to other countries. The remainder is offered for sale at specific retail locations. Therefore, the benefits of organic food items must inevitably reach a nation's local populace if the trend among producers continues to increase. Because there would be less processing needed between the point of production and consumption, this would also guarantee that the food items are nutrient-rich. The purpose of this study is to survey Shivamogga District's organic food product customers. Keeping all of these in mind, the current study was conducted to determine the factors impacting Shivamogga district consumers' purchasing decisions for organic food goods. The study was carried out to understand the issue with using non-organic food products that contain chemical fertilizers to increase product yield. In the modern world,

there is a need for new ideas and discussions that lead to potential consumers using harmful products. As a result, consumers have a negative perception of organic food products and begin purchasing and using them on a regular basis. The researcher is interested in the positive effects on society, which is why this particular study was conducted.

#### **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1.To examine the customer determinants that are influencing on buying behavior of customers towards buying of organic food products in Shivamogga district.

2.To explore the impact of commercial determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

#### **5. HYPOTHESES**

H01: There is no significant impact of customer determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

H1: There is a significant impact of customer determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

H02: There is no significant influence of commercial determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

H2: There is a significant influence of commercial determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

#### **6. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The goal of this study is to identify and examine the variables affecting Shivamogga district consumers' perceptions of and purchasing patterns for organic food goods. The study's scope is limited to investigating how customer determinants commercial determinants affect consumers' purchasing

decisions for organic food items in Shivamogga district.

#### **7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

To achieve the stated goal, descriptive research methodology was used; 240 customers were selected by convenient selection to provide the necessary primary data. A well-planned and pre-tested interview schedule has been used in Shivamogga District to gather the necessary primary data. Regression analysis has been used to analyze this acquired data.

#### **8. POPULATION, SAMPLING METHOD AND SAMPLE SIZE**

To achieve this, cluster sampling was used. The district of Shivamogga was selected as the primary research area. This area was separated into four groups: east, west, south, and north. The research sample consisted of 60 customers who regularly purchase and eat organic food products. The study includes the respondents who offered their full cooperation in providing all of the information. Cluster and convenient sampling is the sample strategy used in this study. Various consumer categories who utilize organic food items make up the sample size. To determine the factors that substantially impact the purchase of organic food items in Shivamogga District, 240 respondents were sampled.

#### **9. DATA COLLECTION**

##### **Primary Data**

A self-administered structured questionnaire was created and requested to be completed in order to collect data for the first time. Respondents were also interviewed in-person. The "5-point Likert scale" was included in a structured questionnaire that was created. The interview was semi-structured and included open-ended conversation in Kannada, the state of Karnataka's official language.

**Secondary Data**

The secondary data was gathered from the following sources, including information from a selection of peer-reviewed articles found in bibliographic databases (Emerald, Sage journals online, Science Direct, Scopus, Taylor & Francis online, Web of Science, and Wiley (online library). Based on their knowledge validity and greatest influence on the field of study, peer-reviewed journals were taken into consideration. E-Sources Online, publications such as research articles, periodicals, theses, journals, reports, and newspapers.

**10. DATA ANALYSIS**

The primary statistical method employed to determine the variables impacting consumers' perceptions of and purchasing patterns for organic food items in Shivamogga district was multiple regression analysis. The research instrument's stability and consistency are determined using the reliability analysis. Consistency demonstrates how accurately the model and conceptual framework are measured by the research tool.

**11. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study's main goal was to investigate the variables that affect consumers' perceptions of and purchasing patterns for organic food items in Shivamogga area alone. The lack of a well-defined measure of the variables influencing consumers' decisions to purchase organic food items is a common problem in the research on

the subject. However, there are drawbacks to this strategy for some customer groups of organic food. One of the study's shortcomings is the author's inability to collect thorough data on exclusively organic food items. Spending surveys have the drawback of underestimating the cost of organic food items if the value of locally grown and harvested food is not noted or remembered. Furthermore, the fact that all of the data in this study was self-reported and derived from subjective opinions is a serious restriction. The data employed in this study is somewhat "outdated," and because of chronological differences, it might not accurately reflect contemporary conditions. This is one of its shortcomings. The study may have made use of sophisticated statistical techniques. It's possible that the other important variable for the study was overlooked. Because some respondents may not be motivated to provide accurate information, their responses may be skewed.

**12. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Customer Determinants.**

- H01: There is no significant impact of customer determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.
- H1: There is a significant impact of customer determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

| Model Summary   |                   |                |                   |                            |        |                   |
|---|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model   | R                 | R Square       | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |        |                   |
| 1   | .664 <sup>a</sup> | .441           | .419              | .78875                     |        |                   |
| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>  |                   |                |                   |                            |        |                   |
| Model   |                   | Sum of Squares | df                | Mean Square                | F      | Sig.              |
| 1   | Regression        | 112.892        | 9                 | 12.544                     | 20.162 | .000 <sup>a</sup> |
|   | Residual          | 143.091        | 230               | .622                       |        |                   |
|   | Total             | 255.983        | 239               |                            |        |                   |
| b. Dependent Variable: Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products |                   |                |                   |                            |        |                   |

| Model Summary   |   |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
|---|---|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model   | R   | R Square                    | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |        |                   |
| 1   | .664 <sup>a</sup>                         | .441                        | .419              | .78875                     |        |                   |
| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>  |   |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
| Model   |   | Sum of Squares              | df                | Mean Square                | F      | Sig.              |
| 1   | Regression                                | 112.892                     | 9                 | 12.544                     | 20.162 | .000 <sup>a</sup> |
|   | Residual                                  | 143.091                     | 230               | .622                       |        |                   |
|   | Total                                     | 255.983                     | 239               |                            |        |                   |
| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |   |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
| Model   |   | Unstandardized Coefficients |                   | Standardized Coefficients  | t      | Sig.              |
|   |   | B                           | Std. Error        | Beta                       |        |                   |
| 1   | (Constant)                                | 5.235                       | .171              |                            | 30.690 | .000              |
|   | Consumers food habit                      | -2.161                      | .769              | -1.875                     | -2.810 | .005              |
|   | Organic food Priorities                   | -4.594                      | 1.309             | -3.894                     | -3.510 | .001              |
|   | Customers' value for life                 | -1.112                      | .973              | -.933                      | -1.144 | .254              |
|   | Customers' taste and preferences          | 4.801                       | 1.333             | 4.025                      | 3.602  | .000              |
|   | Helping farmers by consuming organic food | 3.801                       | 1.065             | 3.181                      | 3.569  | .000              |
|   | Consumer's perceived health               | -1.000                      | .595              | -.836                      | -1.680 | .094              |
|   | Quality and ingredients in food           | -1.765                      | .730              | -1.521                     | -2.419 | .016              |
|   | Consuming organic products as prestigious | 1.928                       | .658              | 1.725                      | 2.930  | .004              |
|   | Highly Recommended 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<sup>a</sup>) between consumer factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district. R<sup>2</sup> 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 Shivamogga districts. Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products = (5.235) + (-2.161\* Consumers food habit) +(-4.594\* Organic food Priorities) +(-1.112\* Customers' value for life) +(4.801\* Customers' taste and preferences) + (3.801\* Helping farmers by consuming organic food) + (-1.000\* Consumer's perceived health) +(-1.765\* Quality and ingredients in food) +(1.928\* Consuming organic products as prestigious) +(-.661\* Highly Recommended 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 impact of customer determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food

products in Shivamogga district is accepted.

**Commercial Determinants**

H02: There is no significant influence of commercial determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

H2: There is a significant influence of commercial determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district.

| Model Summary   |  |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
|---|--|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model   | R  | R Square                    | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |        |                   |
| 1   | .771 <sup>a</sup>                            | .595                        | .577              | .67319                     |        |                   |
| ANOVA <sup>b</sup>  |  |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
| Model   |  | Sum of Squares              | df                | Mean Square                | F      | Sig.              |
| 1   | Regression                                   | 152.205                     | 10                | 15.220                     | 33.586 | .000 <sup>a</sup> |
|   | Residual                                     | 103.778                     | 229               | .453                       |        |                   |
|   | Total  | 255.983                     | 239               |                            |        |                   |
| b. Dependent Variable: Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products |  |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
| Coefficients <sup>a</sup>   |  |                             |                   |                            |        |                   |
| Model   |  | Unstandardized Coefficients |                   | Standardized Coefficients  | t      | Sig.              |
|   |  | B                           | Std. Error        | Beta                       |        |                   |
| 1   | (Constant)                                   | 2.465                       | .347              |                            | 7.099  | .000              |
|   | Affordable Value                             | .081                        | .071              | .107                       | 1.144  | .025              |
|   | Attractive Advertising Campaign              | .028                        | .075              | .029                       | .369   | .712              |
|   | Access to organic food Products              | .238                        | .096              | .229                       | 2.469  | .014              |
|   | Quality of the organic food products         | .117                        | .061              | .164                       | 1.912  | .057              |
|   | Company's Integrated marketing communication | -.022                       | .049              | -.025                      | -.450  | .653              |
|   | Regulatory support                           | -.018                       | .074              | -.022                      | -.246  | .806              |
|   | Companies concern for customer's health      | .242                        | .099              | .231                       | 2.444  | .015              |
|   | Companies environmental sustainability       | .156                        | .103              | .181                       | 1.519  | .130              |
|   | Companies Labelling and packaging approach   | -.227                       | .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 coefficient (.664<sup>a</sup>) between marketing factors and buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district. R<sup>2</sup> 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 Shivamogga districts. Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products =  $(2.465) + (.081* \textit{Affordable Value}) + (.028* \textit{Attractive Advertising Campaign}) + (.238* \textit{Access to organic food Products}) + (.117* \textit{Quality of the organic food products}) + (-.022* \textit{Advertising appeal}) + (-.018* \textit{Regulatory support}) + (.242* \textit{Companies ethical policies}) + (.156* \textit{Companies environmental concern}) + (-.227* \textit{Product packaging})$ . 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 influence of commercial determinants on buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga district, is accepted.

### 13. FINDINGS

Variables of consumer factors such as Consumers food habit, Organic food Priorities, Customers' taste and preferences, Preference to Locally produced Food, Quality and ingredients in food, Symbol of Social Status were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga districts. Variables of marketing factors such as Affordable Value, Access to organic food Products, Quality of the organic food products, Companies concern for customer's health and Companies Labelling and packaging approach were used to predict Buying behavior of customers towards organic food products in Shivamogga districts.

### 14. SUGGESTIONS

It is evident from the aforementioned studies that consumers' perceptions have a beneficial impact on their decision to buy organic food items. The majority of consumers are moving from conventional to environmentally friendly food items. This is present in practically every product category. This also applies to the FMCG sector. As a result, producers and retailers have to focus more on creating and promoting organic food items, which are

both environmentally beneficial and healthy for customers. The majority of consumers are willing to buy eco-friendly items because they care about the environment and their health, even if they are a little more expensive than traditional products.

### 15. CONCLUSIONS

Concerns about the health and environmental effects of food production have led to a rise in the usage of organic products. Among other factors, the rising desire for food free of pesticides and chemical residues has been cited as the reason for consumers' increased interest in organic food items. An attempt is made to characterize the current state of affairs with reference to this research. Support for small or local farmers as well as health and environmental advantages are the primary drivers behind the buying of organic food items. Customer information was also identified as a significant problem that hinders the development of organic products. Increasing the availability and variety of organic food items, as well as raising consumer knowledge of and faith in organic labeling, may be the best strategy for growing their market share. According to the survey, the primary obstacle to the market share of organic products among consumers and non-consumers is the information that is readily available, and the perceptions and happiness of customers are important data that policymakers can utilize to support organic farming at the national and regional levels.

### 16. DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE RESEARCH

In order to improve policy-making for food product makers, further study might be done comparing the sustainable food consumption patterns of customers throughout Karnataka districts. Similar investigations in different places can be carried out by future researchers to validate the research findings. A far broader variety of topics should be covered by this poll.

In order to better identify the gaps in the empirical research on the topic, the study recommends that comparable investigations be carried out using the conceptual model of environmental food supply. Furthermore, research on food security may be conducted, and sustainable food consumption was the least investigated element; therefore, future studies should take this into account to close the remaining research gap.

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