

## A STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN TIRUNELVELI

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### **Abstract:**

Organic products are now considered healthier by most buyers because they are made from natural substances. Organic produce is grown without the use of fertilizers, artificial chemicals or pesticides. . The organic food market in India is starting to grow rapidly, albeit at a stubborn stage. Consumers prefer organic food not only for safety, human health and environmental reasons, but also because attributes such as nutritional value, taste, freshness and appearance of organic food are of great importance to consumers. This study is descriptive in nature. A stratified simple random sampling technique was used and 80 respondents were interviewed with a well-structured questionnaire. Survey results show that consumers prefer to buy organic foods. There are several factors that influence the preference for organic food compared to female respondents. More than educated respondents prefer to buy organic food. 35-45 year olds prefer to buy organic food compared to other age groups. Also, people with an income range of Rs.20,001 to Rs.40,000 prefer to buy organic food. Consumers prefer to buy organic food because they like fresh vegetables and fruits. Reason for choosing it to be healthy, taste good, be safe, protect the environment, etc.

**Key words:** Consumer Preference, Organic food products and Environmental concern.

### **Introduction:**

India's traditional farming system is now called organic farming. Over the past few decades, the organic market has grown rapidly, and the growing awareness of health, quality, safety and environmental considerations has developed a trend towards organic products. India has become the largest exporter of organic products. In India, on the other hand, there is a growing preference for organic products. Consumers pay more attention to organically grown products that are free of chemical pesticides and fertilizers to avoid consumer health problems. Organic products are preferred over conventional products because of their nutritional value and natural taste, and are considered to be the healthiest type of product for human consumption. We prefer to buy products that don't require additives and provide long-term benefits. That's why organic shops are always growing.

**Significance of the study:**

Indian organic products are growing in the domestic market. Growing awareness has led to changes in consumer tastes and preferences, increasing demand for organic products both domestically and internationally. Consumers prefer organic over conventional products, citing health concerns, chemical-free products, and environmental impact for several reasons. Therefore, this survey aims to gain insight into the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their preferences for organic products.

**Review of Related Literature:**

R. Mohanasoundari & N. Sathya (2017) conducted a study on customer preference towards natural organic products in Tirupur city. Organic foods are also not processed using irradiation, industrial solvents or chemical food additives. Prevention of many illnesses, thus increasing our quality of life. The survey has been conducted for 300 respondents. The data obtained from the survey by the researcher were analysed using percentage, Rank analysis, Chi-square test. The availability of product information was also supporting the consumers' intention to purchase organic products. Knowing how consumer perceived organic products by understanding the reasons of buying would probably help the marketers of organic products to establish a proper communication and advertising strategies.

Mahadevappa and Mokshapathy (2015) assessed the Consumer Awareness and Preference towards Organic Vegetables. The researcher examined the consumer awareness on organic vegetables in Belagavi district of Karnataka, He collected the data from 60 organic vegetable consumers through structured questionnaire method, in this 90 % of the consumers exposed that organically grown vegetables protect the health, followed by 81.67 % of the consumer opined that organically grown vegetable more tastier than chemically grown vegetables. It is found that 86.67% of the consumer opined that organically grown vegetables have long shelf life. Cent % of the consumers opined that the statements as organic vegetables are healthier.

**Objectives of the study:**

- To analyse the demographic profile of the consumers.
- To study the reasons of buying towards organic food products.
- To study on consumer preferences for organic foods products.

**Research Methodology:****Data Collection**

Primary data is first hand information it was collected from the respondent by using a structural questionnaire. The researcher has got the primary data through survey method.

Secondary data are those which have been already collected by someone else and which have been passed through the statistical process. In this study data has been taken from various secondary sources like newspapers, internet, books, magazines, reports, publications and journals.

**Sampling Design:**

For the purpose of this study the data were collected from 235 respondents using random sampling technique.

**Sampling Size:**

The sample size of the research is 235 respondents.

**DATAANALYSIS**

The demographic profile is analysed with help of variables like gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, monthly income, family type and family size. The results of the analysis are discussed below.

**TABLE: 1- Demographic Profile**

Variables	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
Gender wise classification		
Male	78	33.2
Female	136	57.9
Transgender	21	8.9
Age wise classification		
Below 25 years	39	16.6
25-35 years	67	28.5
35-45 years	102	43.4
45-55 years	15	6.4
Above 55 years	12	5.1
Educational qualification wise classification		
Illiterate	29	12.3
Under graduate	134	57
Post graduate	49	20.9
Professional	23	9.8
Occupation wise classification		
Professional	13	5.5
Private employee	83	35.3
Government employee	47	20
Own Business	58	24.7

Home Maker	34	14.5
Monthly income wise classification		
Below Rs.20,000	56	23.8
Rs.20,001 to Rs.40,000	132	56.2
Rs.40,001 – Rs.60,000	28	11.9
Above Rs.60,000	19	8.1
Family type wise classification		
Nuclear family	168	71.5
Joint family	67	28.5
Size of family members		
2-4 members	127	54
4-5 members	47	20
More than 5 members	61	26

Source: Primary data

The above table shows 33.2% of the respondents are male. 57.9% of the respondents are female. 8.9% of the respondents are transgender. 16.6% of the respondents belong to the age groups below 25 years. 28.5% of the respondents belong to the age groups 25-35 years. 43.4% of the respondents belong to the age groups 35-45 years. 6.4% of the respondents belong to the age groups 45-55 years. 5.1% of the respondents belong to the age groups above 55 years. 12.3% of the respondents are illiterate. 57% of the respondents are under graduate. 20.9% of the respondents are post graduate. 9.8% of the respondents are professional. 5.5% of the respondents are occupation is professional. 35.3% of the respondents are private employee. 20% of the respondents are government employee. 24.7% of the respondents are own business. 14.5% of the respondents are home maker. 23.8% of the respondents are having below Rs.20,000. 56.2% of the respondents are having income Rs.20,001-40,000. 11.9% of the respondents are having Rs.40,001-60,000. 8.1% of the respondents are having income level in above Rs.60,000. 71.5% of the respondents are nuclear family. 28.5% of the respondents are joint family.

## REASON FOR CHOOSING ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS:

**TABLE-2**

### Reason for choosing the organic products

Reason for choosing organic food products	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Quality	43	18.3
Price	24	10.2

Health	63	26.8
Taste and Safety	61	26
Environmental welfare	44	18.7
Total	235	100

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows that out of 235 respondents, 63 (26.8%) respondents have choosing organic food products for the reason of health, 61 (26%) respondents have choosing organic food products for the reason of taste and safety, 44 (18.7%) respondents have choosing organic food products for the reason of environmental welfare, 43 (18.3%) and 24 (10.2) respondents have choosing organic food products for the reason of quality and price.

### PREFERENCE TO BUY ORGANIC PRODUCTS:

**Table: 3**

#### FRIEDMAN TEST

Variables	Mean rank	Chi-Square Value	P Value
Fresh vegetables and fruits	5.00	69.852	0.000**
Cereals and pulses	3.92		
Tea and coffee	4.74		
Edible oil	3.79		
Milk and Milk Products	4.87		
Honey	4.66		
Dried fruits and nuts	4.73		
Meat products	4.29		

Source: Computed primary data

\*\*denotes significant level at 1% level

According to the, table 3 the P-Value of the test for the mean rank of the organic products you prefer to buy is less than 0.01. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected at the 1% level. It was discovered that differences in respondents' rank positioned organic products preferred to buy. Based on mean score, Fresh Vegetables and fruits (5.00) is the most important factor to preference to buy organic food products, followed by Milk and Milk

products (4.87), Tea/Coffee (4.74), Dried fruit and nuts (4.73), Honey (4.66), Meat Products (4.29), Cereals and pulses (3.92), Edible oil (3.79) respectively.

### Findings:

Most of the respondents are female.

102 (43.4%) of respondents are 35-45 years old.

134 (57%) of respondents have a college degree.

83 (35.3%) of the respondents are individual employees.

132 (56.2%) of the respondents have a monthly income between Rs.20,001 and Rs.40,000.

168 (71.5%) of the respondents are nuclear families.

127 (54%) of respondents are from her two to her four family members.

63 (26.8%) of respondents choose organic food for its health benefits.

The result on Friedman test source that fresh Vegetables and Fruits is the most preferred organic food products followed by milk and milk products.

### Conclusion:

It is clear that consumers prefer organic food, and there are many factors that influence their preferences, such as consumer demographics. Females have been observed to prefer organic foods to male respondents. A growing number of educated respondents prefer to buy organic food. The 35 to her 45 year old group prefers to buy organic food compared to other age groups. Also, her 132 of the respondents have an income ranging from Rs 20,001 to Rs 40,000. Consumers prefer organic food based on their perception that organic food is healthy, safe and environmentally friendly. To get more consumers to buy organic food, marketers use Marketing Her Mix to give consumers easy access to organic products. Friedman test source that fresh Vegetables and Fruits is the most preferred organic food products followed by milk and milk products. There is an old one - good food brings good thoughts, good thoughts lead to good deeds. So by embracing organic foods, you can lay a strong foundation for reaching a better generation.

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