



## BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS' TOWARDS SELECT ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN SALEM DISTRICT

Dr. A. Vinayagamoorthy\* D. Kamatchi\*\*

\*Professor, Department of Commerce, Periyar University, Salem-636011, Tamil Nadu, Email:

\*\*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Periyar University, Salem.

### Abstract

Nowadays, with the advancement of science and technology world, humans have more information knowledge, technology and education than previous time. As courses, people become more aware and concern to the environment and their surroundings. A better quality and healthy lifestyle have becomes a kind of necessity to the current generation. Therefore, "Organic Food" is recognized to be one of the contributors to a healthy lifestyle. Nearly every day, you can read or see "Organic" topic everywhere around you. From newspaper, magazine, billboard advertisement, internet and etc, "Organic" has slowly becomes a trend to the new society. This study will focused the buying behavior of consumer towards organic food products in salem district.

**Key Words:** Organic Food Products, Organic Farming, Consumer Behaviour.

### 1.1 Introduction

Nature is a gift of God. Everyone should follow the laws of nature to have socially, culturally, economically and healthy life as "health is wealth". But to meet demands of increasing population in the world, exploitation of natural resources started. To satisfy the need of more food "green revolution" with technological interventions in agriculture was widely adopted by farmers to exploit the nature for maximizing agriculture production. The Green Revolution launched in the mid sixties became a landmark in transformation of agriculture in India.

The seed, fertilizer, plant protection, irrigation and other allied technologies of intensive nature promoted since then, made the way for a substantial increase in food production, leading to self sufficiency and even surplus for export. The use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in insects, increases cost of production are gradual effects, which are challenging the sustainability of agriculture production at high level. Nonuse of chemical-based pesticides and fertilizers protects the farmer from the ill effects of the same and has a positive impact on our ecosystem.

Over the past decade consumption patterns of consumer will be change especially in food consumption because all consumer to eat organic food because of the he/she perception is to eat the organic food is good for health and it's grows with use of organic manual and use natural resource, so consumer behaviour will be shift to organic food item, and quality and safety in food attract consumer interest in organic food that is free from pesticides and chemical residues.

India is fast emerging as one of the largest potential markets for organic food products, owing to the facts that organic foods are completely natural, contain no chemicals or preservatives, and are a healthy alternative to conventional foods. With growing awareness towards health foods, surging income levels, and shifts in consumer behavior, India's nascent organic food market is fast transforming into the world's fastest growing organic food market.

### 1.2 Basic Concepts – Objective I

#### 1.2.1 Organic Meaning

The term —organic is rooted in —bio from Greek —bios meaning life or way of living. —Organic food products was first coined in the 1940s and refers to food raised, grown and stored and/or processed without the use of synthetically produced chemicals or fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, growth hormones and regulators or generic modification. (Essoussi & Zahaf, 2008). Roddy, Cowan and Hutchinson (1994) view organic food products as a product of organic farming.

#### 1.2.2 Organic Farming

Organic Farming, in simple terms, means cultivation without using chemical-based pesticides and fertilizers. Age-old and time-tested farming techniques like mulching, crop rotation, etc. are implemented. Moreover, only natural manures and pesticides, namely, cow dung and cow's urine, goat manure, chicken manure, varieties of composts, leaf extracts, neem-based products, etc., to cite a few, are used. Organic farming ensure that the provides priceless health benefits to the consumers.

#### 1.2.3 Organic Food Product

"Organic" refers not only the food itself but also to how it was produced. It can be concluded that "Organic food is food which is grown, stored and processed without using most conventional pesticides, fertilizers made with synthetic ingredient or sewage sludge, bioengineering or ionizing radiation". Organic food is sustainable production food, healthy and safe food.



### 1.2.4 Consumer Behaviour on Organic Food Products

Consumer behavior plays a major role in Organic food products segment. The marketers of organic foods need to be innovative and dynamic in order to complete with the changing purchase behavior in the Organic food products market among urban residents. The importance of organic food products was ignored for quite a long period. As results of environmental sustainability, importance is shifted towards Organic food products rather than conventional farming.

### 1.3 Organic Food Industry in Tamil Nadu

Organic food market is in growing stage in Tamil Nadu. The consumers are well aware of their health. They believe that organic food is safe, of high quality, and free of substances used to be clean and disinfect. The consumers' demand for organic food products because of the issues of adulteration in food, growing incomes for middle class, evaluation of modern retail formats, private sector initiatives in agro business, technological innovation in Agro& Food. In Tamilnadu organic food is packed in reusable, recycled, recyclable, and biodegradable material whenever possible. Packing material, and storage containers, or bins that contain a synthetic fungicide, preservative, or fumigant are prohibited. The organic produce shall not be packed in reused bags or containers that have been in contact with any substance likely to compromise the organic integrity of product or ingredient placed in those containers. Organic food is protected from pest and diseases by the use of good manufacturing practices that include proper cleaning, sanitation and hygiene, without the use of chemical treatment or irradiation. Organic product packing has minimal adverse impacts on the product or on the environment.

### 1.4 Statement of the Problem

The green revolution in India reformed the dwindling agricultural sector, but the costs have been high. Overuse of fertilizers, use of too much pesticide, low knowledge in agricultural sciences and technology among the farmers, inadequate education, improper seed collection, hybrid seeds etc. have resulted in reduced soil fertility and improper balance of nutrients in the food that is produced.

To reduce the effect of harmful chemicals to the human body, there is a need to reduce the use of chemical fertilizer and pesticides. That means the farmers need to adopt "Organic Farming" from "Conventional Farming". The cost of organic food is higher than that the conventional food, because the organic price tag more closely reflects the true cost of growing the food, reports the organic farming research foundation (OFRF).

Lack of established marketing channel or green markets are the major weaknesses in Indian organic food industry. Absence of or incomplete product information and certification procedures were also slowdown the growth of organic market in India. Improving the quality of products, packaging, logistic infrastructure and technical support to the producers and exporters are the need of the hour. More investment is required for improving the quality of research and development in the country. Government should apply and get for accreditation under different countries' national organic regulations.

A major problem is that consumers are not aware quietly, have a lack of confidence, and often confuse organic with conventional products. Besides this, consumer expectations of organic products are different from the expectations of conventional products. There is a need to create awareness about the advantages of organic food among the people and promote its use. Even though an organic food product plays a vital role however some factors are influencing them at the time of purchase. There is also a need to find out the problems people face in obtaining the organic food products.

### 1.5 Scope and Importance of the Study

The very essence of Life is good health. We at OTR – Organic Farm Products strongly believe that food has a profound impact on one's health. Unfortunately, in the modern day world, quality of food is severely compromised to meet the ever-growing demand. The focus seems to be on QUANTITY and PRESENTATION rather than QUALITY. In normal farming, several chemical-based pesticides and fertilizers are extensively used at different stages of cultivation and what reaches the consumer is a neatly packaged blend of chemicals. In the process, the natural goodness of the produce is lost. With rising concern of health issues and food safety, many consumers have turned their site to organic products. The increased consumers' interest in organic food has been attributed among others to the growing demand for food free from pesticides and chemical residues. Organic food promotes a balance of human, other living organisms and the nature. It also promotes no artificial preservatives and best maintain the originality of food. This prevents excess use harmful ingredients and thereby ensures health. It is in this scenario that Organic Food Products assume the great importance. The proposed study attempted to gain knowledge about buying behavior of consumer towards organic food product consumption and to see whether there is any potential this might have for changing their behaviour.

### 1.6 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the buying behaviour of consumers' towards select organic food products in Salem district. The specific objectives of the study are:



1. To examine the conceptual background of the study.
2. To analyze the demographic variables of the respondents in the study area.
3. To find out the attitudinal respondents towards the selected organic food product in salem district.
4. To identify the problems faced by the consumers towards selected organic food product.
5. To offer suitable suggestions and recommendations for improving the scope of marketing of organic food products in Salem District.

### 1.7 Research Methodology

It is the way of analyzing a research problem systematically and scientifically. It explains the methods followed in research activities starting from problem identification to presentation of research report.

#### 1.7.1 Research Design

It is an overall plan or program of research. It includes an outline of what the investigator doing the beginning with writing of hypotheses and their operational implications and culminates in the analysis and interpretation of data. The descriptive research design will be adopted.

#### 1.7.2 Area of the Study

The proposed study covers exclusive organic retail shops in Salem District.

#### 1.7.3 Selection of Products for the Study

Though there are many products are available in organic shops, but the researcher select the following products:

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Rice               | b. Pulses and Cereals |
| c. Oil Items          | d. Millets            |
| e. Vegetables /Fruits | f. Herbal Items       |
| g. Jaggery and Sugar  | h Others              |

#### 1.7.4 Sampling Techniques

The convenient sampling technique was adopted. The sample size comprises of different types of users who are using organic food product. The researcher 50 respondents selected for this present study.

### 1.8 Analysis and Interpretation of the Study

#### Objective II Result of Demographic Variables

Table 1

S. No	Demographic Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	<b>Age</b>		
	Up to 25 years	10	20.0
	26 - 35 years	20	40.0
	36 - 45 years	14	28.0
	Above 46 years	6	12.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
2.	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	20	40.0
	Female	35	60.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
3.	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	Married	36	72.0
	Un married	14	28.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
4.	<b>Educational Qualifications</b>		
	Up to H.Sc	16	32.0
	Graduates	16	32.0
	Post Graduates	12	24.0
	Professional qualifications	2	4.0
	Others	4	8.0



	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Student	4	8.0
	Home Makers	18	36.0
	Self Employed	16	32.0
	Employed	12	24.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Monthly Income</b>		
	Below Rs. 10000	28	56.0
	Rs. 10001 – 20000	16	32.0
	Rs.20001 – 30000	4	8.0
	Rs.30001 - Rs. 40000	2	4.0
	Above Rs. 40000	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Nature of Family</b>		
	Nuclear Family	24	48.0
	Joint Family	26	52.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>No. of Family Members</b>		
	Below 3 members	8	16.0
	3 -5 members	30	60.0
	5-7 members	8	16.0
	above 7 members	4	8.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Residential Area</b>		
	Rural	18	36.0
	Semi-urban	20	40.0
	Urban	12	24.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table indicates that the following result:

**Age:** 20% of the respondents are age group of up to 25 years, 40% of the respondents are 26-35 years, 28% of the respondents are 36-45 years, and 12% of the respondents are above 46 years.

**Gender:** 40% of the respondents are Male and remaining 60% of the respondents are Female.

**Marital Status:** 72% of the respondents are married, and remaining 28% of the respondents are Unmarried.

**Educational Qualifications:** 32% of the respondents are Up to H.Sc. & Graduates, 24% of the respondents are Post Graduates, and remaining 4% & 8% of the respondents are Professional and others qualifications.

**Occupation:** 8%, 36%, 32% of the respondents are belongs to Student, Home makers, Self Employed, and remaining 24% of the respondents are belongs to Employed category.

**Monthly Income:** 56% of the respondents are belongs to the income level of Below Rs.10000, 32%, 8%, and 4% of the respondents are belongs to the income level of Rs.10001-20000, Rs.20001-30000 and Rs. 30001- 40000.

**Nature of Family:** 48% of the respondents are Nuclear Family and remaining 52% of the respondents are Joint Family.

**No. of Family Members:** 16%, 60%, 16% and 8% of the respondents are Below 3 members, 3-5 members, 5-7 members and above 7 members.

**Residential Area:** 36% of the respondents are belongs to Rural Area, 40% of the respondents are Semi-urban, and remaining 24% of the respondents are belongs to Urban area.



**Objective II Attitudinal Response towards Organic Food Products**

**Table 2**

S. No	Attitudinal Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
<b>1.</b>	<b>Willingness to buy Organic Food Products</b>		
	Yes	50	100.0
	No	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Duration of Using Organic Food Product</b>		
	less than 1 year	18	36.0
	1-2 years	22	44.0
	2-3 years	4	8.0
	above 3 years	6	12.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Duration of Purchase</b>		
	Daily	6	12.0
	Weekly	14	28.0
	Monthly	24	48.0
	Occasionally	4	8.0
	Once in a year	2	4.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>How did you know about OFP</b>		
	Media	14	28.0
	Personal Reference	24	48.0
	Parents	4	8.0
	Reference Groups	6	12.0
	Sales Personal	2	4.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Advertisement Media for OFP</b>		
	Television	6	12.0
	Newspaper	8	16.0
	Magazines & Journals	10	20.0
	Psters & Banners	4	8.0
	Friends and Relatives	12	24.0
	Internet	6	12.0
	Exhibitions (Expo)	4	8.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Place of Purchase</b>		
	Super Market	6	12.0
	Organic Food Shop	36	72.0
	Grocery Shops	2	4.0
	Direct from Farm	4	8.0
	Public Distribution System	2	4.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Monthly Amount spend for OFP</b>		
	Below Rs.2000	30	60.0
	Rs. 2001 – 4000	18	36.0
	Rs.4001 – 6000	2	4.0
	Above Rs.6000	0	0.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Purchase Decision</b>		
	Own	36	72.0
	Spouse	4	8.0
	Family Members	10	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows that, 100% of the respondents are willingness to buy organic food products, 36% of the respondents



are using organic food products is less than one year, and remaining 44%, 8% & 12% of the respondents are using OFP is 1-2 years, 2-3 years and above 3 years, 12% of the respondents are purchased OFP on Daily basis, 28%, 48% of the respondents are purchased OFP on Weekly, monthly basis and remaining 8%, 4% purchased OFP on occasionally, once in a year. 28%, 48%, 8%, 12% and 4% of the respondents are know about OFP through Media, Personal reference, Parents, Reference groups, and Sales Personnel. The 12%, 16%, 20%, 8%, 24% of the respondents are says the best advertisement media for OFP is Television, Newspaper, Magazines and Journals, Posters and Banners, Friends and Relatives, Internet and Expo. The 12% of the respondents are purchased from Supermarket, 72% of the respondents are purchased from Organic food shops, and remaining 4%, 8% of the respondents are purchased from Grocery shops, Direct from farm and Public distribution system. 60%, 36% of the respondents are spend amount for purchase of OFP is below Rs.2000, Rs.2001-4000 and remaining 4% of the respondents are belongs to above Rs.6000. 72%, 8% and 20% of the respondents are take a decision to purchase of OFP is Own, Spouse and Family members.

#### Objective IV Problems faced by the Consumer's towards the Select Organic Food Products

**Table 3: Friedman Rank Test**

Overall Problem	Mean Score	Rank
High price	6.88	III
Unavailability of the product	6.16	VII
Lack of trust on product	6.48	VI
Lack of choice of the product	3.84	XI
Arrival of unbranded product	6.80	V
Distance from residence	6.84	IV
Minimum number of brands	4.12	X
Minimum number of shops	4.60	IX
Low shelf life	5.04	VIII
Lack of advertisement	8.08	I
Lack of Awareness	7.16	II

**Test Statistics**

N	25
Chi-Square	43.476
Df	10
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The above test resulted the consumer faced major problem is Lack of Advertisement, Lack of Awareness and High Prices belongs to rank I, II, and III. The last 3 ranks like IX, X, and XI is Minimum number of shops, Minimum number of brands and Lack of choice of the product.

#### 1.9 Findings of the Study

- The majority of the respondent's age group of 26-35 years, 60% of the respondents are female.
- Most of the respondents are married and having School level and graduates level educational qualifications.
- The majority of the respondent's belongs to homemakers and our monthly income of the family is below Rs.10000.
- The more number of respondents are belongs to joint family and having 3-5 members residing at rural and semi-urban area.
- Most of the respondents to purchase of organic food products is 1-2 years, to purchase on weekly and daily basis.
- The best advertisement media for knowing organic food product is Friends and relatives and magazine & journals.
- The majority of the respondent's to purchase product from organic food shops and super market, and spending amount to purchase is below Rs.2000.
- The most of the respondent to take decision with own and with the help of family members.



### 1.10 Objective V Suggestions and Recommendation

- The organic products are too expensive comparative than non-organic products. So, the consumer not to purchase more number of products.
- There is a lack of awareness about organic food products.
- The organic products are not properly certified from the organic certification department or authority.
- The organic shops are very limited in the district.
- The government is also support to grow of organic farming and farmers through good organic food products market facilities, financial support and so on.
- The package of the product is not sufficient. So provide good packing facilities to specified product.

### 1.11 Conclusion

Consumer Behaviour is playing the major role while buying any type of products. So, the organic shops and product supply is limited but at present demand for organic food products is increased. The farmers and government are think to improve and increasing production of organic product and also concentrate to packaging, quality, and price and market system. This will result to increase the healthy environment and standard of living farmers. The sellers of the organic product are also increase. The marketers must create promotions which are both realistic and moral and the product availability in terms of volume, more numbers of products are required become a successful in marketing of organic food products. The consumer point of view the awareness of organic food products is very low, that could be increase in future.

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