

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF REASONS AND BARRIERS INFLUENCING CUSTOMERS TO PURCHASE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN CHHATTISGARH

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Abstract

The growing popularity and awareness of the health advantages of organic food, particularly among young people, has increased demand significantly. The majority of population is confused about organic food and agricultural goods and lack knowledge about them. Few are typically aware of the relationship between organic food and human health, as well as the need of preserving future generations. The lack of acceptable appropriate quality evaluations and regulations is the most significant barrier that India has in its quest to become one of the world's major organic food producers. The scarcity of organic food goods is a serious issue for society's health-conscious youngsters. They mostly purchase organically cultivated fruits, vegetables, cereals, and herbs from branded retail outlets. Procuring healthier food, as well as an efficient marketing structure and the required backing from the government, as well as improving supply chain management and production planning, were shown to be successful in resolving concerns with organic food items. As a result, this research aims to provide a platform for assessing reasons and barriers influencing customers to purchase organic food products in Chhattisgarh city.

Keywords: health advantages of organic food, agricultural good, health-conscious youngsters, supply chain management and production planning, organic food items, Chhattisgarh city

Introduction

The phrase "organic food" arose from the necessity to distinguish between meals produced with chemical or genetic enhancers and those that were not. There is a widespread belief that inorganic

foods have inferior nutritional content than organic foods, despite the fact that they give larger yields. There is minimal scientific evidence supporting this, and additional study is needed. In general, however, inorganic foods generate more per unit of investment than organic foods. The worldwide organic food and beverage industry is growing as people

become more aware of the health advantages of organic foods, which has resulted in more organic farming throughout the globe.

When it comes to organic food, India has a lot of promise. Sikkim has been designated as the "first organic state," yet appropriate marketing of organic food items is lacking. Around 135 organic goods are produced in India, and they are also sold. The move in India toward organic food is a return to our forefathers' traditional practises. We were almost entirely relied on herbs and plant extracts for healing treatment and health food in ancient India, not just because we were farming natural and organic foods. Modern India is again returning to this magnificent way of life. In India, organic farming is a long-standing and well-known traditional vocation.

Organic farming, which was formerly thought to be done in a highly healthy manner, is no longer practised in the same way. The meals we choose to consume should keep us healthy and improve our quality of life. Young people are becoming more sensible, and they demand more data before making judgments. Because their food attitudes are significantly influenced by their level of knowledge, perception, and health awareness. The goal of the study is to deliver more information about organic foods to students via an awareness programme designed to encourage them to learn about and eat healthy meals, as well as to enlighten them about organic foods.

To go over the difficult step of selecting food items via chosen organic food merchants while remaining fearless about purchasing the product. This is due to the abundance of similar synthetic items on the market. Organic consumers are identified based on their knowledge, health awareness, environmental concerns, preference, attitude, and purchase of organic food items, and ultimately, buying intention to eat organic foods, despite the fact that the transition is taking place

at a gradual rate. The current research examines the key elements that influence organic food product purchases and its barriers.

2. Review of Literature

The "Impacts and Constraints Evaluation of Organic Farming in West Bengal" was initiated and designed by the Agro Economic Research Centre, Visva – Bharati, Santini Ketan, West Bengal, with the goal of evaluating the status and influence of organic farming as a substitute method in West Bengal, as well as to determine the related restraints of organic farming that obstruct the implementation of this specific and scientific method of farm operation. The research was carried out in four distinct villages, each of which belonged to a different block, resulting in two different districts being chosen for the study. 60 of the 120 homes examined for this research were found to be practising organic farming, whereas the other 60 were doing chemical or inorganic farming.

Radhakrishnan (2024) Organic farming is a rapidly growing economic sector that has a significant impact on human health, the economy, and the environment. Organic farming maintains ecological equilibrium and mitigates concerns from global climate change, according to the data. This necessitates government regulations that promote the growing organic food industry. The Farm Bill, as the principal method of agricultural policy, is a potential vehicle for organic farming investment. Agricultural policy now gives very little assistance to organic farmers and, in certain circumstances, is harmful to organic farmers' interests.

Madhusree(2023) said in his study that organic food has always been widely respected, cherished, and farmed in India with the best knowledge of the planet's sustainability, the bio-network, and future generations. The status of Indian agriculture, on the other hand, has shifted dramatically in recent decades. Chemical fertilisers and pesticides are often employed in today's market to achieve early and large-scale production. Chemical fertilisers, on the other hand, have increased output and productivity to a greater level. Pesticide usage has increased, resulting in a slew of environmental and health issues. When chemical fertilisers and pesticides are used over a

long period of time, they have negative harmful effects on the land's production and spread illnesses to the people who eat these goods.

According to Shalini Talwar (2021), organic food consumption is increasing internationally owing to customer worries about personal health and food safety. Several nations, including Japan, are focusing on encouraging organic food consumption, however research on Japan's organic food sector is limited. Furthermore, despite consumers' good attitudes about organic food, retail sales of organic food in Japan remain low, and there is a need to understand why. The Stimulus–Organism–Behaviour–Consequence (SOBC) paradigm was used to investigate elements that may influence consumers' willingness to purchase (WTP) and stated purchasing behaviour (SBB) toward organic food. Cross-sectional data from 928 Japanese customers was used to evaluate the created model. Food safety concerns (FSC) and health awareness, according to the results, are positively associated to openness to change and ethical self-identity. Furthermore, WTP is favourably connected with openness to change and ethical self-identity, whereas SBB is positively associated with WTP. Furthermore, purchase frequency attenuated the relationship between self-identity and WTP and WTP and SBB. Researchers, marketers, and merchants should take note of the findings.

3. Objectives of The Study

To assess the reasons and barriers influencing customers to purchase organic food products in Chhattisgarh city

4. Sampling Design

In this study, Purposive sampling was used for the research, with organic food shops in and around Chhattisgarh serving as sample units. The sampling framework is a list that contains all of these sample units. The researcher separated the study region into East, West, North, South, and Central Chhattisgarh and distributed 160 questionnaires in each direction, resulting in a sample of 800 respondents to examine the variables affecting the purchasing of organic food items.

5. Garret Ranking

Garrett Ranking is used to assess the reasons for buying organic food products by the select organic consumers in Chhattisgarh which is classified based on the attributes such as helping digestive system, live a healthy life style, overcome age related factors, leading life as an example in the society, prevention from diseases, to overcome existing health issues and finally, advice from the doctor / health physician.

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF ORGANIC FOOD BUYERS

Demographic Profile	Category	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Gender	Female	112	46.7
	Male	128	53.3
Age	15-25 years	42	17.5
	26 – 35 years	42	17.5
	36 – 45 years	128	52.5
	46 – 55 years	06	2.5
	Above 56 years	24	10
Income	Less than 20,000	114	47.5
	20,001 to 40,000	58	24.2
	40,001 to 60,000	50	20.8
	60,001 to 80,000	18	7.5
Education	Up to Schooling	10	4.2
	Undergraduate	97	40.4
	Postgraduate	129	50.8
	Others	04	1.7
Current Usage	I never use organic food	16	6.7
	I rarely use organic food	52	21.7

	Occasional, I purchase organic food	80	33.3
	I always use naturally made foods	72	30
	I regularly use organic foodstuff	20	8.3
Not to Use Organic	Generally, the price of organic food is high	26	10.8
	I do not believe that are organic food	60	25
	I do not identify what naturally made products are	42	17.5
	Organic food does not have any attractive appetite	56	23.3
	I considered organic food do not have a delicious taste	04	1.7
	It is hard to find a variety of foods	10	4.2
	I don't trust the institution eco-logos and labels	02	0.8
	Very care I will go for organic shopping	10	4.2
	My family members do not attract to organic food	02	0.8

The majority of respondents were male (53.3%); most of the buyers are aged in-between 36-45 years old (52.5%). It is found that almost all the respondents had basic education knowledge and most of them have completed PG and Ph.D. (53.8%). They earned more than 20 thousand per month (47.5%) and their usage patterns towards organic food products sometimes only use organic food (33.3%). At the same time, the responses were also recorded regarding why they are not using organic food product, it is shown that 23.3% of respondents are pointed out that the organic food product does not have physical appearance attractive and 17.5% of customers are not able to differentiate between the organic and nonorganic food products (Jamshi and Ganeshkumar, 2017).

TABLE 2. VALIDITY AND CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY

Reliability and Validity	Cronbach's	AVE	CR
Behaviour	.762	.675	.861
Expression	1.0	1.0	1.0
Pens_Soc_Norms	.780	.528	.848
Intention	1.0	1.0	1.0
Trust	.777	.754	.860

Before proceeding into the structural equation model, the Cronbach's alpha (α) and Composite Reliabilities (CR) were applied to ensure the reliability of the adapted instrument. Both α and CR values in the measurement model are within the cutoff level which ensured the scale reliability. To test the validity, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was depicted in SPSS AMOS.

TABLE 3. DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY FOR THE ORGANIC FOOD BUYERS

	Behaviour	Expression	Intention	Pens_Soc_Norms	Trust
Behaviour	0.822				
Expression	0.588	1			
Intention	0.023	0.085	1		
Pens_Soc_Norms	0.283	0.383	0.392	0.727	
Trust	0.215	0.428	0.299	0.246	0.869

Table 3 represents the analysis results of construct reliability and validity. All the standardized factor loadings are statistically significant at 0.001 levels for each construct and also the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values have more than 0.50 for each construct that denotes that the Convergent Validity (CV) of all constructs achieved (Ganeshkumar and Mathan Mohan, 2014). To assess the impacts of the unmeasured latent construct, we have engaged the analytical method

suggested by Podsakoff (2003) which compares a construct model along with all factors coefficients of the constructed model. The general structural model was found to be insignificant, therefore albeit the modified model was performed in order to improve the fit indices. The factors behavior, expression, intention, trust, personal and social norms are also statistically significant at 0.01% level resulting in the discriminant validity within the theoretical constructs as shown below the table (Ganeshkumar & Nambirajan, 2013; Prabhu et al. 2024).

TABLE 4 RANK SHOWING THE REASONS FOR BUYING ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS BY THE CONSUMERS

Reasons for buying organic food Products	Garrett Score	Garrett Mean	Garrett Rank
Doctor's Advice	33332	46.56	7
Prevention is better than cure	34218	47.75	6
To overcome age related factors (Premature)	41783	57.83	1
My life an example for the society	41399	57.32	2
To overcome existing health issues	36966	51.41	4
To help the digestive system	35547	49.52	5
To live a healthy life style	39927	55.36	3
<i>Source: Computed from Questionnaire</i>			

The respondents rating based on the reason for buying organic food products was highly found with respect to the statement “To overcome age related factors (pre-mature), with the mean of 57.83 followed by the 2nd rank perceived towards the statement “my life an example for the

society with the mean of 57.32 ", third rank considered was "To live a healthy life style with the mean of 55.36", fourth rank was for the statement "to overcome existing health issues with the mean of 51.41 ", fifth rank was for the statement "to help the digestive system with the mean of 49.52 sixth rank was for the statement "prevention is better than cure with the mean of 47.75 " and finally, the least rank was for the statement "Doctor's Advice with the mean of 46.56 " opined by the respondents during reasons for preference of organic food products.

TABLE 5 GARRETT RANKING SHOWING RESPONDENTS RATING TOWARDS BARRIERS TO OPT ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

Respondents Rating towards Barriers to opt Organic Food Products	Garrett Score	Garrett Mean	Garrett Rank
No difference between organic and non-organic products	35324.1	49.22	4
No health benefits differentiated between organic and non-organic	35840.57	49.91	3
Would buy organic frequently if it was cheaper	42692.87	59.05	2
Am on a budget / trying to cut down on bills	49477.63	68.09	1
Eating non-organic food has not done me any harm	28708.33	40.35	6
No hold of organic products / not convenient	33507.5	46.8	5
<i>Source: Computed from Questionnaire</i>			

The respondents rating based on the barriers faced to buy organic food products was highly found with respect to the statement "am on a budget / trying to cut down on bills with the mean of

68.09”, followed by the 2nd rank perceived towards the statement “would buy organic frequently if it was cheaper with the mean of 59.05”, third rank considered was “no health benefits differentiated between organic and non-organic products with the mean of 49.91”, fourth rank was for the statement “no difference between organic and non-organic products with the mean of 49.92”, fifth rank was for the statement “No hold of organic products / not convenient with the mean of 46.80”, and finally, the least rating and sixth rank was for the statement “eating non-organic food has not done me any harm with the mean of 40.35”

6. Suggestions:

It is critical to safeguard society from growing health risks. As a result, the government must take significant steps to change the organic food sector. Farmers should be given subsidies to develop organic food items, and prices should be regulated to help farmers and buyers. The government should publicise and promote the advantages of eating organic foods, as well as encourage consumers to do so through social media. Certain toxic pesticides, fertilisers, and the usage of genetically engineered crops should all be prohibited by the government. Building trust and increasing their impression of organic food, as well as letting them realise that it is not too costly when compared to their medical bills, might enhance their willingness to spend more for organic food. The government should insist on a particular course on green goods and their advantages being taught in schools and universities.

7. Conclusion

Marketing methods have become more socially significant in today's environment. The marketing of organic foods has become a top priority for contemporary marketers. Individual health and environmental conservation are key concerns for both the people and the government in India. As a result, the research focuses on the factors that influence consumers' decisions to buy organic food in Chhattisgarh. It was also shown that customers' buying attitudes toward organic food items were strongly impacted by knowledge and healthy awareness. In addition, consumers' attitudes about purchasing organic food items had a large and beneficial impact on their purchasing

intentions. As a result, in the current lifestyle changing circumstances, organic food intake would be advantageous to people and society as a whole.

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