

Consumer Attitude And Purchase Intention Towards Organic Food Products In India: An Exploratory Study Of Twin Cities Of Hyderabad And Secunderabad

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Abstract

The increasing global warming and environmental degradation and health problems led governments, marketers and consumers to pay attention towards the marketing and consumption of Organic food products. Improvement in the quality of life, standard of living, income and educational level of the urban consumers have created a favourable attitude towards buying of organic food products. The change of preference and attitude is largely based on the consumers' consciousness towards health and environment aiming towards a sustainable environment. The present study is conducted among the urban consumers from the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad (India) to find out the purchase intention towards organic food products. The results show that a majority of surveyed consumers prefer organic food over traditional food (non-organic) products because of health, environmental concerns, life style and subjective norms.

Keywords: *organic food; health concerns; subjective norms; consumer attitude; purchase intentions.*

1. Introduction;

Organic Foods are the result of that agricultural process that avoiding the use of Man-made chemical pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, growth regulators and animal additive. It is fresh and processed food produced by using organic farming method. The production and consumption of conventional food causes many environmental and health problems. So the Organic food is the alternative of that which has minimal or no impact on environmental and human health. According to a recent market survey report, the estimated size of global organic food and beverages market was at USD 187,485.6 million in 2020 and by the year 2031, it is expected to reach USD 860,625.7 million with a CAGR of 14.9% from 2022 to 2031 [1]. In yet another

research report in 2022 suggests that the value of Indian organic food market in the year 2020 stood at USD 849.5 million and it may reach about USD 2601 million by 2026 with a CAGR of 20.5% for the period from 2021-26 [2].

Purpose of the study

The present study is an attempt to identify and examine the factors and variables that influence the consumers' attitude towards buying of organic food products in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The city of Hyderabad figured together with Mumbai as creative cities and is known for its gastronomy recognized by the UNESCO.

2. Literature Review

The Sustainable food system is one of the priorities of successive policy makers concerns with sustainable world. In the past couple of decades, the popularity and demand for organic food products have increased considerably. Some of the attributes contributing for the popularity of organic food product markets are increasing awareness of consumers towards organic food, healthy life, environmental concerns, easy availability of organic food products through off line and online to urban and semi-urban consumers. Organic food habits some time leads to alternative life style, vegetarianism [3]. Organic food products are generally known for non use of pesticides, using of natural manure. Several research studies establish that the motivation to prefer or buy organic food products are primarily stemming from health concerns, eco-friendly, conforming to food safety norms [4].

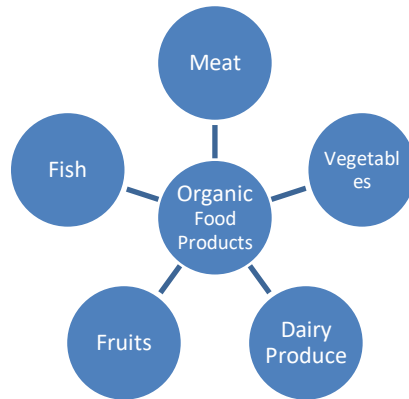
Past research undertaken in different countries suggests some of the common attributes for preferring organic food by the customers include freshness and taste, sensory attributes, nutritional values, free from pesticides etc.[5]. Literature review also suggests that some of the reasons which prevent a customer to buy organic food products are high price, availability issues, limited choices, lack of perceived value etc.[6]. Most often the consumers would not mind to pay a premium price for buying organic food products keeping the health concerns of self and family members [7].

The main reason behind the fast growth of organic food market is the rising awareness and the increasing health concern among the consumers. The organic food market in India is currently a niche market which targets only a particular portion of the market but, the increasing incidence of food adulteration; this is penetrating to all the segments of the market and is expected to grow at a faster rate in coming days.

Organic Food Products

Organic food products are generally classified into the following five categories as given in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 : Classification of organic food products



2.1. Health and Environmental Concern

In a Malaysia based research study on the purchase intention of generation Y customers towards purchase of organic food products, it was concluded that “environmental concern, health factors, and perceived value influence consumers’ purchasing intention towards organic food” [8]. In a study carried out by two researchers in Delhi NCR and other major cities in India on a large sample size revealed that the consumers preferred organic food over non-organic food. Their choice primarily based on the factors like health and environmental factors. But at the same time, most of the consumers believed that the organic food is costly as compared to conventional food products [9].

2.2. Awareness about the organic food

The consumer awareness of a product basically refers to characteristics, recognition and its allied benefits. In the case of organic products, the possible customer attributes include nutritional contents, level of freshness, organic certification, locally produced or imported, country of origin, basic labeling information including expiry date etc. prescribed by the local authority where the product is marketed or sold. An UAE based study undertaken by a group of researchers with a 500 sample size found out that awareness about the organic food is positively influenced with demographic factors gender, nationality, education, income, occupation and age group. The high income group spends more on buying of organic food [10].

2.3. Subjective Norms/Lifestyle

“Consumers choose organic food especially in relation to recognized health [11] and environmental [12] benefits” [13]. Subjective norm is the reflection of the perception of a consumer who is influenced by his family, friends and colleagues at workplace to buy a product.

The subjective norms play an important role on the minds of the consumer in favour of a product buying.

2.4. Affordable price and Availability to the consumers

The organic food products have premium prices. The prices of these products are somewhat more than the conventional food products, because of its long production and preservation requirements. So people of generally high income group purchases these products to maintain their high standards of living and show their lifestyle. In study undertaken by two researchers in two major southern cities of India viz. Chennai and Bengaluru with a large sample size indicates that “environmental concerns, health and life style, product quality, support towards local farmers, convenience and price, safety and trust, and subjective norms” influence the purchase intention of the customers [14].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design, sample and data collection

The study is based on a structured questionnaire with 20 questions related to consumer awareness, availability, and affordability of organic food products including their purchase intention. Past consumer studies indicates that the socio demographic factors do influences the consumer behavior.[15];[16];17] & [18]. The recorded demographic profiles of the respondents were (a) gender (b) age group (c) Income level and (d) educational attainment. Before administering the questionnaire, the same was piloted with 10 target respondents who were consuming organic food products. After the pilot study, two of the questions were modified suitably for the survey.

3.2. Construct description

In order to test these hypotheses, data collection has been made through a structured questionnaire with 24 questions (including 4 questions related to socio-demographic profiles) in a 5 point Likert’s scale during 4th week of Sept and 1st week of October, 2022. Different social media groups were identified by the researchers to collect the responses of the consumer through google forms through convenience sampling methods. In total 103 responses were received during the survey and all were found valid for testing.

3.3. Reliability and Validity

All 103 responses were thoroughly analyzed by the researchers and coded for doing statistical analysis through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The responses were tested through SPSS version 20. To test the reliability of the data collected through the survey, consistency analysis is done by using “Cronbach’s alpha” method to measure the internal

consistency of the items included in the factors. In this study, the reliability Cronbach alpha is = 0.925 for 20 items, hence the items of the questionnaire were found valid and reliable to predict the purchase intentions of the target consumers.

3.4. Principal Component Analysis

The “Principal Component analysis with Varimax method” was applied to find out the reliability of the questionnaire through “Kaiser-Mayer-Olin (KMO) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity method”. The measuring sampling adequacy (MSA) for the questionnaire developed by the researchers was 0.874 which is well above the acceptable value of 0.450. All the identified variables under the four factors are found at a satisfactory level above 0.559 and meet the sampling adequacy for the present study. Accordingly, the researchers proceeded further for factor analysis. The value of KMO and Bartlett’s test is as under at Table-1:-

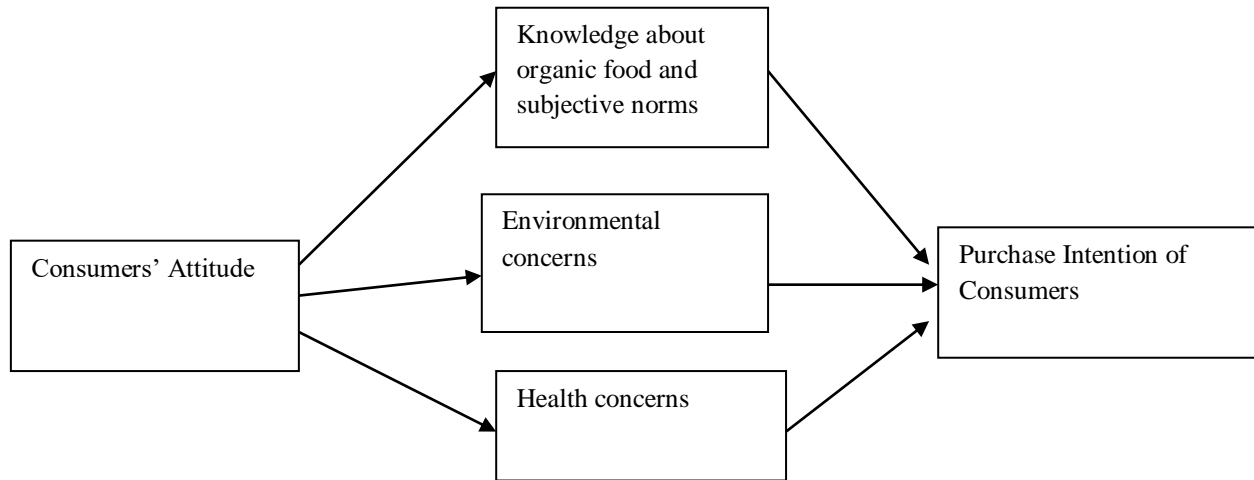
Table-1: Kaiser-Mayer-Olin and Bartlett’s test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.874
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square df Sig.
	1098.555 190 .000

3.5. Research Model

Based on the literature review, the researchers have developed a research model for the present study as shown in Figure 2 below. The purpose of the model is to establish the relationship between the attributes of the consumers’ attitude towards purchase intention of organic food products in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, Telangana (India).

Figure 2 : Research Model for Consumer Purchase Intention of Organic Food Products



4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

A total 103 questionnaires were collected online and all were found valid. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are consisting of 70.9% male and the remaining 29.1% women consumers. Out of which 44.7% are younger consumers below the age of 30 years. The percentage of middle age group (between 30-45 years) is 34% and 17.5% was consisting of aged participants above the age of 45 and below 60 years. The remaining 3.9% participants were above the age of 60 years. About 40% of surveyed respondents are in the lowest income bracket of below 3 Lakh per annum and 34% of the respondents' annual income is between Rs.3 Lakh to 10 Lakh. The remaining 28.2% respondents' income level is above Rs.10 Lakh per annum. The surveyed respondents were highly qualified as 68% are postgraduates; 28.2% are having professional qualifications; and only two each of respondents out of 103 are either graduates and high school pass-outs respectively. The type, category-wise demographic characters mapped in the survey has been given at Table-2 below:

Table-2: Demographic characteristics and frequencies (N= 103)

<i>Type</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Gender	Male	73	70.9
	Female	30	29.1
Age group	Below 30 years	46	44.7
	30-45 years	35	34.0
	45-60 years	18	17.5
	60+ years	04	03.9
Income level (Per annum)	Below Rs.3 Lakhs	39	37.9
	Rs.3 to Rs.10 Lakhs	35	34.0
	Rs.10 Lakhs & above	29	28.2
Educational qualification	High School	02	01.9
	Graduate	02	01.9
	Postgraduate	70	68.0
	Professionals	29	28.2

4.2. Survey Questions

The details of survey questions of the study under four factors viz. (a) Knowledge about organic food and subjective norms;(b)Environmental concern; (c) Purchase intention of consumers; and (d) Health concerns is given below at Table-3:

Table-3: Survey Questions (N= 103)

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Questions</i>
Knowledge about organic food and subjective norms	KSN1	Some of my friends and relatives are already using organic foods.
	KSN2	My family members also wish to consume organic foods.
	KSN3	I saw several promotional initiatives around me to switch over to organic foods in social media and departmental stores.
	KSN4	“Organic foods are easily available in nearby Kirana shops” and departmental stores at Hyderabad/Secunderabad
	KSN5	I am always curious for new organic foods products in the stores (online and off-line)
	KSN6	I am shopping organic foods regularly
	KSN7	I buy organic foods even though alternative non organic foods are available
Environmental Concern	ECN1	I am concerned about my daily intake of nutritional food.
	ECN2	I am understand the overall benefits of organic food products
	ECN3	Organic foods are costing more for the consumer.
	ECN4	Organic foods are available only in popular stores or in some kiosks in the hypermarkets.
	ECN5	It is more convenience to buy Organic foods through online
Health conscious	HCN1	I am concerned about my daily intake of nutritional food.
	HCN2	I am aware that Organic foods are good for my health
	HCN3	I would prefer organic food over non-organic food
Purchase intentions of the consumers	PIC1	It is worth to pay more to buy Organic foods.
	PIC2	I resolve to buy organic foods in the near future because of its nutritional value
	PIC3	I would not mind to spend more to buy organic foods because of its health benefits

4.3. Factor Analysis

“Exploratory factor analysis and principal component analysis” were done through SPSS to determine the factors and items influencing the consumer attitude and behavior towards purchase of organic food products (Table-4). The chosen solution with four principal components was

constructed using the varimax rotation technique and explained 69.07 percent of the total variance.

The rotated factor loading of 0.50 was chosen as a threshold and all factors with factor loadings below 0.50 were eliminated from further analysis. With the help of Scree plot as given at Figure 3 and Kaisers criterion (eigenvalue > 1), four substantive factors with 20 items/variables were identified for further process. The ranking of factors 1 to 4 reflect the declining trend of eigenvalues.

Table -4: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.396	41.981	41.981	8.396	41.981	41.981	3.846	19.229	19.229
2	1.851	9.254	51.236	1.851	9.254	51.236	3.706	18.529	37.758
3	1.374	6.870	58.105	1.374	6.870	58.105	2.674	13.372	51.131
4	1.086	5.431	63.537	1.086	5.431	63.537	2.481	12.406	63.537
5	.916	4.579	68.116						
6	.851	4.255	72.371						
7	.776	3.881	76.253						
8	.655	3.277	79.530						
9	.587	2.934	82.464						
10	.524	2.620	85.084						
11	.514	2.570	87.654						
12	.435	2.175	89.829						
13	.367	1.837	91.667						
14	.344	1.720	93.386						
15	.302	1.511	94.897						
16	.271	1.354	96.251						
17	.244	1.218	97.469						
18	.187	.937	98.406						
19	.184	.921	99.327						
20	.135	.673	100.000						

Note: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The first component (knowledge about organic food and subjective norms) accounted for 19.229% of the variance. Two variables (safer for consumption with high nutritional value) and (I

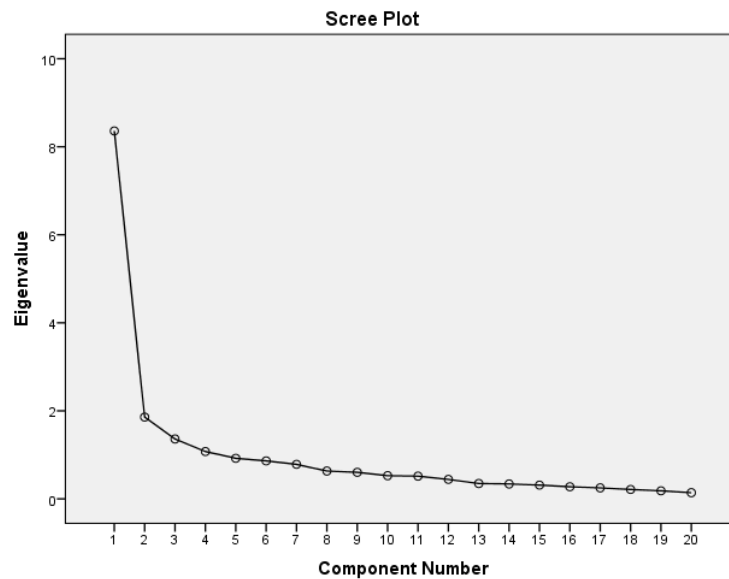
often interested to shop more with factor loadings less than 0.50) were eliminated. The final four factors with 18 items used in this present study showing factor loadings and communalities are given below at Table-5. The value of Cronbach’s alpha is also found satisfactory as they are above 0.700. As may be seen from the table all the items included in the study have demonstrated satisfactory indicator reliability.

Table-5: Varimax rotated component analysis factor matrix
(Indicating Factors, cronbach’s alpha, observable items, factor loadings, communalities)

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Factor loadings</i>	<i>Communalities</i>
Factor 1 – Knowledge about organic food and subjective norms (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.861)			
Some of my friends and relatives are already using organic foods.	KSN-1	0.587	.537
My family members also wish to consume organic foods.	KSN-2	0.646	.685
I saw several promotional initiatives around me to switch over to organic foods in social media and departmental stores.	KSN-3	0.559	.728
“Organic foods are easily available in nearby Kirana shops” and departmental stores at Hyderabad/Secunderabad	KSN-4	0.657	.487
I am always curious for new organic foods products in the stores (online and off-line)	KSN-5	0.620	.718
I am shopping organic foods regularly	KSN-6	0.794	.722
I buy organic foods even though alternative non organic foods are available	KSN-7	0.721	.657
Factor 2 – Environmental concerns (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.821)			
Organic foods help us in protection of environment and sustainability.	ECN-1	0.572	.591
I understand the overall benefits of organic food products	ECN-2	0.669	.620
Organic foods are costing more for the consumer.	ECN-3	0.749	.648
Organic foods are available only in popular stores or in some kiosks in the hypermarkets.	ECN-4	0.614	.487
It is more convenience to buy Organic foods through online	ECN-5	0.728	.678
Factor 3- Purchase intentions of the consumers			

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.738)			
It is worth to pay more to buy Organic foods.	PIC-1	0.752	.703
I resolve to buy organic foods in the near future because of its nutritional value	PIC-2	0.566	.610
I would not mind to spend more to buy organic foods because of its health benefits	PIC-3	0.763	.668
Factor 4- Health concerns (Cronbach's alpha = 0.713)			
I am concerned about my daily intake of nutritional food.	HCN-1	0.741	.591
I am aware that Organic foods are good for my health	HCN-2	0.570	.620
I would prefer organic food over non-organic food	HCN-3	0.699	.690

Figure 3: Scree Plot



The calculated residuals value viz. minimum, maximum, Mean and S.D. of the sampling were found adequate for the study (Table-6). The predicted value of the dependent variable i.e. “purchase intention of the consumers” towards organic food product after the analysis is calculated as under:-

Table-6: Residuals Statistics^a

	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
Predicted Value	1.28	4.23	2.28	.642	103
Residual	-2.409	2.970	.000	.845	103
Std. Predicted Value	-1.565	3.039	.000	1.000	103
Std. Residual	-2.751	3.392	.000	.965	103

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase intention of the consumers to buy organic food product

The results of descriptive analysis of the responses/attitudes of the target customers towards buying behavior of organic food products in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad are given under the four factors/dimensions are shown below at Table-7.

4.4. *Consumers’ attitude towards buying of organic food products.*

The average Mean value of the three chosen namely Knowledge and subjective norms (KSN), Environmental Concerns(ECN) and Health concerns HCN) is 3.49, 4.25 and 4.24 respectively which indicates the consumers have given due preference towards these factors.

Table-7: Consumers’ attitude towards buying of organic food products

(N= 103 ; Likert scale 1-5)

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
Knowledge about organic food and subjective norms (KSN)	KSN-1	3.83	1.043
	KSN-2	3.83	0.954
	KSN-3	3.92	0.893
	KSN-4	3.17	1.070
	KSN-5	3.50	1.056
	KSN-6	3.06	1.127
	KSN-7	3.17	1.130
(Avr. Mean = 3.49)			
Environmental concerns (ECN)	ECN-1	4.46	0.738
	ECN-2	4.28	0.746
	ECN-3	4.43	0.966
	ECN-4	4.17	0.901

(Avr. Mean = 4.25)	ECN-5	3.95	0.833
Health conscious (HCN)	HCN-1	4.22	0.949
	HCN-2	4.38	0.781
	HCN-3	4.12	0.808
(Avr. Mean = 4.24)			
Purchase intentions of the consumers (PIC)	PIC	3.82	1.061

To find out the relationship of each of the identified factor of consumers’ attitude towards purchase intention to buy the organic food products Pearson correlation test has been applied and the results are given at Table -8 below.

The results indicates that out of the three factors, KSN (Knowledge about organic food and subjective norms) is correlated positively towards the purchase intention of the consumers towards organic foods with $r = 0.570$, followed by ECN (Environmental concern) with $r = 0.569$ and HCN (Health concerns) with $r = 0.507$. The significant level of correlation of all the factors is at the 0.01 level.

Table-8 : Correlations Matrix - Consumers’ purchase intention towards organic food product on the identified factors

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Knowledge about organic food</i>	<i>Environment Concern</i>	<i>Health Concerns</i>	<i>purchase intention of the consumers</i>
(N= 103)				
Knowledge about organic food (KSN)	1			
Environment concerns (ECN)	.528**	1		
Health concerns (HCN)	.540**	.617**	1	
Purchase intention of the consumers (PIC)	.570**	.569**	.507**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.5. *Differences in the purchase intention of consumer with reference to socio-demographic factors*

In the present independent t –test has been used to see the significance difference in the purchase intention of the consumer behavior towards organic food products in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad according to gender.

The results of the Levene’s Test for gender is shown below at Table-9. The P-value arrived at in the study is 0.121 which is more than 0.05 which indicates that the variance is homogeneous hence t – test for equal variance was used in the analysis. Further the 2-tailed significance (0.0753) is more than 0.05 which shows the difference in gender is statistically not significant. As per the equal variances assumed, the differences in the Mean value with the standard deviation for gender on purchase intention of consumers towards buying organic food products was found not significant.

Table-9 :Independent t-test for gender

	<i>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</i>		<i>t-test for Equality of Means</i>						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.449	0.121	-0.316	101	0.753	-0.073	0.231	-0.532	0.385
Equal variances not assumed			-0.358	72.563	0.721	-0.073	0.204	-0.480	0.334

The demographic analysis of survey at Table-10 indicates that only miniscule viz. 8.7% of the respondents of the study was found indifferent towards purchasing of organic food products. Out of the remaining 93% of the surveyed respondents, 22% are already bought or consumed organic food products. As much as 52% of the respondents, resolved to buy organic food products in the near future. About 17% of the respondents indicated that they have some knowledge about the benefits of the organic food products but they are non committal about buying. The purchase of the surveyed participants is based on three factors viz. (a) knowledge and subjective norms; (b) environmental concerns; and (c) health concerns. However the purchase intentions are based largely influenced by health and environment factors of their own and their family members.

Table-10: Purchase intention observed from the participants towards organic food products by the consumers based on demographic factors

Demographic factors	Well informed and already using the product regularly	Knowledge about the products and resolved to buy in the future	Some knowledge about the product but non committal about buying	Little knowledge about the availability of the product but unwilling to buy	No knowledge about the product and unwilling	Total
Gender						
Male	19	34	12	5	3	73
Female	4	20	5	1	0	30
Total	23	54	17	6	3	103
Age Group						
Below 30 years	8	26	6	4	2	46
30-45 years	8	17	9	1	0	35
45-60 years	5	10	2	1	0	18
60 yrs & above	2	1	0	0	1	4
Income level						
Below Rs.3 Lakh	9	17	8	3	2	39
Rs.3-10 Lakh	8	19	6	2	0	35
Above Rs.10 Lakh	6	18	3	1	1	29
Educational Attainment						
High School	0	1	1	0	0	2
Graduate	0	0	1	1	0	2
Postgraduate	18	33	13	4	2	70
Professional	5	20	2	1	1	29

5. Conclusions

The results show that the consumers have given equal priority to environmental and health concerns over the subjective norms and other attributes towards purchase of organic food

products. However, consumers also given preference towards the knowledge about organic food (KSN) as well as subjective norms (peer pressures, advertisement etc.).

Out of the seven items under the factor KSN, consumers are under influence of various sales promotional activities by the marketers of organic food products. The results of the study indicate that the target consumers give top priority to daily intake of nutritional food hence they prefer organic food products. The consumers also satisfied with the availability of organic food products through online stores as many of them prefer to buy organic food products through online based on the sales promotional schemes offered by the marketers. The results indicate that the consumers are in agreement with the statement that “Organic foods are good for health”.

The demographic analysis of the study also indicates that the surveyed participants are very positive towards purchase of organic food products. About 1/4th of the surveyed participants are already consuming the organic food products. Over half of the surveyed participants have shown inclination towards purchase of organic food products in the near future. However the purchase intentions are based largely influenced by health and environment factors of their own and their family members.

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