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A Study on Consumers Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food with Special Reference to Pazhayannur Panchayath

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Abstract: Globally there is an increasing awareness of adverse impact of chemical inputs on the human, health, soil and environment. This has stimulated both developed and developing countries to shift towards organic food and farming. In this context, the research is conducted to study the level of awareness, knowledge and attitude of customers towards organic food, customers buying behaviour and level of satisfaction also examined.

Keywords: Buying Behaviour, Organic Food, Fertilizers, chemical inputs

I. INTRODUCTION

"It is Health that is real wealth" is an important quote by Mahathma Gandhi. Now a days the many of the health issues are due to the food habits and life style changes. The agricultural methods changed a lot. Industrialisation and technical revolution brought many changes in the field of agriculture and farming. For more profits and cultivation large varieties of chemical fertilizers and pesticides introduced. This resulted badly in human life as well as environment. In such a situation, going back to nature has become a global trend. Natural products begun to market and people started to demand these products in a great manner. In such a way an organic culture in agriculture spread around the world. Since the 1990s, consumers of industrialized nations have shown attention and interest towards organic food products. Indian consumers are also becoming conscious about their health and organic food is gaining wide acceptability.

II. OBJECTIVE

- A. To study consumers level of awareness of Organic food.
- B. To examine purchase pattern of customer towards organic food
- C. To evaluate the level of satisfaction with organic food

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is both descriptive and analytical in nature. A convenient sampling is adopted for data collection. A sample size includes 40 respondents.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gil, Gracia & Sánchez(2000)Spain For unlikely consumers, the willingness to pay high prices was nearly zero. Likely and actual organic food consumers were willing to pay the higher price premium and exhibited favourable attitudes towards organic food and its qualities. It was found that for consumers it was easy to identify organic attributes in perishable and fresh products and their willingness to pay higher price premium was more important for these products such as fruits, meat and vegetables. The high premium for organic meat is due to food-scarcity also. Regional differences were also recognised. Consumers' willingness to pay a price premium for organic food was higher in the producing region than in the consuming regions. McEachern& McClean (2002)UK With regard to attitude and purchase behaviour for the organic dairy, three distinct clusters of consumers were identified, namely, 'complacents', 'conceivables', and 'committed'. 'Complacents' perceive organic dairy as highly priced and never purchase it. Taste and food safety are the main motivations for 'conceivables' and they buy it occasionally. Food safety and health are the main drivers for 'committed' and they always buy organic dairy. Baker, Thompson, Engelken, Huntley (2004)UK, Germany Regular organic consumers of both countries, UK and Germany value well-being, concern for health and enjoyment of life but the product attributes sought in case of organic food products are different. For consumers in UK, it is healthiness and non-GMOs, for consumers in Germany, it is taste and quality of food. Honkanen, Verplanken& Olsen(2006)Ecological motives, that is the concern for the environment, and concern for animal welfare had the strongest impact on attitude towards consuming organic food, political motives also had a positive impact. Religious motivations had minor influence on attitudes, while for country of origin, consumers preferred politically acceptable countries. Smith, Huang, and Lin(2009)Income strongly and significantly affects demand for organic food products, but a household's organic food buying decision is most significantly impacted by the presence of small children below the age of 6 years.

Organic products purchase is directly and positively related to the level of education. It is more likely that compared to younger household heads, heads aged 55 years and above purchase organic food products. Ghosh, Datta & Barai (2016) During the purchase, consumers get highly involved with organic food products. Knowledge about organic food leads to the formation of attitude, which, further drives purchase behaviour. Hence, by increasing the knowledge and attitude about organic food products can lead to an increase in the purchase. On the basis of knowledge, attitude and demographics, customers were grouped into six segments. For raising the level of consumers' knowledge and attitude, a specific communication strategy is required for each segment.

V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A. Demographical Profile

- 1) Gender wise classification shows that out of the 40 respondents majority (67 percent) are male.
- 2) The majority (65 percent) of the respondents belong to the age group Below 25.
- 3) Occupation wise classification shows that majority (43 percent) of respondents are graduates.
- 4) Stream of education wise classification shows that out of 40 respondents majority (67 percent) from the group commerce & management.
- 5) The majority (33 percent) of the respondents belong to the occupation group, Service.
- 6) The monthly income classification of respondents reveals that majority (52 percent) of them fall under the income group Below 15000.

B. Customer Awareness

- 1) Out of 40 respondents 55 percent of respondents are highly aware about the benefit of organic food for health.
- 2) The mean variation of the scores of level of awareness about organic food among people with gender classification found that the awareness of "grown using natural method, free from chemical fertilizers, done eco friendly manner, Authorized by organized agencies" with gender give F values of 24.223, 14.349, 13.282 & 111.58 respectively, which are significant at 5 percentage level ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is significant difference. In case of awareness of organic food, "nutritious and help to resist disease" with gender the corresponding F values of .736 are found to be not significant at 5 percentage level ($p = .396 > 0.05$). This implies that there is no significant difference. It can be found that males are highly aware about organic food.
- 3) It is found that familiarity of organic food certifying bodies with occupation the awareness of variables "India organic, USDA Organic & USOCA across different occupation gives F values of **10.068**, **8.642** & **6.261** respectively, which are significant at 5 per cent level ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is difference in the mean scores obtained for organic food certifying bodies. In the case of India organic and USDA Organic, students are more aware about these certifying bodies. In case of USOCA, Professionals are more aware about the certifying g bodies.
- 4) The mean variation of the familiarity of the respondents about the various organic food brands with monthly income of respondents found that awareness of variables "Navdanya, Sanjeevani organic, Organic india, Grown to earth and 24Mintra with different classification of monthly income gives F values of **5.416**, **4.443**, **11.582**, & **11.905** respectively, which are significant at 5 per cent level ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is difference in the mean scores obtained for organic food brands. In the case of Navdanya, organic india, grown to earth and 24 mintra income level between 30000-50000 are more familiar with Organic food brands. In case of Sanjeevani organic income level between 15001-30000 are more familiar with the organic food brands.
- 5) It is found out that Agreements and disagreements of the respondents about the organic food with age wise classification of respondents the statements "Organic food does not contain artificial colors & additives, Organic farming and food is eco-friendly, Organic food is healthier option to me and family, Trend of organic food increasing & Trust organic certification logos with different classification of monthly income, gives F values of **4.227**, **14.688**, **3.842**, **23.984** & **56.367** respectively, which are significant at 5 per cent level ($p < 0.05$). In the case of statement Taste of organic food better than conventional food based on age the corresponding F values is found to be not significant at 5 percentage level ($p = .871 > 0.05$). This implies that there no significant difference in the mean scores obtained on the agreements and disagreements of respondents about the organic food among respondents with age.
- 6) It is found that Advertisement is the most dominant (35 percentage) sources of information about organic food used by customers.

C. Buying Pattern of Organic Food

- 1) The buying habits of respondents reveals that majority (60 percentage) of respondents purchases organic groceries occasionally.
- 2) The buying pattern of consumers reveals that majority (30percentage) of consumers buy organic fruits, vegetables and milk almost weekly.
- 3) The majority of respondent (43 percentage) spend for 60 %conventional and only 20%organic food.
- 4) The evident from the Friedman test the chi square statistics provides a value 83.929 at 5%significant level(.000<.05). So there is differences in purchasing of organic food from different locations .And it can be inferred that majority of respondents preferred directly from the farmers market and exclusive organic food store for purchasing organic food.
- 5) The majority (43 percentage) of people willing to , 50percentage pay more for organic food.
- 6) It is found that descriptive statistics of highlights that the most dependent means among the ways of check genuiness of organic food is "own experience" having the lowest mean value. All the hypothesis are rejected as their p values .031 ,.000 ,.011 ,.001 &.000($p < .05$). It means that there is significant difference .In broad sense the person having educational qualification up to professional check genuiness of organic food through own experience. The person having educational qualification up to Graduate check genuiness of organic food from recommendation of friends and relatives. The person having educational qualification up to under graduate check genuiness of organic food through lab certification of organized company. the person having educational qualification as professional check genuines of organic food Shop only at exclusive organic food store.

D. Level of Satisfaction

It is found that satisfaction level of the respondents about the organic food with stream of education the statements of satisfaction "Quality ,price ,availability, and information gives F values of **11.168, 5.006, 7.063 & 6.680** respectively, which are significant at 5 per cent level ($p < 0.05$). This implies that there is difference in the mean scores obtained for satisfaction of respondents of organic food with stream of education.

The majority (40 Percentage) of respondents are likely to recommend organic food to others.

VI. SUGGETIONS

A. Consumers Awareness

The study depicted that there is lack of awareness about ecofriendly nature of organic food and farming and sourcing of organic food from certified land: government policy makers ,producers and sellers should create awareness emphasizing the procedure of organic farming and beneficial for environmental and health of human beings. They should also educate consumers about organic certification ,its procedure , importance, various certifying agencies and various organic food brands, as that will help to build and enhance the trust of genuiness of organic products.

B. Buying Pattern of Organic Food

The findings indicate that all the consumers don't have a similar buying behavior. Some of consumers buy organic food as their own level of knowledge , preferences and availability. For sustainable growth and development , it is important that its purchase frequency and the percentage of expenditure increases. This can be done by reducing the barriers of buying , especially inadequate availability , high prices and lack of trust.

C. Level of Satisfaction

For sustainable growth and development of the organic food market, it is essential to have a large number of satisfied consumer who buy and consume organic food product. To increase the consumption , it is imperative to create awareness ,promote the products ,reduce barriers in buying and build trust of consumers that organic food is a genuine product which has many health social and ecological benefit.

VII. CONCLUSION

The first objective of the study is to know about the awareness of the consumers about the organic food. It is clear that the level of awareness of the consumers varies across some variables such as gender , age, level of education, occupation ,household income and stream of education etc. The consumers category include students and professionals have more awareness about organic food brands and certifying bodies .The second objective is to study about the buying pattern of consumers. It is clear that most of the consumers are buy organic groceries occasionally and vegetables and fruits weekly.



But most the consumers preferred more conventional food product than organic food product. These variations arising because of availability and price of the organic food product. Most of the consumers prefer for purchasing organic food products are directly from the farmers market and exclusive organic food stores. The third objective is to study the satisfaction level of the consumers. This study reveals that most of the consumers are likely to recommend organic food to others. Hence it can be concluded that present organic food is a niche market and there is significant differences in the organic food buying behaviour of consumers across various socio graphic variables. Differentiation strategy and consolidated effort from all the stakeholders, viz government, farmers, sellers and consumers are required to sustain this sector.

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