

# College Student's Awareness and Attitude towards Organic Food Products in Coimbatore City

K. Sundaresh & Dr. S. Babu

Research Scholar Management, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore.  
Assistant Professor, M.R. Govt Arts and Science College, Mannargudi.

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**Abstract :** *The term Organic refers to grown without the use of fertilizers, artificial chemicals, and pesticides. Consumers prefer organic food due to safety, human health, and environmental concern and also due to attributes like nutrition value, taste, freshness and appearance of organic food matters a lot for consumers. The study aims at understanding the college student's awareness and attitude towards organic food products. The objectives are to examine the organic consciousness; level of awareness, attitude, preference of the respondents and their valuable suggestions to the study was carried out in Coimbatore City*

**Keywords:** *Organic, awareness, attitude, preference*

## 1. Introduction

The term 'organic' is rooted 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.

India is the second largest country in the world on the basis of population and a major part of the population are depends on agricultural activities. Now a day there is an increasing trend is seen towards organic agriculture. Organic products are grown under a system of agriculture without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides with an environmentally and socially responsible approach. Organic agriculture is not a new concept in India.

The organic food industry is growing at fast rate on a worldwide basis and is now has been the matter of much media attention over the past decade. Over the past several years, the organic food industry in India has been experiencing an annual growth between 20-22 per cent. India has the potential to be largest organic food producer. In India, there are over 15,000 certified organic farms and the number is growing fast over the year. Apart from this, there are many small farmers growing organic food by using the organic practices (Menon, 2009). According to the Indian

Competence Centre for Organic Agriculture, the global market for organically produced foods is \$26 billion and is estimated to increase to \$102 billion by 2020. The future of organic agriculture will, to a large extent, depend on consumer demand.

The market for organic food products in India has been growing at a rapid pace over the last few years. Rising health consciousness among middle class consumers in major cities across India has been the key factor contributing to growth in the market. Unlike conventional food, which involves use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, organic food products are manufactured using natural products. As a result, organic food products are free from chemical residues and are healthier compared to conventional food products. Organic food products include diverse food categories ranging from fruits & vegetables, dairy products, processed foods, pulses & food grainst other products such as beverages, confectionaries, etc. Implementation of various standards to improve the quality of organic food produced in the country is expected to propel growth in India's organic food market over the next five years. According to "India Organic Food Market Forecast & Opportunities, 2020", the market for organic food in India is anticipated to grow at a CAGR of over 25% during 2015-20.

## 2. Review of Literature

M.Gomati & Dr. S.Kalyani conducted a study on the topic of "A Study on Awareness on Organic Food Products among General Public in Erode City, Tamilnadu, India". The aim of this study is to to know the awareness level of general public and to identify the Sources which help them to know the Organic products. The study was conducted in the Erode city of Tamilnadu. The study is based on descriptive research design. Stratified random sampling was used to select the population and a sample of 100 respondents was drowned. Data was collected only by use of Questionnaires. The information gathered will be analyzed with the help of SPSS 16 software byusing the Tabular Presentation & Chi-Square Analysis to generate the statistical outputs. The result of the study shows

that the level of Awareness among the public about organic products are less than 50%.

Dr. Geetika Sharma & Dr. Rakhee Dewan conducted a study on the topic of "Factors Influencing Consumer Buying Behavior & Awareness towards Organic Food: A Study of Chandigarh & Panchkula Consumers". The study will focus and to determine the Awareness of Organic Food Products & the purchase behavior, preference & factors affecting towards organic food of the selected location. This study was based on primary survey of 100 respondents living in the Chandigarh & Panchkula. The questionnaire was designed to record the responses on food safety concerns, frequency of buying behavior, from where they buy the products, awareness, attitude, factors effecting buying behavior, price effect on purchasing, behaviors towards organic food and effectiveness of sources for organic information. This study will help to create awareness amongst consumers about organic food by the organic companies.

S Priya, M Parameswari Bali conducted a study on the topic of "Consumer attitude towards organic food products". The study was focused on consumer attitude towards organic food products and carried out in Coimbatore City. A sample of 150 household respondents was taken, who are familiar with Organic Food Products by adopting multistage sampling technique. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

J.Padmathy & R.Saraswathy conducted a study on the topic of "A Study on the Consumers' Buying Behavior Towards Organic Food Products In Thanjavur District". The study investigates the relationship between variables that affect consumers, buying behaviour for organic products and identifies the price levels consumers prefer to pay for organic products in the district. A sample of 200 respondents was taken using convenience sampling method. The primary data was collected from the respondents with the help of pre-tested structured opened and closed ended questionnaires. The data were analyzed by using regression and chi-square. The findings of the study reveal that there is significant relationship between the variables which affects consumers, buying behavior for organic products.

Uma.R & Dr.V.Selvam conducted a study on the topic of "Analysis of Awareness among Consumers towards Organic Food Products: With Reference to Vellore Organic Consumers Perspective". The aim of this study is to analyse consumer awareness on organic food products with reference to Vellore City, TamilNadu. The study will be based on the data collected from the organic consumers in Vellore city, Tamil Nadu, India. A survey questionnaire will be developed to collect qualitative questionnaire from the consumers of the

study. In this backdrop, the present research work is an attempt to explore basically on consumers level of awareness on organic food products with the consideration of Indian Organic industry. The finding of the study shows that organic food consumption is increasing due to environmental and health concerns associated with food products. The organic food products will expand to grow by overcoming the hindrances and also problems on implementing agricultural market in India.

Tomsik & Kutnohorska, 2013 Find that the organic food market consumer actually shows different attitudes, belief and behaviors in relation to health care. Most of the consumers perceive their health as an important part of their life and they regard organic food as rather healthier than the conventional food.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the College students attitude towards organic food products in Coimbatore city
2. To study the College students level of awareness towards organic food products in Coimbatore city

### 4. Statement of the Problem

The potential buyers using products which are harmful to the consumers have got awareness on organic products started buying and utilizing for their regular consumption. The researcher shows interest on the optimistic impact to the society thus this particular study has been carried out. Hence, the present study is conducted to know the awareness and attitude on organic food products and factors that influence the College students to buy organic products.

### 5. Research Methodology

Descriptive in nature and focuses primarily on population consisting of college students as consumers of organic food in Coimbatore city. The sampling technique used was convenient sampling. Data was collected from primary data sources, One hundred responses were received via questionnaire, face to face and telephonic interviews. Various statistical techniques using SPSS 16 were applied for data analysis and inferences have been drawn.

#### 5.1 Area of the Study

The population covers the college student's as consumers of organic food in Coimbatore city.

#### 5.2 Sources of Data

The study is based on primary data collection. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire prepared and contacted personally. The secondary data was collected with the help of books, internet and journals.

#### 5.3 Sampling Design of the Study

The sampling technique in this project is convenient sampling. A sample of 100 respondents was taken into account for finding their attitude and awareness towards organic food products.

#### 5.4 Tools for Analysis

The following are the tools applied on the respondents given by the respondents to analyze and derive the result.

1. Simple Percentage analysis
2. Chi- square analysis

#### 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The survey was conducted to college student only in Coimbatore City.
2. The number of respondents is 100 only.
3. The researcher has collected data by convenient sampling using questionnaire and there is a possibility of certain deviations.

#### 6. Results and Discussions

##### Demographic Analysis of the Respondents

Age			
Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Up To 18 Years	8	8.0	8.0
19 Years - 20 Years	58	58.0	66.0
21 Years - 22 Years	12	12.0	78.0
Above 22 Years	22	22.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	
Gender			
Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative

Male	56	56.0	56.0
Female	44	44.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	
Marital Status			
Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Married	30	30.0	30.0
Unmarried	70	70.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	
Monthly Income Of The Household			
Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Up To Rs. 20,000	42	42.0	42.0
Rs. 20,001 – Rs. 40,000	24	24.0	66.0
Rs. 40,001 - Rs 60,000	24	24.0	90.0
Above Rs 60,000	10	10.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	
Current Educational Status			
Particulars	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Graduate	76	76.0	76.0
Post Graduate	12	12.0	88.0
Others(Specify)	12	12.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	

Total Family Income per Month \* How long ago did you buy your first organic product?  
 Cross tabulation

Particulars		How Long Ago Did You Buy Your First Organic Product?					Total
		More Than 5 Years Ago	1-3 Years Ago	3-5 Years Ago	Within Last 12 Months	Within Last 6 Months	
Total Family Income Per Month	Up To Rs. 20,000	2	20	2	18	0	42
	Rs. 20,001 – Rs. 40,000	0	16	2	6	0	24
	Rs. 40,001 - Rs 60,000	0	16	0	6	2	24
	Above Rs 60,000	0	6	2	2	0	10
Total		2	58	6	32	2	100

#### Chi-Square Tests

Particulars	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.268 <sup>a</sup>	12	.108
Likelihood Ratio	18.527	12	.101
Linear-By-Linear Association	1.111	1	.292
N Of Valid Cases	100		

The minimum expected count is .20.

### 7. Suggestions

The study shows that further steps have to be taken to increase the awareness level of organic products. Government can increase the trend for consumption of organic foods by increasing public awareness (such as programs and advertisements in TV and other channels) and further government should come forward to provide subsidy for organic producers. Organic food particularly fruits and vegetables are highly quality, nutritious and taste better. The same can be maintained to hang on to current customers and focus on new customers by increasing availability of the products. More people opt for organized organic outlet, hence, proper display, arrangements, showcases, etc. activities will definitely attract the consumers towards their attitude to go for organic food products. Cooking time is more for organic products. Therefore fast food is preferred by customers. Something should be done to speed up the cooking time of the organic products.

### 8. Conclusion

The awareness about organic food products is increasing among the people and their intention to buy organic food is shaped by various beliefs. The college student's awareness and attitude towards preferring organic food products has been studied and their level of preference was measured based on their opinion which concludes that the consumers are highly preferring to use organic food products in Coimbatore city

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