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ORGANIC FOOD CONSUMPTION PATTERN IN URBAN AREA

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ABSTRACT

Organic food refers to crops or livestock that are grown on the farm without the application of synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, and without using genetically modified organisms. The high growth of population and life expectancies during the recent years increased demand for food supplies in India. Consumer surveys indicate that the public is concerned about the awareness of the organic food products and safety of the produce that they purchase in stores due to possible pesticide contamination. The paper aims to find out the consumption pattern and purchase frequency of organic food in urban area of Bengaluru. The size of the sample was 106. The study was conducted using Google forms and through interview. Face to face interview was carried out in Organics Store with the consumers who had come to purchase organic food products. Demographic profiles considered in this study are; age-group, gender, education, occupation, income and number of members in the household. Among the 106 respondents, the numbers of female respondents were 62.3 percent while the study had 37.7 percent of male respondents 32percent of the respondents preferred supermarket as place of purchase. 97 percent of the respondents agreed that organic foods are healthier 82 percent of the respondents agreed that organic foods are natural. Consumers are more inclined towards organic products due to health benefits that it possesses. Middle-aged group are the most common respondents for organic food. This is because they become health conscious at this stage of life. Increasing the awareness level of organic products, encouraging people to create their own organic garden can increase consumption of organic foods. Further the analysis indicate that the frequency of purchase between nuclear and joint family express that there exists a significant difference in the frequency of nuclear and joint family ($\chi^2 = 13.5^*$). The habit of reading the label was assessed for the respondents, the data subjected for statistical test indicate that there is gender difference in reading label of organic products ($X^2 = 16.07^*$).

Keywords: Organic food, consumption pattern, Knowledge Purchase, Demographic profiles, health benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Food plays an important role in people's lives. Organic foods are grown without use of chemicals from planting seeds to harvesting organic products are free from all the chemicals which generally used to grow crops (Raji and Nagadeepa, 2021). Organic food refers to crops or livestock that are grown on the farm without the application of synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, and without using genetically modified organisms. Consumer surveys indicate that the public is concerned about the awareness of the organic food products and safety of the produce that they purchase in stores due to possible pesticide contamination (Amudha and Kanagarathinam, 2017). Organic food refers to food items that are prepared and processed without using any chemicals. In today's world organic food products was very important for the human

beings to lead a healthy life, has become a basic necessity in human life. Organic livestock raised for meat, eggs, and dairy products must have access to the outdoors and be given organic feed. Organic foods have been proven to contain 50 per cent more vitamins, minerals and nutrients than similar food that is produced in regular manner (Venkatakrisnan , 2017).

Methodology: The study focuses on awareness of organic food, consumption and buying behavior of the consumers. Data of their socio-demographic characteristics, attitudes, social norms, purchase behavior was also collected. Purposive random sampling method is used for the primary data collection. An attempt has been made to find out the consumers awareness towards organic food.

The study was carried out in Bengaluru by using a questionnaire, being the third largest city and fifth largest metropolitan city in India, Bengaluru comprises of people from different cultures, religions, castes, languages, occupations, income groups and different food preferences. It also has several organic food outlets along with potential buyers who can afford organic food products. It has also been found that there is an increasing demand for organic food products in the city.

The sample size is comprising of 106 respondents. Purposive sampling was taken for the study. The study was carried out through Google forms and interview method. Interview was carried out in Gopalan Organics Store with the consumers who had come to purchase organic food products. Online Google forms were sent to the consumers with their consent. A questionnaire having relevant questions used for collecting the data. Questions in the study survey were designed based on the factors including socio-demographic features, knowledge, attitudes, intention of purchase, barriers of purchase, purchase behaviors, and different foods consumed. Respondents were approached in person at organic food shops also. They were given the questionnaires to ascertain for awareness of organic food products. In India, organic food market is in new stage has experienced immediately fast growth in the past few years. The current growth in the organic market is striving to achieve by health factor and safe consumption. Every day the environmental concern is increasing, consumers are focused. This research study has been undertaken in Tiruchirappalli Corporation and to focus the consumer perception towards organic products. (Savithri and B.Lavanya (2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SECTION - I: DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table - 1: Respondents by Gender, Age and Marital status

Characteristics	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	40	37.7
	Female	66	62.3
Age group (years)	16 - 25	48	45.3
	26 - 40	41	38.7
	41 - 55	17	16.0
Marital Status	Married	58	54.7
	Unmarried	48	45.3
Total		106	100.0

The respondent's gender, age and marital status is shown in Table-1 the number of female respondents were 62.3 percent while the study had 37.7 percent of male respondents. Also the study conducted by Jonah Elisa Shiny (2022) showed 60 percent of the respondents are female and only 40 percent of the respondents are male. It is also evident from the finding that higher percentage (45.3%) found in the age group of 16-28 years

followed by 26-40 years (38.7%). Regarding the marital status of the respondents it is seen that majority (54.7%) observed to be married as compared to the remaining (45.3%) were found to be unmarried.

Table - 2: Respondents by Educational qualification and Occupational status.

Characteristics	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage
Educational qualification	≤ PUC	15	14.1
	Graduate	50	47.2
	Post Graduate	40	37.7
Occupational status	Govt Employee	27	25.5
	Business/Self Employed	27	25.5
	Professionals	11	10.4
	Others	41	38.6
Total		106	100.0

Table-2 represents the educational qualification and occupation of the respondents, shows that 47.2 percent of respondents were graduates as compared to 37.7 percent of respondents were post graduates and only 14.1 percent of them were less than PUC. Hence majority of the respondents were educated. This was similar to the study conducted by Jonah Elisa Shiny. (2022) reported 63 percent of the respondents have completed Undergraduate and only 17 percent of the respondents have completed Postgraduate regarding their qualification of Education. 20 percent of the respondents have completed doctorate. Regarding occupational status of the respondents indicates that 25.5 percent were government employees and 25.5 percent were self employed.

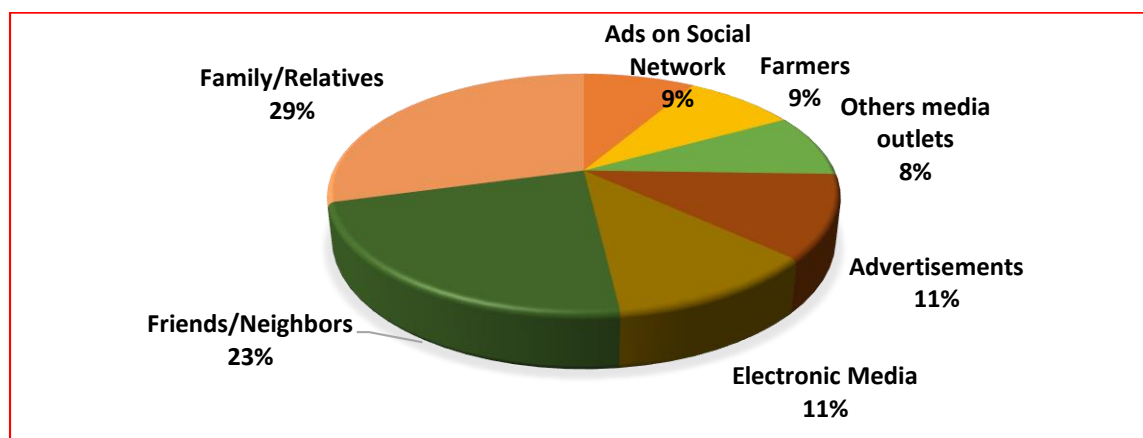
Table - 3: Respondents by Type of Family and Family income

Characteristics	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage
Family Type	Nuclear	81	76.4
	Joint	25	23.6
Family Income/month	< Rs 25,000	10	9.4
	Rs. 25,000 - 50,000	36	34.0
	Rs. 50,000 - 1,00,000	42	39.6
	Rs. 1,00,000 - 3,00,000	18	17.0
Total		106	100.0

Table-3 depicts the respondent's type of family and income of family. Findings reveal that 76.4 percent were nuclear and 23.6 percent were joint family. Of the total families surveyed 39.6 percent were earning an income of Rs50,000 -100,000/month, 34.0 percent were earning Rs 25,000-50,000/month. In the study conducted by Jonah Elisa Shiny (2022) also had shown 50 percent of the respondents earn a monthly income of Rs10,000 - 50,000 and 50 percent of the respondents earn a monthly income between Rs 50,000- 100,000.

SECTION - II: SOURCE, PURCHASE, FREQUENCY, READING LABEL AND CONSUMPTION OF ORGANIC FOODS

Figure. 1 : Source of Information collected by Respondents about Organic Food



A survey was conducted on different factors which influenced the consumers which ultimately led them to purchase organic food products (Figure-1). It can be seen that 9 percent of the respondents said that they were influenced by ads on social media, 11 percent of respondents were influenced through Advertisements and other Electronic Media. It is interesting to note that 29 percent of the respondents were made aware of organic food products from their Family members and Relatives, Further, 8 percent of the respondents were convinced to purchase organic food products by farmers and other media outlets. However, 23 percent of respondents were aware of the health benefits of organic food products by their close friends and Neighbors. The study concludes that consumer's awareness have great implication for promoting organic food markets, domestically as well as globally. (Dr. A. Raju 2018)

A similar study shows that the majority of the respondents were made aware of the benefits of organic products through friends and relatives (27%); 53 percent of the respondents use the organic products for the maintenance of health. The respondents bought through local shops (23%) and specialized shops (17%) respectively. Marketing companies create awareness through advertisements using themes (53%) regarding the benefits and awareness of organic products, (Jonah Elisa Shiny.2022).

Table - 4: Place of Purchase of organic food by respondents.

No.	Place of Purchase	Respondents	
		Number	Percent
1	Farmers produce	11	10.0
2	Health stores	7	7.0
3	Local Markets	23	22.0
4	Organic food stores	31	29.0
5	Supermarkets	34	32.0
	Total	106	100.0

Table 4 depicts the organic food purchased by the respondents. Supermarkets were the most preferred 32.0 percent place of purchase by the respondents, as compared to 29.0 percent of the respondents chose to purchase from Organic Food stores. Further, 22.0 percent of the respondents purchased from Local Markets Whereas 10 percent of the respondents preferred to purchase from farmers produce. The respondents who purchased in health stores were only 7percent.

Table - 5: Frequency of Purchase of Organic Products

Frequency of Purchase	Nuclear		Joint		Combined	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Weekly twice	18	22.5	13	50.0	31	29.2
Weekly once	10	12.5	3	11.5	13	12.3
Monthly Once	17	21.3	8	30.8	25	23.6
Occasionally	35	43.8	2	7.7	37	34.9
Total	81	100.0	25	100.0	106	100.0
χ^2 Test	13.15*					

* Significant at 5% level,

$$\chi^2 (0.05, 3df) = 7.815$$

Table-5 reveals the frequency of purchase of organic product by the respondent it is evident from the findings that 34.9 percent of the respondents made purchase occasionally followed by weekly twice (29.2%) it is interesting to note that respondents from nuclear family (43.8%) do go purchase occasionally as compared to higher percentage of respondents emerged from joint family (50.0%) made use of purchase weekly twice. Further the analysis indicate that the frequency of purchase between nuclear and joint family express that there exists a significant difference in the frequency of nuclear and joint family ($\chi^2 = 13.5^*$). A Study conducted by Sathyendra Kumar and Chandrashekar (2015) shows that the 60 percent of respondents are buying weekly an Organic products, 30 percent of Respondents are Daily purchasing, 6 percent occasionally buy and remaining 4 percent of respondents once a month a purchasing of an organic products out of 50 Respondents.

Table - 6: Motivating Factors for the purchase of Organic Food

No.	Motivating factors	Respondents	
		Mean	SD
1	Healthier	95.8	1.2
2	Tastier	70.8	4.9
3	Natural	86.3	2.4
4	Chemical free	76.9	5.1
5	Rich in nutrient	82.1	3.3
6	Good for children/old aged	80.2	4.5
7	No preservatives	73.1	5.2
8	Attractive packing	50.9	7.2
9	Fashion to consume	58.0	6.1

The motivating factors for purchase of organic foods is depicted in Table-6. The data reveals that 95.8 percent specify that organic foods are healthier, consider it to be natural component (86.3 %), feel that it is rich in nutrients (82.1 %) and ideal for growing children/old aged. (80.2 %). Further, the findings reveals that organic foods are chemical free (76.9 %), and 73.1 percent are aware that the organic food is free of preservatives. However, 70.8 percent of the respondents mention that organic food is tastier and 58.0 find that its fashionable to consume organic food. According to the similar study conducted by Nilima Varma (2016) the respondents who had purchased organic food in were asked about their motives. The most important motive was the expected positive health affects a reason for 97 percent of the organic buyers. These expected positive health effects may be related to their being pesticide-free, as (90%) of organic buyers said that they purchase organic food because they do not contain pesticide residues and (88%) mentioned that organic foods have a high safety level of guarantee and control .which was in par with the

present study. 53 percent of the respondents are well aware of the importance and usage of organic products for maintenance of health. Jonah Elisa Shiny, (2022), a similar study by Sathyendra Kumar and Chandrasekhar (2015) 60 percent of respondents prefer organic food to maintain good health, 20 percent of respondents for its quality and other 4 percent of respondents to Low Price and remaining 16 percent of the respondent were prefers as good service provided by organic shop out of 50 respondents.

Table - 7: Habit of reading Label of Organic Products

Reading Label	Male		Female		Combined	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Always	6	15.0	34	51.5	40	37.7
Occasionally/Sometimes	19	47.5	23	34.8	42	39.7
Rarely/Never	15	37.5	9	13.7	24	22.6
Total	40	100.0	66	100.0	106	100.0
χ^2 Test	16.07*					

* Significant at 5% level,

The habit of reading the label was assessed for the respondents the result in

Table -7 shows that female respondents 51.5 percent read the labels always whereas only 15 percent of male respondents read the labels. While 39.7 percent of the respondents read the labels occasionally as compared to 22.6 percent as of the respondents never read the label. The data subjected for statistical test indicate that there is gender difference in reading label of organic products ($X^2 = 16.07^*$).

Figure2. Willingness to Purchase Organic products

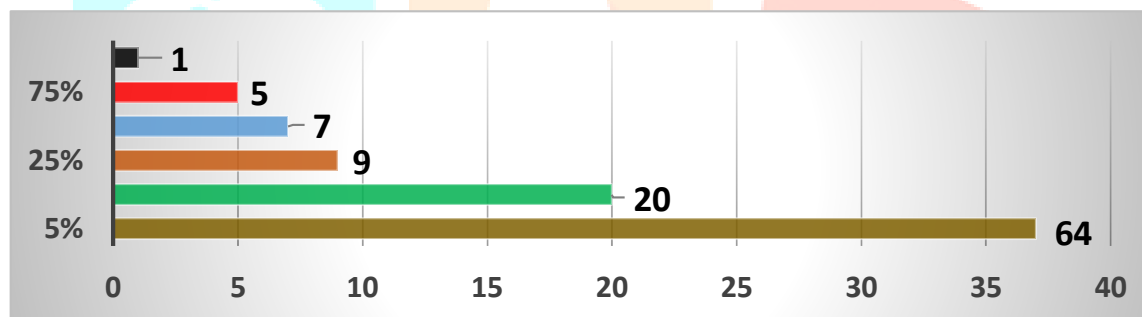


Figure-2 depicts the willingness of the respondents to purchase organic food produce, the graphical representation indicates that as the price increases the willingness to purchase decreases with (5%) increase the number of respondents was higher and the number getting reduced as the percentage of the price increasing to the conventionally grown foods. Hence price also determines the willingness. Knowledge and awareness about organic food products can bring about change in the attitudes and perceptions made about the product and, ultimately influence the buying decisions of the consumers.

Jonah Elisa Shiny (2022) in their study highlights that organic food products are highly preferred and in demand, the food products are priced higher than other traditional food products. But, quality characteristics affect consumers' preferences for organic products are higher than other traditional food products; with the most important including health and nutritional value, taste, fresh and general appearance

According to the study conducted by Vijayalakshmi and Hanuman Kennedy S (2020), the household consumption with respect to production is less than 10%. Shortage of availability, lack of awareness and substantial price differentials were among the many other reasons observed by researchers and industry as the main cause for this.

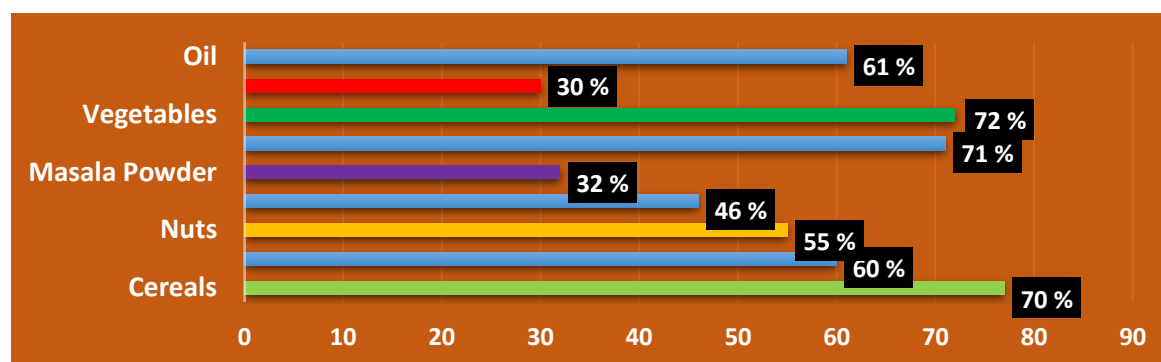
Figure. 3: Consumption of Different Organic Food Products.

Figure-3 represents the consumption of different organic foods by the respondents. Study reveals that 70 to 72 percent of respondents were consuming organic vegetables, fruits, and cereals. Around 60 % consumed organic oils and Pulses. The nuts consumed was 55 percent and spices consumed was 46 percent . Only 30 to 32 percent of the respondents consumed organic fruit juices and masala powder respectively.

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