



An Experimental Study on Consumer Perceptions On Organic Food in and Around Tamil Nadu.

S. SriDevi

Research scholar, Department of BBA, VISTAS, Chennai, India

Dr. V. Jayanthi

Assistant professor and Research Advisor, Department of BBA, VISTAS, Chennai, India

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Abstract

Food safety, human fitness, and environmental situation alongside sensory attributes such as nutritive value, taste, freshness, and look have an impact on natural meals purchaser preferences. Demographic variables might also outline natural shoppers however the correlation is no longer very significant. Consumers additionally companion natural meals with the herbal processes, care for the surroundings and animal welfare, and the non-use of pesticides and fertilizers. The premium rate continues to suppress natural meals consumption. Understanding the grounds of the growing stage of natural meals consumption such as motivation are most integral in appreciating the possibility of the natural meals come to be a clearly mainstream market. The demand for natural products has swiftly accelerated globally in current years. However, the natural market stays an area of interest market in most countries, and lookup in this location stays limited. Further investigation is vital to higher recognize customer perceptions about natural meals and the situations in which they are inclined to buy natural food. Accordingly, the researchers are looking to apprehend the perceived cost that shoppers accomplice with natural meals and the elements that have an impact on their willingness to buy natural meals. This finds out about is exploratory in nature and makes use of a qualitative strategy via the use of in-depth interviews. Findings from the find out about advising that customers who pick out a fantastic cost with regard to natural meals are greater inclined to buy natural food, in which fitness was once the main perceived benefit. For buyers who become aware of a terrible fee with regard to natural food, they are much less inclined to buy natural food. Many did not see any distinction between natural meals and nonorganic food. Instead, they have seen the expenditures of organic meals as being steeply-priced and argued that greater efforts are wanted on their section to supply natural food. Implications and hints from lookup findings are additionally presented.

Keywords: Organic food; customer perceptions; consumer's willingness; quality, Farming, Green issues, Consumer behavior, Consumer, Perceived cost, Willingness to purchase.

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Introduction:

Organic meals are described as a product from a farming gadget that avoids the use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides. The ideas used in the farming machine practice the advantage of contemporary scientific understanding and applied sciences to provide greater sustainable meals manufacturing (Institute of Food Science and Technology, 2005).

Genetically-modified organisms and antibiotics are prohibited in natural requirements for animal husbandry whilst solely 30 components are accredited insures stipulations (Soil Association, 2000). Therefore,

buy of natural meals can be considered as a motion stimulated with the aid of beliefs about health and perchance true style of these merchandises as properly as via beliefs about the high quality have an impact on on the surroundings and welfare of manufacturing animals.

This evaluation goals to furnish a comparison of the literature on the customer mindset closer to natural food. It is necessary to be aware of how shoppers relate to meals best and meals machine problems in order to discover the potentials of natural agriculture. Knowledge and public appreciation impact the client valuation of food.



Thus, shoppers want clear, correct, and dependable records about natural food. Consumers accept as true with they are extra knowledgeable if records on natural meals are furnished and the data influences their perceptions.

1. Review on consumer perceptions towards organic food

Sustainable merchandise is continually viewed as a costly alternative (Market & Opinion Research International Limited (MORI), 2003). Being environmentally pleasant is expressed to be handy solely to the center classes. The shoppers favor having a desire amongst the sustainable merchandise as a substitute than selecting products that are sustainable and those that are not. The significance positioned on every parameter is based totally on the consumers' priorities and values. Experience develops non-public relevance, importance, hobby which collectively derives the motivational nation (Shroeder, 2003).

Demographic variables as properly as lifestyle and environmental attitudes outline the natural customer profile. Regular shoppers of natural meals have a tendency to be educated, prosperous and of greater social classification (Padel and Foster, 2005; Stobelaaret al, 2006). Awareness of meals dangers and information of meals risks had been greater amongst ladies and people with greater schooling and earnings (McIntosh et al, 1994; Torjuset al, 2001; Stobelaaret al, 2006). Lockieet al (2002) additionally observed a robust correlation between the growing consumption of natural meals and tiers of formal education. Organic customers are inclined to pay about 10% top class for natural meals with a common of 9.5% by using ladies and 11.4% by means of guys (Urenaet al, 2008). Regular shoppers would pay a barely greater top rate round 15%, a common of 12/6% via female and 18% with the aid of guys (Urenaet al, 2008). This Spanish learn about additionally recognized three organizations of natural meals buyers in relation to frequency of consumption specifically regular, occasional and nonconsumer. Regular customers have been described as those who make purchases at least twice a week representing 12% of consumers, 42% had been occasional shoppers with 42% and the final 46% had been non-consumers.

Among the non-consumers, 25% had been conceivable shoppers with intention to purchase natural meals in the future.

Generally, natural ingredients do no longer use pesticides or artificial fertilizers. Environmental contaminants then again are probably to be determined in meals of each production. Organic meals incorporate solely one-third of pesticides that traditional meals do (Baker et al, 2002). It can be stated that decrease publicity interprets into decrease risk. In traditional food, nearly all produce will have pesticide residue under the statutory most limits. Consumers' categorical nervousness on agrochemicals, hormones, and medication in animal manufacturing and GMO and synthetic components in fruits and greens (Naspetti and Zanolli, 2006). With admire to the absence of pesticides and fertilizers in natural products, natural fruits and veggies have greater biochemical electricity to synthesize really helpful secondary plant metabolites such as polyphenolic antioxidants as nicely as naturally taking place toxins (Winter and Davis, 2006). The high content material of vitamins, greater nourishing ingredients, and a wholesome food plan had been pronounced as motives for buying natural meals by means of 4%-7% of normal natural meals customers (Naspetti and Zanolli, 2006).

Consumers who are worried about herbal foods, the sensory and emotional attraction of meals, and the extra possibility to have interaction in inexperienced consumption practices are extra probable to have a higher consumption of natural meals (Lockieet al, 2004). Women had been recognized to have greater fitness cognizance and had been considered as innovators for trade in the direction of more healthy diets with their essential roles in shaping a household weight-reduction plan (Fagerli and Wandel, 1999). They are additionally extra health-conscious about the implications of chemical residues and preservatives (Yiridoet al, 2005). Women are greater dedicated to herbal ingredients and environmental values and the equity of paying a top class for environmental good. Higher nutrition C content material used to be discovered in natural meals in contrast to traditional meals (Soil Association, 2000). Inconsistent findings had been recorded on the evaluation of sensory traits of organic food to



traditional meals (Bourn and Prescott, 2002). Consumers described that natural orange juice tasted higher than traditional orange juice and no distinction used to be described between natural and traditional milk (Fillion and Arazi, 2002).

In current years, natural meals have been accomplishing a developing customer demand. A variety of motives have pushed this natural meals market trend. The British buyer's perceived natural meals as a potential of attaining man or woman and social values for themselves and their families. The largest intent for selecting natural meals is the fitness issue observed through the environmental and animal welfare factors. Some buyers purchase natural meals as they identify a distinction in meals quality. Few particular parameters expressed are sensory parameters, accompanied by protection and vitamins (Bordeleau et al, 2002). Animals' organic characteristics and overall performance enhance barely when they are fed with organically produced feed (Magkoset al, 2003). The interpretation of this discovery has to be made with warning and any extrapolation to human have to think about the metabolic and physiological distinction between animals and humans.

Opposing mindset and price in the direction of GM meals imply a high-quality view on the organic, specifically when they are noted together. GM meals are considered manipulative and alter nature whilst natural meals are considered to retain the 'naturalness' of the surroundings (Dreezenet al, 2005). Composting meals wastes and consumption of regionally produced meals are amongst the most in many instances food-related environmental behaviour specific with the aid of shoppers in contrast to consumption of natural food. Awareness on the natural meals consumption desires to be raised and the obstacles want to be overcome. The hyperlink between fitness and environmental advantages ought to be bolstered to amplify activity amongst customers (Magnusson et al, 2003).

2. Methodology

It is an overview of posted journal articles on natural meals shoppers and sustainable agriculture from the 12 months 2000 to 2008. This paper investigates the consumers' issues (globally) about meals security primarily based on fitness risk, agricultural and environmental

modifications related to current meal manufacturing consisting of the genetic amendment, and the mistaken use of pesticides. This assessment additionally consists of the various patron attitudes closer to natural food, mainly the willingness to pay for natural meals and their fine and helps forestall environmental fitness chance with recommendations.

2. Consumers' willingness to pay for organic food

Price premium is the additional percentage charged on organic food when compared with the price of conventional food. Numerous claims are made about the goodness of organic food, in order to justify the premium price that consumers have to pay (Fillion and Arazi, 2002). According to Hamm *et al* (2002), of sales arguments used to justify the price premium for organic foods; the most important was food safety, followed by nature conservation and taste. Some consumers simply assume that they cannot afford organic food and some feel that the market often charges more for healthier food (Whitehead and Nicholson, 2001).

Awareness and facts on natural labeling are unmistakably one way of growing the chance that a purchaser would be inclined to pay a top rate for natural meals (Batteet al, 2007). A purchaser survey on the customer willingness to pay for natural products performed in Spain determined the want to modify the prices of the natural meals. Consumers are inclined to pay expenses comparable to these prevailing at current (Sanjuan et al, 2003). The willingness to pay is greater in the "likely" and "organic" customer segments. Similar values have been shown, round 22-24% for veggies and fruit, 17% and 15% respectively for potatoes. For the "unlikely consumers" segment, the willingness to pay is barely decreased for greens (20-22%) whilst drastically decreasing for potatoes (8-10%). It appears that natural merchandise is recognized extra easily in perishable merchandise such as fruit and greens and as a result, greater premiums are offered. In the UK, natural fruit and greens are usually related with a more healthy weight loss plan even though this stands in distinction to the low stage of UK-grown natural fruit and veggies (Gil et al, 2000).. The current gap between traditional and natural



meals costs must be decreased to enlarge consumption (Gil et al, 2000).

Considerable charge top-class distinction even between neighboring nations displays that natural market transparency is, in particular, bad (Hamm et al, 2002). When the farm-gate fee is low for a precise traditional meals product, for instance, cereal, the natural charge top class for cereal is additionally low. In nations the place conventional meals suppliers like fundamental supermarkets are actively advertising natural food, the fee top class is commonly lower. One feasible thing is to decrease the distribution fee due to the fact natural meals can be transported collectively with conventional food. The developing natural market wants to be recognized based totally on market facts from over numerous years to assignment market improvement and discovering an answer to minimize the charge hole of natural meals and traditional food.

The buyers of natural meals have a tendency to be older, come from tertiary-educated family and have greater profits than those no longer buying natural meals (Padel and Foster, 2005; Roitner-Schobesberger et al, 2008). Therefore, it used to be recommended that willingness to pay for natural meals will increase with age and income. Lockie et al (2004) on the opposite observed that age and earnings have very little had an impact on the degree of natural consumption. Gil et al (2000), too observed that customer socioeconomic traits are now not very applicable in contrast to life and attitudes in the direction of environmental issues. A Norwegian patron find out about additionally located no good-sized impact of earnings or occupation on the hobby of ingesting natural meals (Wandel and Bugge, 1996). Canadian customers on common are inclined to pay a charge top class of at least 24% (Yiridoet et al, 2005). A Spanish customer learn printed that buyers have been inclined to pay a greater top class for meat, fruits, and greens suggesting that they discovered perishable merchandise with greater necessary natural attributes. In the case of meat, the rational purpose may want to be partly due to the fact of the meals and fitness problems (BSE, E.coli 0157 contamination) taken area in Europe (Gil et al, 2001). In Roitner-Schobesberger et al (2008), 60% of the natural purchaser did now not see the fee as a limiting element and solely 29% of the

non-consumers cited it as a purpose no longer buying natural food.

A find out in the Netherlands investigated health-related determinants of natural meals consumption and discovered that frequency of buying influenced the fitness and environmental motives for purchasing. "Incidental" consumers indicated fitness as a principal purpose for buying whilst "heavy" shoppers took the environmental problems into consideration (Schifferstein and Oude Ouphuis, 1997). The "heavy" shoppers are viewed to have an extra situation on the surroundings with the aid of being inclined to pay greater extra frequently. Therefore, it was once counseled that when natural customer research is carried out, the frequency of buying needs to be classified.

Consumers of natural meals comprehend their function in their neighborhood surroundings when they are worried about the natural meals device (Pirog and Larson, 2007). The patron cognizance evolves from the notion of natural meals and additionally originates from the apprehension of the traditional meals that are considered to end up far-off from the 'green' consumerism. In addition, shoppers every so often relates emotions of proper moral sense and duty for the well-being of household with natural meal buys choices (Arvolaet et al, 2008). Arvolaet et al (2008) examined the position of affective and ethical attitudes as motivators of natural meals in the context of the "Theory of Planned Behaviour". It used to be determined that affective and ethical measures have a great position in predicting intentions to buy natural food. Self-rewarding and the feeling of doing something precisely for the surroundings appear to be fantastic to apprehend the intentions of shopping for natural food. Therefore, an ethical dimension affords any other justification in growing the advertising of natural food.

Satisfaction of customers with their present-day buy can also additionally emerge as a barrier to buying natural meals (Roddy et al, 1994). The shoppers do now not suppose that natural meals are any better, so why trouble to pay extra for meals that they can achieve at a less expensive price. The integration of environmental issues in EC agricultural policy, manufacturing, and advertising of excessive great meals is increasing. Organic meals will proceed to be produced however nevertheless most meals will



be produced as herbal as possible, with much less pesticide however no longer strictly organic. The meals might also be less complicated to produce and much less highly-priced imparting a foremost chance to natural food. Consumers who already purchase natural food, on the different hand can be stimulated to enlarge their frequency of buying via enhancing the availability and sensitivity to meals first-class and market preferences (Torjusen *et al*, 2001).

3. Consumer perception of organic food quality

It is obvious that most shoppers emphasized standard satisfactory components such as freshness and style in their meals preference (Torjusen *et al*, 2001; Dimara *et al*, 2003). In fruits and vegetables, for example, freshness is commonly the essential criterion to seem for. Consumers in Thailand had been extra possible to purchase natural fruits and veggies if they meet the criterion (Roitner-Schobesberger *et al*, 2008). Quality, on the other hand, is no longer a well-defined attribute however consists of many different houses such as sensory attributes (appearance, texture, style, and aroma), nutritive values, security determinants, chemical constituents, mechanical properties, practical homes, and defects (Abbott, 1999; Mizrach, 2007). Sensory evaluation will become major for shoppers in identifying their desire accompanied with the aid of their attention of invisible features such as microbial and toxicological security and dietary fee (Thierman, 2000). The taste will proceed to emerge as a top consideration in customer meals preference mainly after the trip of eating the meals (Fillion and Arazi, 2002). Although sensory opinions on whether or not natural meals tastes higher than traditional meals have yielded inconsistent outcomes (McEahern and McClean, 2002), many customers agree that natural meals taste higher (Roitner-Schobesberger *et al*, 2008). It used to be recommended that it is fundamental to deal with every product kind one at a time alternatively than placing a wide declare on the sure product.

Woese *et al* (1997) examined extra than a hundred and fifty comparative research on meals inclusive of cereals, potatoes, vegetables, fruit, wine, beer, bread, milk, eggs as properly as meal merchandise made from them. The research investigated the concentrations of

pesticides residues and environmental contaminants as properly as sensory assessments and feeding experiments in animals. It used to be located that traditional meals which are fertilized with minerals look to have greater nitrate content material than organically fertilized greens and potatoes. In relation to pesticides, decrease residue degree used to be discovered in veggies and fruit from natural production.

Apart from the excellent attributes that can be judged thru experience, fitness, and procedure associated satisfactory is a query of credible information. The fitness advantages of natural meals are required to be communicated in a way that shoppers regard as credible. For instance, a find out about on dry remember attention used to be carried out on leafy greens from natural and traditional food. It used to be cautioned that immoderate fertilization to the traditional veggies has motivated a fast boom that will increase the crop yield by way of growing the water content material (Soil Association, 2000). This variety of data ought to be greater correctly stated and in contrast on a clean weight, foundation to keep away from deceptive of facts and confusion to the consumers.

A six-European nation patron mindset survey on the GM meals printed that one-third of the six-country populace (France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Poland, and Portugal) would now not select any structure of GM ingredients (Almeida *et al*, 2006). They pointed out that they are inclined to take delivery of GM meals solely if these meals furnished 'health benefits' and if there have been meal manufacturing benefits. Other motives to take delivery of GM meals have been additionally associated with cost, taste, labeling, and dietary improvements. It can be stated that GM meals acceptance will be higher if they supply both fitness or different welfare benefits. The find out additionally mentioned that 86% of the populace ate up useful meals at least as soon as a week. The purposeful meals include fruits and vegetables, high-fiber products, probiotic yogurt drinks, meals enriched in vitamins/minerals, and cholesterol-lowering spreads/drinks. These records corresponded with their view that growing fruit and vegetable consumption and slicing down on



fatty ingredients and sugar as methods to decrease non-public hazard of weight-reduction plan associated illnesses such as kind two diabetes or coronary heart disease.

When GM meals and natural meals are compared, research has observed that buyers have a very fantastic mindset closer to natural meals (Magnusson 2004, Arvola et al, 2008) whilst they are pretty bad to GM meals (Dreezen et al, 2005). Consumers in Spain described GM meals with attributes such as no benefit, tampering with nature, and excessive danger whilst natural ingredients with attributes such as serving a proper purpose, essential and healthful (Koivisto-Hursti and Magnusson, 2003). Many different European consumers' research additionally installed poor attitudes closer to genetic amendment in meals merchandise (Frewer et al, 1995; Grunert et al, 2000; Gifford and Bernard, 2005). However, public attitudes are possibly to trade dramatically when the utility is related to a precise purpose (Heijset et al, 1993). Negative framing on positive kind of manufacturing (i.e. traditional farming) increases impact on the choice science (i.e. natural farming) however advantageous framing was once discovered to be extra advantageous (Gifford and Bernard, 2005). Therefore, a message about the advantages of natural farming may also have greater that means to consumers. Consumers have a tendency to take delivery of an incredibly volatile science if the software is considered to be beneficial to mankind and the environment. The equal grasp applies to natural food. Considerations about fitness and about the way the product is produced with regard to animal welfare and environmental care characterize the patron perceptions on the fitness and security component which should be any other element of meals quality.

4. Conclusion

Demographic variables such as age, income and education may define organic consumers but the correlation is not very significant. Premium price continues to hold back organic food consumption. It is complicated to justify the premium because health benefits asserted to organic food are often difficult to quantify.

Therefore, more transparency in the organic food production and farm-gate price can be advantageous to the society. Securing the domestic supply of organic food may be the key to reduce the price gap. Understanding specifically the determinants of increasing levels of organic food consumption such as motivation, behaviour, beliefs and demographic variables are most critical in understanding the potential of the organic market to keep up the increasing growth and become genuinely a mainstream market.

A growing interest in organic food has prompted many studies comparing aspects of organic against conventional food because human health, food safety and environmental concern along with other sensory attributes such as nutritive value, taste, freshness and appearance. Consumer perceptions about organic food are highly subjective. It is also worth noting that such perceptions may or may not be their actual behaviour in purchasing. Furthermore, good quality of organic food at reasonable price may not only attract more potential buyer but also do justice to our environment as the pesticide application is minimal. Thus, concerted effort from all parties especially the government in promoting the advantages of consuming organic food may help shift consumers' behaviour.

Therefore, future studies should go for consumer-based approach which is important not only for consumers, but also in terms of responses to changes in market dynamics.

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