

GREEN CHOICES AND HEALTHY LIVING: PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD AND ITS IMPACT IN COIMBATORE

DR. M.S. RANJITH KUMAR

Professor and Head, Department of Commerce with Business Analytics, Dr. N.G.P Arts and Science College, Coimbatore,

Tamil Nadu, India.

Mr. JITENDRA KUMAR SHARMA

B. Com.BA., Dr. N.G.P Arts and Science College, Coimbatore.

ABSTRACT

Worries about well-being, nature, and what's safe to eat have pushed more people worldwide to look at organic options. Across India, cities and towns are starting to see stronger demand for such foods. Lately, Coimbatore - known for growth in education and industry within Tamil Nadu - has been noticing folks who care more about staying healthy and protecting the environment. Looking closely, this work explores how these residents buy organic items, along with shifts it brings to daily habits and choices around meals. Looking into how much people know about organic foods, what sways their choices when shopping, how often they buy them, besides the advantages they believe these products offer. Data came straight from shoppers through a blend of questionnaires and talks. What stands out is the struggle tied to cost, access issues, alongside doubts about labeling claims stopping wider use. Results should help those shaping store strategies, market plans, plus government rules find ways to boost healthier eating while easing pressure on nature.

Keywords

Organic Food, Purchase Behaviour, Consumer Awareness, Health Consciousness, Sustainable Consumption, Coimbatore, Green Marketing, Lifestyle Impact

INTRODUCTION

Lately people care more about what they eat because health, safe food, and nature matter now. Worries around fake stuff in regular farms - like strong sprays and lab-made helpers - push many toward organic choices instead; these skip man-made junk, altered genes, and strange shelf-life tricks. In India, things are changing fast: wallets grow fuller, cities spread wider, screens flash new ideas - all feeding a rise in clean eating trends. Coimbatore hums with factories and busy lives, yet folks there show real curiosity for natural produce, whole grains, pure milk, even boxed meals made cleanly. Still, not everyone buys in - cost bites hard, stores run short, trust often wobbles. This look digs into how locals pick their groceries when going organic, ties those picks to wellness thoughts and actual habits, weighs what sways decisions most, then faces roadblocks standing in the way.

LITERATURE REVIEW

● Organic Food and Sustainable Consumption

Organic food plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable agriculture and environmental protection. According to earlier studies, organic farming helps in reducing soil degradation, conserving biodiversity, and minimizing water pollution. Tukker et al. (2014) emphasized that sustainable production and consumption patterns are essential for long-term environmental balance. More recent studies highlight that organic food consumption is closely linked with the concept of responsible consumption and sustainable development. Purushothaman (2025) noted that sustainable and eco-friendly production

methods are becoming increasingly important in the food industry, especially in the context of climate change and resource scarcity. Research also suggests that consumers who prefer organic food often show higher concern for environmental protection and ethical farming practices.

● **Consumer Awareness and Purchase Behaviour**

Consumer awareness plays a vital role in shaping purchase behaviour towards organic food. Jackson (2005) pointed out that although many consumers are aware of sustainable and healthy choices, this awareness does not always translate into actual buying behaviour. In the Indian context, Sharma (2024) found that awareness about organic food has increased significantly, but factors such as price sensitivity and limited access continue to restrict regular consumption. Sinha (2024) observed that health consciousness and concern for personal well-being are major motivators for purchasing organic food, especially among urban consumers. However, Kumar and Rozy (2024) highlighted that lack of trust in certification, fear of false claims, and poor distribution systems act as major barriers to organic food adoption in developing regions.

● **Role of Government and Institutions**

Government policies and institutional support play an important role in promoting organic farming and consumption. According to UNEP (2023), without strong policy support, awareness programs, and incentives, the growth of sustainable consumption practices may remain slow. In India, initiatives promoting organic farming, natural farming, and healthy eating habits have been introduced, but their impact on consumer behaviour is still limited. Martínez-Acosta et al. (2023) showed that educational institutions and community programs can act as effective platforms to promote sustainable food choices and healthy lifestyles among young consumers and families.

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE

Looking into past research shows people who eat organic often care about their health, the planet, among other things. Even though more folks say they know the benefits, what they say does not always match what ends up in shopping carts. Cost too much, hard to find, doubt labels - these keep blocking wider use. Much of what we know comes from big city studies or overseas spots, leaving places such as Coimbatore less explored when it comes to real-life buying patterns.

RESEARCH GAP

Even so, many investigations into how people view organic food rely heavily on abstract frameworks or center on big cities within wealthy nations. Yet attention rarely lands on places like Coimbatore - urban spots rising fast across Tamil Nadu. What keeps knowledge from turning into buying remains murky despite past efforts. Instead of clarity, silence lingers around money, learning, routine living, and eating patterns here. Little digging has happened where it matters most - on home ground. Still, how eating organic food shapes daily habits or views on well-being hasn't been looked at much. For that reason, a closer real-world look is needed into why people in Coimbatore choose to buy organic products.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Even with more talk about healthy eating, fresh air, and caring for nature, people in Coimbatore still buy little organic food. Most stick to regular groceries - those often carry traces of lab-made chemicals and shelf-life extenders. While officials, doctors, and sellers claim organics are better for bodies, real-world hurdles block wider use: cost bites hard, stores rarely stock them, label claims feel shaky, knowledge feels thin. This mismatch - knowing one thing, doing another - makes you wonder what really shapes choices at checkout counters. What holds back change might lie deeper than price tags or store shelves. Understanding how locals decide to buy - or skip - organic items could reveal patterns hidden beneath routine habits.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine customer attitude towards organic food in terms of preference, perceived nutrition, safety, environmental concern, price willingness, trust, and healthy lifestyle.
2. To analyze the association between age and awareness level of consumers towards organic food in Coimbatore.

METHODOLOGY

A closer look at the topic uses description backed by numbers and personal views. From Coimbatore, responses came in from 129 shoppers, chosen easily yet sorted by group traits. A fixed set of survey questions covered background details, knowledge about organic items, how people shop, what pushes them to buy, along with thoughts on well-being and daily habits. Beyond that, casual talks happened - some with buyers, others with store owners - to uncover real feelings and grasp current selling scenes. From journals, books, reports, online sources, and official documents came the secondary information gathered. Once pulled together, it was examined through methods like percentages, chi-square checks, along with summary stats by way of SPSS so insights could take shape.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Socio economic Factors	Level of Satisfaction		Total
	Low	High	
Age			
Below 20 years	32(24.81%)	5(3.88%)	37(28.68%)
21-30 years	32(24.81%)	10(7.75%)	42(32.56%)
31-40 years	22(17.05%)	11(8.53%)	33(25.58%)
Above 40 years	13(10.08%)	4(3.10%)	17(13.18%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)
Gender			
Male	56(43.41%)	20(15.50%)	76(58.91%)
Female	43(33.33%)	10(7.75%)	53(41.09%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)
Educational Qualification			
School	24(18.60%)	12(9.30%)	45(27.91%)
Under graduation	47(36.43%)	13(10.08%)	27(46.51%)
Post graduation	28(21.71%)	5(3.88%)	36(25.58%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)
Occupation			
Student	37(28.68%)	8(6.20%)	43(34.88%)
Employee	21(16.28%)	6(4.65%)	25(20.93%)

Business	26(20.16%)	10(7.75%)	33(27.91%)
Homemaker	15(11.63%)	6(4.65%)	28(16.28%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)
Monthly Income			
Below 10000	38(29.46%)	5(3.88%)	43(33.33%)
10000 – 20000	16(12.40%)	9(6.98%)	25(19.38%)
20000 – 30000	24(18.60%)	9(6.98%)	33(25.58%)
Above 30000	21(16.28%)	7(5.43%)	28(21.71%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)
Type Of Family			
Nuclear	60(46.51%)	15(11.63%)	75(58.14%)
Joint	39(30.23%)	15(11.63%)	54(41.86%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)
Area Of Residence			
Rural	36(27.91%)	13(10.08%)	49(37.98%)
Semi – urban	30(23.26%)	8(6.20%)	38(29.46%)
Urban	33(25.58%)	9(6.98%)	42(32.56%)
Total	99(76.74%)	30(23.26%)	129(100%)

The table shows the relationship between socio-economic factors and the level of satisfaction of consumers. Out of 129 respondents, a large majority, 99 respondents (76.74%), fall under the low satisfaction category, while only 30 respondents (23.26%) fall under the high satisfaction category, indicating that overall satisfaction is relatively low. Across all age groups, genders, educational levels, occupations, income groups, family types, and areas of residence, low satisfaction is predominant, though slight variations are observed among some groups such as middle-aged, higher income, and business respondents. However, these differences are not very large, and the general trend shows that most consumers report low satisfaction regardless of their socio-economic background. Overall, the findings suggest the need for better quality, accessibility, affordability, and awareness to improve consumer satisfaction.

ANOVA							
SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Result
1.1 Age	Between Groups	29.522	23	1.284	1.328	.168	Accepted
	Within Groups	101.501	105	.967			
	Total	131.023	128				
1.2 Gender	Between Groups	6.825	23	.297	1.277	.201	Accepted
	Within Groups	24.400	105	.232			
	Total	31.225	128				

1.3 Educational Qualification	Between Groups	14.949	23	.650	1.264	.211	Accepted
	Within Groups	53.981	105	.514			
	Total	68.930	128				
1.4 Occupation	Between Groups	51.176	23	2.225	2.217	.003	Accepted
	Within Groups	105.382	105	1.004			
	Total	156.558	128				
1.5 Monthly Income	Between Groups	48.112	23	2.092	1.779	.026	Accepted
	Within Groups	123.485	105	1.176			
	Total	171.597	128				
1.6 Type of family	Between Groups	4.298	23	.187	.724	.811	Accepted
	Within Groups	27.097	105	.258			
	Total	31.395	128				
1.7 Area of Residence	Between Groups	14.389	23	.626	.862	.647	Accepted
	Within Groups	76.231	105	.726			
	Total	90.620	128				

The ANOVA results reveal that there is no significant difference in the level of satisfaction among respondents based on age, gender, educational qualification, type of family, and area of residence, as the p-values for these variables are greater than 0.05, indicating that these socio-demographic factors do not have a statistically significant influence on satisfaction. However, occupation ($p = 0.003$) and monthly income ($p = 0.026$) show statistically significant differences in satisfaction levels, as their p-values are less than 0.05, suggesting that economic and work-related factors play an important role in shaping satisfaction among the respondents. Overall, the findings indicate that while most demographic characteristics do not significantly affect satisfaction, variations in occupation and income levels lead to meaningful differences in satisfaction, highlighting the importance of economic status in influencing respondents' perceptions and experiences in the context of the study.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- The study reveals that a large majority of the respondents (76.74%) fall under the low satisfaction category, while only 23.26% show high satisfaction towards organic food, indicating that overall satisfaction with organic food products in Coimbatore is relatively low.
- Age, gender, educational qualification, type of family, and area of residence do not show a statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels, as confirmed by the ANOVA results ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that satisfaction towards organic food is not strongly influenced by these demographic factors.

- Occupation and monthly income show a statistically significant influence on satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that economic and work-related factors play a crucial role in shaping consumers' satisfaction towards organic food.
- Respondents belonging to higher income groups and business/employed categories tend to show relatively better satisfaction compared to students and lower income groups, indicating that affordability and purchasing power are key determinants in organic food consumption.
- Across all socio-economic categories, the dominance of low satisfaction suggests the presence of common problems such as high price, limited availability, doubts about authenticity, and lack of consistent quality in organic food products.

SUGGESTIONS

- **Price Rationalization:** Since income significantly affects satisfaction, efforts should be made to reduce the price gap between organic and conventional food through subsidies, better supply chains, and direct farmer-to-consumer models.
- **Improve Availability:** Organic food products should be made easily available in local markets, supermarkets, and neighborhood stores in Coimbatore to improve convenience and accessibility.
- **Quality and Certification Assurance:** To improve trust and satisfaction, sellers should clearly display certification labels, source information, and quality assurance marks to remove doubts about authenticity.
- **Targeted Marketing Strategies:** Marketing efforts should focus more on working professionals, business people, and higher income groups, who show relatively higher satisfaction and purchasing capacity.
- **Awareness and Education Programs:** Although awareness exists, it should be strengthened through health campaigns, workshops, social media content, and in-store promotions explaining the long-term health and environmental benefits of organic food.

CONCLUSION

The low satisfaction level with organic food is evident in Coimbatore, despite the fact that more people are aware of its health benefits, nutritional values, and positive impacts on the environment. However, when it comes to factors such as age, gender, education level, family structure, and geographical location, it appears that none of these influence people's feelings about organic food, except for job type and income, which indicate that access to money and habits matter most. The price remains too high, and the availability of products on the shelves is low, while questions linger about authenticity and labeling, which widens the gap between knowledge and the feeling of being good about purchasing. To address this, it is important to make things cheaper, more accessible, and more believable by enhancing the supply chain routes, scrutinizing standards closely, disseminating proper facts tailored to various groups, and encouraging habits to gradually lean towards greener purchasing that promotes both health and environmental farming.

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