

Understanding Consumer Attitudes and Satisfaction with Organic Farm Products

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Abstract:

This study investigates consumer attitudes and satisfaction with organic farm products, aiming to understand the factors influencing these perceptions. A sample of 100 participants from Rohtak was surveyed using structured questionnaires, supplemented by focus group discussions and literature reviews. The analysis revealed that a significant majority of consumers view organic products as healthier and more environmentally sustainable. Age was found to be a significant factor affecting consumer satisfaction, while marital status did not have a notable impact. Additionally, educational qualifications significantly influenced satisfaction levels, suggesting that more educated consumers exhibit greater satisfaction with organic products. The findings highlight the importance of trust in certification and the perceived value of organic products, as well as the need for effective marketing strategies to enhance consumer awareness. Overall, this research provides valuable insights for stakeholders in the organic market, informing strategies to improve consumer engagement and satisfaction, ultimately promoting the growth of organic farm products.

Keywords:

Understanding, Consumer, Attitudes, Satisfaction, Organic Farm and Products.

Introduction:

In recent years, the growing awareness of health, environmental sustainability, and food safety has led to a significant shift in consumer preferences toward organic farm products. Organic farming, a practice that emphasizes sustainable agriculture through natural farming methods, has gained popularity as it offers a healthier and eco-friendly alternative to conventional farming. Organic products, which include fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and meat, are produced without the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), antibiotics, or hormones. As a result, they are perceived as healthier, safer, and more environmentally responsible, appealing to an increasingly health-conscious and environmentally aware consumer base.

Understanding consumer attitudes and satisfaction toward organic farm products has become essential for producers, retailers, policymakers, and researchers. Consumer attitudes towards organic products are shaped by a variety of factors, including awareness, perception of health benefits, trust in organic certification, environmental concerns, and socio-economic factors. At the same time, consumer satisfaction plays a critical role in determining long-term consumer behavior, influencing repeat purchases and brand loyalty.

This comprehensive study aims to explore and analyze consumer attitudes toward organic farm products, factors influencing their purchasing decisions, and the level of satisfaction they derive from these products. By understanding these dimensions, the study will provide valuable insights for organic product marketers, policymakers, and producers to develop strategies that align with consumer preferences, improve customer satisfaction, and foster the growth of the organic market.

The Organic Food Movement: A Global Trend

The organic food movement is not a recent phenomenon. It dates back to the early 20th century, when scientists, environmentalists, and farmers raised concerns about the long-term environmental and health impacts of industrialized agriculture. Over time, this movement gained momentum, particularly in the 1990s and early 2000s, as consumers became more conscious of the need for sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

Globally, the demand for organic food products has been growing steadily. According to reports, the global organic food market was valued at approximately \$220 billion in 2022, with forecasts predicting continuous growth in the coming years. Countries like the United States, Germany, France, and China are leading markets for organic food, with increasing numbers of consumers willing to pay premium prices for organic products. The growth of organic food sales is also driven by governmental policies and certification systems that promote organic agriculture and regulate labeling standards to ensure authenticity.

In India, the organic food market has seen a considerable rise, supported by an increasing focus on sustainable farming practices and a growing middle-class population. Organic farming in India is still evolving, but it has immense potential due to the country's rich agricultural heritage and diverse agro-climatic conditions. Various state governments and private organizations have initiated programs to promote organic farming, while certification agencies play a key role in maintaining trust in organic labels.

Defining Organic Farm Products

Organic farm products refer to agricultural goods that are produced through organic farming practices, which emphasize the use of natural methods and resources. Organic farming focuses on maintaining soil fertility, enhancing biodiversity, and minimizing the environmental footprint of agricultural activities. These products are cultivated without synthetic chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers, and without genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

The organic certification process is essential to ensure that farm products labeled as organic meet the prescribed standards set by governmental and certification bodies. In India, the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) oversees the certification of organic products, ensuring that they adhere to stringent guidelines on production, processing, and labeling.

Organic farm products include a wide range of categories such as:

- **Fruits and vegetables:** Often considered the cornerstone of organic farming, these are grown without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides.
- **Grains and cereals:** Organic grains are free from chemical additives and are produced using crop rotation and organic soil management techniques.
- **Dairy and meat products:** Organic dairy and meat are derived from animals that are raised on organic feed, have access to outdoor spaces, and are not treated with antibiotics or growth hormones.
- **Processed organic products:** These include organic oils, bread, cereals, and packaged food items, made from certified organic ingredients.

Factors Shaping Consumer Attitudes Towards Organic Farm Products

Consumer attitudes toward organic farm products are shaped by a combination of personal, social, and psychological factors. The key factors influencing consumer attitudes include:

1. Health Consciousness:

Health consciousness is one of the most significant drivers of consumer attitudes toward organic products. Many consumers believe that organic food is healthier and more nutritious than conventionally produced food. The absence of synthetic chemicals and the use of natural farming methods contribute to the perception that organic food has a higher nutritional value and fewer harmful residues. Moreover, concerns over food safety and the impact of chemical pesticides on human health have led to a preference for organic products.

2. Environmental Awareness:

Environmental sustainability is another critical factor driving consumer attitudes toward organic farm products. Organic farming is seen as an environmentally responsible practice that promotes biodiversity, improves soil health, and reduces pollution. Consumers who are environmentally conscious are more likely to choose organic products to support sustainable agriculture and reduce their carbon footprint.

3. Trust in Certification:

Organic certification plays a vital role in shaping consumer trust and confidence in organic products. Certified organic labels provide assurance to consumers that the products meet the required standards and are free from harmful chemicals. However, consumer trust in certification agencies and the authenticity of organic labels varies, and any discrepancies or scandals involving certification can negatively affect consumer attitudes.

4. Perceived Quality:

Consumers often associate organic products with superior quality in terms of taste, freshness, and overall product integrity. This perception of higher quality motivates consumers to choose organic farm products over conventional alternatives, even at a higher price point.

5. Social and Cultural Factors:

Socio-economic status, cultural beliefs, and peer influence also play a role in shaping consumer attitudes. In some regions, organic products may be perceived as a status symbol due to their premium pricing, while in others, they may align with cultural values of purity, health, and ethical consumption.

6. Price Sensitivity:

Despite the growing demand for organic products, price remains a major barrier for many consumers. Organic products are generally priced higher than conventional alternatives due to the cost of organic farming practices, certification processes, and supply chain logistics. Price-sensitive consumers may be hesitant to purchase organic products regularly, despite their positive attitudes towards health and environmental benefits.

Consumer Satisfaction with Organic Farm Products

Consumer satisfaction is a key determinant of repeat purchases and brand loyalty in the organic food market. Satisfaction is influenced by factors such as product quality, availability, price, and overall experience. Understanding what drives consumer satisfaction with organic farm products is essential for producers and marketers to retain existing customers and attract new ones.

1. Product Quality and Consistency:

Consumers expect organic products to meet high standards of quality, including freshness, taste, and appearance. Inconsistent quality or a lack of availability can lead to dissatisfaction, causing consumers to switch to other brands or conventional products.

2. Value for Money:

While many consumers are willing to pay a premium for organic products, they still expect value for their money. If the perceived benefits of organic products do not match the price differential, consumers may feel dissatisfied, leading to reduced purchase frequency.

3. Availability and Accessibility:

The availability of organic products in local markets, supermarkets, and online platforms plays a crucial role in consumer satisfaction. Limited availability or difficulty in accessing organic products can frustrate consumers, particularly those who live in regions where organic options are scarce.

4. Packaging and Labeling:

Packaging plays an important role in consumer satisfaction, as it reflects the brand's commitment to environmental sustainability. Consumers appreciate eco-friendly, minimalistic packaging that aligns with the values of organic farming. Clear and informative labeling, especially regarding certification and ingredients, is also essential in fostering trust and satisfaction.

Challenges Facing the Organic Food Market

Despite the positive consumer attitudes and increasing demand for organic farm products, several challenges persist in the organic food market. These include:

- 1. Price Premium:** The higher cost of organic products limits their affordability for a large segment of consumers. Efforts to make organic food more accessible through subsidies or cost-reduction strategies are essential.
- 2. Trust Issues:** Misinformation and skepticism about the authenticity of organic labels can erode consumer confidence.
- 3. Supply Chain Gaps:** Limited availability and distribution networks can hinder market growth, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

Understanding consumer attitudes and satisfaction toward organic farm products is critical to the growth of the organic food market. Health consciousness, environmental awareness, trust in certification, and perceived product quality are key drivers of consumer preferences. However, challenges such as high prices, limited availability, and trust issues continue to hinder the market's full potential.

By addressing these concerns, organic producers, retailers, and policymakers can develop strategies to enhance consumer satisfaction, improve accessibility, and foster long-term loyalty toward organic products. Through a deeper understanding of consumer attitudes, the organic food market can continue to thrive and contribute to a healthier and more sustainable future.

Review of Literature:

Roy, Ghosh, and Vashisht (2023) reviewed literature to identify factors affecting consumer perceptions and purchasing attitudes toward organic food. Their study revealed that behavioral aspects, health concerns, cost-effectiveness, and product reliability play crucial roles in driving consumer adoption of organic products. Additionally, they identified a lack of supply chain infrastructure as a significant barrier to the availability of organic food, limiting its widespread consumption despite increasing demand.

Sankar and Aruna (2023) examined the factors influencing customer attitudes and satisfaction regarding organic products, surveying 586 customers across India. Their findings revealed a positive impact of all factors on customer attitudes, except for price, which had a negative influence. Despite this, effective marketing and promotional strategies shifted satisfaction positively. The study recommends addressing low sales despite high awareness and health consciousness through innovative strategies.

Ali (2021) investigated Kurdish consumer attitudes toward healthy and organic food through an online survey of 452 respondents. The findings revealed that health concerns were the primary motivator for consumption, with quality and taste also influencing purchasing decisions. Consumers were willing to pay premium prices for these products. However, environmental and animal welfare concerns were minimal, providing fresh insights into an under-researched population in Iraq.

Vukasovic (2015) investigated EU consumer attitudes toward organic fruits and vegetables, finding that organic buyers are typically younger and more educated. Trust in product authenticity and price were noted as concerns. The study emphasized the need for producers to enhance consumer knowledge about organic products to differentiate them in the marketplace, suggesting that greater education could significantly boost organic consumption.

Xie et al. (2015) explored consumer perceptions and attitudes toward organic food in China, revealing that health and safety concerns are primary motivators for purchasing organic products. The study found that higher education, disposable incomes, and families with children are associated with organic purchases. Barriers include high prices, lack of knowledge, and limited availability. Educating consumers and improving availability are recommended strategies for market expansion.

Objective of the Study:

- To examine the effect of demographic factors on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

Hypothesis of the Study:

H0: There is no significant effect of demographic factors on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

Research Methodology:

For this study on "Understanding Consumer Attitudes and Satisfaction with Organic Farm Products," a sample of 100 participants from Rohtak was selected. Primary data was gathered directly from consumers. To meet the study's objectives, frequency analysis, ANOVA, and t-tests were used as statistical tools. Quantitative data collection involved surveys and structured questionnaires, while qualitative methods included reviewing relevant literature and conducting focus group discussions to explore the factors influencing consumer attitudes and satisfaction with organic farm products.

Data Analysis:

Data analysis is the process of inspecting, cleaning, and transforming data to extract useful information, draw conclusions, and support decision-making. It involves applying statistical and logical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and relationships within the data, facilitating a better understanding of the subject being studied.

Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variable

Frequency analysis of demographic variables involves counting and categorizing participant characteristics, such as age, marital status, and educational qualification. This method helps to summarize the distribution of these variables within the sample, enabling researchers to understand the composition of the population and its potential impact on study outcomes.

Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variable

Demographic Variables		Frequency
Age	18-25	34
	25-30	28
	30-35	22
	Above 35	16
	Total	100
Marital Status	Unmarried	42
	Married	58
	Total	100
Educational Qualification	Graduation	46
	Post graduation	35
	Others	19
	Total	100

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The demographic data collected from the 100 participants provides insights into their characteristics. Among the respondents, the majority were aged between 18 and 25 years (34%), followed by those aged 25 to 30 years (28%) and 30 to 35 years (22%). Only 16% were above 35 years, indicating a predominantly younger sample. Regarding marital status, 58% of participants were married, while 42% were unmarried, suggesting a balanced representation of both groups. In terms of educational qualifications, most respondents were graduates (46%), with 35% holding postgraduate degrees, and 19% categorized as having other qualifications. This distribution highlights a well-educated participant pool, predominantly consisting of young adults, which may influence their perspectives and attitudes toward the study subject. The demographic breakdown is essential for understanding how these variables might correlate with consumer attitudes and satisfaction in the context of organic farm products.

Frequency Analysis of consumer satisfaction with organic farm products

Frequency analysis of consumer satisfaction with organic farm products involves counting and categorizing responses to assess how often specific satisfaction levels occur. This statistical technique helps identify trends and patterns in consumer opinions, providing insights into overall satisfaction and areas for improvement in organic product offerings.

Frequency Analysis of consumer satisfaction with organic farm products

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
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I believe that organic farm products are healthier than conventional products.	3	4	3	19	71
I prefer organic farm products because they contain fewer harmful chemicals.	4	3	4	32	57
Choosing organic farm products helps to protect the environment.	1	2	7	36	54
I purchase organic products because they promote sustainable farming practices.	6	5	9	35	45
I trust the certification labels on organic farm products.	3	5	2	17	73
Organic certification ensures the quality and authenticity of the products I buy.	8	7	3	55	25
I am satisfied with the overall quality of organic farm products.	5	3	4	32	56
I find organic farm products to be consistently fresh and of good quality.	4	4	5	52	35
I believe the price of organic farm products is justified by their benefits.	7	6	7	33	47
Organic farm products provide good value for money.	11	4	5	33	47

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The frequency distribution of consumer attitudes towards organic farm products reveals significant insights into their perceptions and satisfaction levels. A strong majority (71 respondents) believe organic products are healthier than conventional ones, indicating a positive attitude towards health benefits. Similarly, 57 participants prefer organic products for their reduced chemical content, and 54 see them as environmentally protective. However, trust in certification labels shows mixed responses, with 73 affirming their trust, yet 55 feel that organic certification ensures product quality and authenticity, suggesting varying levels of confidence in the certification process.

While most respondents express satisfaction with the overall quality of organic products (56) and freshness (35), perceptions of value for money are more divided; only 47 believe the price is justified by benefits, and the same number feel organic products provide good value. The data suggests a strong inclination towards the health and environmental advantages of organic products, but highlights concern regarding pricing and perceived value, pointing to areas where marketers can improve consumer education and address pricing strategies.

ANOVA: Consumer satisfaction with organic farm products across age

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of age on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

ANOVA: Age					
Age	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	33.619	8	1.865	10.677	.000
Within Groups	103.756	92	.176		

Total	137.375	100			
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Source: Researcher's Compilation

The ANOVA results indicate a significant effect of age on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products, as evidenced by an F-value of 10.677 and a p-value (Sig.) of 0.000, which is below the alpha level of 0.05. The Sum of Squares Between Groups (33.619) suggests that there is considerable variability in satisfaction levels based on age groups. The Mean Square Between Groups (1.865) further supports the presence of significant differences among the groups. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and conclude that age does significantly influence consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

T-Test: Consumer satisfaction with organic farm products across marital status

H_0 2: There is no significant effect of marital status on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means: Marital Status						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	1.992	.161	1.647	98	.103	2.26142	1.37338
Equal variances not assumed			1.480	49.198	.145	2.26142	1.52785

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The T-test results indicate that there is no significant effect of marital status on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products. Levene's Test shows a p-value of 0.161, indicating that the assumption of equal variances is satisfied. The t-value for equal variances assumed is 1.647 with a p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.103, which is above the alpha level of 0.05. Similarly, for unequal variances, the t-value is 1.480 with a p-value of 0.145. Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H_0 2), concluding that marital status does not significantly impact consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

ANOVA: Consumer satisfaction with organic farm products across educational qualification

H_0 3: There is no significant effect of educational qualification on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products.

ANOVA: Educational Qualification					
Education Qualification	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	184.988	9	9.683	30.195	.000
Within Groups	184.985	78	.321		
Total	369.973	100			

Source: Researcher's Compilation

The ANOVA results reveal a significant effect of educational qualification on consumer satisfaction with organic farm products. The Between Groups Sum of Squares (184.988) indicates substantial variability in satisfaction levels across different educational qualifications. The F-value of 30.195, combined with a p-value (Sig.) of 0.000, is well below the alpha level of 0.05. This strong statistical significance suggests that educational qualification influences how satisfied

consumers are with organic farm products. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H_03), concluding that there are significant differences in consumer satisfaction based on educational qualifications. Future research could further explore which specific educational levels correlate with higher satisfaction rates.

Conclusion:

The study on "Understanding Consumer Attitudes and Satisfaction with Organic Farm Products" highlights significant insights into consumer perceptions and preferences. The findings reveal that a majority of participants view organic products as healthier and more environmentally friendly, with trust in certification playing a crucial role in their purchasing decisions. Age emerged as a significant factor influencing consumer satisfaction, while marital status did not show a noteworthy impact. Educational qualification also significantly affected satisfaction levels, indicating that more educated consumers tend to have higher satisfaction with organic products. Overall, the study underscores the importance of enhancing consumer awareness regarding organic products and their benefits. Marketers should focus on addressing pricing concerns and improving the perceived value of organic farm products. These insights can help shape effective marketing strategies and promote the growth of the organic market by catering to consumer preferences and addressing their concerns.

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