

“A STUDY ON PERCEPTION OF HOUSEWIVES TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS IN THE POST COVID TIMES”

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ABSTRACT

The research on housewives perceptive towards organic food products were analyzed in this study by using both primary data and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the respondents through structured questionnaire. Total respondents of the study counted 200. The finding of the study proves majority of the respondent follows the conceptual framework, which is about knowledge about the product, interpretation of the product and finally purchasing decision made with the prior two points. Knowledge about the product made by internal stimuli and interpretation of the products happen through external stimuli. Internal stimuli are more powerful for women specially when they playing the role of mother, and care taker of the family. They want to give best for their family, therefore housewives preferred organic food products specially during this pandemic and post pandemic.

Introduction:

Perception is nothing but “How we see the world around us”. Consumers mindset will not follow the same direction always. Perception keeps on change in the speed of “environmental changes’. In this paper researcher penned down the perception of housewives towards organic food products in covid pandemic. The way everyone sees about organic food before and after covid-19 varies. After the hit of pandemic everybody starts to think about “how healthy and nutrition our intakes are?”. Individual health concern got increased after the covid-19(ResearchAndMarket.com). When it comes to housewives, they are more responsible person in the family, regards to food intakes of family members, especial of their kids (*Chakrabarti Somnath, 2010*), at this covid times. Understanding the perceptions of homemaker towards organic food products are crucial data for all the marketers. For every individual perception gets vary, according to one’s own internal and external stimuli perception gets change, here expectation of the product also plays major role (*Agyekum, Crentsil, 2015*). Therefore, stimuli to consume

organic food products arise even before the pandemic due to many factors like personal health, ecofriendly concern, food taste, nutritional value in food, food safety etc. Now after the pandemic implication of these factor manifolds in all. Subsequently, the need for organic food and medicinal products demand increasing. People realized only the healthy can sustain, so the transformation is happening, awareness to practice. Before pandemic itself organic food are quite popular in metro cities, everybody aware about its goodness, benefits. Yet people show hesitation to buy for many reasons, likely higher price, availability, originality of the product and so on. Now all that reluctance wiped off, people needs to be healthy to withstand in this covid pandemic. Hence, at this time people awareness level got renovated to their actions.

Review of Literature:

Knowledge about the product:

Knowledge is nothing but knowing about the facts of things or concept, here knowledge is knowing about organic food products. At this juncture role of sensory organs plays major

role. First consumers hear about the product from peer group, family or from any specialist. Next, they scrutinize all the facts and start seeking for practical applicability of that product to use in their life. This point was already proved by *Anupam Singh, Priyanka Verma (2017)* in their research paper, that mainly these factors are influencing consumers to make the real purchase of organic food products; namely, health conscientiousness, knowledge about organic food products, availability of the products, perceived price, influence of F&F (friends and family).

Now a days awareness level in cities comparably higher than expected, due to many factors like intake of toxic food, water and air higher in cities due to concentrated population. Therefore, people live in city side concentrates more on the counterpart, that is, how to protect them from all these calamities. Subsequently here awareness level for organic food products rapidly increases, to maintain the healthy lifestyle. *Mohamed Bilal Basha, Cordelia Mason et al. (2015)* concluded in their research paper that consumer behavior changing fast towards organic food products purchases, owing to the fact of environmental degradation and related issues which caused illness to the human health. *Efthimia Tsakiridou and et al., (2006)*, also said prior understanding of organic food products plays vital role in purchasing pattern. *A. Gracia and T. de Magistris, (2007)* also said that consumers who have more knowledge about organic food product are the most bulky purchased consumers of organic food product.

Interpretation about the product:

First consumers grab the information, subsequently consumers do their own research about the product, after that only they react according to their conclusion. *Mohamed Bilal Basha, Cordelia Mason et al. (2015)* said consumers undergo the psychological processor after identifying the need, they collect the information and interpret those collected information to make the purchase decision. *Lydia Zepeda and Jinghan Li (2007)* said in the process of making purchase decision every consumer undergoes these situation after collecting the information, consumers seek personal connection with the product and intention to act. If consumers convinced

themselves about the product, they stay positive towards organic food product.

Reacting:

Consumers respond whether to purchase or not according to their knowledge about the product and the interpretation they have done with the product knowledge about the product. Tiziana de *Magistris Azucena Gracia, (2008)* said awareness and knowledge about the organic food product makes consumers to have positive attitude towards organic food, this positive attitude makes them to purchase organic foods. In this stage positive feedback and opinion of experts makes consumers to grab the product for their daily usage like magnetic field.

Objectives:

- To know about the organic food product awareness between housewives.
- To know how housewives are interpreting the knowledge about organic food products.
- To know, how housewives are reacting to the organic food product in this pandemic.
- To know the relationship between demographic variables and perception of housewives towards organic food products.

Hypothesis:

- H₀ : there is no relationship between demographic variables and perception of housewives towards organic food products.
- H₀: there is no relationship between knowledge about organic food products and purchasing decision.
- H₀: there is no relationship between interpretation of the knowledge about organic food products and the purchasing decision.

Methodology:

Researcher used primary data to collect demographic data and perception of housewives on organic food products, especially on post pandemic. Structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from the respondents. Questionnaire was divided into four categories such as demographic factors, knowledge about the product, interpretation about the product and reacting on the bases of knowledge and interpretation. Respondents were selected on the basics of convenient sampling method. Hence this method is proved easy and convenient way of

collection data (Aaker et al., 2007). Mainly this study targeted on the housewives who having the purchasing authority in their respective family. In questionnaire demographic question are based on optional type question and rest of the questions are based on five-point Likert scale method.

In demographic section questions like age, income, no of members in the family, monthly budget for provision were asked. In Knowledge about the product section seven sub variables were included, in next section of Interpretation of the product five sub variables were asked to study the respondents and in the final section of react on the bases of knowledge and interpretation of the product have six sub variables. Online platform was used to collect the questionnaire. Questionnaire was entered in the google form, that link was shared among different women groups in Chennai.

Data Collection:

Pilot study was carried out by the researcher to test the reliability of the questionnaire. For pilot study 50 samples were collected from the respondent. The data were coded and tested in Kornberg alpha test to know the reliability of the questionnaire; the test value is .853 which indicates the reliability of the questionnaire.

Main Study Data Collection:

Once the data passed in the Kornberg alpha test, the researcher started collecting data for the main study. The sample size for the main study is 200. As researcher chooses convenient sampling, collected data in online mode, specifically in women's group, the only restriction is participant should be in Chennai. Period of data collection was between September 2021 to November 2021.

Conceptual Framework:

Focally this research paper concentrated on homemaker's perception of organic food products. Women shows more important to nutritional food, and they lead family to choose the innovative way to be healthy by choosing hazards free foods or environment friendly foods. When women purchase the food products to their family, it inevitably means, that she has done a lot of research work before purchase. In general consumer perception is grounded by knowledge about the product,

interpretation of that information and finally reacting to that outcome of interpretation.

Awareness about the product comes from outside, those situations are as follows, recommendation from the professional, word of mouth, advertisement, promotional campaign. Particularly to organic food products mostly recommendation came from health professionals and word of mouth works to spread awareness level to public. There is no such promotional campaign for organic food products, but advertisement plays good role in spreading brand name of organic products. *David Pearson, Joanna Henryks et al (2010)* said in their research paper that consumers influenced purchase organic food products primarily for health reason. Country like India, consumers prefer organic food for personal health, in well developed countries consumers purchases organic food for the environmental concern. *Marija Ham, Ana Pap et al (2017)* done a study in central Europe, concludes intention behind every purchases of organic food products not only the health personal reasons, its more than that, people in Croatia induced to purchase organic food for environmental concern.

After awareness stage, consumers start to think about the product, how it will be useful, can be afford, is the product reliable, how to believe the product. To answer all these question here sensory organs plays important role. Once consumers are in interpretation stage, hear about the product a lot, they start to scrutinize within themselves. At this stage consumer's start relating the product to their lifestyle, if that product suits with them, mostly consumers attach positively to that products.

The final stage is, how consumer response or react to the product after analyzing the information. This stage is very crucial, consumers evaluate the product with their previous experience if any or they see the reviews about the product in internet. The role of opinion leader is vital at this point, their opinion makes consumers to stay positive with the product. Particularly to organic food products opinion leaders may not be the celebrities, here opinion leaders may be a health consultant, yoga guru, fitness coach, protector of the environment, naturopathy doctors and so on. Finally, this react stage will decide the consumers purchasing behavior.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

to analysis the data which were collected in the data collection process.

Analysis and Discussion:

The data were processed in SPSS 21, to know about the perceptions of the respondent towards organic food product in post pandemic period. The below table shows the reliability and validity of the data collection instrumentation.

The reliability assessment of the variables showed in the below table ranged from 0.82 to 0.88 which were above the preferred limit of 0.7 (Everitt, B. S.; Skrondal, A). Also, the items measuring the three variable constructs were found to valid as shown in Table 2. Hence, all the variables were retained for main study.

Data Analysis:

Collected information were coded with whole number and entered in SPSS 21 to analyses.

Statistical tools like Factor Analysis, ANOVA and linear multiple regression analysis were used

Table 1- Reliability Assessment

S.No	Variable	Reliability
1	Knowledge about the product	0.82
2	Interpretation	0.86
3	Reaction towards knowledge and interpretation	0.88

Table 2- Validity Assessment

S.No	Variable	Table Value	Calculated value	Result
1	Knowledge about the product	0.159	0.324 to 0.685	Valid
2	Interpretation	0.159	0.413 to 0.752	Valid
3	Reaction towards knowledge and interpretation	0.159	0.384 to 0.872	Valid

The relationship between three variables is clearly explained in the figure 1, which shows the frame work of the study. The path model was run and estimated with a good model fit as indicated by the fit indices in Table 3. The model fit indices table shows that the chi-square value is 1.854 and the p-value is larger than the 5% level which indicates a good model fit.

Table 3- Chi- Square Test

Indicators	Observed Value
Chi- Square	1.854
P	0.175

Table 4:

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.526	5	6.905	15.632	.000 ^a
	Residual	218.214	494	.442		
	Total	252.740	499			

From the above table it can be ascertained that the F value and P value are statistically

significant at 5% level. It shows that there is a significant impact of demographic variable on knowledge about the organic food products.

Table 5:**Coefficients^a**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.247	.211		10.674	.000
B1	.021	.042	.024	.487	.627
B2	.081	.047	.088	1.746	.081
B3	.168	.045	.177	3.712	.000
B4	-.077	.039	-.097	-1.986	.048
B5	.187	.031	.278	5.955	.000

From the above table it is formed that the beta value, T value and P value are statistically significant for the independent demographic variable and the reaction steps involved towards purchases decision of the respondents. For the purpose of the study researcher considered every variable as a different segment, then only the effect of each variable towards the react stage can be study. All the variables individually significant towards the react of the customers towards final decision.

Findings and Conclusion:

In demographic variable, who's family income is exceeding one lakh per month having higher knowledge about the product and directly purchasing on the bases of knowledge and internal stimuli. Majority of the respondents follows the flow of decision making towards action of decision making. Each variable considered as a independent variable to the direct relationship between final reaction and the variables.

To recapitulate the majority of the respondents follows the flow of the conceptual framework (figure:1), few exceptions are, respondents who have broad awareness and knowledge not depend on the external stimuli like feedback and views of others about the products, they directly purchase the product by believing their internal stimuli. Internal stimuli are more powerful for women specially when they playing the role of mother, and care taker of the family. They want to give best for their family, therefore housewives preferred organic food products specially during this pandemic and post pandemic.

Limitation and prospects for future study:

This research work has its own limitation. Mainly this study covers perceptive of housewives alone, but working people too used to purchase organic food products, their perceptive is missing in the study. Therefore, in future the perceptive of other people need to study. The result of this study cannot be applicable for the other region or other category of the population. Therefore, future research opportunities are there in this stream too.

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