



# The investigation of customer purchasing motivation for organic goods

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## ABSTRACT

Many customers' perspectives have shifted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. People are becoming more conscious of the dangers of disregarding the environment. Although there was a reported rise in environmental consciousness and sustainability prior to the pandemic, COVID-19 has expedited this process and inspired more individuals to take on this duty. Therefore, the health issue may encourage the adoption of organic foods—that is, those grown using ecologically friendly farming practices and free of artificial modification. Retailers must understand the behaviour of these organic food consumers if they hope to adjust their approaches. Using a random sample technique, 210 consumers—including professionals, homemakers, students, and senior citizens—were included in this Noida Urban study. The age range of their group was 20 to 75 years old. The investigation was carried out online using a structured questionnaire. The study's goals were to: (a) examine consumer purchasing patterns for organic goods before and after the pandemic lockdown; and (b) learn about the variables influencing consumers' purchasing patterns for organic goods and the issues that come with them. The purchasing habits of consumers who purchase organic goods, such as food items, clothing, toiletries, household supplies, and décor, were investigated. After the data was evaluated, it became clear that 92% of consumers had a favourable opinion of organic products, with health consciousness being the primary driver. Their biggest issues with purchasing organic items were limited availability, high cost, and unpredictable supply.

**Keywords:** Behaviour; Consumer attitude; Organic products; Market

## Introduction

Over the past ten years, there has been a significant increase in demand for organic products (Du et al. 2017). Organic items are created using natural ingredients, implying that artificial chemicals and fertilisers are not used. Therefore, in order for a product to be classified as organic, it must have been produced in a way that respects the soil, preserves its nutrients, stays away from the use of chemicals, and has received ecological accreditation certification. By preventing ongoing exposure to chemical compounds, its intake safeguards not only the health of the customers but also that of the farmers and labourers involved in its production. Additionally, organic farmers demonstrate concern for future generations by working to ensure the sustainable use of resources. Based on management techniques that restore, preserve, and improve "ecological harmony," it is predicated on the least amount of off-farm inputs (National Standards Board of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Consumer behaviour is defined as "the actions and decision-making processes of people who purchase goods and services for personal consumption" by Engel, Blackwell, and Mansard (1976). Customers make decisions about what to buy when they purchase things based on a variety of influences, behaviours, and variables. This psychological process is known as consumer buying behaviour. Ninety-six percent of the public were aware of organic food, and fifty-six percent of them purchased food from organic product stores, according to a study on "Awareness Attitude and Perception Analysis as Strategies of Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food Products Among The College Students In Noida District."

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak was a unique time that had tremendous impact on people's daily lives all across the world. Global public health, financial and economic stability, quality of life, and food security are all seen to have been seriously impacted by the pandemic. A significant number of people's food choices and lifestyle changes have been impacted by the global health crisis (WHO, 2021). COVID-19 hastened concerns about health and sustainability. According to Cachero-Martínez (2020), there has been a rise in the consumption of organic food and the use of organic products. Organic products are environmentally friendly items created from natural materials, implying that they are free of chemicals, preservatives, and synthetics. The primary obstacle to creating healthy communities is environmental awareness, as consumer decisions have an impact on the standard of living for both present and future generations. The current drive to establish a sustainable and healthful environment has sparked interest in raising consumer knowledge of the need of making informed decisions when choosing organic products. Nonetheless, within the past ten years, there has been a noticeable growth in demand for organic products. Customers who switch from commercial to organic products are safeguarding their families, communities, surroundings, and themselves. The reasons why consumers stick with organic products are mostly because of its high quality, lack of chemicals, lack of synthetic addictive substances, etc. The market's supply of organic products has expanded in tandem with this shift in consumer perception. Innovation that many refer to as "the fourth industrial revolution" is being fueled by numerous technical advancements. It was shown in a study on the factors influencing consumer preference for purchasing organic food that women were more likely than men to be drawn to organic items. The study found that the demand for organic food is largely determined by awareness, money, and education.

This study influences customer purchasing decisions for organic goods, primarily related to food, vegetables and greens, clothing, furnishings, accessories and décor for homes, and cosmetics. The study is important since it aims to understand consumer purchasing behaviour, including frequency and manner of purchase as well as specific motivations for choosing organic products. The study's main goals are to ascertain consumer preferences for organic products, consumer purchasing patterns towards organic products, factors that influence consumers to purchase organic products, and important factors associated with consumers' purchasing decisions.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The research was conducted from January 2023 to March 2023. Primary data form the basis of the study. Using simple random sampling procedures, the primary data was gathered from a subset of users. 198 customers in Noida between the ages of 20 and 65 made up the sample. The data took into account both male and female participants. Customers were given structured surveys to complete. 25 research questions were included in the questionnaire to gather information about the respondents' socio-demographic and economic traits, purchasing habits, mode and frequency of purchase, reasons for choosing organic products, suggestions for marketing organic products, and issues related to the organic products that are currently on the market. The study's objectives were met and the psychological perspective of customers towards products on the market and marketing tactics was taken into consideration when framing the questions. Percentages of the replies were incorporated in the statistical analysis and are interpreted in light of relevant studies.

## 3. Results and Discussion

This study aims to understand consumer purchasing behaviour, including frequency and manner of purchase as well as specific motivations for choosing organic products. The study's primary goal is to determine how much consumer preference there is for organic goods. There were 135 females and 75 males in the sample. Among the 210 respondents, 68% of the females and 33% of the males were under the age of thirty, according to the age and gender distribution. The remaining ones ranged in age from less than 20 to more than 50. The respondents' sociodemographic and economic characteristics is shown in Table 1.

It contained information about their marital status, kind of family, level of education, type of occupation, range of income, and spending habits. The chart shows that of the 210 respondents, 84.76% were from nuclear families, 65.71% were married, and over 15.71% earned an average of Rs. 6,00,000 annually. Regardless of gender, 59.6% of the respondents were employed as professionals, and 43.80% had a professional degree. Their spending habits are as follows: 46.75% goes towards food, 36.36% goes towards housing and related services, and 7.01% goes towards toiletries and cosmetics. According to the Economic Times, Indians spend more on housing-related services, health care, and education than they do on food. According to the Labour Bureau's updated index, housing expenses decreased from 15.2% in 2001 to 16.87% currently, while other expenses, such as those for health and education, increased from 23% to 30% (Yogima Seth Sharma, 2020).

**Table 1:** The socio-demographic and economic profile of the respondents.

Details		Numbers	Percentage (%)
Type of Family	Nuclear	178	84.76
	Joint	32	15.23
Marital Status	Married	138	65.71
	Unmarried	52	24.76

	Separated	7	3.33
	Divorced	13	6.19
Income (Per Year)	>1,00,000	47	22.38
	1,00,000-3,00,000	62	29.52
	3,00,000-5,00,000	68	32.38
	<5,00,000	33	15.71
Occupation	Student	57	27.14
	Working Women	39	18.57
	Non-Working Women	26	12.38
	Professionals	124	59.04
	Retired	21	10.00
Education	High School	3	1.42
	Higher Secondary	6	2.85
	Graduates	50	23.80
	Post Graduates	56	26.6
	Professional	92	43.80
	Illiterates	3	1.42
Expenditure Pattern (in Rs. Per Year) *For average middle income family with salary of 6,00,000 per annum	Food	18000	46.75
	Greens & Veg	3000	7.79
	Apparels	1800	4.67
	Housing	14000	36.36
	Furnishings	1000	2.59
	Cosmetics & Toiletries	2700	7.01

The focus of this study was on customers' degree of preference for organic products. The selected organic products were divided into four categories: clothing, cosmetics, food and beverages, and home décor. Table 2 shows that preference levels for organic foods and cosmetics were 44.44% and 60.0%, respectively, for females and 13.33% and males, respectively. Almost 18.0% of them, regardless of gender, favoured eco-friendly clothes and accessories.

**Table 2:** Customers' inclination to purchase organic goods rather than commercial.

Organic Products	Female		Male	
	No.	%	No.	%
Food And Drinks	60	44.44	45	60.00
Clothing	19	14.07	11	14.66
Home Decor	18	13.33	9	12.00
Cosmetics	38	28.14	10	13.33
Total	135	100.0	75	100.0

**Table 3:** Factors contributing to the purchase of organic products

S. No.	Factors	Respondents	
		No.	%
1	Product Pricing	162	77.14
2	Product Packaging	98	46.66
3	Product quantity	156	74.28
4	Product quality	180	85.71
5	Shelf Life	99	47.14
6	Ingredients	162	77.14
7	Accessibility to product information	170	80.95
8	Product Availability	172	81.90
9	Affordability	120	57.14
10	User Friendly	85	40.47
11	Branded Product	74	35.23
12	Reuse/Recycle products	84	40.0
13	Ready to use products	109	51.90
14	Health and Safety concerns	175	83.33
15	Personal Values	158	75.23
16	Environmental safety	120	57.14
17	Eco Labels	145	69.04
18	Freshness	87	41.42
19	Flavour	93	44.28
20	Appearance	90	45.5
21	Quality Assurance Certification	200	93.4
22	Place of production of the product	74	35.23
23	Plant based products	68	32.38
24	Use and throw/one time use products	105	50.0
25	Self-made products	203	97.0

Those that buy organic items are known as "green consumers." In terms of the reasons for the customers' purchases of organic products, this is a diverse group. The consumers can be categorised as follows: Self-oriented consumers who purchase organic products to take care of their own health and the health of their families; Organic fanatics who believe that only organic products are valuable; and Common Sense Consumers whose environmental behaviour is based on reliable information and motivated by a desire to gain prestige (Klimczyk-Bryl, 2015).

The study's findings, which are displayed in Table 3, highlight the variables that customers take into account while selecting organic goods. AGMARK, Veg Mark, eco mark, and other assurance certifications of product quality were highly valued by 90% of the respondents. 97 percent of consumers, both male and female, chose homemade organic items over those found in markets and retail establishments. This demonstrates the breadth and promise of organic product entrepreneurship. The organic cosmetics market in India is expanding quickly, but one obstacle is the organic brands' limited availability (Misra R, & Singh D., 2016). Buyer behaviour research indicates that because 'characteristic' and 'natural' beautiful goods are linked to biodynamic and human-safe components, buyers gravitate towards them. It is required of women to arm themselves with information on personal hygiene, beauty products, shifts in consumer behaviour and lifestyle, and increased purchasing power. As consumers' preferences for natural goods, household items, and herbal beauty products rise, the market is also seeing a sharp expansion (Pharmaadda, 2020). Consumers' key focus in the cosmetics business will be on clean, transparent, and innovative products. Openness in innovation and ingredients suggests that products are more forthcoming with customers regarding claims, toxicity, efficacy, and ingredients (Indian Cosmetic Sector Forecast, 2015).

The primary purchasing behaviours of the participants comprised of (a) the frequency of purchasing organic items; (b) the mode of purchasing organic products; and (c) the reasons behind selecting organic products. The bulk of consumers chose organic products because they were more focused on high-quality food that was bought locally from reputable and trustworthy producers and suppliers. Other reasons for their preference included being more economical, safer for health, improving lifestyle, and improving their reputation in the community. In addition, they study food's nutritional and health benefits, avoid preservatives and allergies, and are interested in production processes, food safety, and methods of preparing and storing goods (Smiglak-Krajewska et al., 2021). Additionally, the consumers expressed dissatisfaction with the pricing of the organic items due to their high cost. They also discovered that a significant difficulty with organic items was their unavailability and problems with quantity.

### Summary and Conclusion

The study demonstrates how consumer behaviour affects organic food products significantly. Customers' shifting purchasing habits are largely due to the creative and dynamic marketing tactics used by organic food marketers. Customers are gravitating towards organic items as a result of their increased emphasis on environmental sustainability. The study provided an explanation for why individuals are aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the organic products that are on the market. Customers also anticipate that when there are more stores offering organic goods, the cost of such goods will become more competitive, making it easier for them to purchase. The study indicates that consumers' primary concerns were the high cost of organic products, their unavailability, their lack of trust in the credibility of organic food certificates, and advertising campaigns, even though they were aware of the health benefits of using organic products. These findings have implications for future research. In order to comprehend the marketing tactics and sensory analysis used for the promotion of organic products, future study should be conducted with entrepreneurs and all kinds of marketplaces, including internet markets. Additionally, a cross-study including a small number of identical items created by producers of organic products would shed additional light on the creation, promotion, and analytical elements of organic products. To encourage organic food consumption, green marketing, and sustainable product creation, more awareness-raising and action at the governmental and individual levels are needed. Information and education to be given to the public on how to recognise organic food and how to become skilled at creating homemade organic goods.

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