

# A Study on Consumer's Choice of Organic Products in Bangalore City

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**ABSTRACT** - Organic is the one of the fastest growing agricultural markets due to consumer's increased concern about their own health, the environment, the reported crises and emergencies worldwide on food safety, and environmental issues in recent decades. It has now become an alternative for an increasing number of consumers who are worried about the negatives consequences on the environment caused by chemical intensive production methods. The consumer's consciousness regarding the negative effects caused by the conventional farming, is driving them around the world to opt for organically grown or produced products. Through this paper, various factors which resulted in major shift in consumer behavior towards Organic products have been reviewed. The present study throws light on the vital factors affecting consumer behavior using a survey of 60 respondents in Bangalore in about 10 organic outlets spread across various locations. An open ended questionnaire was framed to study the consumer's reasons for choosing organic products such as quality and safety concerns, point of purchase, socio-demographic factors, environmental concern, for such products, influence of certifications on their purchase pattern and. finally the responses of the consumers was analyzed through various tests using SPSS tool.

To explore the potential for organic products, it is important to know how consumers choose their daily products focusing on quality and system. The aim of this paper is to study in depth, the choice of customers with respect to organic products.

**Key Words:** Organic Definition, Organic products classification, organic vs non organic products, Consumer buying behavior, Consumers' choice, Factors influencing choices.

**Target Audience:** Regular and occasional consumers of organic food products

## I. INTRODUCTION

Organic agriculture is very old concept to India and inhabitant to this land. A researcher cannot make start on organic farming without referring India and China. Early of 19th century, many across the world have capitalized substantially on India's highly sophisticated traditional agricultural systems, which had long applied many of the principles of organic farming as per Salvador V. Garibay and Katke Jyoti[40]. In producing organic food, India is the country with most producers (650000) in the world. According to Food and Agricultural Organization of United States cited by Willer, H., & Kilcher, L[54], India is producing cereals include triticale, rye, rice, maize, barley, oats, wheat and others (97.1 million hectares), citrus fruit including tangerine, pomelos/grapefruit, lemons and limes, oranges and others (0.75 million), temperate fruits(peaches/nectarines, cherries, plums, pears, apricots, apples and others), tropical and subtropical fruit(pineapples,

dates, kiwis, figs, mangos, Avocados, bananas and others), oil seeds(linseed, sesame, rape and turnip rape, peanuts, sunflower, soybeans and others), protein crops (26 million hectares), and vegetables. Along with this growth, the domestic market has become more diversified. India's organic boom is happening primarily in the metropolitan cities. In 2011, the total sales value of organic products, according to our estimates, was Rs 9.9 crore for Hyderabad, Rs 17.9 crore for Mumbai, and Rs 21.4 crore for Bangalore. That includes certified as well as non-certified products. The main reasons for this growth as pointed by Nina Osswald and Manoj K. Menon [33] in their study are, a growing awareness of the dangers of pesticide residues in food and growing disposable incomes of the urban middle classes. The report on "India Organic Food Market Forecast & Opportunities, 2019", also quoted by J. D. Heyes [18] pointed that the organic food market revenues in India are expected to grow at a CAGR [combined annual growth rate] of around 25% during 2014-19. The growth in sales of

organic food has reached to 72 billion US dollars in 2013. Market revenue has increased almost five times since 1999.

### Indian scenario on Organic Products

Organic products are grown under a system of agriculture without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides with an environmentally and socially responsible approach. This is a method of farming that works at grass root level preserving the reproductive and regenerative capacity of the soil, good plant nutrition, and sound soil management, produces nutritious food rich in vitality which has resistance to diseases.

India is bestowed with lot of potential to produce all varieties of organic products due to its various agro climatic regions. In several parts of the country, the inherited tradition of organic farming is an added advantage. This holds promise for the organic producers to tap the market which is growing steadily in the domestic and export market.

As per the available statistics from FIBL & IFOAM Year Book 2018, India's rank in terms of World's Organic Agricultural land was 9th and in terms of total number of producers was 1st as per the 2018 data.

The Government of India has implemented the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP). The national programme involves the accreditation programme for Certification Bodies, standards for organic production, promotion of organic farming etc. The NPOP standards for production and accreditation system have been recognized by European Commission and Switzerland for unprocessed plant products as equivalent to their country standards. Similarly, USDA has recognized NPOP conformity assessment procedures of accreditation as equivalent to that of US. With these recognitions, Indian organic products duly certified by the accredited certification bodies of India are accepted by the importing countries.

### Area

As on 31st March 2018, total area under organic certification process (registered under National Programme for Organic Production) in India is **3.56 million Hectare** (2017-18). This includes 1.78 million ha (50%) cultivable area and another 1.78 million Hectare (50%) for wild harvest collection. Among all the states, **Madhya Pradesh** has covered largest area under organic certification followed by Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. During 2016, Sikkim has achieved a remarkable distinction of converting its entire cultivable land (more than 76000 ha) under organic certification.

### Production

India produced around **1.70 million MT** (2017-18) of certified organic products which includes all varieties of food products namely Oil Seeds, Sugar cane, Cereals & Millets, Cotton, Pulses, Medicinal Plants, Tea, Fruits,

Spices, Dry Fruits, Vegetables, Coffee etc. The production is not limited to the edible sector but also produces organic cotton fiber, functional food products etc. Among different states Madhya Pradesh is the largest producer followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. In terms of commodities Oil seeds are the single largest category followed by Sugar crops, Cereals and Millets, Fiber crops, Pulses, Medicinal, Herbal and Aromatic plants and Spices and Condiments.

### Exports

The total volume of export during 2017-18 was **4.58 lakh MT**. The organic food export realization was around **INR 3453.48 crore (515.44 million USD)**. Organic products are exported to USA, European Union, Canada, Switzerland, Australia, Israel, South Korea, Vietnam, New Zealand, Japan etc. In terms of export value realization Oilseeds (47.6%) lead among the products followed by Cereals and millets (10.4%), Plantation crop products such as Tea and Coffee (8.96%), Dry fruits (8.88%), Spices and condiments (7.76%) and others.

## II. NEED FOR THE STUDY

According to estimates by Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority of India (APEDA), India produced around 2.67 million tonnes of certified organic products including oilseeds, sugarcane, cereals & millets, cotton, pulses, medicinal plants, tea, fruits, spices, dry fruits, vegetables and coffee. The country also produces organic cotton fibre and functional food products, followed by sugar crops, cereals and millets, fibre crops, pulses, medicinal, herbal and aromatic plants and spices and condiments adding the total volume of export during 2018-19 to 6.14 lakh tonnes.

Despite the overall growth aspects in terms production and area of cultivation, still the household consumption with respect to production is less than 10%. Shortage of availability, lack of awareness and substantial price differentials were among the many other reasons observed by researchers and industry as the main cause for this.

An organic product with respect to domestic market has not grown as healthy when compared to the export market and it is complex to estimate the size and trends in the growing market. Commonly, metros such as Kolkata, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore with its diverse population remain as the major market for organic products. Also it is important to identify the actual consumers of organic products, which organic products are most preferred, where do they purchase from and what motivates them to purchase before carrying out any further specific studies.

Hence, the current paper — “A study on consumer's choice of organic products in Bangalore city” was undertaken.

### 1. Objective of the study:

The main objectives are

1. To study the demographic profile of the respondents in this study
2. To identify the consumers' preferences towards organic products
3. To identify the factors that influence the consumer's purchase decisions towards organic products
4. To identify scope for study on specific organic product category

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Definition of Organic:

There is no common definition of "Organic" due to the fact that different countries have different standard for products to be certified "organic". In simple words organic products are minimally processed to maintain the integrity of the product without artificial ingredients, preservatives or chemicals. Organic products are obtained by processes friendly to the environment, by cultivation techniques that consider both the attributes of the final product and the production methods.

A wide range of consumers of organic and non-organic products were addressed and scrutinized to obtain their observations and visions towards organic products. All organic consumers are not having the same method of approach towards organic products.

The Definition of the word "Organic", according to USDA (National Standards Board of the US Department of Agriculture) an ecological management production system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity. It is based on the minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance "ecological harmony".

**Some Organic companies:** There are various Companies producing organic products in India. They are Organic Mandya, Mother earth, Madhav ashram trust, Art of Living, Farm 2 Kitchen, Big Basket, Pro-nature organic, Orignnel Organic Food, Nature's hub, Nisarga Organic, ISKCON Organic Outlet, Karnataka Organic Farming centre and many others.

Hence it has become very necessary now a days not only to improve public health condition, but also to reduce the loss incurred due to environmental pollution. It helps to restore food quality and food safety and also reduces agricultural costs and improve the quality leading to a healthy and blissful life.

**Shift from Non Organic to Organic products:**

In accordance with the (BCG report,2009) around fifty percent of consumers choose not to buy environmental friendly green products for various reasons such as unaware of green products (34%), only few option (16%) that too it is expensive (11%). Few felt (2%) the quality of the products are poor comparing with the conventionally produced and some of them don't trust (4%) the label information and the certification. Ling, C. Y [27] in her study observed that green products are costlier than the conventional products because higher cost is acquired by the process, material and to obtain certified eco labels. Hence, the important considerations among the consumers when they buy organic food were found to be taste, health and environmental benefits, whereas the price and availability of such products are the major obstacles by Lockie et al [28] and McEachern and McClean [31]

Leila H.M and Mehdi Zahaf [26] in their studies found that customers want to buy organic products because of their lifestyle, environment and the health benefits. Most of them have lack of trust on companies and as a result they prefer to buy from local producers or open markets and sometimes from specialty store or supermarket. But they identify and recognize the difference between organic and non-organic products with the help of label information and certifications.

On the other hand, Beharrel and MacFie [5] and Jolly et al [20] in their studies observed that consumers held positive attitudes toward organic products because they conceived that organically grown products were healthier and safer than conventional alternatives. At the same time, other by products of organic food products like fruits and herbs for beverages, cosmetics, vegetables for dyes etc are catching the market and need to be advocated through extensive awareness drives, promotions etc to reach the consumer in a larger way.

## IV. ORGANIC PRODUCT CLASSIFICATION

An **organic product** is made from materials produced by organic agriculture. There are different types of organic products. However organic product is more known for food items like organic grocery, organic vegetables, organic certified food etc. Most appropriately organic products can be explained as any products that is made or cultivated organically should be treated as an organic product. To be marketed as "organic" products require certification and must comply with certain guidelines. The list involves specific substances that can be used to produce organic material involving crops and livestock.

### a. Organic Food Products:

The Department for Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) states that:

'Organic food is the product of a farming system which avoids the use of man-made fertilisers, pesticides; growth

regulators and livestock feed additives. Irradiation and the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or products produced from or by GMOs are generally prohibited by organic legislation.

There are many benefits involving organic food products. Organic foods contain fewer pesticides. This means that things such as insecticide that is used in most agricultural practices are eliminated. Farming without pesticides is also better for the environment.

**Major products produced in India by organic farming:**

Type	Products
Commodity	Tea, coffee, rice ,wheat
Spices	Cardamom, black pepper, white pepper, ginger, turmeric, vanilla, mustard, tamarind, clove, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, chili
Pulses	Red gram, black gram
Fruits	Mango, banana, pineapple, passion fruit, sugarcane, orange, cashew nut, walnut
Vegetables	Okra, brinjal, garlic, onion, tomato, potato
Oil seeds	Sesame, castor, sunflower
Others	Cotton, herbal extracts

Source: Org-Marg, 2012 (Field survey and the publication - Organic and Biodynamic farming, Government of India, planning commission).

**b. Organic Clothing Products:**

The organic industry has started with organic food because people are very much conscious about a healthy lifestyle. But now consumers are also concerned about environment, so they stated looking at sustainable organic clothing. In recent time sustainability is a leading characteristic of fashion product. Clothing products made with such raw materials which have been produced by using organic methods are referred to as Organic Clothing. By definition, organic clothing products are such products whose raw material have been produced using organic methods and the product has been produced using eco-friendly method including the machinery and equipment.

**Clothing Brands going Organic across the world:**

Popular clothing brands like Patagonia, are labelled as organic by using 100 percent organic cotton for many of its styles. Even big brands like Nike, Adidas, and Levi's are moving towards a more organic brand. These are 3 of 13 clothing companies that have committed to the 2025 Sustainable Cotton Challenge. Brands who participate in this challenge are committed to using 100 percent sustainable cotton by 2025.

Many esteemed clothes brands have started using organic fabrics in their collections. For instance- Nike, Patagonia and Timberland use some percentage of organic fabrics in sportswear. Some of international designers like Rogan Gregory, Katherine Hamnett and Stella McCartney use organic cotton in their designer outfits.

Raymonds have introduced an entire range of garments made from bamboo fabrics. The shirts and trousers made from bamboo fabric possess anti-bacterial and anti-static property, they have extra capacity to retain moisture thus in summer season the wearer would experience cool even under scorching heat. Raymonds also uses soybean fabrics in their trendy clothes line, as this fabric provides extra shine and moisture absorbing property. They have also introduced a fibre called Casein made from combination of milk protein, super 120s wool and silk. It is used for making suiting-shirts and jackets.

An international brand named BSC has launched their collection of organic towels in India. They are even planning to launch kids wear and home furnishing range in coming years. Some private labels also have experienced success and overwhelming response in organic clothing. One such name is Aura Herbal Wear based in Ahmedabad city of India. They have a wide range of organic fabrics of cotton, linen, silk, etc. made from medicinal herbs and dyed with herbal dyes. Levis has also announced to launch a range of women and men jeans collection made up from 100% organic cotton. It would be named as Levis Eco right now available in the U.S. stores of the company

**c. Organic Personal Care Products:**

Unlike food products, the USDA does not regulate the term "organic" as it applies to personal care products. A personal care product can be deemed organic if it contains agricultural ingredients and can meet the USDA organic production standards. Once certified by the USDA it can fall into one of four categories: "100 percent organic", "organic", "made with organic ingredients", or "made with less than 70 percent organic ingredients." A personal care product can only claim they are USDA-certified organic if they meet the qualifications of the USDA.

**Organic Personal Care and Cosmetic Products Market**

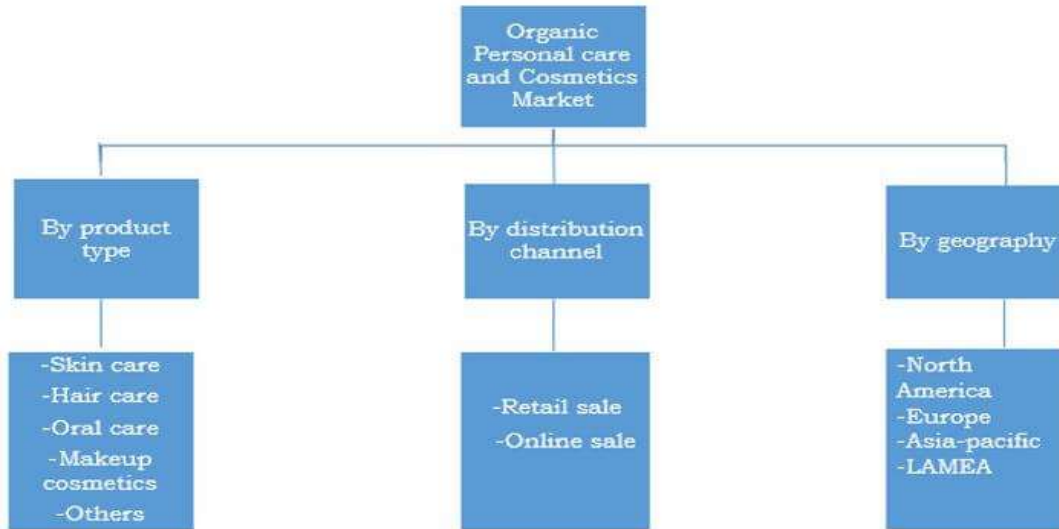
As per a report in Allied Market Research, Shrikant Chaudary, the organic personal care and cosmetics products market is expected to reach \$19.8 billion by 2022, registering a CAGR of 10.2% during the forecast period 2016-2022. Personal care and cosmetics are mixtures of chemical compounds or organic ingredients, used to enhance the overall appearance or are used for personal hygiene. Personal care products can fall under a wide variety of products such as deodorant, makeup, tampons, lotion, shampoo, etc. Chemicals in these personal care products can be associated with a wide variety of concerns including things like hormone disruption, allergies, and infertility. Companies are hearing the concerns of these chemicals from consumers and trying to diversify. Many big makeup companies such as Avon and Revlon are removing phthalates from their products. Johnson & Johnson removed many chemicals from their products including parabens, formaldehyde, and certain fragrance

chemicals. Cosmetic brands such as Laurel and Rose Mira are both 100 percent organic and have a wide array of skin care products.

Similar to organic food, organic personal care products also have a higher price tag. While organic personal care

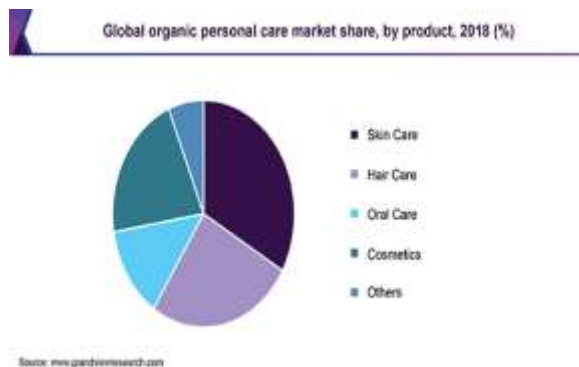
**World organic personal care and cosmetics market segmentation**

products may lack many of the harmful chemicals that consumers like to stay clear of, this cleaner alternative comes with the cost of a higher price.



Source: Shrikant Chaudhari, May 2016, www.alliedmarketresearch.com.

Organic ingredients are incorporated in cosmetic products including lipsticks, nail polishes, fragrances, and bronzing powders. Growing consumption of these products in China, Brazil, and India in light of increasing population of working class women is expected to promote the growth.



**V. CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR**

The topic of consumer behavior is one of the massively studied topics by the researchers and marketers in the past and still being studied. One of the common views by Kotler and Keller [23] is that understanding consumer behavior has become a factor that has a direct impact on the overall performance of the businesses. Another view suggested by Lancaster [58] is that understanding consumer behavior has become crucial especially due to fierce competition in retail industry worldwide.

One of such studies was conducted by Acebron et al [1] of consumer buying behaviour. The aim of the study was to analyze the impact of previous experience on buying behaviour of fresh foods. In their studies the authors used structural equation model in order to identify the relationship between the habits and previous experience on the consumer buying decision. Their findings show that personal habits and previous experience of the consumers have a direct impact on the consumers’ purchase decision. Lea and Worsley [25] also carried out studies to learn the five stages of consumer decision making process. The researcher focused on the facts that affect the consumer decision making process, in particular demographic factors such as gender, education, income and marital status. Five Stages Model of consumer decision making process has also been studied by a number of other researchers. Although different researchers offer various tendencies towards the definitions of five stages, all of them have common views as they describe the stages in similar ways. One of the common models of consumer decision making process has been offered by Blackwell et al [6] According to him, the five stages of consumer decision making process are followings: *problem/need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision made and post-purchase evaluation.*

It is important to note that The Five Stage Model is not the only model related to consumer decision-making, and there are also a range of competing models that include Stimulus-

Organism-Response Model of Decision Making developed by Hebb in 1950's, Prescriptive Cognitive Models, The Theory of Trying by Bagozzi and Warsaw [3], Model of Goal Directed Behaviour by Perugini and Bagozzi [36] and others.

## 2. Factors Impacting Consumer Buyer Behaviour

It has been established by researchers that the consumer buying behaviour is the outcome of the needs and wants of the consumer and they purchase to satisfy these needs and wants. Although it sounds simple and clear, these needs can be various depending on the personal factors such as age, psychology and personality. Also there are some other external factors which are broad and beyond the control of the consumer.

A number of researches have been carried out by academics and scholars on identifying and analyzing factors affecting the consumers' buying behaviour and as a result, various types of factors have been identified. These factors have been classified into different types and categories in different ways by different authors. Wiedmann et al [52] classified them into internal and external factor. On the other hand, Wier [53] divided them into social, personal and psychological factors. As per Rao [37] despite the fact that they have been classified into different groups by different authors, they are similar in scope and purpose.

There is a wide range of factors that can affect consumer behaviour in different ways. These factors are divided by Hoyer et al. [19] into four broad categories: situational, personal, social and cultural factors.

**The following articles were collected and reviewed to identify the research variables (factors influencing consumer buying). They include:**

### Consumer's socio-demographic factors:

Chouichom et al [10] in their paper, identified the influence of socio-demographic variables of consumers on their purchase pattern for organic products in Bangkok and from their analysis recommended that the demand for organic products rises on account with age, gender, education and income.

According to Lea and Worsley [25] and Van Doorn and Verhoef [49], younger members in a house and women consider organic food more important and include it in their purchase. Similar studies by Davis et al [12] and Wandel and Bugge [51] have found that women are more interested in organic food than men. These studies are also supported by Koivisto Hursti and Magnusson [22] who noted that a higher proportion of women holds positive attitudes towards organic foods and consumes organic foods

Similarly, Jolly DA and Norris K [20] found that most organic food buyers tend to be younger than non-buyers. Also researchers, Thompson and Kidwell [46] and Fotopoulos and Krystallis [15] suggested in their research

that young people are more environmentally conscious but less willing to pay more due to their lower purchasing power, whereas older people are more health conscious and more willing to pay an extra price for organic food.

In the demographic portrayal of consumers, income is another factor considered important in influencing purchase intention of organic food. According to Awad T.A [2], income was always perceived to have a positive relation to green consumer behavior due to the general assumption that most green products have higher prices than conventional ones. He found that higher income households are more likely to form positive attitudes and purchase more organic food.

Besides that, the level of education has also been reported as a significant factor affecting consumer attitudes towards purchase of organic food. According to Storstad and Bjorkhaug [44], organic food consumers tend to be more highly educated than non-organic consumers. According to Wier & Calverley [53], this can be because people with higher education require more information on the production and process methods of organics and are much more willing to pay a premium for organic food.

### i. Consumer's Awareness:

According to Soler et al.[43] and Freeland-Graves and Nitzke[14], awareness and knowledge are the two major critical factors affecting consumer's attitude towards organic products. Chakrabarti [8] and Compagnoni et al [11] had conducted several researches to determine the extent to which knowledge, awareness, attitude and behaviour of consumers was likely to affect the purchase pattern for organic food products among developed and developing countries. Squires [45] claimed that purchase pattern, knowledge and awareness are slightly higher in developed countries in comparison with developing countries. He also stated that in countries like India, low awareness level is one of the main reason for the organic products to still remain in its primary developing stage

### ii. Health Benefits for the consumer:

Loureiro et al [29] and Nair [32] proposed that the increased consciousness on consumer well-being, food safety and environmental awareness has resulted a gradual grow thin people's preference for organic products. As per the studies of Chinnici et al [9], Harper and Makatouni, [17] and O'Donovan and McCarthy [34], consumers always had a positive approach regarding the consumption of organic products and they consider it to be healthier than the conventionally grown products. Consumer's tend to see products which are termed as organic to be locally produced or imported, which provides detail information regarding the country from where the product is been produced, the level of freshness it possesses and how far the product is been beneficial to their health.

### iii. Environmental consciousness of the consumers:

Consumer's attitude has progressed over the years mainly due to ethical concerns towards the environment. McKinsey piloted an analysis and discovered that consumer's from countries such as Canada, United States, China and India are more anxious about the negative effects of using pesticides and other chemical compounds in the farms. Seyfang [42] stated that the safety concerns for environment is a combined stimulus that in turn is directed towards ethical consumerism. The increase in consumer consciousness for environmental concerns has raised the demand for environment friendly products. Gradually a transformation occurred in consumer's attitudes and purchase intentions when they realized the harm caused to the environment as a result of conventional farming.

### iv. Availability of Organic Products in store:

Due to the growing demand for organic foods in the market, conventional supermarkets also have added organic foods to their shelves in order to make organic foods available to their customers. Consumers can purchase organic foods through the conventional supermarket also rather than only purchase them from organic stores. With reference to a study by Dettmann & Dimitri [13], organic foods were found to be more accessible to consumers due to greater marketing strategies involved in promoting organic products through conventional supermarkets and large retail stores. However, other research findings suggested that, it was not easy to get organic food everywhere. Evidences showed that consumers found difficulty in locating environmentally directed products because of the lack of information as per Brown [7]. Previous studies by Beard worth et al [57]; Davies et al [12] also found that lack of organic food availability in the store was considered as one of the impediments for consumers to purchase organic products.

### v. Certifications and Labelling concerning organic products:

Consumer's knowledge is the key factor that decides what and how consumers choose to buy a product. The respondent's knowledge are highly influenced by the nature and value of information accessible for them. Factors such as awareness regarding various certifications and labels, advertisements, processing etc concerning organic products play a crucial role in knowledge enhancement. Certification is vital factor which inspires consumers to purchase organic products. In order to attain consumer's trust, it is important that farmers need to certify their products through government certification procedures.

### vi. Quality of organic products:

Cultivation of Organic crops eliminates the use of insecticides and added crop preserving compounds, which are injurious for human health. Thus, food safety is actively encouraged by governments, healthcare industry experts, academician's etc. Thompson & Kidwell [46] advocate that the physical appearance of an organic product is directly related its skin-deep quality. As per the research done so far, researchers claims that consumers are not dotting towards its outer appearance. Thompson & Kidwell [46] argues that most people considered these effects to be insignificant while purchasing food products which are organic. Certain studies reveal that consumers consider flavor as another decisive factor for its purchase. Research shows that consumers expects organic products to have higher nutritional value and taste when compared with the normal substitutes.

### vii. Lifestyle Factors:

The purchase of organic products turns out to be a sign of luxury and has become the latest trend among the elite class of the society. It portrayed the purchasing power and luxurious lifestyle of consumers with greater disposable income. Canavari and Olson [x] claimed that in certain countries like Italy and United States, people consider to purchase and consume organic products as an indicator of their status symbol. Gracia and Magistris [16] and Santucci [41] proposed that consumers with high income consume organic food products with an intention to showcase their level of awareness, attitude as well as status symbol. Another major factor which prompts consumer awareness is its brand recognition. There are certain specific brands which are opted by the consumers which seems to have high quality and hence such considerations are likely to affect their buying behavior. Organic consumption is also linked to the adoption of alternative lifestyles: vegetarianism, environmentalism and alternative medicine as per Torjusen et al [47] which was also voiced by Farinello and Pellegrini [35]

### viii. Variety Offered:

Non-availability and range organic food in the store is one of the most important barriers for consumer's purchasing. The consumer attitude is highly unfavorable towards organic food due to availability and price. There are vital reasons like high price, satisfaction with conventional food, limited choice and availability, lack of perceived value and lack of trust which prevent consumers from buying organic food.

### ix. Better Taste:

The taste of the organic products was found to alter the purchase decision of consumers. Krystallis and Chrysohoidis [24] stated that organically produced food or products is safer, more nutritious, and tastes better than the

non-organic produced products. This is true as according to Saba and Messina [39] who in their study recognized that organic products were healthier, more nutritious, environmental friendly, and better taste when compare to non-organic products. Besides, Radman [38] also stated that one of the motivations that motivate consumers to consume in organic products is the belief that it has a superior taste compare to non-organic products.

**x. Recommendation by others (Subjective norms)**

Subjective norms are one of the important factors which influence the consumer to purchase certain product. Especially, in a country like India where there is high social interaction, people tend to follow the reference group leader who in turn influence the group towards the certain behavior and action. Torjusen et al [47] examined the factors influencing organic food consumptions in China market. The influence of attitudes and important others (subjective norms) on intention to consumer were explored. The findings revealed that both attitude and the subjective norm influenced intention to consume.

## **VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1. Statement of problem**

Organic Products have a major contribution to the country's economy and also to the livelihood of many agriculturists. It has created employment to many intermediaries and also found its place in the production of many products in the markets. However the pertinent question is that, are we aware of the products? Are we ready to use the products without any concerns as procured from the sources? If yes why and if not why? Why are these products not as preferred as the regular products available in the market? Is visibility the reason? Or the lack of awareness in acquiring the product is the reason for their alternating choice. However owing to the changing trends in the market and rising health issues from lifestyle patterns of consumers, demand for organic products is on the upswing. However lack of information regarding these products, places of availability and other related factors is hindering the consumer from preferring these products. There is a lot of scope for improvement with respect to the product, prices, promotion and making the organic products available to the customers. This study attempted to gain knowledge about consumers' outlook towards organic food product consumption. And also to see whether if there is any potential this might have for changing his purchase behavior towards organic products sold through various establishments in Bangalore as there are many studies conducted by researchers throughout the world for regular products available across the markets.

## **2. Research Design**

### **Location for the study:**

While considering the organic markets in Bangalore, the direct interaction between producers and consumers gives "a sense of security" to those who are looking out for healthy organic products. At the same time, organic farmers are able to connect with the growing number of health-conscious customers thereby a major portion of the profit earned goes directly to the farmers. Additionally, organic food products seems to be attractive for those who are health and environment conscious. Hence, Bangalore with its diverse population from not only across the country but also from across the world, has been chosen as an ideal location for the study.

### **Organic shops in Bangalore:**

There are more than 2000 supermarkets and departmental stores out of which around 30% of the shops are selling organic food products and more than 700 specialty organic stores in Bangalore. They sell organic products that are locally produced and transported from other states of India and also from outside India.. Hence the retail stores as well as specialty stores for organic food products are considered for the study. Some areas in Bangalore have as many as 10 organic stores in its location within a radius of 5 kms whereas other areas have 2 to 3. So stores were chosen so that these was a balanced representation along with regular retail stores.

### **Sampling:**

Purposive sampling method is used for the primary data collection. Since the focus group is organic consumers, the respondents were purposively chosen on the basis of people who use (or) have used organic food products. Data was collected with the help of structured questionnaire from the customers who visited supermarkets either regularly or occasionally which has organic food sections in it and also from exclusive organic food stores located in Bangalore.

The questionnaire was designed to record the responses on consumer's demographics aspects, choice of the type of organic products they prefer, the preferred way of purchase like visiting the stores or online or directly from the producers etc; reasons or factors which have motivated/influenced their purchase of organic products.

Questionnaire was a very basic one which gave a clarity of who are the organic customers (demographic factors), where do they buy (choice of method of purchase), what do they buy (types of organic products), and finally why do they buy (factors influencing their buying behavior).

### **Sample Size:**

A small sample of 100 consumers were administered the questionnaire where 60 responses were found appropriate and chosen to conduct a preliminary study.



**Data collection:**

The proposed questionnaire was administered to consumers who were there to buy organic products only. Most of the consumers were willing to fill in the questionnaire by themselves. However, for others, the researcher personally filled in for them.

**Data Analysis:**

Since it was a study to understand the basics of organic product preference, excel was used and the interpretation was made accordingly.

**VII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Table-1: Demographics profile of Customers:**

Demographic Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	21	23%
Female	39	77%
<b>Age</b>		
Below 20	6	10%
21-30	17	28%
31-40	22	32%
41-50	9	15%
51 and above	6	10%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	47	78%
Unmarried	13	22%
<b>Locality</b>		
Urban	49	82%
Semi Urban	11	18%
<b>Family Type</b>		
Nuclear	43	72%
Joint Family	17	28%
<b>Educational Qual.</b>		
10 <sup>th</sup>	10	17%
12 <sup>th</sup>	10	17%
Undergraduate	18	30%
PG/ Professional	22	36%
<b>Occupational Status</b>		
Self-Employed	6	10%
	18	30%
Job in Private Sector	11	18%
Job in Public Sector	9	15%
Retired	9	15%
Housewife	7	12%
Student		
<b>Monthly Household Income</b>		
	01	2%
	11	18%
Below 10000	12	20%
10000-20000	23	38%
20000-40000	13	22%
40000-50000		
50000 and above		

**Interpretation:**

The above table shows the demographic profiling of consumers who are the customers of organic products and visited the stores to purchase either one or other products. Altogether sixty respondents participated in the survey. Out

of the data collected, 23% of respondents were male and 77 % were females. Hence it is observed that more number of females preferred to buy organic products than male consumers. Coming to the age group, the age group 31-40 years preferred to buy more organic food products as compared to other age groups of respondents. This depicts that respondents belonging to this age group are well aware about organic products, so they purchased more compared to the other groups. Considering the locality to which the respondents belongs, 82% of the respondents belong to Urban area, married are 78% and 72% of people belonging to nuclear families preferred organic products than people in joint families. Higher income groups (i.e. between 40000- 50000 rupees per month), working professionals with either stable jobs or high profile jobs in corporates (30% of private sector job holders) and higher qualified group ( 36% PG or professional groups) of respondents preferred to buy organic products.

**Table-2: Types Of Organic Food Products Preferred:**

Product type	Number of respondents	Percentage
<b>Organic Food Products</b>		
*Commodities (Tea, coffee, rice, wheat etc.)	44	73%
*Spices (Cardamom, black pepper, white, pepper, ginger, turmeric, vanilla, mustard, tamarind, clove, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, chili)	35	58%
*Pulses (Red gram, black gram etc)	6	10%
*Vegetables (Okra, brinjal, garlic, onion, tomato, potato, green leaf etc)	60	100%
*Fruits (Mango, banana, pineapple, passion fruit, sugarcane, orange etc)	49	82%
*Oil seeds (Sesame, castor, sunflower etc)	6	10%
Others (Millets, Cotton, herbal extracts, nuts etc)	25	42%

Source: Primary Research

**Interpretation:**

The result on the percentage of type of organic food products purchased shows that consumers are more health conscious, want better taste and less harmful food. Organic vegetables and fruits are the most frequently purchased products at 100% and 82% respectively. Surprisingly commodities and spices are the next sought after products at 73% and 58%. Other products like millets, herbal extracts used for various home remedies for hair, face and home medicines was at 42%. Cooking oil and pulses are bought occasionally (10%).

**Table-3: Types Of Organic Personal Care Products Preferred:**

Product Type	Number of	Percentage
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	Respondents	
<b>Organic Personal Care Products</b>		
Skin care ( creams, Lotions, makeup etc)	45	75%
Haircare (Oil, Shampoo, gels etc)	50	83%
Oral Care(toothpaste, toothbrush, mouth wash etc)	40	67%
Cosmetics( makeup articles)	35	58%

Source: Primary research

**Interpretation:**

The result on the percentage of type of organic personal care product purchased showed that with increasing pollution, work related stress, and receding hair line, hair care products at 83%, are the most sought after products as the general idea was that organic hair oil will have natural oils, medicinal herbs where skin care products with floral extracts, fruit bases, natural products like lentil powders, pastes, for face packs etc. followed at 75 %. Oral care products at 67% was a surprise but survey showed consumers are now conscious about oral hygiene and natural dental cleaning products like neem sticks, cinnamon based tooth powder, clove oil are once again sought after. Other make up items are less preferred at 58 % as some consumers are still more into brands like Maybelline, Lakme and Others.

**Table-4: Types Of Organic Clothing Products Preferred:**

Product Type	Number of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Organic Clothing Products</b>		
Apparels(Mens' clothes, Womens' clothes etc)	42	70%
Home Furnishings	38	63%
Baby Products(diapers etc)	28	47%

Source: Primary data

**Interpretation:**

The result on percentage of Organic Clothing Products preference shows that 70% of the respondents (both men and women) together preferred organic apparels. Home furnishings were almost equally preferred by people who had babies and skin sensitiveness. Baby products like diapers, blankets, towels etc were at 47%.

**Table-5 Types of Purchase Point Preferred:**

Point of Purchase options	Number of respondents	Percentage
Retail Malls	30	50%
Super Markets/Hypermarkets	12	20%
Specialty Stores	39	65%
Teleshopping	14	23%

Directly from Producers	7	12%
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Source: Primary Research

**Interpretation:**

As per the survey, results claims that majority of the consumers (65%) prefer to purchase regularly from specialized organic food shops while others (50%) purchase them from retail malls and super markets and (14%) through teleshopping since they could get organic products at discounted rate. Only (7%) bought directly from producers because it gives them more confidence about the quality of products bought. Few consumers (20%) also buy from supermarkets and hypermarkets along with other regular products.

**Table-6: Factors Influencing Buying Decision of Consumer**

Most important factor influencing buying decision	Number of respondents	Percentage
Consumer awareness	27	45%
Quality of products	60	100%
Better Taste	45	75%
Health Benefits	55	92%
Environmental Consciousness	45	75%
Availability	25	42%
Variety	30	50%
Lifestyle	29	48%
Price	20	33%
Labelling and Certification	10	17%
Recommendation by friends	18	30%

Source: Primary Research

**Interpretation:**

The results revealed that respondents believed that consumption of organic products can make them healthy. Secondly they could make their portion of contribution towards conserving environment by purchasing organic products. Improved taste, product quality and better service and recommendations from friends are the other factors which made them to go for organic products. Hence these are the most influencing factors on organic food purchase. The least influencing factors are price, product availability. Only some consumers were aware of labelling and organic certification while purchasing organic products. While sizable number of people purchased because of their friend's recommendation strengthening the fact that word of mouth is an important tool for influencing consumers' in their purchase decision.

**VIII. SUMMARY**

As per the survey conducted, the results reveal that a major portion of the respondents were aware of the benefits

gained from the consumption of organic products. On the other hand, the level of awareness and consumption was comparatively more among the educated and higher income respondents. Even though the consumers are aware about the superiority of the organic products when compared with the conventional products, the consumption rate of organic food products is comparatively more than other product categories like personal care and clothing despite high price, limited availability of stores and promotions in media.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended for:

- Constant support from government to restructure the existing mechanisms.
- Providing assistance to the farmers to enhance the production leading to better quality and availability of organic products
- Creating awareness on organic products among the local buyers for enhanced purchases
- Companies to clearly define its communication parameters to create positive image, better visibility and understanding about the benefits of using organic products

### **IX. CONCLUSION**

Consumer behavior acts as a key determinant not only while purchasing organic products but also non organic products. Hence ways and means to maintain loyal customers should be adopted. The sellers should explore the unidentified factors which prevents the consumers from purchasing organic products. Marketers needs to bring out innovative strategies for retaining the customers and convert them into loyal customers. The current research enlightens specific questions of how organics can be made available in different retail store formats, how it can be more affordable and make them an indispensable part consumers' life. By conducting a systematic survey through a questionnaire for the consumers, it can be said that many consumers are aware about organic products and its business. They also have a positive attitude towards it. The study brought out the fact that consumers do consider the benefits of consuming organic products which reflects the change in their attitude when making the purchase decision.

### **X. SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

In this study, it was found that Organic product consumption is definitely on the upswing owing to the fact that they do not contain harmful chemicals leading to health hazards both internally and externally. Especially food products are most sought after due to the increased publicity of various diseases and their aftermaths. Environmental consciousness and lifestyle based stress is leading to more number of people opting for balanced nutritious food which can be obtained through organic foods, specifically in cities like Bangalore and other metros.

Hence a detailed in-depth study on the consumption of organic food products in metros with cosmopolitan population like Bangalore can be taken up.

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