

IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON AWARENESS TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD

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Abstract:

Consumers' knowledge of organic food relates to their openness to learning about and recognizing the qualities of organic food products. His or her decision to purchase organic food products may be influenced by awareness. Several factors that affects the awareness towards the organic products are studied, the socio demographic factors, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Products quality affects the level of awareness towards organic food and these factors has been focused on this study. The study population is Nurses in Tirunelvelicity; total sample collected for this study is 176.

Keywords: Organic, environment, health, availability, awareness, Product quality.

Introduction:

Awareness and knowledge have played a major role in influencing customers' attitudes and behaviours towards organic foods, which is anticipated to fuel market expansion for these products. People are progressively moving towards organic food items that have not undergone any form of chemical processing or treatment as they become more aware of the negative impacts of inorganic crops and foods and the positive advantages of organic food items. With rising income levels, a growing interest in health foods, and changes in consumer behaviour, India's emerging organic food industry is quickly becoming the organic food market with the highest rate of growth worldwide.. Consumers should be made aware of the advantages of consuming organic products, and those who believe the price of organic products is premium should also take into account the danger of doing so and allocate a sizable number of money for medical treatment. Paying a premium amount today for organic goods is an investment in your future health.

Objective:

- To study the demographic profile of the respondents
- To analyse the difference in Awareness, Health Consciousness, Environmental Consciousness, Availability and Product quality with respect to the demographic factors profile of the respondents.

Literature Review:

Dipeolu, A. O., Philip, B. B., Aiyelaagbe, I. O. O., Akinbode, S. O., & Adedokun, T. A. (2009). This study has shown that consumers are indeed aware of the fact that vegetables can be grown organically. They also agree that organic vegetables are healthier, tastier, have no harmful effects and are of better quality than the conventional vegetables.

Akhtar, S., & Nisar, G. (2016). The study was conducted to find the awareness towards organic food amongst Adolescents. It was found that majority of the Adolescents were in the age group of 16 years. Majority of the Adolescents were having awareness towards organic foods. However, Adolescent girls were more aware towards Organic foods than Adolescent boys.

Mahes Kumar, S., & Vijaypriya, M. A. (2019), the result their study shows that the general people are aware about the organic product. The main source of getting awareness through is social media. The

social media plays a vital role for awareness of organic products. Through the promotion of shops the general people are got some knowledge thoughts about the organic products. The peoples started search on organic products benefits and its usage from social media. The main source of awareness towards organic products among the general public is through social media and public promotion.

Singh, N. K., & Alagawadi, M. V. (2020). The urban customers in Kalaburagi City should be educated about organic food process, cultivation, health benefits, environment sustainability and the usage of toxic and chemical substance in food. The research concludes that consumer awareness plays a vital role in determining the buying behavioral aspect for selecting organic food products.

Malkanthi, S. P., Rathnachandra, S. D., & Weerasinghe, W. R. N. (2021), According to their study, most of the urban consumers are aware of organic food. However, the purchase level of organic food by them is less. This is mainly because of its high costs and lack of advance knowledge about organic food. Sri Lankan consumers' awareness on organic foods has significantly influenced by their education, marital status, gender, and monthly income.

Muthukumar, C. K. (2021), consumers, irrespective of all age-groups, income and educational qualification have enough knowledge regarding organic food products.

Research Methodology:

This study is a descriptive one. The survey is conducted in Tirunelveli city. The Nurses in Tirunelveli city hospitals are the respondents. This research adopts Convenience Sampling method. 176 respondents have been taken as sample for this study.

Data Analysis:

The data was entered in SPSS version 22. The reliability Statistics for all the factors under study have been checked using Reliability analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha values for all the constructs used in this study are above .70 and are highly reliable. This research uses non-parametric test. Statistical methods percentage analysis and Kruskal Wallis Test were used to analyse the quantitative data collected through a structured questionnaire.

Research Hypothesis:

H₁₁₍₁₋₅₎ - There is a significant differences in awareness towards organic products with respect to the socio demographic profile of the respondents.

H₁₂₍₁₋₅₎ - There is a significant differences in Health consciousness towards organic products with respect to the socio demographic profile of the respondents.

H₁₃₍₁₋₅₎ - There is a significant differences in Environmental consciousness towards organic products with respect to the socio demographic profile of the respondents .

H₁₄₍₁₋₅₎ - There is a significant differences in Availability towards organic products with respect to the socio demographic profile of the respondents .

H₁₅₍₁₋₅₎ - There is a significant differences in Product Quality towards organic products with respect to the socio demographic profile of the respondents .

Results and Discussion:

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographic Factors and awareness	Count	%
AGE		
Below 25	66	37.5
26-30	77	43.8
31-35	11	6.3
above 35	22	12.5
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	99	56.3
Unmarried	77	43.8
Divorced	-	-
GENDER		
Male	-	-
Female	176	100
Transgender	-	-
FAMILY SIZE		

upto 2	77	43.8
3-4	77	43.8
More than 4	22	12.5
INCOME		
10000-20000	88	50
20001-30000	44	25
30001-40000	11	6.3
40000 and above	33	18.8
RESIDENCE		
Urban	88	50
Rural	88	50
Semi Urban	-	-
DEGREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS		
I know it very well	110	62.5
I know it somewhat	55	31.3
I know it vaguely	11	6.3
PRICES OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS AS COMPARED TO NON- ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS.		
Higher	77	43.8
Lower	55	31.3
Same/Average	33	18.8
Reasonable	11	6.3
WORTHINESS PAYING MORE FOR ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS		
Absolutely	110	62.5
Partially	66	37.5
SOURCES OF AWARENESS		
Relatives , friends or Colleagues	88	50
Internet and Social Media	-	-
experts(Doctors, Nutritionists, health advisor)	66	37.5
Retailer advertisement or in store hand-outs	-	-
Agricultural fairs or Exhibitions	22	12.5
News papers/Journals/ Magazines	-	-
Radio, Television	-	-

Hypotheses testing:

Kruskal Wallis Test between Age of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

$H_{11-15(1)}$ - There is a significant difference in awareness, health consciousness, environmental consciousness, availability, product quality towards organic products with respect to the Age of the respondents.

Table 2:Kruskal Wallis Test between Age of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality

Variables	Age	N	Mean rank	Chi square Value	p Value	Hypotheses
Awareness	Below 25	66	91.25	23.581	.000 $P < 0.05$ Significant	$H_{11(1)}$ Supported
	26-30	77	94.79			
	31-35	11	17.00			
	above 35	22	94.00			
Health consciousness	Below 25	66	88.50	2.171	.538 $p > 0.05$ Not	$H_{12(1)}$ - Not
	26-30	77	84.06			
	31-35	11	93.41			

	above 35	22	101.59		<i>significant</i>	Supported
Environmental consciousness	Below 25	66	79.46	6.428	.093 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₃₍₁₎ – Not Supported
	26-30	77	88.64			
	31-35	11	100.18			
	above 35	22	109.27			
Availability	Below 25	66	85.26	4.980	.173 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₄₍₁₎ – Not Supported
	26-30	77	89.25			
	31-35	11	67.00			
	above 35	22	106.34			
Product Quality	Below 25	66	84.55	4.132	.248 <i>>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H_{15 (1)} – Not Supported
	26-30	77	85.93			
	31-35	11	89.68			
	above 35	22	108.77			

The above table shows that there is a significant differences in the awareness of the respondents ($p=.000$), among the age groups 26-30yrs and above 35yrs have more awareness compared to other two groups according the mean rank value 26-30yrs (94.79) , 35yrs(94.00).

There is no significant differences in the health consciousness of the respondents with respect to their Age ($p= .538$). There is no significant differences in environmental consciousness of the respondents with respect to their Age ($p=.093$). There is no significant differences in respondents thought about the availability of organic food product with respect to their Age ($p= .173$). There is no significant differences in respondents thought about the product quality of organic food products with respect to their Age ($p=.248$).

Kruskal Wallis Test between Marital Status of the respondents and Awareness, Healthconsciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

H_{11- 15(2)} – There is a significant difference in awareness, health consciousness, environmental consciousness, availability, product quality towards organic products with respect to the marital status of the respondents.

Table 3:Kruskal Wallis Test between Marital Status of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality

Variables	Marital Status	N	Mean rank	Chi square Value	p Value	Hypotheses
Awareness	Married	99	90.94	.528	.468 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₁₍₂₎ – Not Supported
	Unmarried	77	85.36			
Health consciousness	Married	99	90.06	.214	.644 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₂₍₂₎ – Not Supported
	Unmarried	77	86.50			
Environmental consciousness	Married	99	96.28	5.377	.020 P<0.05 Significant	H₁₃₍₂₎ – Supported
	Unmarried	77	78.49			
Availability	Married	99	91.69	.895	.344 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₄₍₂₎ – Not Supported
	Unmarried	77	84.40			
Product Quality	Married	99	93.12	1.884	.170 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H_{15 (2)} – Not Supported
	Unmarried	77	82.56			

The above table shows that there no significant differences in the respondents awareness (p=.468), health consciousness (P=.644), thoughts towards the availability (p=.344), product quality(.170) towards the organic products with respect to their marital status.

There is a significant difference in environmental consciousness (p=.020) of the respondents with respect to their marital status. Among the marital status group married respondents are much environmental consciousness compared to unmarried respondents with the mean rank value of 96.28.

Kruskal Wallis Test between Family size of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

H_{11- 15(3)} - There is a significant difference in awareness, health consciousness, environmental consciousness, availability, product quality towards organic products with respect to the Family Size of the respondents.

Table 4: Kruskal Wallis Test between Family size of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

Variables	Family Size	N	Mean rank	Chi square Value	p Value	Hypotheses
Awareness	upto 2	77	104.21	33.095	.000 <i>P<0.05</i> Significant	H₁₁₍₃₎ - Supported
	3-4	77	64.14			
	More than 4	22	118.75			
Health consciousness	upto 2	77	85.42	.510	.775 <i>p>0.05</i> Not significant	H₁₂₍₃₎ - Not Supported
	3-4	77	91.04			
	More than 4	22	90.39			
Environmental consciousness	upto 2	77	91.21	.480	.787 <i>p>0.05</i> Not significant	H₁₃₍₃₎ - Not Supported
	3-4	77	87.19			
	More than 4	22	83.61			
Availability	upto 2	77	93.87	1.688	.430 <i>p>0.05</i> Not significant	H₁₄₍₃₎ - Not Supported
	3-4	77	85.40			
	More than 4	22	80.57			
Product Quality	upto 2	77	89.14	.230	.891 <i>p>0.05</i> Not significant	H_{15 (3)} - Not Supported
	3-4	77	89.24			
	More than 4	22	83.66			

There is a significant difference in awareness (p=.000) of the respondents with respect to their family size. The respondents having more than 4 family members shows much awareness level compared to other groups with the mean rank value of 118.75 , followed by up to 2 group with mean rank value of 104.21.

The above table shows that there no significant differences in the respondents health consciousness (P=.775), environmental consciousness (p=.787), thoughts towards the availability (p=.430), product quality(.891) towards the organic products with respect to their family size.

Kruskal Wallis Test between Income of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

H_{11- 15(4)} - There is a significant differences in awareness, health consciousness, environmental consciousness, availability, product quality towards organic products with respect to the Income of the respondents.

Table 5: Kruskal Wallis Test between Income of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

Variables	Income	N	Mean rank	Chi square Value	p Value	Hypotheses
Awareness	Below 10000	88	78.88	74.107	.000 <i>P<0.05</i> Significant	H₁₁₍₄₎ - Supported
	10001-20000	44	124.25			
	20001-30000	11	160.00			
	Above 30000	33	42.67			
Health consciousness	Below 10000	88	85.76	.741	.864 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₂₍₄₎ - Not Supported
	10001-20000	44	92.82			
	20001-30000	11	84.77			
	Above 30000	33	91.30			
Environmental consciousness	Below 10000	88	89.50	.274	.965 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₃₍₄₎ - Not Supported
	10001-20000	44	87.97			
	20001-30000	11	81.18			
	Above 30000	33	88.98			
Availability	Below 10000	88	88.85	1.307	.727 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₄₍₄₎ - Not Supported
	10001-20000	44	86.65			
	20001-30000	11	75.00			
	Above 30000	33	94.53			
Product Quality	Below 10000	88	89.58	3.081	.379 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₅₍₄₎ - Not Supported
	10001-20000	44	81.18			
	20001-30000	11	76.59			
	Above 30000	33	99.35			

There is a significant difference in awareness ($p=.000$) of the respondents with respect to their Income .The income level 20001-30000 INR shows much awareness compared to other groups with mean rank value of 160.00 , followed by 10001-20000 INR with mean rank value of 124.25.

The above table shows that there no significant differences in the respondents health consciousness ($P=.864$), environmental consciousness ($p=.274$), thoughts towards the availability ($p=.727$), product quality(.379) towards the organic products with respect to their income.

Kruskal Wallis Test between Area of Living of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

H_{11- 15(5)} - There is a significant difference in awareness, health consciousness, environmental consciousness, availability, product quality towards organic products with respect to the Area of Living of the respondents.

Table 6:Kruskal Wallis Test between Area of Living of the respondents and Awareness, Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, Availability, Product Quality.

Variable	Area of Living	N	Mean rank	Chi square Value	p Value	Hypotheses
Awareness	Urban	88	83.69	1.590	.207 <i>p>0.05</i> <i>Not significant</i>	H₁₁₍₅₎ - Not Supported
	Rural	88	93.31			
Health	Urban	88	86.61	.246	.620	H₁₂₍₅₎ - Not

consciousness	Rural	88	90.39		$p > 0.05$ Not significant	Supported
Environmental consciousness	Urban	88	90.36	.238	.625 $p > 0.05$ Not significant	H₁₃₍₅₎ – Not Supported
	Rural	88	86.64			
Availability	Urban	88	90.87	.384	.536 $p > 0.05$ Not significant	H₁₄₍₅₎ – Not Supported
	Rural	88	86.13			
Product Quality	Urban	88	88.98	.016	.901 $p > 0.05$ Not significant	H₁₅₍₅₎ – Not Supported
	Rural	88	88.02			

The above table shows that there no significant differences in the respondents awareness ($p = .207$) health consciousness ($P = .620$), environmental consciousness ($p = .625$), thoughts towards the availability ($p = .536$), product quality (.901) towards the organic products with respect to their area of living.

Conclusion and suggestions:

Due to increasing concern over health issues, many customers are switching from conventional food goods to organic food products. This study results shows that most of the respondents feel that the organic food products prices are high but it is reasonable. Regarding the sources of awareness to this study population, they are not getting awareness from the following: Internet and Social Media, Retailer advertisement or in store hand-outs, Newspapers/Journals/ Magazines, Radio, Television. Word of mouth plays a vital role in reaching this segment. The higher income group above 30000 INR shows less awareness level compared to other groups, the marketers should focus on the higher income group because they are tend to spend more than the other income group. Different promotional strategies should be followed for different segment of consumers. Once the consumers are aware of the product they will tend to purchase the products.

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