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Effect of Influential Factors on Consumers Attitude towards Organic Food Products

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Abstract:

Organic Food products are becoming latest trend for marketers, since the consumers' shows special interest towards organic foods. Awareness towards Healthy lifestyle of individual leads to buy organic foods. But it is necessary to know the influential determinants which form as attitude towards buying decision for organic foods. The determinants considered towards attitude are Health consciousness, Environmental consciousness, organic food knowledge, safety, Value, Culture/lifestyle and food attributes. The main objective of this study is to investigate whether the factors have an effect towards consumer behavior to buy organic foods. This study is a descriptive study by data collection. The statistical population is users or consumers of organic foods in Nilgiri district. The sample size for this study is 200 by randomly selected from major organic food store. Based on this study there is a positive correlation between variables like Health consciousness, consumer knowledge, safety, environmental consciousness, culture, value with attitude towards organic food products. But the food attribute has a negative correlation with the attitude.

Keywords: Attitude toward organic foods, Consumer behavior

1. Introduction

Organic food industry, over recent years has shown a considerable growth globally, Organic food is considered to be a biggest market in growth stage. People are sensitive about nutrition and add value to the food that they consume. And increasing knowledge of human also leads to have safety and healthy food consumption. In this juncture it is necessary to investigate the motive or attitude formation towards consumption of organic food products. Individual and family health is given more concern; this development has motivated us to investigate to explore the information regarding organic food consumers.

This research study undertook a quantitative analysis of the various factors which influence the consumers' attitude towards buying or consuming decision. The main focus is given on examining the certain variables like Health consciousness, Environmental Consciousness, Consumers' knowledge, Safety concern, Values, Culture and Food attributes which may influence the attitude towards organic food products.

2. Literature Review

The study by Davies, Titterington, and Cochrane, (1995) reveal that health and environmental concerns are the two major reasons for purchase of organic produce. Zanolli & Naspetti (2002) found that health is the consumer's most important motivation for buying organic food. consumer's concern for health is the most commonly stated motive to choose organic foods (Magnusson et al., 2003; Schifferstein and Oude Ophuis, 1998; Tregear et al., 1994; Wandel and Bugge, 1997; Williams and Hammit, 2001) Environmental attitudes mean predisposition behaviour that consciously seeks to minimize the negative impact of individual's actions on the natural world. Researchers found that environmental attitudes directly influence to the green consumer behavior (Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008). Consumers' knowledge is specific information that affects consumer buying decision. Ritson & Oughton, 2007; Padel & Foster, 2005 also argue that among other factors, consumers' knowledge about organic foods, compared with conventional food products are considered major barriers to the development of the organic food market. food safety was the most important consideration when making organic food products purchase decisions among UK consumers (Rimal, Moon and Balasubramanian, 2005) Value and life style are essential factors that need to be considered in the research on consumer buying behavior of organic product. Value is a good predictor compared to other factors (Sihombing, 2007, and Chan, 2001). Schiffman & Kanuk (1994) have found that cultural values are often seen as important forces shaping individuals' view about the world. It is shared by all members of a social group and shape one's attitudes and behaviour. According to the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) value orientations have been described as

fundamental dimensions upon which difference culture may vary and these basic cultural differences can apply a profound influence on the way in which the members of the culture think and act. consumers' values, which reflect social influences and environment should affect needs to be fulfilled through purchase and consumption decisions, and therefore consumption behaviour (Kim, Triands, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994). Values are therefore at the heart of the culture of any country or organisation. The study of Radman (2005) indicated that organic food consumers in Croatia are generally dissatisfied with the appearance of organic products. They indicate that organic food does not last for a long time on supermarket shelves like conventional food. Additionally, consumers in larger households consider product appearance an important factor that influences their intention to purchase organic food. Non-buyers are also affected by the less attractive appearance which is perceived as lower quality, especially with the high prices for these products.

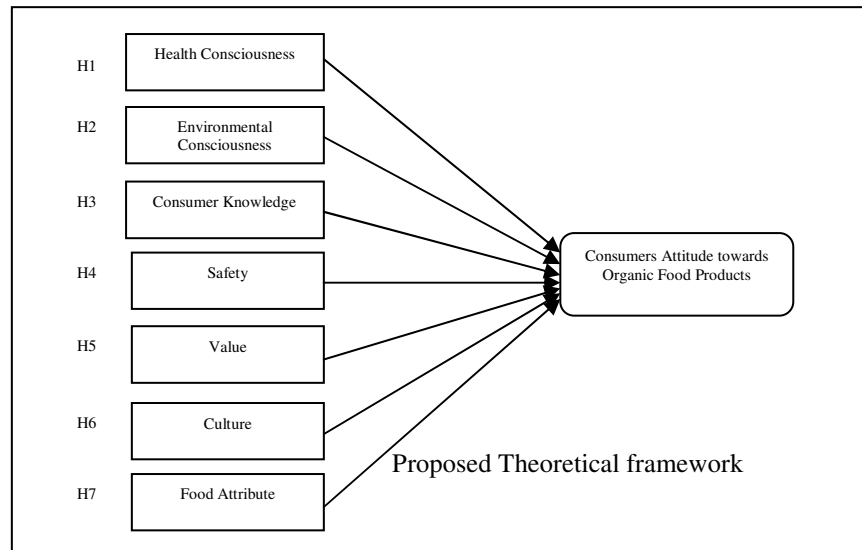


Figure 1

2.1. Objectives of the Study

1. To Identify consumer's attitude towards organic food products
2. To examine the effects of intention on the relationship between Influential factors and attitude towards buying organic food

2.2. Hypotheses

- H1: health consciousness has a significant effect on attitude towards organic food
- H2: Environmental consciousness has a significant effect on attitude toward organic products
- H3: Organic food knowledge has a significant effect on toward organic products
- H4: Safety has a significant effect on attitude toward organic products
- H5: Value consciousness has a significant effect on attitude toward organic products
- H6: Culture has a significant effect on attitude toward organic products
- H7: Food attributes has a significant effect on attitude toward organic products

3. Research Methodology

The respondents were surveyed with consumers in organic stores in Nilgiri district. Potential respondents were approached while they were shopping in organic stores. The respondents were requested to fill up the questionnaire and to return it back immediately to the researcher. As a result, a total of 200 questionnaires were collected. The questionnaire was designed especially to elicit consumers' buying behavior and their views on organic food products. The respondents were selected based on simple random sampling. The data was analyzed using statistical tools like Factor analysis, Correlation & Multiple Regression.

4. Results & Discussion

| Profile Characteristics | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 117 | 58.5 |
| Female | 83 | 41.5 |
| Age | | |
| Below 20 | 2 | 1 |
| 21-30 | 18 | 9 |
| 31-40 | 86 | 43 |
| 41-50 | 45 | 22.5 |
| 51-60 | 36 | 18 |
| Above 60 | 13 | 6.5 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 185 | 92.5 |
| Single | 15 | 7.5 |
| Education | | |
| School | 36 | 18 |
| Diploma | 11 | 5.5 |
| UG | 51 | 25.5 |
| PG | 71 | 35.5 |
| Professional | 28 | 14 |
| No education | 3 | 1.5 |
| Income | | |
| less than 50000 | 25 | 12.5 |
| 50001-100000 | 42 | 21 |
| 100001-150000 | 20 | 10 |
| 150001-200000 | 12 | 6 |
| Above 200000 | 101 | 50.5 |

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

It could be seen from the above table that majority of the respondents (58.50 per cent) were male buyers of organic foods. About 43 per cent are belonging to the age between 31-40. Among the respondents, 92.5 per cent of customers are married. About 35.5 per cent had post graduate level education and about 50 per cent respondents were in category with monthly family income ranging between above 2, 00,000.

| Correlations | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|
| Factor | Attitude | Health | Envt | Knowledge | Safety | Value | Culture | Attribute |
| Attitude | 1 | .084 | .083 | .112 | 0.179 | 0.174 | 0.165 | -.009 |
| Health | .084 | 1 | 0.39 | 0.216 | 0.166 | 0.264 | 0.364 | 0.143 |
| Envt | .083 | 0.39 | 1 | 0.364 | 0.327 | 0.367 | 0.349 | .126 |
| Knowledge | .112 | 0.216 | 0.364 | 1 | 0.299 | 0.286 | 0.391 | .134 |
| Safety | 0.179 | 0.166 | 0.327 | 0.299 | 1 | 0.514 | 0.334 | .017 |
| Value | .174 | 0.264 | 0.367 | 0.286 | 0.514 | 1 | 0.335 | .098 |
| Culture | 0.165 | 0.364 | 0.349 | 0.391 | 0.334 | 0.335 | 1 | .075 |
| Food Attribute | -.009 | 0.143 | .126 | .134 | .017 | .098 | .075 | 1 |
| Mean | 4.117 | 4.245 | 4.141 | 3.938 | 4.097 | 4.228 | 4.129 | 4.179 |
| SD | 0.536 | 0.418 | 0.502 | 0.567 | 0.541 | 0.463 | 0.448 | 0.426 |
| Skewness | -0.231 | -0.416 | -0.397 | 0.108 | 0.025 | -0.255 | 0.232 | -0.244 |
| Kurtosis | -0.741 | -0.033 | 0.275 | -1.014 | -0.732 | -0.636 | -0.424 | -0.550 |

Table 2

*Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlation Analysis was conducted to find the relationship between two variables. The values which are closer to 1 infer a better relation between two variables. All the positive values indicate a positive relationship between two variables except the relationship between food attribute and attitude which is a negative value. The correlation between attitude and safety is 0.179, the correlation

between attitude and value is 0.174, the correlation between attitude and 0.165, the correlation between attitude and knowledge is 0.112, the correlation between attitude and health consciousness is 0.084, the correlation between attitude and environment is 0.083. The amount of skewness tells how highly skewed the sample is: the bigger the number, the bigger the skew. Here the skewness varies between -0.416 and 0.232. Kurtosis shows the height and sharpness of the peak relative to the rest of the data. Here the value ranges between -1.014 and 0.275.

| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|-------------------------|-------|--|
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | Collinearity Statistics | | |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Tolerance | VIF | |
| (Constant) | 5.455 | .414 | | 13.162 | .000 | | | |
| Health | .197 | .070 | .215 | 2.811 | .005 | .774 | 1.291 | |
| Envt | -.108 | .069 | -.126 | -1.571 | .118 | .703 | 1.423 | |
| Knowledge | .070 | .062 | .087 | 1.132 | .259 | .762 | 1.312 | |
| Safety | -.008 | .068 | -.010 | -.116 | .907 | .682 | 1.465 | |
| Value | -.200 | .074 | -.222 | -2.688 | .008 | .666 | 1.502 | |
| Culture | -.171 | .077 | -.178 | -2.223 | .027 | .711 | 1.407 | |
| Attribute | .059 | .048 | .086 | 1.252 | .212 | .964 | 1.037 | |

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude

Table 3

The Coefficient analysis in multiple regressions shows that for every unit increase in Health, attitude will go up by .197 units, provided other variables remain unchanged. For every unit increase in Knowledge, attitude will go up by .070 units, provided other variables remain unchanged. Also, for every unit increase in Attribute, the attitude will go up to .059 units, for every unit increase in Environment, attitude will decrease by 0.108 units, for every unit increase in safety, attitude will decrease by 0.008 units, for every unit increase in value, attitude will decrease by 0.171 units, provided other variables remain unchanged.

5. Discussion

Based on the result of analysis conducted for the study, we found out which variable had a significant impact on the attitude of the consumers which leads to the purchase intention.

Considering the health consciousness, it has a positive impact on attitude. It implies that the consumer will have an attitude to buy the organic food products if it provides health benefits to them. Also, the result shows that health is the first important factor that influences the consumer's attitude to purchase organic food products.

Consumer knowledge has a positive relationship with attitude towards buying the organic food products. It implies that if the consumer has more knowledge about organic food products, then their purchase attitude may increase. Also this study found that consumers' knowledge is the second most important factor that influences on consumer's attitude towards organic food products.

Safety is positively correlated with attitude towards buying the organic food products. That means that Consumer's concern about consuming safe food products increases their attitude to buy organic food products. But it shows a negative regression coefficient when considered along with the other variables.

Environmental consciousness is a positive relationship with attitude towards buying the organic food products. This shows that the consumers are concerned about not polluting the environment for their personal benefits. While considering along with other factors the regression coefficient becomes negative.

Culture shows a positive correlation with attitude towards buying the organic food products. This infers that the influence of an individual's culture does have a positive impact on their attitude to buy organic food products, but when consider with other factors it shows a negative regression coefficient.

Value shows a positive correlation with attitude towards buying the organic food products. Individual's values have a positive impact on their attitude to buy organic food products, but when consider with other factors it shows a negative regression coefficient.

Food attribute is negatively correlated attitude towards buying the organic food products. It shows that consumers are not that much considered about food attributes like taste, flavours, colours etc. But the regression coefficient shows a positive value.

6. Conclusion

Organic food products choice by the consumer may influence by their attitude and the attitude influence by the factors like Health consciousness, environmental consciousness, Consumers knowledge, safety, value, culture and food attributes. Based on this study there is a positive correlation between variables like Health consciousness, consumer knowledge, safety, environmental consciousness, culture, value with attitude towards organic food products. But the food attribute has a negative correlation with the attitude. So it can be concluded that nowadays consumers are health conscious rather than artificially created taste, colour, flavor and other food attributes. The consumers like to preserve environment for the future generations. By increasing consumer's knowledge about organic food products purchasing intention can be increased.

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