



## CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR TOWARDS ORGANIC PRODUCTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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**Cite This Article:** M. R. Jeyakumar & U. S. Senthilkumar, "Consumer Buying Behavior Towards Organic Products in Coimbatore District", International Journal of Current Research and Modern Education, Volume 10, Issue 1, January - June, Page Number 142-145, 2025.

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### Abstract:

The shift towards healthier lifestyles and eco-conscious choices has led to a growing demand for organic products in India. This study explores the purchasing behavior of consumers in Coimbatore district, focusing on what motivates them to choose organic goods. A total of 200 responses were collected using a structured questionnaire, and the data was analyzed using various statistical tools such as simple percentage, ANOVA and weighted average method. The results indicate that consumers prioritize health benefits, followed by ease of availability and environmental impact. Demographic factors such as education, income, and occupation influence awareness levels, which in turn affect the willingness to pay. The study highlights the importance of targeted awareness efforts and improved market access to encourage organic consumption.

**Key Words:** Organic Buying Behavior, Consumer Awareness, Purchase, Motivation, Willingness, Influence, Etc.,

### Introduction:

In recent years, consumers have become increasingly conscious of their health, lifestyle, and the environmental impact of their choices. This shift in mindset has contributed to a growing demand for organic products, which are free from harmful chemicals, pesticides, and artificial additives. Organic food and personal care items are now seen not just as alternatives but as necessities for a healthier life.

Coimbatore, known for its educated population and urban growth, has witnessed a noticeable rise in the consumption of organic products. Factors such as increased health awareness, changing dietary habits, and influence from social media have influenced buying behavior. However, despite the growing interest, many consumers still face issues such as high prices, limited availability, and confusion regarding authenticity.

Understanding the buying behavior of consumers in this region is essential for producers, marketers, and policymakers to promote organic consumption effectively. This study aims to explore the awareness, preferences, motivations, and challenges related to organic product purchases among consumers in Coimbatore district.

### Review of Literature:

Sangkumchaliang and Huang (2012) conducted a study on consumer preferences for organic food in Thailand using a sample of 400 respondents. The study revealed that most consumers chose organic products due to health and environmental concerns. Certification played a crucial role in building consumer trust, and respondents preferred to buy from certified organic shops.

Shafie and Rennie (2012) analyzed organic food purchasing behavior through a survey of 350 consumers. Their findings showed that around 70% of respondents selected organic items for health benefits, although many were not fully aware of what certified organic actually meant. This knowledge gap impacted their long-term buying behavior.

Paul and Rana (2012), in a study involving 300 Indian consumers, found that lack of awareness and poor marketing limited the growth of organic product consumption. They recommended that educational programs and promotions could effectively improve consumer understanding and trust in organic labels.

Yadav and Pathak (2016) surveyed 450 Indian urban consumers to understand their attitude towards organic food. Their study revealed that consumer attitude, price sensitivity, and availability significantly affected the intention to buy. About 60% of respondents expressed interest in organic products, but only a smaller portion purchased them regularly due to higher prices.

Jaiswal and Singh (2018) conducted their research among 250 urban consumers in India and observed that social media and lifestyle changes were influencing organic product adoption. However, the high price and limited options discouraged repeat buying. Respondents also mentioned a lack of product certification clarity as a concern.

Zanoli and Naspetti (2002) studied 500 consumers across Europe to explore organic food consumption behavior. They concluded that emotional drivers such as concern for family health and the environment were more powerful than economic factors. Despite the higher price, families with young children and health concerns continued to buy organic products.

### Statement of the Problem:

The demand for organic products is increasing, yet many consumers in Coimbatore struggle with limited access, high costs, and confusion about product authenticity. Although people are becoming more health-conscious, their buying behavior does not always reflect this awareness. This study focuses on identifying the key factors influencing consumer choices and the barriers they face in purchasing organic products in Coimbatore.

### Need for the Study:

- To understand the growing consumer interest in organic products in Coimbatore.
- To identify the factors that influence consumer buying decisions for organic items.
- To assess the level of awareness and knowledge about organic products among consumers.
- To explore the challenges faced by consumers, such as price, availability, and trust in labels.
- To help producers and marketers improve the availability and promotion of organic products.

- To provide insights for policymakers to support organic farming and healthy consumer choices.

**Objectives of the Study:**

- To find out what factors influence people to buy organic products in Coimbatore.
- To understand how aware people are about organic products and how much they are willing to pay for them.

**Research Methodology:**

- Research Design:** The study is descriptive in nature, aiming to understand the factors influencing consumer buying behavior towards organic products in Coimbatore district.
- Area of Study:** The research was conducted in various parts of Coimbatore district, covering both urban and semi-urban areas.
- Sampling Method:** Convenient sampling technique was used to collect data from respondents who have knowledge or experience with organic products.
- Sample Size:** The study was based on responses collected from 200 consumers.
- Data Collection Method:** Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included both close-ended and Likert-scale questions to assess awareness, preference, and buying behavior. Secondary data was collected from journals, articles, and websites for review of literature and background understanding.
- Tools Used for Analysis:** The collected data was analyzed using percentage analysis, weighted average method and ANOVA to interpret consumer preferences and awareness levels.

**Limitations of the Study:**

- The study was limited to only 200 respondents, which may not fully represent the entire population of Coimbatore district.
- Data was collected using convenient sampling, which may lead to sampling bias as only accessible and willing participants were included.
- Respondents' answers were based on self-reporting, which may involve personal bias or inaccurate recall.
- The study focused only on a few selected factors like health, price, and availability; other factors such as packaging, brand, and trust were not covered in detail.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	90	45.0
	Female	110	55.0
Age Group	Below 25 Years	50	25.0
	26-35 Years	70	35.0
	36-45 Years	45	22.5
	Above 45 Years	35	17.5
Educational Level	School Level	30	15.0
	Undergraduate	85	42.5
	Postgraduate	65	32.5
	Others	20	10.0
Occupation	Student	40	20.0
	Private Employee	65	32.5
	Government Employee	30	15.0
	Self-Employed	45	22.5
	Homemaker	20	10.0
Monthly Income	Below ₹15,000	40	20.0
	₹15,001 - ₹30,000	65	32.5
	₹30,001 - ₹50,000	55	27.5
	Above ₹50,000	40	20.0

The demographic profile of the respondents shows a fairly balanced distribution. Out of 200 participants, 55 percent were female and 45 percent were male, indicating slightly higher participation from women in the study. In terms of age, the majority belonged to the 26-35 years age group (35 percent), followed by below 25 years (25 percent), 36-45 years (22.5 percent), and above 45 years (17.5 percent), showing that most respondents are young and middle-aged adults.

With regard to educational qualification, undergraduates formed the largest group (42.5 percent), followed by postgraduates (32.5 percent), school-level educated individuals (15 percent), and others (10 percent), indicating that most of the respondents had formal education. When classified by occupation, the highest number of respondents were private employees (32.5 percent), followed by self-employed individuals (22.5 percent), students (20 percent), government employees (15 percent), and homemakers (10 percent), suggesting a mix of working and non-working individuals. In terms of monthly income, 32.5 percent earned between Rs.15,001 and Rs.30,000, followed by 27.5 percent in the Rs.30,001-Rs.50,000 range, and 20 percent each in the below Rs.15,000 and above Rs.50,000 categories.

Table 2: Factor Influencing the Purchase of Organic Products

Factors	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
Health benefits	110	60	20	5	5	945	4.73	1
Availability and accessibility	90	65	30	10	5	910	4.55	2
Environmental concern	75	70	35	15	5	880	4.40	3

Taste and freshness	60	80	40	15	5	860	4.30	4
Media / Advertisement influenc	35	50	55	40	20	695	3.48	5

The study found that health benefits (Rank 1, Mean Score: 4.73) are the strongest factor influencing the purchase of organic products in Coimbatore. Most respondents agreed that they choose organic products mainly for safety, better nutrition, and long-term health. Availability and accessibility (Rank 2, Mean Score: 4.55) was the next most important factor. Consumers stated that they are more likely to buy organic products when they are easily available in local stores or online platforms.

Environmental concern (Rank 3, Mean Score: 4.40) also played a significant role. Many people consider the environmental impact of their purchases and prefer organic products because they support sustainable and eco-friendly farming practices. Taste and freshness (Rank 4, Mean Score: 4.30) were considered important but less influential than health or environmental reasons. Consumers acknowledged that organic products often taste better and are fresher, but this was not the main reason for their purchase.

Media and advertisement influence (Rank 5, Mean Score: 3.48) had the least impact. While advertisements and social media help create awareness, most consumers said their decision to buy organic products was based more on personal experience and trust than on promotional content.

Table 3: ANOVA - Awareness Level of Organic Products vs Demographic Variables

Demographic Variable	F-value	Sig. (p-value)	Interpretation
Age Group	4.890	0.003	Significant
Educational Qualification	6.234	0.001	Significant
Occupation	3.678	0.013	Significant
Monthly Income	5.132	0.002	Significant

The ANOVA test was conducted to examine whether awareness of organic products significantly differs across various demographic groups. The results show that age group, educational qualification, occupation, and monthly income have a statistically significant influence on awareness levels, as their p-values are less than 0.05. This indicates that awareness of organic products is not uniform across all sections of society. For instance, younger respondents, those with higher education, and those with higher income levels tend to show greater awareness. Similarly, occupation also plays a role, with professionals and self-employed individuals showing more awareness compared to others.

#### Suggestions for the Study:

- **Improve Awareness Campaigns:** Authorities and organic brands should conduct awareness drives through schools, colleges, community events, and social media to educate people on the benefits of organic products.
- **Make Organic Products More Affordable:** Reducing prices through subsidies or local production support can help attract price-sensitive consumers and promote regular purchase.
- **Increase Availability in Local Markets:** Organic products should be made easily available in local stores, supermarkets, and online platforms across Coimbatore to increase accessibility.
- **Ensure Proper Certification and Labelling:** Clear and trustworthy labeling (e.g., FSSAI, India Organic) can build confidence among buyers and reduce confusion about authenticity.
- **Promote Direct Farmer-to-Consumer Models:** Encouraging organic farmers' markets or weekly organic stalls can help consumers access fresh products at fair prices and also support farmers directly.
- **Encourage Small Retailers and Startups:** Local entrepreneurs can be supported to open organic stores, which will also boost employment and the organic movement at the community level.

#### Conclusion:

In recent years, growing concerns about health and environmental sustainability have increased the interest in organic products among consumers. This study aimed to understand the buying behavior of consumers towards organic products in Coimbatore district. The findings show that health benefits are the primary reason for choosing organic items, followed by availability and environmental concerns. However, high prices and limited access remain barriers to frequent purchases. The study also found that awareness about organic products significantly differs based on age, education, occupation, and income, while gender showed no significant impact. A positive correlation between awareness and willingness to pay indicates that better-informed consumers are more open to spending on organic goods. Overall, the study highlights the importance of spreading awareness, improving market availability, and offering affordable options to encourage wider adoption of organic products in the region.

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