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## Consumers preference towards organic food products: A study in Navi Mumbai city

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#### Abstract

For the better understanding of consumer preference towards organic food products, a study was conducted in Navi Mumbai. Five organic food sale points of Navi Mumbai city was selected, from each organic food sale point 20 consumers were selected randomly, totaling of at least 100 consumers. Majority (29%) of the respondents belonged to young age group (<25 and 25-30 each) However, 22% of the respondents were middle age groups (30 to 50 years) and 20% of the respondents belonged to old age group (>50 years).

Four consumers (Gender, Area, Family type, and Education) showed a significant relationship with the level of perception, three consumers (Area, Education, and Annual income) showed a significant relationship with the level of attitude, and four consumers (Area, Education, Occupation, and Annual income) showed a significant relationship with the level of belief out of the seven profile characteristics that were chosen.

The major constraints in marketing of organic food products faced by shopkeepers/retailers are products are expensive by customers ranked I (66.16) followed by doubt of authenticity of the product ranked II (57.75). The customers are not aware of the products ranked III (53.26).

**Keywords:** Organic, consumer behaviour, preference, environment, awareness

#### Introduction

Organic products are those made with the use of natural substances, which implies the avoidance of fertilizers and synthetic chemicals (Magkos *et al.* 2006) [3].

Therefore, for a product to be considered organic, it is necessary that it has been produced in a way that respects the soil, conserves its nutrients, avoids the use of chemical products, and has been certified according to ecological accreditation.

Organic farming is in a nascent stage in India. About 2.78 million hectare of farmland was under organic cultivation as of March 2020, according to the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. This is two percent of the 140.1 million ha net sown area in the country. According to the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, the top three states - Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra - account for about half the area under organic cultivation. The top 10 states account for about 80 percent of the total area under organic cultivation.

#### Methodology

In Maharashtra state, Navi Mumbai city was selected as a greater number of organic food consumers are present in Navi Mumbai city. Five organic food sale points of Navi Mumbai city was selected.

From each organic food sale point 20 consumers were selected randomly totalling of at least 100 consumers.

#### Data collection

The primary data were collected by personal interview method using a well-structured interview schedule. Details on demographic characteristics, perception, attitude, belief, and intention of the sample respondents towards organic food products were included in the interview schedule. The reference year for primary data was 2021-22.

The secondary data on location, demography and other details about study area were collected from the government websites, government publications, journals and annual reports like APEDA, FIBL, IFOAM, Maps of India etc.

**Results and Discussion**

The present investigation was carried out in surrounding of Navi Mumbai city of Maharashtra. For the study hundred consumers were selected. Numerous required information and data was collected.

**To find out the constraints in marketing of organic food products and some suitable measures to overcome them**

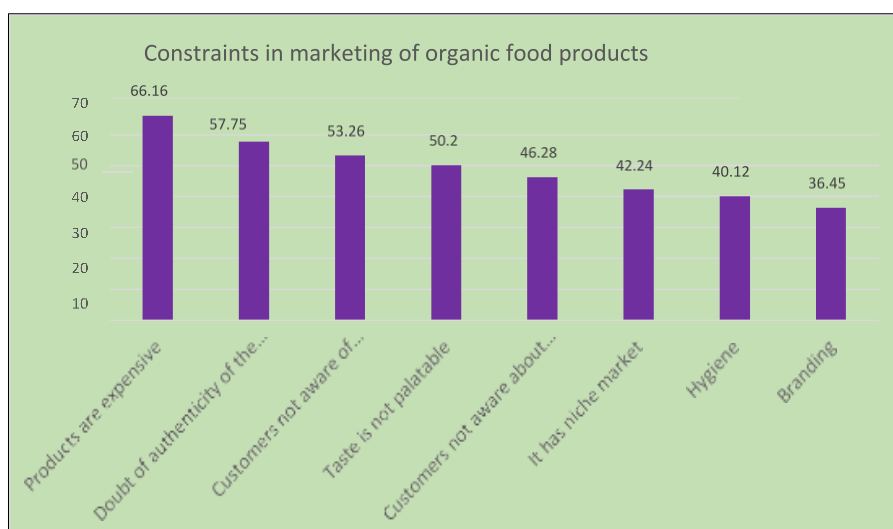
The major constraints in marketing of organic food products faced by shopkeepers/retailers is presented in Table 1. It is

clear from the table that products are expensive by customers ranked I (66.16) followed by doubt of authenticity of the product ranked II (57.75). The customers are not aware of the products ranked III (53.26). The customers felt that the taste is not palatable ranked IV (50.2) followed by customers not aware about nutrient contents ranked V (46.28). Organic food product has niche market ranked VI (42.24) followed by hygiene issued faced by the customers ranked VII (40.12) and Brand imaging issue ranked VIII (36.45).

**Table 1:** Constraints in marketing of organic food products

S. No.	Factors	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Products are expensive	66.16	I
2.	Doubt of authenticity of the product	57.75	II
3.	Customers not aware of products/product’s information	53.26	III
4.	Taste is not palatable	50.2	IV
5.	Customers not aware about nutrient contents	46.28	V
6.	It has niche market	42.24	VI
7.	Hygiene	40.12	VII
8.	Branding	36.45	VIII

Source: Own survey result, 2021.



**Fig 1:** Constraints in marketing of organic food product

**Suggestions to enhance the purchase of Organic food products among consumers.**

- Authorized stores faced issues over consistent supply of products from company to depot and depot to retail store or franchise store, the organization can strengthen their distribution system which can help them to increase the shelf presence of their products, consumer buying behaviour.
- Company can provide products at competitive rates so that they can compete with other organic companies and can attract new consumers.
- The organized retail outlets should make sure the availability of Organic food products at a reasonable price because the consumers demand Organic food products at a reasonable price.
- It is noted that majority of the consumers are having price conscious towards purchase of retail organic products, varieties of organic products followed by product quality, loyalty, convenience and others. So, the organized retail stores should concentrate on the product quality, loyalty, convenience, operational quality, price and promotion and provide their consumers experimental goods which

are according to the trend and offer a wide range of different variety and brands of goods according to their requirements. It would improve the level of consumer satisfaction towards organized retail outlets.

- Viability of organic products also affects the choice of the consumers. So, that the organic consumers are not purchasing more quantity of products.
- In the era of organized retail outlet business, buying behaviour of the consumers has a significant impact on the overall purchase behaviour. It is proved from the study that most percent of the consumers are having impulse buying behaviour while visiting organized retail stores. So, organized retail outlets must consider these factors while designing the marketing strategies especially related to displays, advertisements within and outside the outlets and strategic location of products etc. to increase the sales and profits.
- Provide good packing facilities to specific product

**Summary and Conclusion**

The major constraints in marketing of organic food products faced by shopkeepers/retailers is presented in Table 1. It is

clear from the table that products are expensive by customers ranked I (66.16) followed by doubt of authenticity of the product ranked II (57.75). The customers are not aware of the products ranked III (53.26). The customers felt that the taste is not palatable ranked IV (50.2) followed by customers not aware about nutrient contents ranked V (46.28). Organic food product has niche market ranked VI (42.24) followed by hygiene issues faced by the customers ranked VII (40.12) and Brand imaging issue ranked VIII (36.45).

### Conclusions

It is concluded that the products in the selected retail outlets are not available daily and so purchasing power of consumers was very low and also concluded that health is an important reason for buying organic food. Consumers of Navi Mumbai, are aware of various organic food and they perceive that it is too expensive comparing with the conventional products. As the study concluded consumers who were at least having a bachelor's degree and under the age group of 20 to 40 years with the income of Twenty to Forty thousand rupees per month have a positive perception, Attitude, belief and purchase intention towards going green. Therefore, it is imperative to assist local farmers in producing more organic food, which should then be sold at the community market so small farmers may make a fair profit rather than being exported to other nations.

### Suggestions

The study pertains to Navi Mumbai only. Therefore, the outcomes in other regions of the nation might be different. The availability of organic food goods in general, rather than for a specific product category, was the focus of this study's attention. If we take into account the cultural characteristics of the study, it will provide a deeper understanding. To learn more about the product's marketing channel, more research might be conducted by speaking with producers and merchants that specialize in a variety of product categories.

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