

# The Response of Consumer's on Organic Foods with Special Reference to Bhagalpur City

Paper Submission: 04/03/2021, Date of Acceptance: 15/03/2021, Date of Publication: 20/03/2021



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## Abstract

In the recent past, awareness about the organic food products have been increasing in the world. This is because human beings have become conscious about their health issues and are taking additional care for quality food intake with other measures safely. There is a key change in the consumer's behavior for organic food products and impact of these changes on environment is positive. Organic food produces are not only ecofriendly rather they are highly beneficial for health in term of nutrition. Hence, organic raw foods and products are gaining popularity in society. Almost every consumers are ready to pay a little more for organic foods in their day to day diet.

**Keywords:** Conventional food, organic food and consumer Health

## Introduction

Organic farming can be defined as 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 input, and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance "Ecological Harmony" (National Standards Board of the US Department of Agriculture USDA).

An organic food is that which is raised, grown, stored without the use of synthetically produced chemicals or fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and growth hormones and processed without any artificial colour, flavouring agents, preservatives and without any radiation treatment and obviously not genetically modified. Produce can be called organic if it is certified to have grown on soil which has no prohibited substances applied three years prior to the harvest. Therefore, food produced by these methods are considered "Organic Food" and are beneficial for human consumption. These organic foods are full of all types of nutrients in natural form. There are no additional nutrients in organic foods and they also taste, look and smell exactly same as conventional food products. [conventional food uses synthetic chemicals during the production process].

Recently the food we consume, has increased amount of chemical residues due to increased use of harmful chemical fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides during farming. Consuming a little amount of these chemicals by mistake can make any one sure to be hospitalized immediately. However, usages of these chemicals is not limited to farming. Post harvest processing of agricultural produce also involves uses of chemicals in form of preservative. All these chemical fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides and preservatives enter our body daily through the food. When these residues or chemicals regularly get accumulated over a period of time making our body on abode for a number of diseases such as skin disorders, heart diseases and even cancer. The WHO has provided more information on chemical hazards. Even Genetically modified food has created a fear of hormonal and transgenic contamination. All these are called for serious threats over dependence on chemical farming.

In The present business driven economic, farmers are more concerned about the physical quality and external appearance of the crop yield, compared to the qualitative or nutritional quality. This immense commercialization of agricultural farming and pressure to sell products easily in market takes a lot on health of both human and the environment. The use of pesticides have led to chemical buildup in soil, water, air,

animals environment and even in our own body. Fertilizers have a short term effects on productively but a long-term negative effect on the environment, where they remain for year after year, leaching and contaminating ground water and water bodies through rain.

Organic farming is a holistic production management which maintains long-term fertility of the soil in a safe and natural way. Organic farming maintains Earth's natural balance and does not harm flora and funa.

According to the "world of organic Agriculture Report 2018", recently published in February, India ranks first in having the largest number of organic producers in the world. Now India is having strong growth of organic farming. There is rapid increase in certified organic farms, mainly producing for a premium price in the domestic or export market. But there are now some other non-certified organic farms which produce crops for their own households consumption and for local markets. Hence, the

Government is also promoting for organic farming which can be a profitable strategy to raise the income level of small and medium farmers by giving different forms of support and subsidies.

#### **Objective of the Study**

1. To know the reasons or thought process of consumer who buy organic food products.
2. Problems faced by consumers while buying organic food products.
3. Satisfaction level of consumers after using organic food products

#### **Methodology**

The present study is a descriptive study. The study is focused on the organic food consumers residing in Bhagalpur city of Bihar. Both primary and secondary data have been used for the study. The data was collected from 50 organic food consumers in Bhagalpur city. The samples were selected using random sampling method. Observation and interview method was applied for the study.

#### **Finding of the Study**

**Table – 1**

**Age wise classification of the respondents**

Age (years)	Number	Percentage
20-30	6	12
30-40	18	36
40-50	20	40
Above 50	6	12
Total	50	100

Table shows that 40 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of 40-50 years. 36 percent of the respondent belong to the age group of 30-40 years. 12 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group above 50 years and 20-30 years

respectively. Majority of the respondents (40 percent) belongs to the age group of 40-50 years. This result shows that 30 to 50 years are more aware and concerned to use organic products in their diet.

**Table-2**

**Frequency of purchase**

Frequency	Number	Percentage
Regularly	7	14
Most often	5	10
Occasionally	33	66
Rarely	5	10
Total	50	100

The above table shows the frequency of purchase of organic food products by the respondents. Table shows that out of the 50 respondents 66 percent purchase organic food products occasionally, 14 percent

purchase organic food products regularly, 10 percent purchase organic food products, most often, and 10 percent rarely. Majority of the respondents (66 percent) frequently uses organic food products.

**Table-3**

**Source of purchase**

Source	Number	Percentage
Online Shopping	39	78
Organic Shop	4	8
Local Farmers	3	6
Other	4	8
Total	50	100

This above table shows that, 39 respondents purchased organic food products through online shopping, 8 percent of the respondent purchase organic food products from organic shop, 6 percent of the respondents purchase organic food products

from local farmers and only 8 percent of the respondents purchased from other sources. This majority of the respondents (78%) purchase organic food products from online shopping, because lack of retail shops for organic produce.

**Table-4**  
**Satisfaction level of respondent**

Satisfaction	Number	Percentage
Very satisfied	28	56
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	20	40
Dissatisfied	2	4
Very dissatisfied	-	-
Total	50	100

This table shows the satisfaction level of respondents with the purchase of organic food product. The result shows that out of 50 respondents 56% of the respondents are very satisfied with the purchase of organic food products, 40% of the respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the purchase of organic food product. The result shows that the Majority of the respondents are very satisfied with the purchase of organic food products in Bhagalpur city.

#### Conclusion

So to conclude

1. Majority of the respondents (40%) belongs to the age group 40-50 years, who consume organic products.
2. Majority of the respondents (66%) purchase organic food products occasionally.
3. Majority of the respondents (78%) purchase organic food products through online shopping.
4. Majority of the respondents (56%) are very satisfied with the purchase of organic food products.
5. The retail shops are limited in Bhagalpur city, selling organic products.
6. Finding shows the lack of awareness regarding organic products among consumers in Bhagalpur city.
7. The varieties of organic products which are available in the market are very limited.
8. The organic products are too expensive than non-organic products.
9. The advertisement and the availability of organic products is very low and slow.

Thus consumer behavior plays a major role in the development of organic food product segments. The marketers of organic food needs to be innovated and should be dynamic in order to compete with the changing purchasing behavior and preferences of the consumers of urban areas as well as semi urban areas. Organic foods are more nutritious and safe to eat. Awareness of people is increasing towards the organic foods either raw or processed, and hence popularity is growing dramatically. Some of the

consumers know that the organic foods, are more nutritious, healthier and safer. It ensures quality from farm to plate.

The consumption of organic food should be ensured and also should be adopted as dietary habits. But high prices and less availability are the main problem faced by the consumers. Consumers are willing to pay premium prices of 5-50 percent for such foods. It should be reviewed as the investment for better health. Growing organic foods are safe for environment too.

#### Suggestions

Awareness programs for organic foods are necessary not only for the consumers but also for the farmers, as they think that cultivation of such foods is impossible today without the use of agro based chemicals.

Number of those consumers who consume organic food occasionally is not a small figure. So, more outlets should be opened to meet the demands of organic foods. Knowledge and awareness about organic products can affect attitude and buying behavior of the people. Keeping in view the health benefits of organic foods and environmental issues, must be promoted.

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