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## Demographic Factors Determining Consumer Perception towards Organic Food in India: An Empirical Study

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### Abstract

Health and Organic food are the major concerns with which everyone is dealing in present environment. In India, there is an increase in health awareness and perception. It gives a good opportunity to the organic food industry to expand. Organic food is a product that ensures good health to its consumers. The main aim behind the expansion of organic food is to improve health of the consumers. A sample of 230 consumers of organic food with different age group and occupation were surveyed with the help of standard questionnaire and simple random sampling to know their perception towards organic food. One Sample t-test and One Way ANOVA were applied to analyse data. It is found that there is a significant difference between male and female in their perception towards organic food. It is also seen that there is a significant difference for the perceptions regarding organic food between the consumers belonging to different age groups and with different occupations.

**Keywords:** Health awareness, Organic food, Consumer, Perception, One Way ANOVA.

### 1.1 Introduction

In 2020, India came in the list of first top three markets of organic food in terms of its 'incremental growth.' Therefore, efforts should be made to extend the organic food so that the awareness and benefits of the organic food can be spread and reach to maximum number of consumers. 'Organic food' is a promising way of circulation which is adopted by the consumers so as to increase the market and infiltration of this need. It is a good sign that the people now are aware of the organic food and its benefits. It is seen that people in the age group between 25-45 years are more interested in organic food for them and their family. It is seen that most of the times the consumers are depending on the 'word of mouth' for their channel of distribution because the suggestion from a friend or family is said to be a leading way for knowledge and awareness of organic food in an individual. Media and advertisements also play important role to spread awareness about the organic food. The buying choice of the prospective consumer is influenced by the knowledge and accessibility of the organic food distributors.

### 1.2. Review of Literature

1. Paul & Rana (2012)

This study emphasizes that income and education levels significantly influence the perception and willingness to pay for Organic products. Educated consumers were more aware of health and environmental benefits.

2. Yadav & Pathak (2016)

Using the Theory of Planned Behavior, this paper finds that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence purchase intentions. Young, educated urban consumers are more likely to buy Organic food.

3. Hughner et al. (2007)

This review identifies that demographic factor like gender (female), higher income, and parental status are consistent indicators of Organic food preference.

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## 4. Agarwal &amp; Goel (2017)

The study from India finds that urban location, age group 30–45, and education level influence consumers' willingness to buy Organic food.

## 5. Kushwah, Dhir &amp; Sagar (2019)

The authors argue that young millennials with higher education and health awareness are more inclined towards Organic products.

## 6. Pallavi &amp; Pahwa (2020)

This paper suggests that age and lifestyle influence the perception of Organic food. People with a healthy lifestyle are more likely to choose Organic, regardless of income.

## 7. Singh &amp; Alok (2022)

This study finds that perceived quality and price significantly influence purchase intentions for Organic food, with education level playing a moderating role.

## 8. Yadav &amp; Pathak (2023)

The research emphasizes that knowledge about Organic food, health benefits, and social norms are strong predictors of purchase intentions among Indian consumers.

## 9. Singh et al. (2024)

This study investigates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention for Organic food, finding that

perceived value, quality, and price mediate this relationship.

## 1.3. Research Objectives

1. To compare the perceptions regarding organic food based on consumer's gender.
2. To compare the perceptions, regarding organic food based on age of the consumer.
3. 3) To compare the perceptions regarding organic food based on occupation of the consumer.

## 1.4 Research Methodology

To conduct the present study a sample of 230 respondents was surveyed in which the primary data was collected through structured questionnaire. The male and female consumers of different age group and with different occupations were considered to know their perceptions regarding Organic food. The study is exploratory in nature and the sampling method was simple random sampling. Independent Sample T- test and One Way ANOVA test were used for data analysis.

## 1.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1. Demographic Table.

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	124	53.91
Female	106	46.09
Total	230	100
<b>Age</b>		
25-45 years	71	30.87
46-65 years	87	37.83
Above 65 years	72	31.30
Total	230	100
<b>Occupation</b>		
Service	76	33.04
Professionals	83	36.09
Business	71	30.87
Total	230	100

<b>Family Status</b>		
Joint family	128	55.65
Nuclear Family	102	44.35
Total	230	100

Table showing Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 2: Comparison between Male and Female for their Perception Regarding Organic food.

Statements	Male	Female
Organic food is mandatory for everyone in life	4.05	3.89
Organic food provides security against uncertain health issues	4.08	3.90
Organic food gives a mental peace	4.00	3.90
Organic food helps you keep your savings unaffected	4.16	3.96
I feel comfortable in choosing the most appropriate Organic food plan	4.24	3.92
I am the decision maker for organic food in family	4.31	3.88
Organic food supports better treatment in the hospitals	3.82	3.74
Tax benefits in organic food provide an additional reason to buy organic food	3.95	3.80
Customers have wide variety and choices for buying organic food	3.92	3.80
I am overall positive about the organic food	3.84	3.73

Table 2 shows the comparative mean values between male and female for their perception regarding organic food. It is seen that, according to males they feel comfortable in

choosing the best organic food plans for me and my family with mean value of 4.24 as compared to female with mean value of 3.92. They say that organic food helps you keep

your savings unaffected with mean value of 4.16 as compared to females with mean value of 3.96. Organic food provides security against uncertain health issues for males with mean value of 4.08 and for females with mean value of 3.90. The perception of male respondents is that the organic food is mandatory for everyone in life with mean value of 4.05 as compared to females with mean value of 3.89. Male respondents say that organic food gives a mental peace with mean value of 4.00 as compared to females with mean value of 3.90 and Tax benefits in Organic food provide an additional reason to buy organic food with mean value of 3.95 as compared to females with mean value 3.80. According to male respondents, Customers have wide variety and choices for buying

organic food with mean value 3.92 as compared to female respondents with mean value 3.80. Further, males say that I am overall positive about the organic food with mean value 3.84 as compared to female with mean value 3.73 and organic food supports better treatment in the hospitals with mean value 3.82 as compared to female with mean value 3.74.

### 1.6 Testing of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 4.1.** There is no significant difference in male and female for their perception regarding organic food.

**Hypothesis 4.2.** There is a significant difference in male and female for their perception regarding organic food.

**Table 3:** Independent Sample t-test for Significance.

Perception Regarding Organic food	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Organic food is mandatory for everyone in life	-1.295	228	.197
Organic food provide security against uncertain health issues	-1.551	228	.122
Organic food gives a mental peace	-.878	228	.381
Organic food helps you keep your savings unaffected	-1.724	228	.086
I feel comfortable in choosing the most appropriate Organic food plan	-2.715	228	.007
I am the decision maker for Organic food in family	-3.498	228	.001
Organic food supports better treatment in the hospitals	-.697	228	.486
Tax benefits in Organic food provide an additional reason to buy Organic food	-1.207	228	.229
Customers have wide variety and choices for buying Organic food	-.916	228	.361
I am overall positive about the Organic food	-.837	228	.403

Table 3 shows the t-value, degree of freedom and significance". Significant differences between males and females are found only for the statements - I feel comfortable in choosing the most appropriate Organic food plan, and I am the decision maker for Organic food in family as the significance values for these two statements is < 0.05.

**Hypothesis 4.3.** There is a significant difference in the perceptions regarding the organic food based on the occupation.

**Hypothesis 4.4.** There is a significant difference in the perceptions regarding the organic food based on the age group.

**Table 4.** Comparative Mean Value Based on Age of Respondents.

	Age Categories			
	25-45 yrs	45-65 yrs	Above 65 yrs	Total
Perception Regarding Organic food	3.67	4.05	4.14	3.99

Table 4 shows the comparative mean values based on the Age of the respondents.

**Table 5:** Comparative Mean Value Based on Occupation of Respondents.

	Occupation Categories			
	Employed	Business	Professional	Total
Perception Regarding Organic food	3.89	3.87	4.19	3.99

Table 5 shows the results of One Way ANOVA for testing the significance of difference based on age.

**Hypothesis 4.5.** There is no significant difference in the perceptions regarding the organic food based on the occupation.

**Hypothesis 4.6.** There is a significant difference in the perceptions regarding the organic food based on the occupation.

The comparative mean values based on the occupation of the respondents. It is seen that the mean value (3.89) for the perception regarding the organic food for the respondents in service is more as compared to mean value (3.87) in the business group, but it is less than the mean value (4.19) in the professionals group.

### 1.7 Findings of study

Out of 230 respondents 53.91% are male and 46.09% are female in which 30.87% belong to age group 25-45 years, 37.83% from the age group 46-65 years and rest 31.30% are from the age group of above 65 years of age. The table also shows that out of 33.04% of respondents that belong to service group, 30.87% are from business field and 36.09% are professionals. 20% of them have an annual income of less than Rs. 1 lakh, 20.87% earn Rs. 1-5 lakh, 24.78% have an annual income of Rs. 5-10 lakh, 17.83% have Rs. 10-15 lakh, and 16.52% are earning above Rs. 15 lakh every year. 55.65% of the total respondents are living in joint family and 44.35% have nuclear family.

It is seen that the mean value (3.67) for the perception regarding the Organic food in the age group 25-45 years is less as compared to mean value (4.05) in the age group 45-

65 years and (4.14) in the age group of above 65 years.

It is seen that almost all the perceptions on the basis of the age of the respondents are significant as the values in the significant column is less than 0.05 except the statements like Organic food supports better treatment in the hospitals; Tax benefits in Organic food provide an additional reason to buy Organic food; and I am overall positive about the Organic food that are not significant as the value in the significant column is above 0.05.

### 1.8 Conclusion

In India, there is no 'social security measures' for the aged people and in contrast, older people are not gifted with sufficient 'financial resources. This reflects in their preferences for the consumption of health care services. The out-of-pocket health expenses of the elderly population is significantly affected by the kind of health care services they are utilizing, because they tend to get ill more at this age of time. It is also seen that the people of older age are more dependent on other members of the family due to the status of their poor health. This becomes a burden to the whole household. That is why; the services of organic food are more popular among the elder population.

The study concludes that there is a significant difference between male and female for their perceptions regarding organic food. It is also found that consumers with different age group and different occupations show significant difference in their perceptions regarding organic food. The consumers that belong to higher age group, employed and are professionals give more importance to organic food as compared to other age groups and occupations.

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