Influence of Barriers and Motives on Organic Food Consumers Buying Decision: A Review

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Purpose:
The paper focuses on exploring the motives and barriers in understanding consumer buying decision.

Methodology:
The purpose is based on existing literature and the interview of 100 consumers who were aware and have consumed organic food.

Findings:
The findings described that consumers buy organic fruits, vegetables, milk, grocery because of health and safety concern. Consumers pay attention to different deterrents while buying different organic products.

Limitations:
Since, this paper focuses on selected organic products, future research would be required and the future research can be taken in the area of organic food focusing on different locations and different age groups.

Originality Value:
The present study is helpful for the marketers to understand the consumer's decision making process. Retailers can also promote the health and safety concern for attracting consumers. Even government can incorporate some important incentives to promote the agriculture on the basis of these findings.

Keywords: Organic food, consumer behavior, India, Buying Decision Process.

1. Introduction:
In all continents, India is one of the growing organic markets in world with estimated value of £1.2 billion in 2003 or, half of the Germany market for organic food. In last few years, organic land area in India has also increased, but in 2003 it decreases for the first time from 724,523 in 2002 to 695,619 ha. This reflects the changes in certification requirements in India. All manufacturers need to certify both land and inventory, whereas livestock could be exempt. However, marketers experiences many problems in particular market like milk, where only 60 to 80% organic production is sold under organic labels and the rest with conventional channels (Hann and Gronefeld, 2004). Despite the fact organic food is in demand, markets are not able to expand their market. This is visible in other parts of the world also. In Europe, organic food markets are maturing and growth rate is going down. Smith and Marsden (2004) have suggested that the slow down might be placing limits on the potential of organic farming and a sovereign remedy for the problems of rural economic development. It is happening in India as well. They conclude that the implementation of govt. policy is important for
making supply chain smooth. India has brought changes accomplished to unusual mix in its policies which includes seller's interest that promotes the smooth functioning of supply chain. There is a need to evaluate the construction limits in production and consumption (Smith and Marsden, 2004).

In connection to extension of buyer's needs, many researches have been done and motivation for purchasing natural food has normally covered. In 1990's to 21st century the development in the value of retail market was noticed. Although, the noticeable diminishing organic market indicates the inconsistency in market and between unwillingness to buy (Makatouni, 2002). Zonali et al. (2004) the difference between possible organic consumer or the actual organic consumer. It is important to study behavior of organic consumers.

This paper explores the motives that influence consumers buying decisions. They buy these products with the help of these motives. The paper includes the literature on organic food and organic food consumer. The paper is based on empirical research with consumers in Delhi, NCR using focus groups (100 participants) from various areas of capital and includes the detail methods and their outcomes. Discussion section includes the connection and the inconsistency between the attitude and buying behavior and recommends various strategies related to the awareness and attitude for organic food.

2. Organic Food And The Consumer:

The retail market has expanded from an approximated £605 million in 1999 to £1.1 billion in April 2004 (SA, 1999). Increasing demand by consumers in UK has been credited by general concern and resistance to the introduction of genetically modified organisms in the food chain. (MINTEL, 1999; Farodoye, 1999; Michelson et al, 2001).

There are various reasons which show the development of organic sector in India. Consumers have shown their interest and started buying organic food. Retailers which have a main role in growth, promoted and increased the range and helped the farmers to adopt-organic farming and government also helped the growers (Michelson et al, 2001)

In India also the companies survey attitude of buyers' to organic food to make their strategies. (e.g. Data monitor, 2002; MINTEL, 2003; MORI, 1996; TNS, 2004). The various researches have covered socio-demographic aspects and organic food consumer's typology, frequency, availability and location of purchases, motivations, and perceptions, barriers etc. which are (summarized in the following section) complemented by panel data in connection to real buying attitude of consumers in connection to organic food (TNS, 2004, SA, 1999). 

2.1 Organic Consumer:

A Mori Pole in 1999 found that the organic shoppers buy organic food which is one third. In 2004, it has been increased by 77% in all organic products. On the basis of a TNS survey, the soil association (SA, 1999) provided a comprehensive breakdown of organic shoppers into eight categories, according to frequency of purchase and the number of product categories bought. General senior people were persistent organic buyers, especially such persons and very few in numbers. 75% of persistent buyers belonged to socio-economic groups (A,B,C) contrast to below 50% of population.

Although, youth is the highest spenders on organic food. Comparatively, the MINTEL, (2000) research explores that youngest and oldest people gives least important to their health and diet and least concerned with organic. Adults (those don't have any kind) are more concerned with organic food. Families with children spend more on organic food (Michelson et al., 2001) supply; the outline could spread down the socio-economic scale. Based on a NOP World Survey of a representative sample of 1057 adults, the SA 1999 to 2004 asserted that appeal for organic food is widening to involved a broader spread of social groups, organic mat and fruits are well liked by people and it becomes easier to distinct between consumers of organic vegetables & other class, MINTEL (2003). Adults purchases more organic vegetables whereas youngest age group did not like much to buy organic vegetables.
Not only the youngsters are the highest spends (Anich & White, 2009); but older people also have sense of autonomy that leads to purchase of organic food (Kriwy & Mecking, 2012). Seniors purchase more organic vegetables whereas young group did not like organic vegetables (MINTEL, 2003), families with children spend more on organic food (Michelson et al, 2001).

People who are aware about certification and have trust in certified logos and labeling, buy organic food because it contributes in making their belief in genuineness and originality (Valerian et al, 2011). Highly educated people prefer organic food (Dimitri & Oberholtzer, 2009). Tshuma et al. (2010) describes that people with high income purchase organic food more. It affects buying behavior positively. Females are most concerned with organic food (Tshuma, 2010). Vegetarians were more willing to buy (Govindasamy et al., 1999)

2.2 Organic Consumer And Their Spending Pattern:

As per the data shown by TNS panels published in SA (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004) it has been observed that the frequency of purchase and average spends of organic consumers in UK has increased in the last two years.

Average purchase of organic food in UK has increased to 13.6 times per year in 2004 from 12.8 times per year in 2002. Also, the average spends per household increased to 59.39 pound compared with 32.44 pound. However, only 25% of all customers buying organic food are responsible for 84% of all organic purchases.

In India organic food is purchased most in the supermarkets, special organic stores. Although organic vegetables purchased directly have increased to 16.2% from 10% in the last two years.

2.3 Motives To Buy Organic Food:

It has been observed in various surveys, the basic motivating force to purchase organic food is health (e.g. Data Monitor, 2002). It is considered the better predictor of attitude and behavior towards organic food, affected purchase intention positively, lead to wellness and sense of achievement. In terms of personal well being and health and in the wider context of benefits to the environment organic food has been purchased for safety concern also. This element proved organic food superior.

Scarpa, R. (2003) describes that organic food is purchased due to psychographic influence also that establishes positive belief about the organic content.

Environmental concern is also considered one of the important motives which contribute to informing attitude positively (M. Brugarolas et al, 2005). The study conducted by O'Donovan & M. Mc carthy, (2002) highlights pollution issues as an important motive to affect consumers' purchase intention positively. Ethical motivations were considered important to create loyalty among regular organic consumers (Pino, Poluso & Guido, 2012). Consumers were influenced to buy organic food after knowing organic production methods & integrated crop management system (O’ Donovan & Mc Carthy (2002), Scarpo, R, 2003). A small segment of consumers adopt organic food due to life style (Kesse-Guyot, 2013) and due to belief in their culture and traditions (Shahruddin et al, 2010).

2.4 Barriers In Buying Organic Food:

Price is the main reason for not buying organic food. Other barriers include lack of information, poor presentation and availability. In 1999, 26% consumers did not know where to find an organic product. Price in the key deterrent for not buying organic food (Tshuma et al, 2010) less familiarity with organic food influences buying behavior negatively (Saleki et. Al, 2012). Other barriers include less availability (Kesse-Guyot, 2013), Less trust in certification (Valerian et al, 2011), General appearance (Kim & Chung, 2011), Poor shelf life (Jolly and Norris, 1991).

Model showing deterrents for not buying Organic Food
3. Existing Literature Summary:

A lot of efforts have been made to identify the organic consumers and important motives for purchasing and deterrents for not buying organic food. It is evident from the existing literature that organic consumers are supposed to be rich, educated and well-informed. Youngster have different attitude for different products. Organic consumers buy these products for their better health, environmental and pollution issues and ethical concerns. But these motives and barriers vary in different products. Very limited researchers focussed on exploring the factors like availability and convenience. Organic vegetables buying decision making process is influenced by attitudes, preference and socio-demographic factors. Those who are regular organic food buyers face a problem like high price, unavailability and lack of information.

Buyers don't buy organic food because they don't interest in certification claims made for organic food and consider themselves to be less able to buy it. The families having children are more keen to buy organic food, especially those whose children are suffering from any disease.

This study is an attempt to explore and understand the motives and barriers in purchasing decision. It focuses on the relation between positive perceptions and purchasing decisions.

4. Methodology:

The paper is based on focus group and laddering interviews with Indian consumers.

4.1 Focus Groups:

Focus groups are the qualitative methods that give importance to every individual. It is based on discussions in the groups and listening to individual's concerns. This discussion can last for one to two hours with 6-15 participants. This paper is based on the discussions among individuals about their perceptions, feelings, attitudes and ideas.

This is the most commonly used techniques in market research. In this study, organic consumers were selected and discussions were made regarding perceptions, level of knowledge, and information about organic food. 20 consumers groups comprising 5 participants each were interviewed; every consumer was aware about organic food. All the participants were representatives of very gender and employment and different levels of education. Participants were selected through organic food retailers and local contacts. They were given organic food sachets as incentives. One of the authors was the moderator of the discussion. The results were interpreted with the help of software.

4.2 Laddering Interviews:

This technique is a technique of in depth interview in market research and adopted in various studies.
An objective of this technique is to explore the underline values of purchasing decisions. The basic of this technique is the means and chain model which includes the three levels - attributes, consequences and values.

The present study adopted the laddering approach and conducted hundred interviews in the various locations. The participants were chosen according to age (40 percent from each age group of 25-34, 35-54 and 20 percent from 55 and above), area (50 percent from Delhi and 50 percent from NCR), place of purchase (Exclusive stores, super markets, farmer’s market) to ensure that the equal representation of every section. They were selected through exclusive organic food stores, super markets and vegetable markets.

Interviewees were chosen according to frequency of purchase (50 per cent regular buyers and 50 per cent occasional or non-buyers); area (70 per cent urban and 30 per cent rural); main place of purchase (supermarkets, direct marketing, specialty shops); and interview time (80 per cent weekdays and 20 per cent at weekends) to ensure that a variety of consumer types were represented.

The participants were regular and occasional buyers both. The products selected for interview were fruits, vegetables, milk products, groceries. The interview focused on understanding, the rule of trust, certification and shelf life.

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<tr>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
<th>Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grown with Manure &amp; Natural Fertilizers</td>
<td>Healthy lifestyle</td>
<td>Improved Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural Colour &amp; Appearance</td>
<td>Ethical Satisfaction</td>
<td>Healthy Thinking</td>
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<td>Environment Friendly</td>
<td>Feeling of Association with Grocers</td>
<td>Stress Fee Life</td>
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(Source: Empirical Research based on MEC Model)

5. Results:
The following are the results of focused groups and laddering interviews which explain the motives and deterrents for buying and not buying the organic food.

5.1 Familiarity with the organic food:
The questions were asked about the familiarity with the organic food. All the participants responded positively and they were well aware about the meaning of organic and they could relate it with fruits and vegetables. They shared the strong affiliation of natural with fresh produce. Regular consumers could associate organic food with healthy, less contaminated, top taste, etc.

In contrast to this, organic consumers were not convinced with taste and appearance.

Occasional consumers said that the price of these products was very high and they could not find good results in consuming them one or two times. They were having less information about these products. The respondents were more aware about organic fruits and vegetables and some items of grocery like pulses, jaggery, honey, etc. some of them were confused between natural and organic.

5.2 Why consumers purchase organic food?
The result of this discussion was based on some indirect questions. The main motives which were highlighted by the respondents were health, supporting local farming and environmental protection. Some of them highlighted the motive of buying organic food because of disease. Females
were buying organic food for the health concern of their children. Participants highlighted the taste and less availability of organic food.

Model showing influence of Motivations for buying Organic Food

6. Conclusion:
The respondents revealed that organic food especially fruits, vegetables was also being purchased as a source of enjoyment while the family consumers bought it as a healthy factor. Working and adult women were the core buyers of organic food; they were well informed. Women were keen to buy organic food because they were involved in cooking and family health. Health was the main reason to buy the organic food. Environmental concerns, ethical concern were the other motives. Price was the main deterrent. Less information, less trust, less availability, appearances were the other deterrents to buy the organic food.

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