



e-ISSN: 2319-8753 | p-ISSN: 2347-6710

IJIRSET

International Journal of Innovative Research in
SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

IN SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

Volume 13, Issue 11, November 2024

ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

Impact Factor: 8.524

 9940 572 462

 6381 907 438

 ijirset@gmail.com

 www.ijirset.com

A Study on Overcoming Consumer's Skepticism towards Organic Product through Effective Sustainable Marketing

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ABSTRACT: Organic products have gained popularity in recent years owing to their health and environmental benefits. However, consumer skepticism remains a significant barrier to widespread adoption. Chi-square Tests and Karl Pearson Coefficient Correlation techniques have been used. Chi –Square showed the result that there is no significant relationship, which leads to the conclusion that the obstacles of adopting organic products to overcome consumer skepticism about organic products are unrelated to respondents' age and correlation analysis gives a positive relationship between the reasons for utilizing organic goods with the tactics for overcoming consumer skepticism about organic products. The findings highlight number of issues that contribute to consumer skepticism, including high prices when compared to regular goods, a lack of knowledge about sustainable farming practices, label and certification confusion, the impact of similar flavor and quality on non-organic items, availability, and trust. In response to these findings, the study suggests several sustainable marketing solutions. Furthermore, the study identifies many sustainable marketing strategies that have the potential to reduce customer skepticism. These strategies include transparency and education, emphasizing quality and flavor, targeting the right customers, reducing packaging waste, and collaborating with sustainable businesses. This study aims to encourage changes toward more sustainable purchase behaviors by addressing the identified skeptical features and delivering successful sustainable marketing techniques. The outcomes of this study can help marketers promote organic food consumption and enhance customer support for sustainable agriculture approaches. The study's major goal is to use these strategies to increase consumer trust and confidence in purchasing organic products, resulting in greater adoption and support for sustainable agriculture practices in order to achieve a low-carbon society.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable marketing, marketing strategies, organic practices, consumer doubts

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumers' distrust about organic products has become a key obstacle to sustainable consumption. Despite increasing knowledge of the environmental and health benefits of organic products, many customers remain skeptical due to perceived high costs, worries about authenticity, and a lack of clear comprehension of the benefits. [1]

Organic products are made using natural components and do not contain fertilizers or synthetic chemicals. To be considered organic, a product must have been produced in a way that respects the soil, conserves its nutrients, avoids the use of chemicals, and has been certified according to ecological criteria. By avoiding extended contact with chemical products, it protects not only the health of the customers, but also the health of the farmers and workers engaged in its production [2]. Marketers may foster trust and a good view of organic foods by utilizing open communication, reliable certifications, and promoting the advantages of organic consumption. This research investigates several sustainable marketing strategies for reducing skepticism and increasing customer acceptance of organic products. [3] As a result, addressing consumer mistrust about organic products is critical to the economy's organic food sector growth. One key area of consumer doubt is the legitimacy of organic claims. Customers often question whether products labeled as organic genuinely meet the standards and regulations associated with organic production. This mistrust may be fueled by instances of misleading labeling or insufficient regulation enforcement.

1.1 Objectives

- To identify the key factors contributing to consumer skepticism towards organic products
- To analyze the challenges in sustainable marketing of organic products
- To identify the reason in consuming organic products.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The problem statement identifies a substantial market difficulty for organic products. This criticism originates from a variety of issues, including concerns about the truthfulness of organic claims, higher pricing, and a perceived lack of real benefits like health benefits and environmental benefits when compared to conventional products. These issues combined hinder market penetration of organic products, hence slowing the development of sustainable consumption behaviours. Another key aspect is the increased cost of organic food. Organic agricultural methods often include more labour-intensive processes, resulting in higher expenses. These variables work together to explain organic products' poor market penetration. When customers are unwilling to trust or invest in these items, the wider adoption of sustainable consumption practices suffers. This has an impact on the overall growth and sustainability of the organic product industry. To overcome these difficulties, the study will look at the precise causes for customer distrust. By learning about these concerns, businesses may modify their marketing efforts to better meet the requirements and expectations of their customers. This might include better labelling, more explicit communication about the benefits of organic food, and strategies for justifying the price premium. Addressing these concerns would enable to better match their marketing efforts with customer expectations, resulting in a more sustainable market environment. The research aims to uncover the root causes of consumer skepticism towards organic products and to develop marketing strategies that address these concerns.

1.3 Need for the study

Understanding and overcoming consumer concern about organic products is critical for promoting a sustainable future. Overcoming these issues is critical for promoting environmentally friendly practices and improving public health outcomes by encouraging the use of items free of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. This research aims to contribute to create a more sustainable market environment in which organic products are recognized for their genuine benefits. By identifying and resolving the causes of consumer mistrust, the study hopes to enhance both environmental and economic sustainability. Effective sustainable marketing methods may play an important part in restoring consumer trust and transparency while also addressing the root cause of skepticism. The study's findings can assist policymakers and regulatory authorities in developing stronger standards and policies to foster the growth of the organic industry. By expanding a comprehensive knowledge of consumer issues and developing methods to address them, this study may pave the way for a more sustainable and successful future for the organic product in the market, as well as the transition to a low-carbon society.

1.4 Scope of the study

This research focuses on overcoming customer distrust about organic products using sustainable marketing tactics. The key areas of inquiry are: Understanding consumer resistance towards organic products, including misinformation, distrust in certifications, and perceived high costs. Identifying effective ways to build customer confidence and promote organic products. This includes strategies such as increasing transparency in labeling and strengthening certification processes, consumer education through campaigns and workshops, addressing price perceptions, engaging in digital and social media platforms, fostering community relationships, highlighting health and environmental benefits with scientific evidence, improving product accessibility, and continuous innovation in sustainable practices. By exploring these factors, this study hopes to give practical knowledge and suggestions for organic product marketers and stakeholders looking to effectively overcome consumer uncertainty and drive broader adoption of sustainable.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

"The willingness to consume organic food" by Gabriel Adewunmi Eyinade and Abbyssinia Mushunje (2021), [4] seeks this article investigates consumer inclination to eat organic food, as well as consumer knowledge and awareness of organic food, and consumer attitudes and preferences for organically grown foods. The results of this study show that the food industry has to promote more awareness about the health benefits of consuming organic foods. The gradual increase in organic food production may also be seen in the rapidly rising.

Indian farmers experience with and perception of organic farming", [5] despite a lack of official assistance in providing

farmers with information and extension, the number of farmers turning to organic farming in India has surged in recent years. The purpose of this essay is to look into the perceived importance, benefits, and challenges of switching to organic farming. A total of 40 farmers, both organic and conventional, were interviewed. According to the findings, conventional farmers cited production and marketing difficulties as the key impediments to organic farming adoption, whereas the farmer's age and education were not considered an issue. Conversion was further hampered by a lack of information and institutional assistance. According to the research, the government's compensation programmed for yield loss during the conversion period, as well as a price premium may be effective.

'Exploring the Preferences of Consumers' Organic Products in Aspects of Sustainable Consumption: The Case of the Polish Consumer' [6]. The article aimed to examine Polish consumers' behavior in the organic product market and explore the relationship between their environmental awareness and willingness to purchase organic products. The authors suggested a link between consumer knowledge of sustainable consumption and the use of organic products. The study involved 1067 participants, using a unique survey questionnaire. Statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics, discriminant function analysis, and regression analysis, was conducted with the Statistical 13.1 PL program. The findings have implications for industry professionals and policymakers to encourage more sustainable eating habits. The authors recommend that food systems policy groups develop new campaigns to educate the public on the benefits of consuming organic foods.

2.1 Research Gap

The influence of digital marketing and social media on consumer attitudes regarding organic products has not been fully studied. Understanding how online platforms encourage or prevent organic product adoption might give valuable insights as they become increasingly influential in shaping customer opinions. If customers are provided with clear information and understanding about organic products, and labels are transparent, consumer distrust may be eliminated. Research on overcoming consumer skepticism regarding organic products involves an in-depth research of skepticism as well as an examination of psychological obstacles and trust variables. All of the challenges, such as limited product availability, organic label bias, lack of information clarity, and perception of similar taste to non-organic alternatives, have been reported by customers, and barriers such as higher prices, fewer retail organic outlets, shorter shelf life, and lack of trust must be identified in order to fill the study's research gap.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

➤ Area of Study

The study has conducted in Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, India.

➤ Sampling Techniques

The sample strategy utilized in this study is simple random sampling across different demographics.

Simple Random Sampling: A type of probability sampling where a subset of participants is chosen at random from a population.

➤ Tools of Analysis

The SPSS package used for the study

Chi - square tests, Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation are used to analyse the data. Appropriate tables are used to present the results.

➤ Source of data

Primary data: Well-structured questionnaire framed to capture consumer attitude and trust levels.

Secondary data: Articles related to organic products, Journals and information's were from websites such as Google Scholar, Google, Shodganga, and Research Gate.

IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Chi-Square Test

Chi - square test is a data analysis on the basis of observations of a random set of variables. Usually, it is a comparison of two statistical data sets. This test was introduced by Karl Pearson in 1900 for categorical data analysis and distribution. [7]

H0: There is no significant relationship between respondent's ages and challenges in using organic product.

Table 1 Comparison between respondent’s age and challenges in using organic product

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.293 ^a	20	.275
Likelihood Ratio	24.708	20	.213
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.527	1	.003

Table 1 show that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 23.293 at the 5% level of significance. P value is greater than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings from Table 1

There is no significant relationship, which leads to the conclusion that the obstacles of employing organic products to overcome consumer skepticism about organic products are unrelated to respondents' ages.

Contingency Coefficient

The contingency coefficient is a coefficient of association that tells whether two variables or data sets are independent or dependent of each other. It is also known as *Pearson’s Coefficient*. [8]

Table 2 Contingency Coefficient relationship between age and challenges in using organic product

Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.763	.275
	Cramer's V	.382	.275
	Contingency Coefficient	.607	.275

Table 2 shows a Contingency Coefficient of 0.607, which is above 0.60 so it is indicating a strong relationship between challenges in utilizing organic products to overcome consumer skepticism and respondents' age*.

*Respondents age is selected randomly from customers using organic products probably between 30 years to 60 years through structured questionnaire.

H0: There is no significant relationship between respondent’s incomes and challenges in using organic products

Table 3 Comparison between Incomes with challenges in using organic products

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance(2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.167 ^a	16	.375
Likelihood Ratio	20.815	16	.186
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.289	1	.012

Table 3 shows a Pearson Chi-Square value of 17.167 at a 5% level of significance. P value is greater than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings from Table 3

There is no significant relationship, and the study suggests that the problems of employing organic products to overcome customer skepticism about organic products are unrelated to respondents' wealth.*

* The income of respondents is determined by their household income of consumers purchasing organic products through structured questionnaire

Table 4 Contingency Coefficient relationship between Income and challenges in using organic product

Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.655	.375
	Cramer's V	.328	.375
	Contingency Coefficient	.548	.375

Table 4 demonstrates that the contingency coefficient is 0.548. Since the value ranges from 0.40 to 0.60, this indicates that there is a moderate link between income and obstacles in using organic products to overcome customer skepticism about organic products and respondents' income.

4.2 Karl Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation is defined as a linear correlation coefficient that falls in the value range of -1 to +1. Value of -1 signifies strong negative correlation while +1 indicates strong positive correlation.[9]

HO: There is no significant relationship between reasons of using organic products with strategies of overcoming consumer's skepticism in using organic product.

Table 5 Correlation between reasons of using organic product with strategies of overcoming consumer's skepticism in using organic product

Pearson Correlation coefficient	Transparency	Limited availability	Access	Education	Doubt in health benefit
correlation	.705	.650	.441	.272	.434
Sign.(2-tailed)	.538	0.668	.547	.368	.287

Table 5 reveals that the Karl Pearson's association coefficient is +1, indicating a positive association between the reasons for adopting organic goods and the solutions for overcoming consumer skepticism about organic products. As a result, the analysis shows that the variables are all trending in the same direction.

Findings from Karl Pearson Coefficient Of Correlation

The Karl Pearson's Correlation coefficient is +1, indicating a positive relationship between the reasons for utilizing organic goods and the tactics for overcoming consumer skepticism about organic products.

4.3 Suggestions

By applying these suggestions, marketers may effectively minimize customer mistrust about organic products, develop trust, and encourage sustainable consumption habits.

1. To lessen customer mistrust about organic products, marketers can increase transparency by assuring clear, informative labelling that details ingredients, sourcing, and certification criteria, as well as giving extensive supply chain information.
2. Educating customers about the benefits and distinctions of organic goods through campaigns, workshops, and seminars is critical for building trust.

Addressing pricing perceptions entails clearly expressing the extra value of organic

V. CONCLUSION

Consumer distrust about organic foods poses a big challenge to the organic food business. However, by using effective sustainable marketing techniques such as transparency, communication, education, and accessibility programs, it is feasible to overcome these barriers and increase consumer trust and acceptance of organic food products.

Consumer distrust of organic products is a significant barrier for marketers seeking to promote sustainable consumption behaviors. First, transparency may be considerably increased by clearly labelling organic products and disclosing the whole production chain. This increases trust by allowing customers to understand the origins and authenticity of the products they are purchasing. To further strengthen confidence, trustworthy certifying bodies must be used, as well as third-party audits to validate organic claims on an ongoing basis. Educational initiatives are also important. Launching campaigns, workshops, and seminars that emphasize the benefits and contrasts between organic goods. Resulting in greater adoption, consumption of organic product and support for sustainable agriculture practices helps to increase health conscious and make a way to achieve a low- carbon society.

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