

Organic Product Labels: The Credence towards Customers Choice of Buying Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: *The organic food sales are not gaining more potential, due to limited buyers, because the customers have a paucity of product labels. This distrust has highly affected the company's profits. The purpose of the study is to ease these sceptics nature which is crucial for the organic food chain and also the government, emphasizing the necessity to enhance trust and openness in compliance. In order to ensure the credibility of the certified labels, companies have to adopt a set of rules and standards which result in a long-term effect on eco-favoured customers, and trust in the organic label creates a positive impact on customer choice of buying behaviour. Besides, companies also focus on conveying the right messages, so that customers can differentiate organic products from conventional ones.*

Design: *This literature highlights various issues pertaining to the organic product label and customers' choice of buying behaviour, and data is obtained from multiple reviews of literature, journals, and case studies.*

Findings: *Labelling strategy may reduce information asymmetry between customers and the company because labelling strategy may influence product differentiation.*

Originality/Value: *Studies encompass the certification scheme which is necessary for labelling organic products. Studies identify reading the labels customers easily identify product attributes that serve as a medium between company and end-users. Moreover, green labels, eco-labels, energy labels, and organic labels serve as certificates of organic products.*

Paper Type: *Case study*

Keywords: Organic Product Labels, Customers Choice, Buying Behaviour, Certification Scheme, Company Profits, SWOC Analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION :

The organic product label is the provocative approach, which identifies them as cues to global quality instead of just a certification. As a result, studies investigate the niche market of well-informed consumers, and whether the label signals are triggered as a motivational factor for the purchase decisions of these expensive products? A convincing report supporting these studies indicates excess consumption of these products has resulted due to labelling strategies (Larceneux, F, et al., 2012) [1]. The current study proposes about the health halo effects have been identified in the case of customer evaluations of health claims. In tracing the justification of these claims study also exhibits about customers' perceived legitimacy of the USDA's "organic labels" which influence customer's choice of buying behaviour. Furthermore, those same labels judge the overall healthfulness and influence individual behaviour (Drexler, D., et al., 2018) [2]. The research results highlights about "organic labels" are the imperative tools that connect customers' credence of buying intentions. Customers are also notified from the packages the required information and labels prove the ecological origin of the product. Conversely, some stream of the literature suggests not all labels prove their potential. But however, studies try to prove labelling helps companies to improve their competitive edge, company reputation, and identify new markets, and market share. Besides, companies also focus on conveying

the right messages, so that customers can differentiate organic products from conventional ones (Bougherara, D., &Combris, P, 2009) [3]. Prior research arguably reprimands that “organic labels” is not a health claim, it can be a process claim, and still, it is a guarantee of a specific process and product may not necessarily mean tastier or healthier than the chemically used ones (D’souza, et al., 2006) [4]. Furthermore, the foregoing literature advocates for environmental concerns for customers, who are likely to involve in buying organic products. Moreover, these customers check information from the labels seeking justification for the product. Studies also exhibit how customers are motivated to buy these environmentally favoured products. Additionally, these customers are often known as “ultra-Green” customers and are the driving force of environmentalism. However, studies suggest that price-sensitive customers read the labels only and may be satisfied with the information but lack the willingness to pay a premium (Mendon, S., Salins, M., &Aithal, P. S, 2019) [5].

Prior research, advocates that information in the product label can hardly create trust, but the level of knowledge about the product has a strong influence on the buyers intend to purchase. Additionally, studies delineate about the positive attitude of the customer's influences individual behaviour. Accordingly, the present studies have attempted to examine how organic labels play a drastic role in knocking on the door of customers’ choice towards organic product buying intention (Wong, W. M., &Tzeng, S. Y, 2021) [6].

2. RELATED RESEARCH WORK:

The “organic labels” are the imperative tools that connect customers’ credence of buying intentions. Customers are also notified from the packages the required information and labels prove the ecological origin of the product. The studies convey information about the superior attributes of organic products, should be done with labelling strategy. Systematic review is done from the Google scholar search engine of the published journals between 2012-2021, with the help of key words “Organic Product Labels, Customers Choice, Buying Behaviour, Certification Scheme, Social Capital” .The table 1 is related to research papers of organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour and it is based on the respective keywords.

Table 1: Related research papers organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour

Sl. No	Field of study	Focus	Outcome of the study	References
1	Customer’s acceptance on organic products.	Customers more concern about food safety.	The reasons advocated by the consumers for buying organic food products are varied and primarily the motivations behind their decision to purchase	Basha, et al., (2015). [7]
2	Role of subjective norms in TPB.	Influences the customer’s attitude towards intensions.	The subjective role based on societal factors influences the customer’s behaviour.	Abdullah, et al., (2014). [8]
3	Consumer’s motivation towards organic products.	Past experience with HEM model.	The hedonic motivation of the customers are related to customers favourable attitude	Lian, (2017). [9]
4	Consumer behaviour and intentions.	The demographic factors positively influence the consumer’s attitudes.	The socio demographic features explored the various features which contributed to shape the nature of behaviour	Paul & Rana, (2012). [10]

			of ecological consumer.	
5	Consumer's purchase intention towards organic products.	Consumers buy organic products to maintain environmental sustainability.	The pro-environmental behaviour of consumers creates intention to buy organic products.	Pittawat & Santiteerakul, (2016). [11]
6	Consumer loyalty and belief in organic food.	Positive attitude toward organic foods is the long term success.	Building customer platform with customers benefits and layer in customers, generated help to build a community	Lee & Goudeau, (2014). [12]
7	Consumer's perception towards organic consumption.	Purchase intention is due to consumer trust and belief in labels.	Customer perception towards organic products increases when there is a belief in organic labels.	Mishra & Singh, (2016). [13]
8	Consumers purchase intentions due to cultural differences.	To identify the availability of organic products in supermarkets	Cultural factors have strong influence on consumers buying behaviour.	Seegebarth, et al., (2016). [14]
9	How health community influences social capital.	Social capital influences organic consumption.	Higher quality of social capital embedded in health community increases the consumption level of organic products.	Hung, et al., (2013). [15]
10	Influence of knowledge on green consumption.	To increase environmental friendly behaviour, policy makers need to design effective policy.	The attitude, belief and practices of the individual are the knowledge which, he uses to purchase eco friendly products.	Yazdanifard, (2014).[16]

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- (1) To identify how the organic labels plays a driving force to customers choice
- (2) To find the customers buying behaviour towards organic labelled product
- (3) To study the credence of customer choice of organic buying behaviour
- (4) To assess whether companies can upgrade sales through organic labelling
- (5) To carry out the SWOC analysis of organic product labels and customer's behaviour

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The data available for this literature is adopted from numerous case studies, reviews of literature, journals and internet sources, and it identifies the other aspects related to organic product labels and consumer choice of buying behaviour.

5. ORGANIC LABELS A DRIVING FORCE TO CUSTOMERS CHOICE :

Organically produced products have gained more significance in the present arena with the organic product market being a booming industry. A growing body of literature examines that customers' evaluation of these products has a wide spectrum. Nevertheless, literature shows about the organic label effects have a drastic change in customers' perception, credence, and attitude along with attributes (both sensory and no sensory features) (Berg, L, 2004) [17]. Besides, customers' evaluation of labels foregoing literature establishes a paradigm shift based on customers' trust in organic labelling which is

typically certified with a government seal. Studies highlight labelling as an effective tool for sensitizing customers to the decision-making process. Furthermore, trust in the organic label creates a positive impact on customer choice of buying behaviour. Consequently, by reading the labels customers easily identify product attributes which serve as a channel between producers and end-users. Moreover, green labels, eco-labels, energy labels, and organic labels serve as certificates of organic products. Specifically, organic label certification has certain benefits such as perceived health and environmental protection and notably, organic labelling is however certified by the government authority, which thereby creates a sense of “reassurance” about product safety and quality issue (Kun, A. I., & Kiss, M, 2021) [18]. Studies show about organic labels had their certification systems in the 1970 and 1980s; this started building trust among customers. However, personal trust is not the sole guarantor of this product's integrity, but it is a crucial element for the non-third party verification system (Nelson, E., et al., 2010) [19]. Over the past two decades, the third-party certifications have proliferated and have been viewed in many sustainable movements related to agriculture with different practices. As a market-based approach, the third party certification is done in the first world countries to capture more market share of disposable income groups. In order to ensure the credibility of the certified labels, the company started to adopt a set of rules and standards and this resulted in a long-term effect on eco-favoured customers (Castka, P., & Corbett, C. J, 2016) [20]. Prior studies encompass the certification scheme necessary for labelling organic products, which may ease the ambiguity of the customers. Digging into the deeper study organic production compliances was introduced in 1999 for the production of organic products. The IFOAM drafted guidelines for the production of these products, based on customer perspective in order to maintain a standard of the product through organic labelling (Aarset, B., et al., 2004) [21]. Table 2 shows growing consumer trust in an unregulated product label

Table 2: Growing Consumer Trust in an Unregulated Product Label 2021

Sl. No.	Natural Labels contents	Trust in Tables (%)
1	Chemical Free	65
2	Does not contain artificial ingredients	62
3	Do not contain GMO	50
4	Respects animal welfare	35
5	Sustainably produced	35
6	Locally sourced	30
7	Term used for marketing only	32
8	Also organic	50

Source: Euro monitor Global Consumer Trends survey, Euromonitor.com

6. CUSTOMERS BUYING BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ORGANIC LABELLED PRODUCTS :

An empirical study, investigated about the organic food sector is not achieving its full potential, due to limited buyers, and because the customers have a paucity of product labels. This distrust has highly affected the company's profits. To ease these sceptics, a holistic approach is crucial for the organic food chain and also the government, emphasizing the necessity to enhance confidence and openness in compliance, to assure traceability and safeguard the customer's safety and security (Doan, H. Q, 2021) [22]. Studies further embark on the nexus of consumer buying behaviour and favourable attitude. Relevant information about this study also discloses that customers can be divided into health concern and sensitive to moral values. Besides, trust and food safety captures important criterion due to customers' credence about organic labels. Studies also project about the disposable income group shelling out to pay for these expensive products due to the credence of the labels (Mendon, S., & Aithal, P. S, 2019) [23]. Apparently, studies opined as labelling is a tool to facilitate consumers' buying behaviour toward organic products. Studies also stated that the majority of consumers opt for organic labelled products, since they believe that cultivation of these products may retain the soil fertility compared to the conventional ones, further which may prevent environmental degradation. Nevertheless, customers assume that environmentally friendly packaging labels may, however, maintain sustainability (Slamet, A. S, et al., 2016) [24]. Foregoing literature studies analysis about the labelling is an indispensable aspect in tracing the justification of organic products. Studies also give

clarity about the information provided through labels is divided as “mandatory” and “non-mandatory”, as with most of the products. Indeed with this information, labels are considered a means of obtaining informed consent along with mitigating the factors of outrage. However, information about the superior attributes of organic products should be done with labelling strategy, which may reduce information asymmetry between customer and company. Since labelling strategy may influence product differentiation. A growing body of literature encourages researchers to do an in-depth study on behaviour of customers. Studies reports also examine what has to be included in the labels to justify clarification in the minds of the customers. Finally, studies provide a fascinating insight into how these encounters can be shaped resulting in changes in the market trends (Marchini, A, et al., 2021) [25].

7. THE CREDENCE OF CUSTOMER CHOICE OF ORGANIC BUYING BEHAVIOUR :

Prior research reported about customers’ fear of being cheated while purchasing organic products, even though they are labelled. Additionally, marketers invest heavily in these products in order to increase trust since the corporate social responsibility of these firms may increase the credence of the customers paving the way to higher profits. But the question arises as to how the pricing strategy should be adopted for the organic product in a competitive market. For organic products like chocolate, we find certain effects of organic labelling, since organic labels prove to be superfluous to customers when they select self-indulgent products. Studies reprimand that repeat-purchase relationships and also the third-party monitoring are necessary for high graded credence goods, to be available. The current study asserts about optimal labelling decisions are the signal game, where self-labelling of products can be done or have them certified by a third party. Furthermore, the government needs to supplement the labelling of organic products with costly monitoring activities, since corrupt marketers may affix some spurious labels in order to capture the market (Wang, Y, 2017) [26]. Studies of some streams of literature highlight the relevance in determining the pro-environmental behaviour of customers their environmental preferences, intentions, etc. Accordingly, self-identity is referred to as a composition of roles, which further persuades an individual to constant action. Nevertheless, labels on products are likely to have a new dimension of consumption. A convincing report overshadows this study by showing customers' credence in these products is related to a stronger belief to be a pro-environmental person and eventually act in an environmentally friendly manner (Qasim, H, 2019) [27]. Consequently, customer’s cognitive structures are discussed in the study of how they frequently use these products due to awareness about environmental issues. But studies also argue that producers ‘mis labelling’ of products creates misinformation leading to negative effects on the credence of customer’s choice of consumption. However, increased awareness about the label benefit has encouraged the customer’s choice of buying behaviour, so organic farmers may increase the production of these sustainable products and can get an outlet for their products (Muhammad, S, 2016) [28].

8. UP GRADATION OF COMPANY SALES THROUGH ORGANIC LABELLING :

With the rapid expansion of information technology, the company can track the store information of customers and their past buying history. By obtaining such information a company can make it feasible for setting a pricing strategy. On the other hand, labelling the product with organic claims after its certified and with an organic seal may increase the company's sales. The more likely company can divide customers into loyal and poaching customers so that certain premiums and discounts can be imposed on loyal customers. Past studies advocate about the price sensitivity of customers and their changing tastes and preference are more likely to result in buying behaviour (Liu, K, 2019) [29]. Specifically, customers' acceptance of labels related to organic marketing is basically related to their motivational factors along with health attributes have been a crucial fact as sensory ones in buying behaviour. Nevertheless, the reduced consumption of chemicals in cultivation is the main criterion for customer choice of organic products. Besides, the motivational factors, a well-functioning label can build trust in the minds of customers. A study survey revealed about a few of the customers is not aware of the importance of the organic label, which has likely affected company sales. So companies are working on domestic promotion campaigns for the organic labels. Studies also suggest that organic labelling can play a very important role in the decision-making process (Nagy-Pércsi, K., & Fogarassy, C, 2019) [30]. Table 3 shows India’s percentage of HNWI’s consuming organic food.

Table 3: India’s Percentage of HNWI’s Consuming Organic Food, By City, 2019-2020

Sl. No.	City	Consumption Rate (%)
1	Mumbai	65
2	Delhi- NCR	61
3	Bangalore	58
4	Ahmadabad	55
5	Hyderabad	52
6	Chandigarh	51
7	Indore	50

Source: Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India

9. SWOC ANALYSIS OF ORGANIC PRODUCT LABELS AND CUSTOMER’S BUYING BEHAVIOUR :

The SWOC analysis evaluates the business's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges as the internal and external structures (Sujaya, H, et al., 2019) [31]; (Sujaya, H, et al., 2019) [32]; (Meghana, S, et al., 2019) [33]; (Meghana, S & Aithal, P.S, 2022) [34]; (Dsouza, Prima Frederick, 2022) [35]. SWOC analysis identifies organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour. Table 4 shows SWOC analysis on organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour.

Table 4: SWOC analysis on organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour

Constructs	Features
Strengths of organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organic labels are the imperative tools that connect customer’s credibility of buying intentions. ➤ Labelling is an effective tool by sensitizing customers to decision-making process. ➤ Consequently, by reading the labels customers easily identify product attributes which serve as a channel between producers and end-users.
Weakness of organic product labels and consumers buying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Price-sensitive customers read the labels only and may be satisfied with the information but lack the willingness to pay a premium. ➤ Due to limited buyers, the customers have paucity towards product labels. ➤ ‘Mis-labelling’ of products creates misinformation leading to negative effects on the credence of customer’s choice.
Opportunities of organic behaviour product labels and consumers buying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Green labels, eco-labels, energy labels and organic labels serve as certificates of organic products. ➤ In order to ensure the credibility of the certified labels, the company started to adopt a set of rules and standards and this resulted in long-term effect of eco-favoured customers. ➤ Labelling the product with organic claims after its certified and with an organic seal may increase the company’s sales.
Challenges of organic food product labels and consumers buying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Customers fear being cheated while purchasing the organic products, even though they are labelled. ➤ Government needs to increase labelling of organic products with expensive monitoring activities, since corrupt marketers may affix some spurious labels in order to capture the market.

10. FINDINGS :

(1) The distrust in the product has highly affected the company's profits. To ease these sceptics, a holistic approach is crucial for the organic food chain and also the government, emphasizing the necessity to enhance confidence and openness in compliance, to assure traceability and safeguard the customer's safety and security.

(2) Information about the superior attributes of organic products should be done with labelling strategy, which may reduce information asymmetry between customer and company. Since labelling strategy may influence product differentiation.

(3) The more likely company can divide customers into loyal and poaching customers so that certain premiums and discounts can be imposed on loyal customers.

(4) Organic label certification has certain benefits such as perceived health and environmental protection and notably, organic labelling is however certified by the government authority, which thereby creates a sense of "reassurance" about product safety and quality issue.

11. SUGGESTIONS :

The organic product label is the provocative approach, which identifies them as cues to global quality instead of just a certification. As a result, studies investigate that from a niche market of well-informed consumers, Company should work on a domestic promotion campaign of the organic. It is also considered important that in organic products market segments customers seek information on the product labels which may appear doubtful to them. So it is suggested in order to achieve better communication of the product features relevant information needs to be given on product labels. The local community links need to build up between farmers and suppliers to ensure the safety and security of the products. The growers, however, alone cannot manage and access the markets, so supplying market stalls of organic products with information about the product labels is necessary. Moreover, the organic labelling should include the name of the certified agency and government zeal so the trust towards the product can be increased by the companies to enhance sales.

12. CONCLUSION :

The research results highlights about "organic labels" are the imperative tools that connect customers' credence leading to intentions of buying behaviour. This research also specifically studies the importance of organic product labelling for gaining customers' attention. It suggests that the company's clear recommendation is necessary to achieve the quality of products and composition, which can be provided through labelling. Moreover, organic labelling is however certified by the government authority, which thereby creates a sense of "reassurance" in the minds of the customers. However, organic product labels catch the attention of the customers and there is no doubt, why these labelling messages are preferred over conventional products. Since customers give more importance to their living situations and moral views. On the other hand labelling with certificate, mark gives a sense of evidence of the environmental quality of the product and acts as an information tool to broaden awareness about these eco-friendly products.

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