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Constraints faced by shopkeepers while marketing organic food products in Udaipur city

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Abstract

A study on “constraints faced by shopkeepers while marketing organic food products in Udaipur city” was undertaken with objectives to examine practices adopted and constraints faced in marketing organic food products. The market survey was conducted in Udaipur city of Rajasthan state. The various strategy used by shopkeepers for promoting organic food products were online marketing, audio visual marketing, tele calling and sales promotion. The constraints always faced by shopkeepers in marketing organic food were irregular supply, high price of products and lack of consumer awareness with Mean Weighted Score calculated for each was 3.00.

Keywords: constraints faced, marketing, organic food products, Udaipur city

Introduction

“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food” – Hippocrates

The economy of India is as diverse as it is large, which include various sectors such as industries, agriculture, textiles and handicrafts, services, *etc.* Agriculture sector is a major component of the Indian economy, more than 75% of our people have their livelihood as agriculture and agriculture oriented works (Thenmozhi and Thilagavathi, 2014) [3]. The Green revolution, launched in the fourth five year plan became a milestone in bringing a revolution in the field of agriculture in India. Green revolution leads to the introduction of high-yielding varieties of seeds and the increased use of chemical fertilizers. Similarly, irrigation led to the enhancement in production of food grains needed to make the country self-sufficient. Due to the introduction of new agricultural strategy the volume of agricultural production and productivity has increased manifold. Total production of food grains in India increased from 81.0 million tonnes during the third plan to 257.4 million tonnes in 2011-12 (Chowdhury, 2016) [1]. The fertilizer consumption in the country accordingly has increased and had achieved near self-sufficiency in nitrogen and phosphate. Indian imports of fertilizer, which were about 2 million tonnes in the early part of 2000, increased to 10.2 million tonnes in 2008-09. India was the third largest producer of fertilizers in the world next to China and USA and the second largest consumer after China during the year 2008. The overall consumption of fertilizers in the country has increased from 65.6 thousand tonnes in 1951-52 to 26.49 million tonnes in 2009- 10. Accordingly, per hectare consumption of fertilizers, which was less than one kg in 1951-52, has gone up to the level of 135 kg in 2009-10. The intensity of fertilizer use varied greatly from about 48 kg per hectare in Rajasthan to as high as 237 kg per hectare in Punjab. The fertilizer use has generally been higher in northern (91.5 kg/ha average) and southern (85.3 kg/ha average) region and lower in the eastern (44.7kg/ha) and western region (40.7 kg/ha) (Jaga and Patel, 2012) [2]. An answer to this disaster is the organic farming, a sustainable agricultural approach which ultimately leads to heal environment and health of the people.

As per the definition of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) “organic farming is a system which avoids or largely excludes the use of synthetic inputs (such as fertilizers, pesticides, hormones, feed additives *etc.*) and to the maximum extent feasible rely upon crop rotations, crop residues, animal manures, off-farm organic waste, mineral grade rock additives and biological system of nutrient mobilization and plant protection”. The recognition of organic farming is progressively increasing and is now practiced in almost all countries of the world.

While considering the market segment of organic product it has been seen that it is still in its infancy stage and need to be flourished so there is the necessitate to encourage the concept of organic farming among Indian farmers, as the large raw organic produce will be available for the companies, better will be the product with the reasonable price for the consumers.

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Marketing of organic food products is must although its initial cost may high but surely help in flourishing the business for long run. Therefore it can be said that implementation of apt marketing strategies will help producers and companies for organic production and influence consumers buying behaviour. The Government and Non-Government Organization need to make concerted efforts to educate, support and encourage people to adopt more organic food. This study basically aims to know the present marketing condition of organic food products in Udaipur city.

The specific objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To examine practices adopted in marketing organic food products.
- To study the various constraints faced by shopkeepers in marketing organic food products.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Udaipur city of Rajasthan State. In Udaipur city there were only four shops which were selling majority of organic food products. All the four shopkeepers were purposively selected as a sample to examine practices adopted and constraints faced in marketing organic food products by the shopkeepers. The name and addresses of the shop were:

- Grealth Agritech Private Limited C/o Gayatri Seva

Sansthan Campus, Sector-6 Hiran Magri, Udaipur, Rajasthan.

- Banyan Roots Organic Store33, Panchvati, Near R K Mall, Opposite Gold Gym, Udaipur, Rajasthan.
- Eco-Fresh Organics Shop 1-Shivaji Nagar, Opposite R.S.S Office, Inside Udaipole, Udaipur, Rajasthan
- Bio Fresh Organics 58-B, Ambamata Scheme, Udaipur, Rajasthan

The selected shops were explored during market survey. The information was collected with the help of an interview schedule by the investigator.

Results

These four shop owners were selling twelve different varieties *i.e.* Cereals, Pulses and legumes, Roots and Tubers, Leafy vegetables, Other vegetables, Fruits, Nuts and oil seeds, Spices and condiments, Processed items, Fats and edible oil, Sugar and jaggery and Beverages.

Marketing of organic food products

Table 1 elaborates the practices adopted in marketing organic food products available in market of Udaipur city by the selected shopkeepers. The promotional activities adopted by them were online marketing, audio visual marketing, tele calling and sales promotion.

Table 1: Practices adopted in marketing organic food products by shopkeepers

Sr. No.	Promotional activities	Shopkeeper 1	Shopkeeper 2	Shopkeeper 3	Shopkeeper 4	Percentage
1	Online marketing					
i.	Direct mails	-	✓	✓	✓	75
ii.	SMS	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
iii.	Facebook page	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
iv.	Watsapp group	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
2.	Audio visual marketing					
i.	Local newspaper	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
ii.	Local radio	✓	-	-	✓	50
iii.	Local magazine	✓	-	-	✓	50
iv.	Pamphlets	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
v.	Posters	✓	-	-	-	25
vi.	Banners	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
vii.	Hoardings	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
3.	Tele calling	✓	-	-	✓	50
4.	Sales promotion					
i.	Discount/price off	-	-	-	-	
ii.	Gift	-	-	-	-	
iii.	Coupon	-	-	-	-	
iv.	Free sample	-	-	-	-	
v.	Exchange offer	✓	✓	✓	✓	100
vi.	Free home delivery	-	-	-	✓	25

Inference can be drawn from the table that all the four shopkeepers selected were following the different marketing and promotional activities. Promotional activities were divided into main four sub heads *i.e.* online marketing, audio-visual marketing, tele calling and sales promotion. Under online marketing strategy, except the owner of Shop 1 all the three owners (75%) were promoting their sales by giving product information quite often through direct mails to their customers. Sending of text message was another promotional activity adopted by cent per cent shopkeepers. All the four shopkeepers (100%) were using social network through facebook page and watsapp group. Under second subhead of promotional activity was audio visual marketing. Under this,

all the four shopkeepers were marketing through advertising in local newspapers, distributing pamphlets, placing banners and hoardings in the city. Whereas two owners (50%) of Shop-1 and Shop- 4 also followed two other promotional activities such as: announcement in local radio and giving advertisement in local magazine. Only one owner of Shop 1 also displayed handmade posters regarding advertising the organic food products available in his shop. Whereas, tele calling promotional activity was followed by two owners of Shop 1 and Shop 4. Under the subheads of sales promotional activities, all the owners provided the facility of exchanging the products in case of unsatisfied consumers. Whereas all the four shopkeepers (100%) provided an assurance that by

mistake if consumers buy any expiry date product or wrong product they can get them exchanged with another one. Only one respondent (25%) provided the facility of free home delivery to the customer if the cost of product is Rs. 150 or above. None of the shopkeepers provided the facility of any discount/price off, gift, coupon and free sample as a sales promotion activity.

Constraints faced in marketing organic food products

Constraints were identified and statements were listed in four different areas such as: transportation, storage, consumers, financial and variation constraints. Severity of the constraints, as expressed by the shopkeepers, was recorded on a three-point continuum scale *i.e.*, 'always', 'sometimes' and 'never' as 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Mean Weighted Score were computed to analyze the severity of constraints.

Table 2: Constraints faced in marketing organic food products n=4

Sr. No.	Constraints faced	Shopkeepers			MWS
		Always %	Sometime %	Never %	
1.	Transportation constraints				
a.	Sources of organic food products are very far	-	75	25	1.75
b.	Lack of efficient distribution system for organic food products	50	50		2.50
c.	Transportation of organic food products is not regular	100	-	-	3.00
2.	Storage constraints				
a.	Not enough storage space in shop	-	50	50	1.50
b.	Perishable organic food products deteriorate faster	-	75	25	1.75
c.	Cold storage vans are not available	-	50	50	1.50
3.	Financial constraints				
a.	Costly	100	-	-	3.00
b.	No subsidies and financial support from government to the farmers	-	100	-	2.00
c.	The profit margin is less as compared to non organic food products	-	25	75	1.25
2.	Constraints due to consumers				
a.	Do not prefer to buy organic food products regularly	25	50	25	2.00
b.	Lack of knowledge about the organic food products outlet in the city	100	-	-	3.00
c.	Lack of awareness among the consumers regarding organic food	75	25	-	2.75
4.	Variation constraints				
a. a.	Production of a variety of organic food products is limited	25	50	25	2.00
b. b.	Less availability of all the varieties of organic products in the market	25	50	25	2.00

Data presented in the Table 2 enlightens constraints faced by shopkeepers in selling organic food products in Udaipur city. Under transportation constraints, the shopkeepers felt supply of organic food products is not regular and this was the major constraint always faced by all the four owners of shops as its mean weighted score calculated was found to be 3.00. Lack of efficient distribution system for organic food products was another main constraint as reported by shopkeepers with mean weighted score 2.5. Sources of organic food products were very far therefore it was another constraint felt by shopkeepers with mean weighted score of 1.75. Under storage constraints, perishable organic food products deteriorate faster was the major constraints felt by shopkeepers with the mean weighted score of 1.75. Lack of enough storage space in shop and unavailability of cold storage vans were the least considered constraint by shopkeepers with mean weighted score 1.50. Another important constraint was financial constraint which was reported as the major problem by all the shopkeepers. Among this constraint, the high cost of organic food products as compared to non organic food products was always faced by all the owners and found to be the major constraint with mean weighted score of 3.00. This constraint under the category of financial was followed by no subsidies and financial support provided by the government for growing organic food with mean weighted scores of 2.00. Least considered constraint was the profit margin is less as compared to non organic food products with mean weighted score calculated was found to be only 1.25.

Constraints due to consumers purchasing behavior was the another category which was studied among the shopkeepers. Lack of knowledge about the organic food products outlet among consumer in the city was always considered a major constraint as faced by all the shopkeepers with mean weighted

score 3.00, followed by lack of awareness among the consumers regarding organic food products was considered as another major constraints as mentioned by three of the shopkeepers out of four with mean weighted score of 2.75. Least considered constraint under this category was consumers do not prefer to buy organic food products regularly as compared to non organic food products due to some or other reason. The calculated mean weighted score for this constraint was found to be 2.00 out of 3.00. Under the last category of variation constraints, it was mentioned that the production of a variety of organic food products is limited in the market and less availability of all the varieties of organic products in the market was constraints faced under variation constraints with Mean Score Weighted of 2.00.

Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this paper was to determine constraints faced by shopkeepers while marketing organic food products. Understanding the scenario of market it has been found that merely four organic food shops were available and selling twelve varieties of organic food products. All the shops were promoting their product through Online marketing, Audio visual marketing, Tele calling and Sales promotion. But still there was the utmost need of popularizing the organic food products among consumers. The various constraints faced by shopkeeper were transportation constraints, storage constraints, constraints due to consumers and variation constraints. These variations need to be tackled at various levels such as government by providing subsidies in organic farming, farmers growing more organic food crops, manufacturers providing organic food products at reasonable price and consumers can help by getting aware and consuming organic food products. These cumulative efforts

will act as a catalyst in order to promote organic food products at large scale.

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