



FACTORS MOTIVATING FARMERS TO SWITCH FROM CONVENTIONAL TO ORGANIC FARMING METHODS.

BUSINESS RESEARCH PROJECT

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INTRODUCTION

- Agriculture is a field which has undergone constant and rapid changes.
- Traditional farming systems which considered earth as a living being moved the way for modern agriculture. This switching was mainly because of the increased demand for food which forced people to adopt modern techniques like the use of high yielding variety seeds, use of fertilizers etc
- Conventional farming practices due to certain deficiencies are paving the way for organic farmers. It is the type of farming which produces abundant food without depleting the resources of earth. The extensive use of chemicals for crop production has made the agricultural land so polluted.
- Increased number of farmers are now moving towards organic farming which is sustainable. Governments are introducing new initiatives to attract more farmers to organic farming, like HARITHAKERALAM in Kerala state.

OBJECTIVE

- The study explores the different motivating factors which influence the farmers to switch from conventional farming to organic farming methods which are sustainable.
- Factors such as concern for the environment, moral and social responsibility, and economic considerations are studied through a qualitative research method. One of the most fertile belts of Central Kerala has been taken for this study.

RATIONALE BEHIND THE RESEARCH

- Organic industry growth has reported at a rate of 30 percentage per annum and it is worth 33 billion dollars.
- The study conducted by ASSOCHAM and TechSci research shows that the organic food market in India is growing at a rate of 25-30 %.
- Despite this huge growth, recent studies by business chamber ASSOCHAM and TechSci Research indicate that market in organic industry in India is likely to treble in four years.
- Farmers are not completely aware of organic farming concepts and the ways of doing it.
- Government Policies are not finding results in different states because to make the policies effective they have to know the actual reasons on why farmers are switching.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What factors are influencing the farmers in switching from conventional farming to organic farming?

Broad Research Questions/ Hypotheses

1. Does cost of farming involved with conventional practices has a positive influence on farmers switching from conventional to organic farming methods?
2. Does Environmental concern has a positive influence on farmers choosing to switch from conventional to organic farming methods?
3. Does consumer purchase pattern of organic food products has a positive influence on farmers switching from conventional to organic farming methods?
4. Does moral and social concern of farmers has a positive influence on them to switch from conventional to organic farming methods??

LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ Health consciousness ,price, availability, environmental constraints, Risk aversion etc are the most important factors which influences **consumers in purchase of organic food.**

Samantha Smith, Angelina paladino 2010

➤ Growing consumer concern for health and Organic **environment issues** has created an impact in the minds of consumers about the purchase of organic food products. Availability, quality, health consciousness, risk aversion were the certain factors which made the consumers to have a positive attitude on organic purchase.

Angela Paladino, Samantha Smith 2010

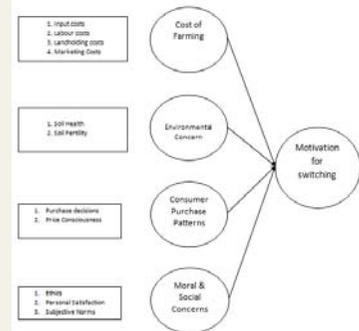
➤ Certified organic producers earn higher income than conventional farmers, but the **costs** they incur on insurance , marketing of the products, labor are a bit higher than conventional farming practices. Lack of economic incentives can be an important barrier for farmers to switch from conventional to organic article.

Hiroki Uematsu, Ashok K Mishra 2012

➤ Farmers switch not only because of monetary benefits alone, but also they are influenced by **moral and social concerns**. Moral concerns are those related to the ethics of the individual and social concerns refer to the behavior of individual in relation to the reference group he is in.

Naoufel Mzoughi 2011

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



METHODOLOGY

- Qualitative Research method is used
- A total of 13 respondents from 3 districts of Kerala were selected for the study.
- Semi structured interviews were used for IDI's
- Interviews were about 30- 50 minutes in duration.
- Field notes analyzed as primary data.



RESULTS

Consolidated Results

Construct	Cost of Farming	Environmental Concern	Consumer Purchase Patterns	Moral & Social Concerns
Variables	Input costs Labour costs Landholding costs Marketing Costs	Soil Health Soil Fertility	Purchase decisions Price Consciousness	Ethics Personal Satisfaction Subjective Norms
No. of farmers	2	7	3	1

Classification on landholding size

Size of Land Holding	Most Critical Factor								Grand Total
	Consumer Purchase Pattern		Cost of Farming		Environmental Concern		Moral and Social Concern		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
<6 acres	1				3			1	5
6 – 10 acres	2		1		2	2			7
>10 acres			1						1
Grand Total	3		2		5	2		1	13

Classification on Crops:

COCONUT

Gender	Number of respondents	Most Critical Factor
Male	5	Soil Health
Female	2	Soil Health and Soil Fertility

Other crops & Vegetables

Gender	Number of respondents	Most Critical Factor
Male	10	Soil Health and Soil Fertility
Female	3	Consumer Purchase Pattern Social Concern

RUBBER

Gender	Number of respondents	Most Critical Factor
Male	3	Soil Health and Soil Fertility
Female	1	Cost of Farming

KEY FINDINGS

- Soil health and soil fertility are the key reasons which influenced the farmers to switch from conventional to organic farming practices.
- The pattern emerged irrespective of the size of the landholding and the different crops they cultivate.
- Moral and social concerns were found to be the least influencing factor for the farmers who chooses to switch.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Subsidies for organic farming inputs and making them available easily through different channels.
- Introduction of government aided retail shops, selling organic manures and organic products at a lower cost which encourages the farmers as well as the consumers.
- Initiatives like HARITHAKERALAM to motivate and encourage farmers. This can be done through agricultural offices through out Kerala.