



VEGETABLE CONSUMPTION PATTERNS IN BANGALORE DISTRICT: A STUDY OF URBAN AND RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

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Abstract

In the case of the perishable fruit and vegetable market, a marketer needs to know what tools to use to convince the consumer to buy the products at the optimal moment, before they deteriorate naturally. Though there is a narrowing gap between rural and urban Indian consumers, there is still a large one due to differences in geography, demography, and psychology. The time has come to study their purchasing habits. The following research looked at how people in the Bangalore district of Karnataka spent their money on vegetables between year 2021- 2022. Vegetable purchasing and consumption habits were also compared between the district's urban and rural residents. Consumers in both urban and rural areas tended to show positive responses, while there was some variance in their attitudes and preferences. Consumers in urban areas were more concerned with quality or brand loyalty than those in rural areas, who were more focused on value. There was also a notable disparity in the purchasing habits of urban and rural vegetarians.

Key Words: Consumer Behaviour; Consumer Attitude; Consumer Preferences; Decision Making; Consumer Intentions

Introduction

India has the second-largest vegetable production in the world, at 1.5 million tonnes, from a total cultivated area of 2.8%. However, daily intake in India is well below the 400g (5 servings of an average of 80g) that is advised by the World Health Organization (National Horticultural Board, 2015). Kerala residents have noticed the similar pattern. There is a strong correlation between a lack of fruits and vegetables in one's diet and an increased chance of developing major, long-lasting health problems. Researchers found that people who ate fewer fruits and vegetables had a lower risk of developing cancer (between 5 and 12 percent) and cardiovascular disease (31%). (Yeates et al., 2015). Vegetables are gaining popularity and a larger portion of consumers' food budgets. Consumers' growing awareness of the need of healthful eating, as well as other factors like rising affluence and a wider selection of nutritious veggies, have contributed to this trend (Goksel et al., 2009). Over half of Indians do not receive enough vegetables in their diets. Thus, it is important to investigate people's attitudes and preferences regarding vegetables. Vegetable buyers were found to be highly influenced by characteristics such as monthly income, price, credit availability, level of education, store cleanliness, product presentation, organic options, availability of additional services, and market type (Chikkamath et al., 2010).

The purpose of this research was to examine and contrast the vegetable-buying habits of urban and rural residents of the Bangalore district in Karnataka. Vegetable shopping and consumption patterns are studied to operationalize consumers' attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions in the marketplace. Based on his research into the Indian market, Sinha (2003) concluded that a firm grasp of consumer behaviour is essential for retail marketers. Consumers' purchasing habits have been shaped by a variety of socioeconomic cultural and psychological elements (Gahaifi and Svetlik, 2011). Vegetable retailing regulations should take into account the shifting demographics of shoppers and the resulting changes in demand.



Vegetable buyers are highly influenced by a variety of factors, including price, availability, quality, and more. Consumers valued the absence of pesticides on their produce and were willing to pay a premium of 15% on average over the standard price to do so (Boccaletti et al., 2000). Consumer demands for specific food qualities, such as safety, freshness, appearance, and texture, have increased alongside rising per-capita wealth in emerging countries. Customers in urban areas and those in rural areas have different tastes, but they still have significant disparities in their consumption and purchasing habits. Choice between two or more possible courses of action including the acquisition of vegetables is operationally characterized as consumer decision making. Consumers make their produce purchasing decisions on the spot, without any prior deliberation.

Objective: To identify the consumer behaviour pattern between rural and urban consumer towards vegetable purchase.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in consumer behaviour among rural and urban consumers.

Methodology

The city of Bangalore was chosen as the study's location in Karnataka. Sixty rural and sixty urban households were picked at random and polled for a total of 120 responses. Out of a total of 60 respondents, 48 fell into the "mixed" category and 12 were "vegetarians." The concept of "consumer behaviour" was operationalized as the aggregate of shoppers' thoughts, feelings, and actions in relation to vegetable purchases.

Demographic status (N=120)

The variations in demographic factors can influence on the behaviour and attitudes of a consumer.

Distribution of age

Table.1, Distribution of respondents based on age

Age years	percentage
18-30	16
31-45	45
46-60	37
Above 60	2

Table 1, The majority of the respondents were from the age group of 31-45 years with a percentage of 45%. The age group of 45-60 years followed the majority. Only 2% were above the age of 60 years.

Table2. Distribution of respondents based on gender

Gender	percentage
Female	67
male	33

When the gender of respondents who are responsible for grocery shopping in the households was considered as a factor, 67% were females and 33% were male (Table 2).



Considerations during purchasing

Table 3, Factors Considered During Purchasing of Vegetables

Consideration	Percentage
Health factors	67
Taste	39
Value for the price	40
Abundant in market	26
Easiness in preparation	28

The consumers selected two factors that they consider during purchasing of vegetables. These factors may determine the type, quantity or spending during purchasing of vegetables. 67% included health factors as one of the two important factors. A value for the price paid was considered by 40%.

Result and Discussion

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents (80.83%) have a positive outlook on vegetable eating. This is followed by a smaller percentage (12.5%) that has a positive outlook on vegetable consumption, and a smaller percentage (6.67%) that has a negative outlook on vegetable consumption. Most respondents agreed that veggies were healthy, tasty, high in fiber, and simple to procure, but that the high cost and short shelf life prevented them from having an extremely positive outlook on vegetables.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents based on consumer attitude Urban Rural

Category	Frequency (60)	%	Frequency (60)	%	Total (120) %
Less favourable	0	0	8	13.3	6.67
Moderate favourable	48	80	49	81.67	8.83
Highly favourable	12	20	3	5.0	12.5

Source: primary data Mean=24, SD=3

As a result of the price's impact, a larger percentage of the rural people fell into the less favourable attitude category, where consumers in the city did not cluster. Consumers in rural areas had a negative outlook on veggies that had been sealed because they were under the impression that they were not fresh and could even be harmful to their health. According to the vast majority of survey takers, a positive attitude toward veggies can also be cultivated by the attractiveness and freshness of the fruit. They also found that people with a more upbeat outlook on veggies spent less time deliberating over which vegetables to buy.

Table 5, Distribution of respondents based on decision making

Category	Frequency (60)	%	Frequency (60)	%	Total (120) %
Less favourable	13	21.6	5	8.3	15
Moderate favourable	45	75	38	63.33	69.17
Highly favourable	2	3.3	17	28.3	15.83



Table 5 shows that most respondents (69.17%) exhibited somewhat favourable decision-making capacity in their purchase of vegetables, based on a critical review of the data presented there. This was explained by the fact that buying vegetables is a necessary but mundane part of maintaining proper nutrition, and most buying decisions were made when shopping. Therefore, even if they didn't have particularly good decision-making abilities, the vast majority of respondents would still choose to buy veggies. The urban population also followed a similar distribution pattern. When compared to urbanites, the proportion of ruralites with excellent decision-making skills was significantly higher (28.33%). This was because people typically base their purchases on rational considerations like finding the greatest price and on subjective considerations like selecting the product that they like using the most. Rural customers were able to make informed decisions as a group since they were more price cautious due to their limited purchasing power.

According to Table 6, which presents the results of a critical analysis of the distribution of respondents based on store choice behaviour, 77.50% of the total respondents belonged to the medium category, 11.67% to the low category, and 10.83% to the high category, based on their perceived consumer intentions. Both consumers in the countryside and the city followed a similar distribution pattern. Both urban and rural respondents felt that familiarity with the store owner and its location were the most important factors in determining where they bought their vegetables.

Table 6. Distribution of respondents based on intentions to buy from an outlet

Category	Frequency (60)	%	Frequency (60)	%	Total (120) %
Low	11	18.3	3	5	11.67
Medium	43	71.6	50	83.3	77.50
High	6	10	7	11.67	10.83

Consumers' intentions were observed to change in a predictable fashion as their age increased or decreased. While convenience was more of a priority for the elderly, young people, for whom shopping was a form of fun, gave preference to establishments that provided a more enjoyable atmosphere and range of services.

Comparative analysis of consumer behaviour among rural and urban consumers: t-test for comparing consumer behaviour of rural and urban consumer is given in the table below.

Table 7. Comparison of consumer behaviour between rural and urban consumers

Category	Urban	Rural
Mean	84.63	87.88
Variance	74.47	70.48
T test observed value	2.09	
T test critical value	1.98	
Alpha	0.05	

Table 4 shows that there is a notable difference (t value 1.98) in the purchasing habits of urban and rural customers, with the latter demonstrating significantly higher demand for vegetables based on the average of the two samples. As a result of their low per capita income, low level of education, poor



purchasing power, and culture bound nature, rural consumers have been demanding higher quality for the same price of produce. This had increased their capacity to make educated decisions as shoppers when they went to the store to buy vegetables.

One could argue that shoppers put a premium on how the produce looks since they carefully examine their options before selecting their favourites. Because of their high susceptibility to spoilage, retailers selling fruits and vegetables should focus on methods of maintaining their natural freshness without compromising the quality of the product. Meanwhile, manufacturers and retailers need to fine-tune their in-store promotional tools to increase sales. Products that spoil quickly can have their prices changed to encourage customers to buy them before they go bad.

Conclusion

The study found that only a small percentage of respondents had very positive behaviour about the acquisition and consumption of veggies. This is really worrisome because a vegetable-rich diet is essential for warding off anything from vitamin deficiency to potentially fatal conditions like heart disease in humans. Consumer habits in the countryside varied greatly from those observed in the cities. Main causes may originate from cultural and economic gaps between urban and rural settings. The price of goods was the most important factor for consumers in rural areas, while those in urban areas cared more about the atmosphere. In this situation, the study is tasked with changing the purchasing habits of people in both rural and urban areas by investigating the elements that influence their decisions. Moreover, these results highlight the importance of educating the public about the importance of eating healthy and promoting the usage of organic produce.

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