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## Consumer perception, purchase intention and barriers to promote organic food products among super market consumers in Sri Lanka

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Organic food consumption is increasing day by day among world population, although it is still in infant stage in Sri Lanka. Increasing health hazards occurred by agro chemicals, environmental issues and developing awareness on harmful effect on conventional food act as main reasons for popularizing organic food products. Therefore this study attempts to examine consumer perception and purchase intention on organic food products among supermarket consumers based on the theory of planned behavior, the five steps of consumer decision making process based on previous researches on organic foods, eighteen items of four dimensions were constructed to measure the consumer's perception towards organic food, six items were used to measure their purchase intention and six items were engaged to determine purchasing behavior on organic food products among super market consumers. Data was collected in supermarkets and surrounding areas in the district of Galle, Kaluthara and Colombo in Sri Lanka. A total of 288 completed questionnaires were gathered, representing 96% response rate, using convenient sampling method and analyzed by using SPSS package. The results indicated that intention to purchase organic food was significantly influenced by the consumer's perception of safety, health, environmental factors and animal welfare of the product. 70% agree with all statements relating to safety section, means safety factor depend on purchase intention and perception on organic food products positively. 43% of the respondents agree with all three statements of environmental and animal welfare factor and further 31% agree to at least two statements which stand positively for consumer perception and purchase intention on organic food products. 87% respondents stand on health factor which influence positively for perception and purchase intention on organic food products. Only 47% respondents stand that quality factor depend on perception and purchase intention on organic food products, so it is not support the comments directly. Differences were observed in the purchase intention of organic food products according to respondent gender, age, income level, education level. Theoretically, this study supported the view of consumer's perception towards organic food products will influence their purchase intention. Poor awareness, poor availability and lack of confidence were act as significant barriers to promote organic food products. The findings proposed useful information to organic marketers help them to develop marketing strategies to convince organic food products to enhance purchase intention in Sri Lankan super market sector.

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