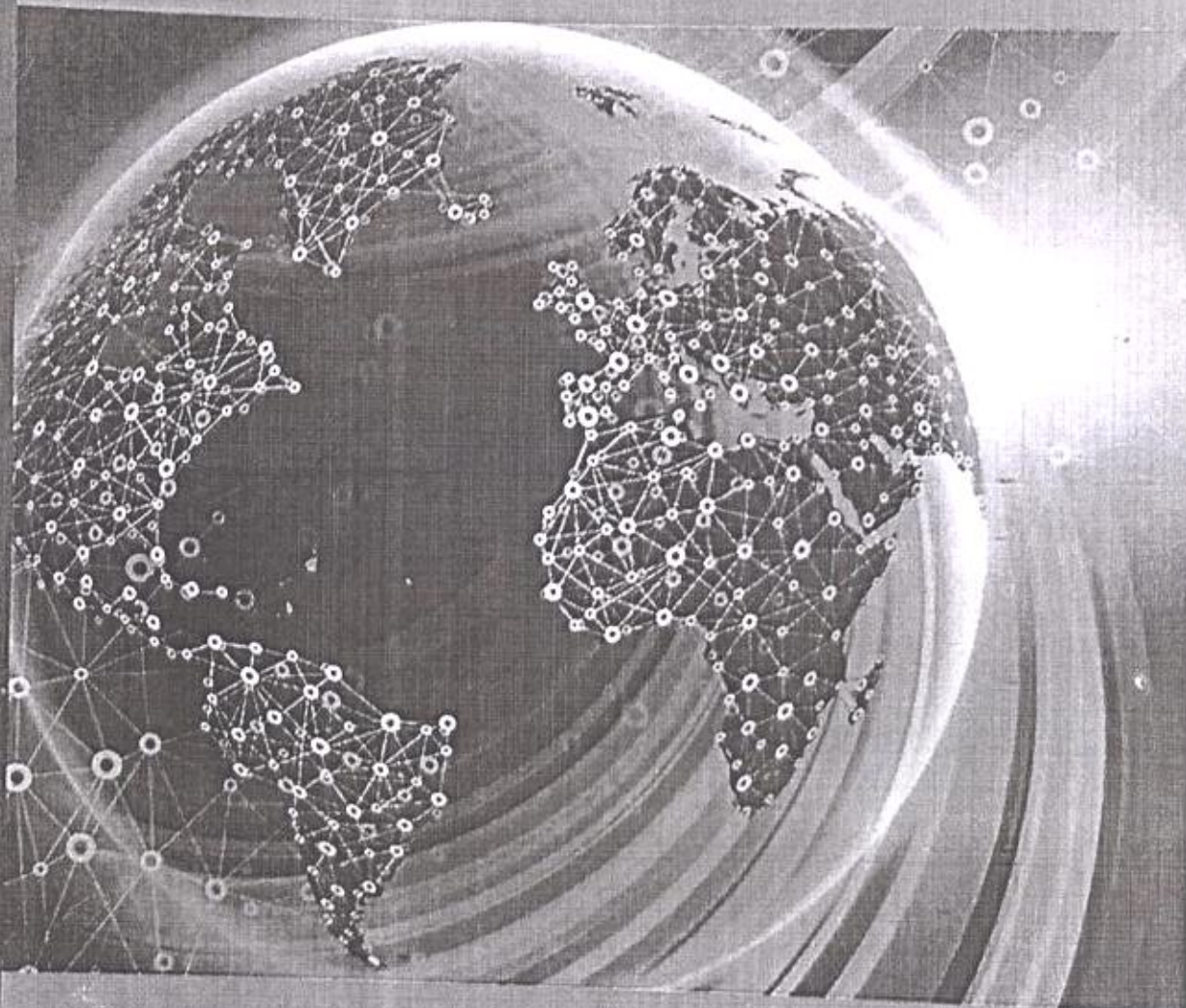


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# GLOBAL INNOVATIVE RESEARCH DIMENSIONS



Editor

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PRINCIPAL

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## KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION OF THE FARMERS ON ORGANIC FORMING: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELECTED VILLAGES IN BANGALORE RURAL DISTRICT

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### Abstract

Agriculture is the backbone of our country; it provides all the necessary food items to all the living creatures by direct or indirect means. Organic farming is gaining popularity all over the world, as it can diversify agricultural production systems towards attaining improved productivity, farm income and food, as well as environmental safety. Organic Farming produces safe and nutritious food as it helps prevent soil pollution by stopping risky chemical reactions in the soil and avoiding produce contamination, as well as soil erosion, by wind and rain. One of the important parties that can enable the country to produce more organic products through organic farming is the growers or farmers. The final decision of farmers to use a new practice like organic farming system is usually the result of their knowledge of the practices as well as their perception.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the source of information, perception or attitude, and practices of organic farming. A structured interview schedule method through face-to-face interview was used to collect the data from a total of 30 farmers in the selected areas of Bangalore Rural district. A simple random sampling has been adopted for the study. The paper also focused on the various problems faced the farmers with regard to organic farming and the suitable suggestions were given to overcome from the same.

**Key words:** Agriculture, Farmer, Organic Farming, Knowledge, Perception, Practices.

### Introduction:

Agriculture is the life line of humanity. Any change in agriculture will result in corresponding change in the life of people and of nature and vice versa too. There has been a very rapid change in the way we do farming in the past few decades. It is characterized mainly by the dominance of machinery and chemical technology in agriculture replacing the traditional wisdom, which has altered the society considerably. Over the years agriculture has undergone several changes, thus drifting away from nature.

Organic farming is one of the several approaches found to meet the objectives of sustainable agriculture. Many techniques used in organic farming like inter-cropping, mulching and integration of crops and livestock are not alien to various agriculture systems including the traditional agriculture practiced in old countries like India. However, organic farming is based on various laws and certification programs, which prohibit the use of almost all synthetic inputs, and health of the soil is recognized as the central theme of the method. Adverse effects of modern agricultural practices not only on the farm but also on the health of all living things and thus on the environment have been well documented all over the world. Application of technology, particularly in terms of the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides all around us has persuaded people to think aloud. Their negative effects on the environment are manifested through soil erosion, water shortages, salinization, soil contamination, genetic erosion, etc.

The farming being practiced for the last three decades in India has increasingly been found non-sustainable. The system is oriented towards high production without much concern for ecology and the very existence of man himself. Organic agriculture is developing rapidly and at least countries produce organic food commercially (Reddy, 2010). As a result, there is an enormous potential in practicing organic farming in coconut growing lands, because organic agriculture is productive and sustainable (Reganold et al., 1999; Mader et al., 2002).

The most popularly accepted definition of organic farming is: "Organic agriculture is a holistic production management system which promotes and enhances agro-ecosystem health, including biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity". This is accomplished by using wherever possible agronomic, biological and mechanical methods, as opposed to using synthetic materials, to fulfill any specific function within the system (FAO, 1999). Organic cultivation is attracting farmers the world over due to its various advantages over modern agricultural practices. Essentially it is a farming system which supports and strengthens biological processes without recourse to inorganic remedies such as chemicals or genetically modified organisms (Reddy, 2010).

### Organic Farming: An Overview

Modern agricultural farming practices, along with irrational use of chemical inputs over the past four decades have resulted in not only loss of natural habitat balance and soil health but have also caused many hazards like soil erosion, decreased groundwater level, soil salinization, pollution due to fertilizers and pesticides, genetic erosion, ill effects on environment, reduced food quality and increased the cost of cultivation, rendering the farmer poorer year by year.

Farmers do not find agriculture a viable proposition anymore and in fact, a large number of farmers have committed suicides. Some of the factors that contributed to the present crisis in farming could be the shooting-up of the price of factory-made external inputs and the government's slow withdrawal of investment as well as market intervention and more significantly, shifting of subsistence farming (mainly with homegrown inputs) to commercial farming (largely with purchased inputs). In other words, local indigenous farm techniques have been wiped out and replaced by the modern techniques, resulting in an unviable and unsustainable farm enterprise. It is in this context that alternative farm techniques and strategies for growing crops ought to be found in the larger interest.

The principle of organic cultivation is attracting farmer's world over due to its various advantages over modern agricultural practices. Essentially, it is a farming system which supports and strengthens biological processes without recourse to inorganic remedies such as chemicals or genetically modified organisms. Organic agriculture is productive and sustainable (Reganold et al., 1993; Letourneau and Goldstein, 2001; Mader et al., 2002). Many state-supported agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals have started experimenting with organic methods of food production in the recent past. India has traditionally practiced organic agriculture, but the process of modernization, particularly the green revolution technologies, has led to the increased use of chemicals.

In recent years, however, limitations of agriculture based on chemical use and intensive irrigation have become apparent and there has been a resurgence of interest in organic agriculture. Renewed interest in organic agriculture is mainly due to two concerns, falling agricultural yield in certain areas as a result of inter alia excessive use of chemical inputs, decreased soil fertility and environmental awareness.

**Government Initiatives for Organic Farming:** Government of India has also launched the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) in the year 2001. The NPOP standards for production and accreditation system have been recognized by the European Commission and Switzerland as equivalent to their country standards. Similarly, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has recognized NPOP conformity assessment procedures of accreditation as equivalent to those in the US. With these recognitions, the Indian organic products duly certified by the accredited certification bodies of India are accepted by the importing countries.

The major goal of organic farming is sustainable production of quality food with little or no effect on the environment. This goal has not been fully achieved by current agricultural practices, i.e. inorganic farming, hence the need to encourage organic farming which is capable of providing solutions to the current agricultural problems and help to achieve optimal production of quality food sustainably (IFOAM, 2005). Despite the global awareness of environmental degradation and climatic change that could result from the continuous practice of inorganic farming and the threats it poses to sustainable agricultural production, most of the farmers in Nimar region are practicing agriculture inorganically.

It is a form of agriculture that relies on techniques such as crop rotation, green manure, compost, and biological pest control. Organic farming uses fertilizers if they are considered natural (such as bone meal from animals or pyrethrum from flowers), but it excludes or strictly limits the use of various methods including synthetic petrochemical fertilizers and pesticides; plant growth regulators such as hormones; antibiotic use in livestock; genetically modified organisms; human sewage sludge; and nonmaterial.

#### Problems and Constraints of Organic Farming

The most important constraint felt in the progress of organic farming is the inability of the government policy making level to take a firm decision to promote organic agriculture. Unless such a clear and unambiguous direction is available in terms of both financial and technical supports, from the Centre to the Panchayath levels, mere regulation making will amount to nothing. The following are found to be the major problem areas for the growth of organic farming in the country:

##### Lack of Awareness

It is a fact that many farmers in the country have only vague ideas about organic farming and its advantages as against the conventional farming methods. Use of bio-fertilizers and bio pesticides requires awareness and willingness on the part of the farming community.

Knowledge about the availability and usefulness of supplementary nutrients to enrich the soil is also vital to increase productivity.

Farmers lack knowledge of compost making using the modern techniques and also its application. The maximum they do is making a pit and fill it with small quantities of wastes.

#### **Output Marketing Problems**

It is found that before the beginning of the cultivation of organic crops, their marketability and that too at a premium over the conventional produce has to be assured. Inability to obtain a premium price, at least during the period required to achieve the productivity levels of the conventional crop will be a setback. It was found that the farmers of organic wheat in Rajasthan got lower prices than those of the conventional wheat.

#### **Shortage of Bio-mass**

Many experts and well informed farmers are not sure whether all the nutrients with the required quantities can be made available by the organic materials. Even if this problem can be surmounted, they are of the view that the available organic matter is not simply enough to meet the requirements. The crop residues useful to prepare vermi-compost are removed after harvest from the farms and they are used as fodder and fuel.

#### **Marketing Problems of Organic Inputs**

Bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides are yet to become popular in the country. There is a lack of marketing and distribution network for them because the retailers are not interested to deal in these products, as the demand is low. The erratic supplies and the low level of awareness of the cultivators also add to the problem. Higher margins of profit for chemical fertilizers and pesticides for retailing, heavy advertisement campaigns by the manufacturers and dealers are other major problems affecting the markets for organic inputs in India.

#### **Lack of Financial Support**

The developing countries like India have to design a plethora of national and regional standards in attune with those of the developed countries. The adoption and maintenance of such a regulatory framework and its implementation will be costly.

#### **Low Yields**

In many cases the farmers experience some loss in yields on discarding synthetic inputs on conversion of their farming method from conventional to organic. Restoration of full biological activity in terms of growth of beneficial insect populations, nitrogen fixation from legumes, pest suppression and fertility problems will take some time and the reduction in the yield rates is the result in the interregnum. It may also be possible that it will take years to make organic production possible on the farm.

#### **Inability to meet the Export Demand**

The demand for organic products is high in the advanced countries of the west like USA, European Union and Japan. It is reported that the US consumers are ready to pay a premium price of 60 to 100 per cent for the organic products. The upper classes in India are also following this trend as elsewhere. The market survey done by the International Trade Centre (ITC) during 2000 indicates that the demand for organic products is growing rapidly in many of the world markets while the supply is unable to match it.

#### **Vested Interests**

Hybrid seeds are designed to respond to fertilizers and chemicals. The seed, fertilizer and pesticide industry as also the importers of these inputs to the country have a stake in the conventional farming. Their opposition to organic farming stems from these interests.

**The important Solutions for Organic Farmers are;** Funding for Research and Development, Using Advanced Farming Organically, Decentralizing and Localizing Organic Farming Inputs, Provisions of Marketing Facility, Provision of proper training facilities, Provision of loan facility, Create Proper awareness in public.

#### **Knowledge**

- a) Rotate crops to control weed, pest and also to improve soil fertility
- b) Use kitchen wastes, plant wastes and animal wastes to fertile soil and plants
- c) Do pruning to reduce diseases that attack plants
- d) Do composting to improve soil fertility and water conservation
- e) Limit the use of synthetic fertilizers to fertilize plants
- f) Do not control weed manually like hand weeding because it will only waste time
- g) Limit the use of chemical pesticides to control pests
- h) Choose resistant plant varieties to reduce damage to plants
- i) Do not practice intercropping / mixed cropping system because it can reduce soil fertility and water conservation
- j) Implement mono cropping system for the full year to decrease diseases
- k) Do mulching to control weed

**The major factors influence on Organic Farming are;** Social Factors, Economic Factors, Education Factors, Environmental Factors, Age Factors, Gender Factors, Market Factors, and Health Factors

#### Review of Literature:

**Anand Dave and Mishra Snehal (2018):** in this article researcher analyzed about farmers' perception toward organic input and to find out awareness level & satisfaction level about organic input. It was found that most of the farmers were highly aware about the bio product. Majority of farmers use organic input because of their satisfaction towards availability and accessibility of Organic inputs. The satisfaction level was less towards price and productivity. This study emphasis and strengthen the trustworthy relationship with dealers and farmers. He suggested that improving the customer base of bio - products, which can be done with the help of dealers.

**Kundan Kumar (2016)** in his article measures the attitude of farmer towards Organic Farming. A total of 55 statements were prepared, for which 'Likert method of summated ratings' was followed. And these statements were administered to the 30 numbers of farmer from non-sample area from two villages each covering of 15 farmers. The conclusion is that very much necessary to know the attitude of farmers, and for the farming system can benefit their farms by increasing the texture and fertility of soil and increase their income farmers.

**Priyadarshini. M (2016)** in her study designed a scale to measure the attitude of farmers towards organic farming practices in Tamil Nadu. Edward's equally 'appearing intervals scale was adopted to develop the scale. The final scale comprised ten statements. This scale was standardized for administration.

**James Mohan.D (2014)** in his study analyzed the attitude of farmers towards the cultivation of organic vegetables who are now engaged in organic and conventional vegetable cultivation. Majority of the organic farmers (86.67%) had a favorable attitude towards organic farming practices followed by more favorable (10%) and less favorable (3.33%) attitude. More than 80 per cent of the conventional farmers had favorable attitude towards organic farming practices. Above 90 per cent of the organic as well as conventional farmers believed that use of organic farming practices was essential for better quality of vegetables.

**Kotresha, S.S (2014)** in his study investigated the knowledge, and attitude of vegetable growers towards organic farming. A survey method through face-to-face interview by using structure schedule was used to collect data from a total of 30 vegetable growers in Maddur taluk of Mandya district which was selected by using simple random sampling method. The findings of the study show that the knowledge of the respondents on organic farming especially pertaining to the use chemical insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers is need to be improved, their attitude is also still negative especially to control pests and diseases.

#### Research Methodology

##### Objective of the Study:

- ❖ To know the demographical profile of the farmers.
- ❖ To determine the level of awareness about organic farming among farmers
- ❖ To identify the attitude and perception of farmers towards organic farming.
- ❖ To find out the problems and solutions of farmers in organic farming.
- ❖ To know the practices, investment and returns for their efforts in organic farming

#### Research Methodology

##### Research Design

The descriptive research design has been used for this study as the study prefers in depth understanding on the topic.

**Source of Data Collection:** The researcher has used both primary and secondary sources of data for this study.

**Sampling and Sample Size:** The simple random sampling has been chosen for the study.

**Sample Structure:** The researcher has selected 30 respondents from 6 different village of Bangalore Rural District comprising 5 respondents from each village.

**Tools of Data Collection:** A well structured interview schedule has been prepared by the researcher for data collection and also focused group discussion also held in order to collect clear information required for the purpose of the study.

##### Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations that researcher experienced during the course of study.

- a) The study was confined to selected villages in Bangalore Rural District.
- b) Limited size of sample respondents.

- c) Time Constraints  
 d) Only one district was selected so the outcome may be varied.

**Table No.-1: Distribution of the Respondents by Age**

Age in (years)	Number	Percentage
Below 30	07	23.33
31-40	15	50.00
Above 40	08	26.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

As per the table, it can be interpreted that as many as 50.00 per cent of the respondents belong to 31-40 years, about 26.67 per cent of the respondents belong to 41 and above years, only 23.33 per cent of the respondents with an age group of Below-30 years. Majority of the respondents in the age group of 31-40 years.

**Table No 2: Education Qualification of the Respondents**

Educational Qualification	Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	08	26.66
Primary to PUC	12	40.00
Graduation/Post Graduation	10	33.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

A nominal per cent 40.00 per cent of the respondents studied Primary to PUC, about 33.34 per cent of the respondents studied Graduation/ Post Graduation and only 26.66 of the respondents belongs to Illiterate.

**Table No 3: Distribution of Gender of the Respondents**

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	26	86.66
Female	04	13.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

A huge number 86.66 of the respondents are males. About 13.34 per cent of respondents were females. It interpret that need motivate females to involve more in organic farming.

**Table No 4: Level of Awareness on Organic Farming**


Awareness on Organic Farming	Respondents	Percentage
Highly Aware	08	26.66
Aware	12	40.00
Not Aware	10	33.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

A nominal per cent 40.00 per cent of the respondents studied Primary to PUC, about 33.34 per cent of the respondents studied Graduation/ Post Graduation and only 26.66 of the respondents belongs to Illiterate. Since it is very important decision making the participation educated in organic forming will definitely fulfill the expectations as shown in the table

**Table-4: Practice of Organic Farming**

Sl.No	Practices	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Intercropping /Mixed Cropping	05	16.67
2	Using animal manure /plant waste /kitchen waste	06	20.00
3	Using organic fertilizer	14	46.66
4	Using insects predators to control pests	05	16.67
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

As interpreted in the above table nominal per cent (46.66) of the respondents practice organic fertilizer in their farming. About 20 per cent of the respondent practice animal manure/plant waste/kitchen waste in organic farming. A few numbers (16.67) of the respondents using inter-cropping/mixed cropping and using insects' predators to control pets.

  
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**Table 3: Attitudes and Perception of Farmers towards Organic Farming**

Particulars	Variable	No. of Respondents	Percent
Organic farming will decrease The production cost by Reducing the input purchases	Agree	22	73.34
	Disagree	08	26.67
	Total	30	100
Organic pesticide are more suitable to control pests	Yes	25	83.33
	No	05	16.67
	Total	30	100
Organic herbicides are more suitable to control weed	Not sure	06	20.00
	Agree	19	63.33
	Disagree	05	16.67
	Total	30	100
Organic farming will only benefiting the consumers not the producers	Not sure	05	16.67
	Agree	17	56.67
	Disagree	07	23.33
	Total	30	100
Organic farming will only troublesome the Farmers because needs more attention	Not sure	05	16.67
	Agree	23	76.67
	Disagree	02	06.66
	Total	30	100
Farming is very Difficult to Implement due to difficulties in obtaining organic matters	Yes	26	86.66
	No	04	13.33
	Total	30	100
Organic farming can increase the income of farmers	Yes	28	93.33
	No	02	06.67
	Total	30	100
Organic farming is effective in increasing the fertility of soil	Dis agree	24	80.00
	Agree	06	20.00
	Total	30	100

**Attitudes and Perception of Organic Farming**

A mammoth per cent (73.34) of the respondent opined that Organic farming will decrease the production cost by reducing the input purchases, whereas a huge number of the respondents with 83.37 per cent felt that organic pesticides are suitable to control pests, organically pesticides most suitable and affordable to control pests. A good number with 63.33 per cent of the respondents' opined that organic herbicides are more suitable to control weed. As many as 56.67 per cent of the respondents felt that organic farming will only benefit the consumers not the producers. It is found that a good number of the respondents with 76.67 per cent of the respondents felt that the organic farming will only troublesome the Farmers because needs more attention. It is analyzed that a mammoth per cent (86.66) of the respondents said that the farming is very difficult to implement due to difficulties in obtaining organic matters and a mammoth per cent (93.33) of the respondents' opined that the organic farming can increase the income of farmers.

**Summary of major Findings:**

- Majority of the respondents in the age group of 31-40 years.
- A nominal per cent (40) of the respondents studied Primary to PUC
- A huge number 86.66 of the respondents are males.
- As interpreted in the above table nominal per cent (46.66) of the respondents practice organic fertilizer in their farming.
- A mammoth per cent (73.34) of the respondent opined that Organic farming will decrease the production cost by reducing the input purchases.
- Whereas a huge number of the respondents with 83.37 per cent felt that organic pesticides are suitable to control pests, organically pesticides most suitable and affordable to control pests.
- A good number with 63.33 per cent of the respondents' opined that organic herbicides are more suitable to control weed.
- As many as 56.67 per cent of the respondents felt that organic farming will only benefit the consumers not the producers.

- It is found that a good number of the respondents with 76.67 per cent of the respondents felt that the organic farming will only troublesome the Farmers because needs more attention.
- It is analyzed that a mammoth per cent (86.66) of the respondents said that the farming is very difficult to implement due to difficulties in obtaining organic matters and a mammoth per cent (93.33) of the respondents' opined that the organic farming can increase the income of farmers.

#### Suggestions:

- The government can show much more interest toward organic farming. The organic farmers may provide with subsidies, awards and rewards for practicing organic farming successfully.
- The organic input among farmers depends on the promotional efforts of the marketers. The availability of organic inputs need wider demonstrations and promotional activities which can be done with the help of dealers
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- The organic\ input among farmers depends on the promotional efforts of the marketers. The availability of organic inputs need wider demonstrations and promotional activities which can be done with the help of dealers
- More number of training programmes can be conducted for the farmers for adopting new methodologies and techniques in organic farming.
- Proper enlightenments programme geared towards the education of the farmers should be given to rural farmers as way of educating them on the importance of organic farming.
- More subsidy and research funding should be provided for organic and eco-friendly agriculture.

#### Conclusion

In India, the farmers have followed the path for organic food production, but the share of India in the world, organic market is very less. Even though large number of farmers and farm labours are migrating from this sector. The organic farming is an integrated approach, where all aspects of farming systems are interlinked with each other and work for each other; therefore it is very much necessary to know the attitude of farmers. The results revealed that majority of the farmers are aware about organic farming and they came to know about organic farming through magazines /newspaper.

The knowledge of the respondent farmers on organic farming concepts especially pertaining to the use of chemical insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers is still need to be improved. Besides, their attitude towards organic farming system is also still negative. In term of practices, they are still dependent on conventional practices (i.e. chemical) especially to control pests and diseases. However, they did use more organic matters (e.g. animal manure, plant manure, and kitchen waste) to fertile their plants at least for the last 12 months ago. It is essential to make farmers aware of the benefits of organic farming. The government also has to play important role to spur growth of the organic industry especially for vegetable industry through policy development and program support. Research and development (R & D) and marketing are also very important issues or aspects to be look into in order to increase the production of organic products through organic farming practices.

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