



A Study on Preference towards Organic Farming with Special Reference to Tirupur - Dt

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ABSTRACT

Organic farming is a form of agriculture that relies on techniques such as crop rotation, green manure, compost and biological pest control. Organic farming uses fertilizers and pesticides but excludes or strictly limits the use of manufactured (synthetic) fertilizers, pesticides (which include herbicides, insecticides and fungicides), plant growth regulators such as hormones, livestock antibiotics, food additives, genetically modified organisms, human sewage sludge, and nanomaterials. Nowadays markets for organic foods are slowly increasing and preferences towards organic products are also increasing simultaneously. From the field analysis, we could infer that preference towards organic products has been increased and people are showing interest on organic products. This study would investigate the preference among farmers towards Organic farming in Tirupur District.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

India has a good potential for organic forming. Demand for organic products is increasing day by day and has created good foundation for organic farming. Organic farming in India is an agricultural process, uses pest control derived from organic manure and animal or plant waste. This farming started to respond to the environmental suffering caused by chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. It is a new system of agriculture that repairs, maintains, and improves the ecological balance. Organic farming uses organic inputs, green manures, cow dung, etc. Considering the diversity in farming practices and inequality in marketing opportunities, farmers from different regions faces region specific problems. However, opportunities are also displaced in front, which could be helpful when exploited with due care. Proper market exploration of market could open up plenty of opportunities for organic products.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the preference towards organic farming.
2. To analyze the factors influencing preference towards organic farming.
3. To offer possible suggestions to improve the organic farming in India



SAMPLING DESIGN

- **Type of Universe** : Farmers from Tirupur district form the universe
- **Sampling Unit**: Farmers within the Tirupur district limits sampling unit. Considering the paucity of time, the sampling unit has been restricted to Tirupur District only.
- **Size of the sample** : The sample size for the study is fixed at 150 considering the time and cost involved in the research project
- **Sampling Procedure**: Convenience sampling technique is used to select the sample size. Respondents hail from various parts of Coimbatore District.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

As there is no requisite for secondary data, the primary data is collected through the structured questionnaire method. The data is collected through schedule method where the enumerators are appointed for the purpose.

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Experience in Organic Farming

Sl.No	Total farming experience	No. of Observations	Percentage
1	5 - 10 years	41	27.3
2	11-15 years	45	30.0
3	16 - 20 years	40	27.3
4	> 20 years	24	15.0
	Total	150	100

The farming experience was good in 11-15 years. Comparatively all other years 11-15 years are best for organic farming.

Land Size for Organic Farming

Sl.No	Size of organic Farm land	No. of Observations	Percentage
1	1 to 3 acres	42	28.0
2	4 to 6 acres	37	24.7
3	7-9 acres	35	23.3
4	Above 9 acres	36	24.0
	Total	150	100.0

The Land size for organic farming was good in 1-3 acres. Comparatively all other acres 1- 3acres are best for organic farming.

Crops grown using Organic Farming

Sl.No	Number of Crops	No. of Observations	Percentage
1	1 to 2	42	28.0
2	3 to 4	38	25.3
3	5 to 6	34	22.7



4	Above 6	36	24.0
	Total	150	100.0

The Crop grown for organic farming was good in 1-2 Crops. Comparatively all other crops 1- 2 crops are best for organic farming.

Income through Organic Farming

Sl.No	Income of the Respondents	No. of Observations	Percentage
1	50k to < 1 Lakh	38	25.3
2	1 Lakh - < 2 Lakhs	40	26.7
3	2 Lakhs - < 3 Lakhs	34	22.7
4	3 Lakhs and Above	38	25.3
	Total	150	100.0

The income through organic farming was good in 1 Lakh - < 2 Lakhs. Comparatively all other incomes are 1 Lakh - < 2 Lakhs best for organic farming.

Increasing demand, self interest and market opportunities in organic products and its influence on preferring organic farming

Extensive review of literature has revealed following opportunities for organic products in general. This study is focused in identifying the awareness level and perception of organic farmers from the selected regions about the following opportunities: Nine variables listed under the head of market opportunities in organic products were tested and the results are shown in the following table. It helps to identify the high loading variables to be marked as highly influencing factor on preferring organic farming. Out of Nine variables 7 variables have been identified as highly influencing variables with the extraction value of above 0.50 and tested using SEM analysis.

Increasing demand, self Interest and market opportunities in organic products and its influence on preferring organic farming

Communalities - Before removal of low loading variables

(List of Measured Variables)

S.No	Variable	Initial	Extraction
1	Ensures optimum utilization of natural resources for short term benefits and helps in conserving them for future generations	1.000	0.644
2	Cultivation of hygiene and clean foods	1.000	0.517
3	My status in society is satisfactory for this stage of my career	1.000	0.558
4	The income and benefits i receive encourage me to organic farming	1.000	0.593
5	I have the opportunity to carry work from home and possibility of flexible working hours	1.000	0.560



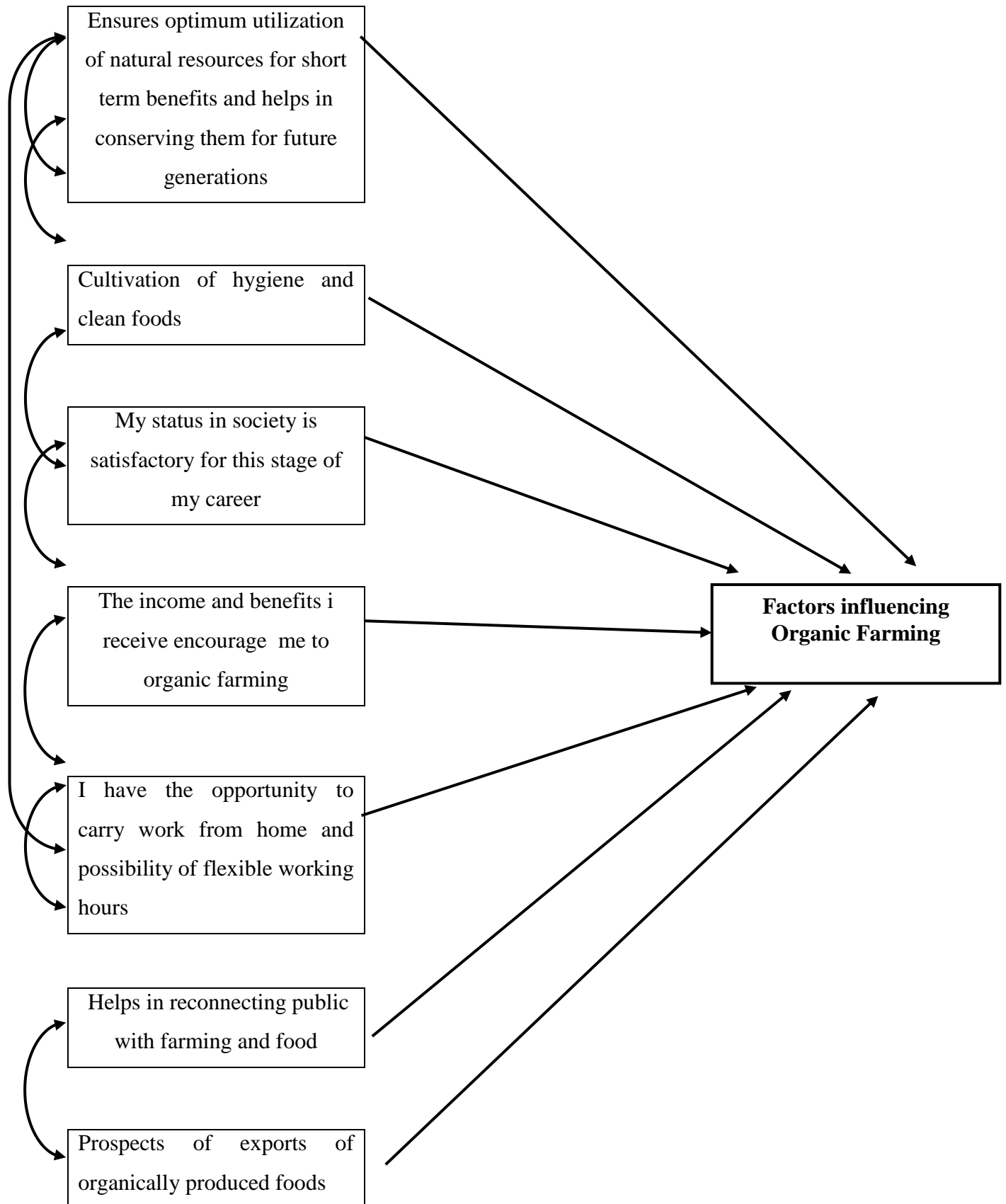
6	Strong consumer demand and brand recognition.	1.000	0.314
7	Potential for cooperative rural and regional development	1.000	0.289
8	Helps in reconnecting public with farming and food	1.000	0.555
9	Prospects of exports of organically produced foods	1.000	0.526

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The above table shows the rotated component matrix, in which the extracted factors are assigning a new naming related together. From the above table it is noted that all the loading factors are having value of more than 0.5. The researcher set the following research model to support the hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS SUPPORTING RESEARCH MODEL





Validity of the Measurements

In structural equation modeling, the confirmatory factor model is imposed on the data. In this case, the purpose of structural equation modeling is twofold. First, it aims to obtain estimates of the parameters of the model, i.e. the factor loadings, the variances and co-variances of the factor, and the residual error variances of the observed variables. The second is to assess the fit of the model, i.e. to assess whether the model itself provides a good fit to the data using the regression analysis.

The multiple regression analysis, generally assume that the independent variables are correlated as the two-headed arrows between the predictor variables. The residual error in multiple regression analysis is actually an unobserved, latent variable. Note that to fix the loading of the residual error factor to one, to achieve identification.

To obtain un-standardized and standardized regression weights, a variance estimate for the residual errors and the squared multiple correlation of the dependent variable ‘Influence of Extrinsic factors on employee retention’. The following table (Table: 4.49 & 4.50) explains influence of extrinsic variables on employee retention.

Maximum Likelihood Estimates

Regression weights

Latent Variables	←	Measured Variables	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P
Preference towards organic farming	←	Ensures optimum utilization of natural resources for short term benefits and helps in conserving them for future generations	0.101	0.011	8.968	1%
Preference towards organic farming	←	Cultivation of hygiene and clean foods	0.127	0.012	10.813	1%
Preference towards organic farming	←	My status in society is satisfactory for this stage of my career	0.122	0.012	10.298	NS
Preference towards organic farming	←	The income and benefits i receive encourage me to organic farming	0.118	0.011	10.469	NS
Preference towards organic farming	←	I have the opportunity to carry work from home and	0.122	0.011	10.750	1%



farming		possibility of flexible working hours				
Preference towards organic farming	←	Helps in reconnecting public with farming and food	0.100	0.012	8.412	1%
Preference towards organic farming	←	Prospects of exports of organically produced foods	0.121	0.012	9.886	1%

The above table shows the regression coefficient of the exogenous variables. It is noted that the critical ratio of the statement (variables) - The value of the Organic Farming is very important to me, I believe my remuneration to be very gratifying, I have the opportunity to carry out my work from home, I have the freedom to take part in conferences during working hours. It helps in reconnecting public with farming and food. Prospects of exports of organically produced foods

Covariance: (Group Number 1 – Default Model)

Measured Variables	<-->	Measured Variables	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P
Helps in reconnecting public with farming and food	<-->	Ensures optimum utilization of natural resources for short term benefits and helps in conserving them for future generations	0.060	0.040	1.521	NS
Ensures optimum utilization of natural resources for short term benefits and helps in conserving them for future generations	<-->	Cultivation of hygiene and clean foods	0.216	0.039	5.597	1%
Cultivation of hygiene and clean foods	<-->	My status in society is satisfactory for this stage of my career	0.004	0.038	0.108	NS
My status in society is satisfactory for this stage of my career	<-->	The income and benefits i receive encourage me to organic farming	0.091	0.039	2.357	5%
The income and benefits i receive encourage me to organic farming	<-->	I have the opportunity to carry work from home and possibility of flexible working hours	0.133	0.040	3.344	1%
I have the opportunity to carry work from home and possibility of flexible working	<-->	Prospects of exports of organically produced foods	0.110	0.039	2.847	5%



hours						
Prospects of exports of organically produced foods	<-->	Helps in reconnecting public with farming and food	0.107	0.102	2.633	5%

From the above covariance matrix, it is identified that five combinations are highly associated with each other at 1 percent level of significance. And the results are given in Bootstrapping table

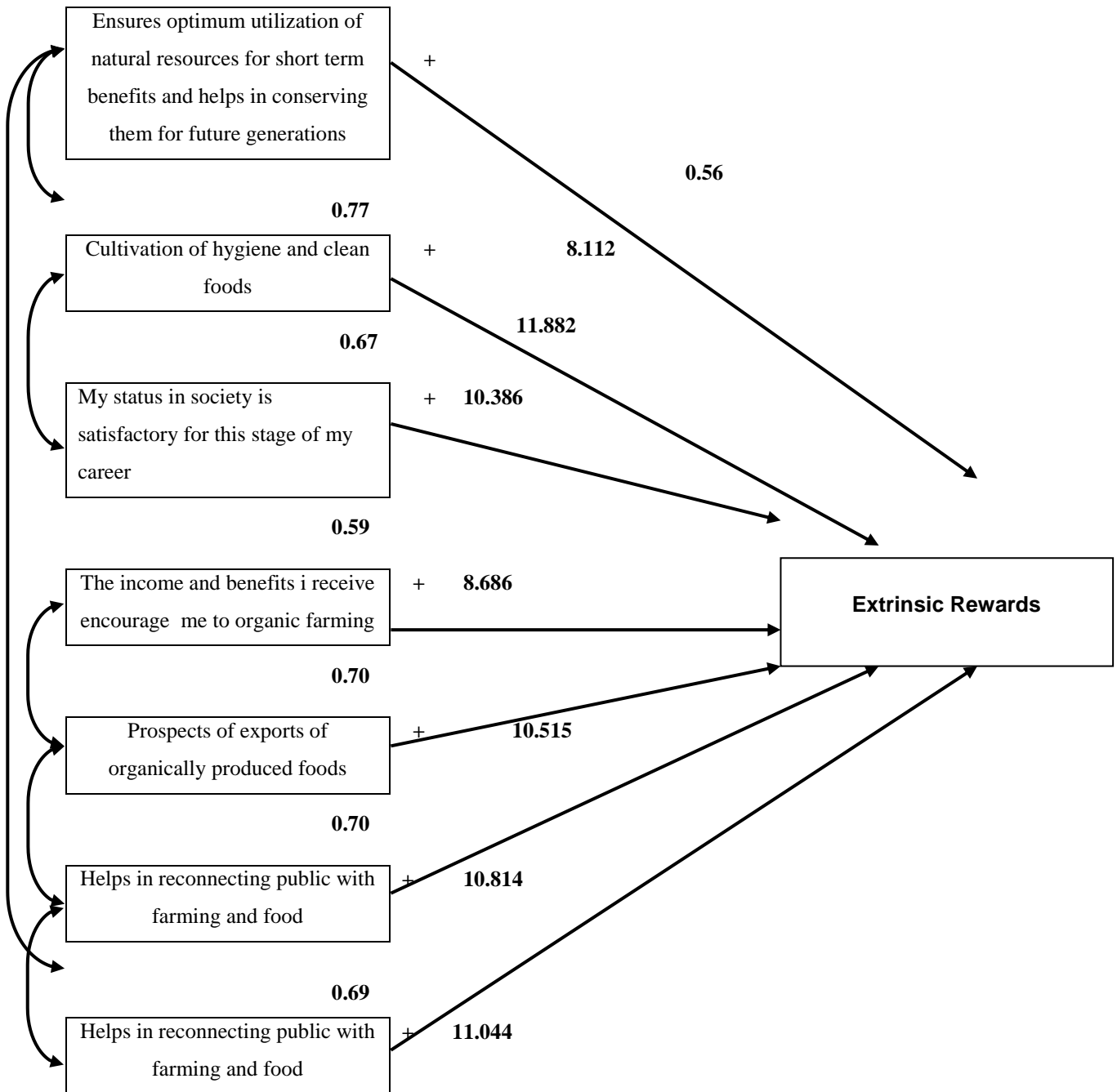
Results

Bootstrapping

Paths			Estimate	S.E	Mean	't' Value	Result
My status in society is satisfactory for this stage of my career	→	Extrinsic Rewards	0.560	0.069	2.687	8.112	H ₁ Accepted



HYPOTHESIS MODEL





Testing of Hypotheses

The following table represents the results of the testing of the hypotheses.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Hypothetical Relationship	Result
H1 : Ensures optimum utilization of natural resources for short term benefits and helps in conserving them for future generations	Positive	Confirmed
H2 : Cultivation of hygiene and clean foods	Positive	Confirmed
H3 : My status in society is satisfactory for this stage of my career	Positive	Confirmed
H4 : The income and benefits i receive encourage me to organic farming	Positive	Confirmed
H5 : I have the opportunity to carry work from home and possibility of flexible working hours	Positive	Confirmed
H6: Helps in reconnecting public with farming and food	Positive	Confirmed
H7: Prospects of exports of organically produced foods	Positive	Confirmed

Discussion of the result

From the path diagram, measured variables with latent variable of influence of extrinsic variable in retention of Organic farming industry is having positive relationship and also significant at 1 percent and 5 percent level. The analysis of the model, from the viewpoint of the antecedent of retention of farming, suggests that all the measured variables are significantly impact on retention of employees in IT industry.

Suggestions:

- Understand the basics of organic agriculture and the organic farming standards
- Recycling through good manure and compost utilization, crop rotations.
- Look out for weeds, pests after planting
- Everyday care is a must
- Identify the crops or livestock suited for your situation
- Be ready to conduct your own on-farm trials

Conclusions:

Organic farming can be defined as a system of management and agricultural production that combines a high level of biodiversity with environmental practices that preserve natural resources and has rigorous standards for animal welfare. Interest in organic agriculture methods is growing, especially in areas where the present farming system has degraded resources essential to agricultural production (especially land).



Non-production factors, such as the farmer's health, are also mentioned as a reason for shifting to organic management. Consumers also have an interest in organic agriculture. Consumer awareness of the environmental costs of agriculture (such as the deteriorating quality of drinking water and soil, and the impact of agriculture on landscape and wildlife) is increasing.

The awareness of environmental quality and health is often promoted by environmental groups, especially in developed countries. The resulting demand for organic products creates the opportunity to sell organic products at premium prices, enabling organic farmers to continue, and often expand.

The Organic farming sector is of vital importance for the region. It is undergoing a process of transition to a market economy, with substantial changes in the social, legal, structural, productive and supply set-ups, as is the case with all other sectors of the economy.