

A Study on Consumer Behaviour towards Purchase Intention of Organic Food Products

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Abstract

The organic product industry is experiencing remarkable growth in today's modern landscape. This study delves into consumer behavior regarding the intention to purchase organic food products (OFPs) in Chennai, India. It focuses on a sample of 133 respondents from the Generation Z demographic, exploring key factors that drive purchase intentions, including consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental concern, personal norms, and subjective norms. By utilizing statistical tools such as correlation and regression analysis, the study aims to uncover the relationships between these factors and purchase intentions. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental awareness, personal norms, subjective norms, and the intention to purchase OFPs, with health consciousness identified as the most impactful factor. Nonetheless, the study acknowledges limitations regarding sample size and demographic representation, highlighting opportunities for future research.

Keywords: Organic Food Products, Consumer Behaviour, Purchase Intention, Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness

Introduction

The organic product industry is experiencing rapid growth in today's modern landscape. Organic food refers to products sourced from farming practices that strictly avoid synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, hormones, and genetically modified organisms. The reasons behind consumers' choices to buy organic have become a compelling area of study, prompting numerous researchers to delve into what drives individuals towards organic products. In India, organic farming plays a vital role in the economy, particularly as concerns over chemical contamination prompt consumers to adopt natural alternatives. This shift is paving the way for greater acceptance of organic food products that are cultivated without chemical intervention from planting to harvest.

Recent trends indicate a notable increase in interest in organic food. Human activities have led to the creation of new species through unnatural selection, heightening awareness about the impact of non-organic items laden with chemicals and pesticides. Organic products offer a clean alternative, as they are free from harmful substances typically associated with crop cultivation, including pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizers that can adversely affect both the environment and human health. Understanding consumer behavior towards organic food products is becoming an increasingly relevant research subject. Key questions arise, such as the main motivations behind the switch to organic consumption, preferred types of organic products, favored retail locations, and overall perceptions of organic options. Additionally, identifying the various factors that shape attitudes and purchasing intentions can greatly benefit farmers and merchants looking to tap into the expanding organic market. This exploration will not only contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior but will also provide a structured framework for research into the attitudes surrounding organic food, helping stakeholders pinpoint what drives consumer decisions in this thriving sector.

Review of Literature

Aslinda Mohd Shahril et al. (2021) researched "Consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Selangor, Malaysia." The study focused on the purchase intentions of Selangor, Malaysia consumers, and it was carried out with a sample of 140 respondents. This study used the quantitative method. The results were analyzed using SPSS. The result of the study found that attitude, subjective norms, and health consciousness had a significant & positive relationship with customer purchase intention of organic food.

Rozainun Abdul Aziz et al. (2022) Undertook research on "Factors influencing consumer purchase intention towards organic food." This study focused on consumers' purchase intention towards organic food products, and a sample of 500 respondents was collected. The study result revealed that a significant and positive relationship exists between all the variables: consumer attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norms with consumer intention.

Carlos Arturo Hoyos-Vallejo et al. (2023) researched the Influence of skepticism (SKP). The study has been carried out with a sample of 446 respondents. The data of this study were processed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modelling (SEM). The results show that SKP does not directly influence the purchase intention.

Shubham Garg et al. (2024) examined an impetus for the research paradigm of determinants of purchase intention of organic food consumers: empirical insight from India. The study aimed to explore the factors driving the purchase decision of organic consumers with a sample size of 603. The results indicated that consumers' purchase intention has a favorable impact on health aspects, trustworthiness, social innovativeness, functional value, subjective norms, and organic product knowledge.

Research Gap

Numerous studies have examined how consumers perceive their intention to purchase organic food products. However, research focusing specifically on consumer behavior regarding these purchases is quite limited. This study seeks to fill that gap and aims to explore consumer behavior in relation to the intention to buy organic food.

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the consumer perception towards Organic Food Products.
2. To examine factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions on Organic Food Products.
3. To examine the level of consumer knowledge, health-consciousness, and environmental consciousness on Organic Food Products.

Research Methodology

Sampling Method: The study employed convenience sampling.

Number of Participants: A total of 133 consumers were included in the sample.

Data Sources: Both primary and secondary data were utilized.

Data Collection Period: Data for this research were gathered in May 2025.

Analytical Tools: The analysis utilized Frequency Analysis, Descriptive Analysis, Correlation, and regression.

Research Instrument: A well-structured questionnaire was created and distributed to the respondents for data collection.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of respondents

S. No	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	86	64.7
	Female	47	35.3

2	Age group (in Years)		
	18-25	29	21.8
	26-35	23	17.3
	36-45	43	32.3
	Above 45	38	28.6
3	Marital Status		
	Married	75	56.4
	Unmarried	58	43.6
4	Educational Qualification		
	School Level	7	5.3
	ITI/Diploma	7	5.3
	Undergraduate	30	22.6
	Post-graduate	67	50.4
	Others	22	16.5
5	Family Monthly Income (In Rs.)		
	Up to 50,000	44	33.1
	50,000-1,00,000	39	29.3
	Above 1,00,000	50	37.6
6	Occupation		
	Home-maker	18	13.5
	Business	12	9.0
	Employed	83	62.4
	Self-employed	20	15.0

Source: Primary Data

The analysis of the data reveals that a significant portion of the respondents are male, comprising 64.7% of the total. The age group most represented is 36-45 years, accounting for 32.3%. Additionally, a majority of the respondents, at 56.4%, are married. Educationally, 50.4% hold a postgraduate degree. In terms of income, 37.6% of the respondents report a family monthly income exceeding Rs. 1,00,000. Lastly, employment status shows that 62.4% of the respondents are currently employed.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics for all the factors

S. No	Particulars	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Consumer knowledge	4.40	0.594
2	Health consciousness	4.47	0.528
3	Environmental concern	4.49	0.587
4	Personal norms	4.39	0.636
5	Subjective norms	4.39	0.636
6	Purchase intention of organic food products	4.46	0.562

Source: Primary data

The table above presents the overall weighted mean scores related to consumer behavior towards the intention to purchase organic food products. It shows that the scores for all six factors exceed 3, signifying that respondents consider these aspects significant in their purchasing decisions. Among these factors, environmental concern stands out with the highest score of 4.49, suggesting that sustainability is a major factor influencing organic food products. Following closely are health consciousness at 4.47 and consumer knowledge at 4.40, along with personal norms and subjective norms, both at 4.39. Lastly, the purchase intention for organic food products also scores high at 4.46.

Table No 3 Showing the Correlation between Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness, Environmental Concern, Personal Norms, Subjective Norms, and Purchase Intention of Organic Food Products

S. No	Particulars	CK	HC	EC	PN	SN	PI
1	Consumer knowledge	1	0.667**	0.568**	0.762**	0.762**	0.559**
2	Health consciousness	0.667**	1	0.734**	0.692**	0.692**	0.908**
3	Environmental concern	0.568**	0.734**	1	0.627**	0.627**	0.656**
4	Personal norms	0.762**	0.692**	0.627**	1	1.000**	0.575**

5	Subjective norms	0.762**	0.692**	0.627**	1.000**	1	0.575**
6	Purchase intention of organic food products	0.559**	0.908**	0.656**	0.575**	0.575**	1

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

***Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)**

Table 3 illustrates the connections among various variables. The correlation coefficient for Consumer Knowledge and Purchase Intention of organic food products is 0.559. Health Consciousness shows a strong correlation of 0.908 with Purchase Intention. Environmental Concern has a coefficient of 0.656, while both Personal Norms and Subjective Norms share a coefficient of 0.575 concerning Purchase Intention for organic food products. Notably, Health Consciousness exhibits the highest correlation with Purchase Intention at 0.908, followed by the other factors. As a result, we reject the null hypothesis, indicating a significant relationship between Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness, Environmental Concern, Personal Norms, Subjective Norms, and Purchase Intention of organic food products.

Table No: 4 Showing Regression Analysis of Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness, Environmental Concern, Personal Norms, Subjective Norms, and Purchase Intention of Organic Food Products

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig
	B	Std. error	Beta		
Purchase intention of organic food products (constant)	0.223	0.185		1.206	0.230
Consumer knowledge	-0.040	0.056	-0.042	-0.713	0.477
Health consciousness	1.049	0.066	0.986	16.006	0.000
Environmental concern	0.005	0.053	0.006	0.100	0.920
Personal norms	0.508	0.063	0.575	8.054	0.000
Subjective norms	-0.070	0.055	-0.079	-1.269	0.207

Source: Primary Data

Independent variables: Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness, Environmental Concern, Personal Norms, Subjective Norms.

Dependent variable: Purchase Intention of organic food products.

Table No 5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	F value	P Value
1	0.911	0.830	155.865	0.000

The multiple R value of 0.911 indicates a strong positive relationship between the intention to purchase organic food products and the independent factors involved. The R Square value of 0.830 reveals that approximately 83% of the variance in purchase intention can be attributed to aspects of consumer behavior, including consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental concerns, personal norms, subjective norms, and the intention to buy organic food products. When examining the significance of these relationships, if the P-value is below 0.05, it suggests a significant connection, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Conversely, if the P-value is at or above 0.05, it indicates no significant relationship, and the null hypothesis is accepted.

Notably, as shown in Table 5, unstandardized beta values reveal that security has the most substantial positive impact on the intention to purchase organic food products. Furthermore, health consciousness and personal norms exhibit a significant relationship ($P < 0.05$), demonstrating a noteworthy influence on the purchase intention for organic options. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis in this case.

Findings

- The demographic profile analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were male (64.7%) and fell within the age group of 36-45 years (32.3%). Most of the people are married (56.4%); postgraduates comprised the largest group (50.4%); most respondents had a monthly income above 100000 (37.6%); and most of the respondents comprised the employed group (62.4%).
- The majority of the respondents were employed with post-graduation qualifications.
- All the factors are significant with the consumer behavior towards the purchase intention of organic food products, which means consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental concern, personal norms, and subjective norms are positively related with the purchase intention of organic food products.
- There is a significant relationship between environmental concern and purchase intention of organic food products.

- Among all the factors, health consciousness has the highest correlation with the purchase intention of organic food products.

Conclusion

Organic farming practices are gaining popularity among Indian farmers, driven by consumer awareness of their positive implications. Increased awareness of the harmful effects of chemicals in food leads consumers to purchase organic food products (OFPs). The "Back to Nature" campaign on social media further promotes environmentally friendly consumption. A study conducted in Chennai analyzes consumer behavior towards purchasing OFPs, revealing that factors such as consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental concern, personal norms, and subjective norms positively influence purchase intention. Gender differences in purchase intention are observed, with males showing greater attention to health and the environment. The primary barriers to purchasing OFPs are their high price and lack of consumer knowledge about organic food standards. Addressing these constraints by providing affordable OFPs and enhancing consumer knowledge about standards and certifications is crucial.

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