

FACTORS INFLUENCING ORGANIC FOOD PURCHASE INTENTION IN DELHI/NCR: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW WITH EMPHASIS ON THE MODERATING ROLE OF HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS

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ABSTRACT

The Increasing awareness about the health, food safety, and environmental sustainability has significantly increased consumer interest in organic food products, particularly in developing countries. This study aims to examine the major determinant factors that are influencing consumers' purchase intention towards organic food products and to analyze the moderating role of consumer knowledge through a comprehensive review of existing literatures. The research adopts a qualitative and descriptive approach based on secondary data collected from peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and scholarly publications available in academic databases such as Scopus, Science Direct, Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar. Relevant studies published between 2008 and 2026 were systematically reviewed and analyzed using a thematic analysis approach to identify key determinants of organic food purchasing behavior. The findings from the literature indicate that factors such as health consciousness, environmental concern, consumer attitude, and perceived product quality play a significant role in influencing consumers' intention to purchase organic food products. The review also highlights that consumer knowledge regarding organic food production methods, certification standards, and health benefits strengthens consumers' understanding and confidence in organic products. Furthermore, consumer knowledge is identified as an important moderating factor that can influence the relationship between these determinants and purchase intention. The study contributes to the existing literature by synthesizing previous research findings and providing a comprehensive understanding of the drivers of organic food consumption in developing countries. The findings also offer useful implications for policymakers, marketers, and organic food producers to promote awareness and develop effective strategies for encouraging sustainable food consumption.

KEYWORDS: Organic Food, Purchase Intention, Health Consciousness, Environmental Concern, Consumer Attitude, Consumer Knowledge, Moderating Effect, Sustainable Consumption, Developing Countries, Consumer Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the demand for organic food items has garnered significant interest globally, especially in developing nations where worries over food safety, environmental sustainability, and individual health are growing swiftly. Organic food denotes agricultural items cultivated through natural farming methods, avoiding synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, genetically engineered organisms, and artificial additives. Consumers frequently view these products as healthier, safer, and more eco-friendly than traditional food items. With the rising awareness of the negative impacts of chemical agriculture, consumers are increasingly leaning towards organic food options.

The worldwide organic food market has experienced considerable growth in the last ten years because of rising consumer interest in healthy and safe food options. In developing nations, swift urban growth, rising disposable income, and enhanced information access via digital media have led to heightened awareness of healthy living and sustainable consumption habits. Consumers are increasingly aware of the nutritional quality and safety of their food, resulting in a growing interest in organic food items. Consequently, recognizing the elements that affect consumers' intention to buy organic food has emerged as a significant topic in consumer behavior and marketing research.

Previous research has identified various factors that influence the intention to purchase organic food. Health awareness, environmental awareness, consumer perspective, and perceived product standards are commonly acknowledged as the primary influential factors. Health-conscious individuals often favor organic food, as they think

it has fewer chemicals and provides more nutritional advantages. Likewise, people with significant environmental worries tend to favor organic farming methods since they encourage ecological sustainability and diminish environmental harm. Favorable consumer perceptions of organic food products significantly influence buying intentions.

Although there is growing interest in consuming organic food, numerous consumers in developing nations still do not have adequate understanding of organic food production techniques, certification criteria, and health advantages. Consumer awareness is a significant element that affects how people view and assess organic products. Understanding can influence consumer perceptions, viewpoints, and decision-making by offering pertinent details regarding product features and advantages. In this scenario, knowledge can serve as a moderating variable, either enhancing or diminishing the connection between influencing factors and purchase intention. Consumers with greater knowledge of organic food tend to form stronger intentions to buy these products than those who have limited understanding. While earlier research has investigated different factors influencing organic food consumption, there has been little examination of how consumer knowledge moderates these effects in developing nations. Grasping this moderating effect is crucial as knowledge can greatly affect how consumers perceive information related to health, environmental advantages, and product quality. Thus, analyzing the relationship between influencing factors and consumer awareness can yield more profound insights into the processes that motivate organic food buying behavior.

This study seeks to examine the primary factors affecting the intention to buy organic food in developing nations and to explore the moderating effect of consumer knowledge on these relationships. This research aims to enhance the current literature on sustainable consumption and consumer behavior by examining how knowledge interacts with factors like health awareness, environmental concern, and consumer attitudes. The study's results will offer valuable insights for policymakers, marketers, and organic food producers in creating effective marketing approaches and awareness initiatives that can improve consumer knowledge and encourage the acceptance of organic food products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) – “The Role of Health Consciousness, Food Safety Concern and Ethical Identity on Attitudes and Intentions towards Organic Food”

Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) studied the impact of health awareness, safety concerns regarding food, and ethical identity on consumers' attitudes and intentions related to organic food products. The research showed that individuals who prioritize their health and food safety are likely to adopt favorable views on organic food. These mindsets greatly affect their intention to buy. The study highlighted that health-related reasons are some of the most significant motivators for organic food purchases, as buyers view organic products as safer and devoid of harmful substances.

2. Chen (2009) – “Attitude toward Organic Foods among Taiwanese as Related to Health Consciousness, Environmental Attitudes, and the Mediating Effects of a Healthy Lifestyle”

Chen (2009) examined the connection between health awareness, environmental beliefs, and consumer perceptions of organic food in Taiwan. The research revealed that individuals with greater health awareness are more likely to embrace healthier habits, which positively affects their perceptions of organic food items. The results emphasized that environmental consciousness and health issues are important elements influencing consumer behavior regarding organic food purchases

3. Yadav and Pathak (2016) – “Young Consumers’ Intention toward Buying Green Products in a Developing Nation: Extending the Theory of Planned Behavior”

Yadav and Pathak (2016) investigated the factors influencing the intention to purchase green products among young consumers in India by building on the Theory of Planned Behavior. The research included environmental awareness and environmental understanding as extra factors affecting consumer behavior. The findings indicated that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control have a significant impact on consumers' intentions to buy green products, such as organic food. Consumer attitudes toward organic food were also positively influenced by environmental concern

4. Singh and Verma (2017) – “Factors Influencing Indian Consumers’ Actual Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food Products”

Singh and Verma (2017) examined the elements affecting the purchasing decisions of Indian consumers regarding organic food items. The research found that health awareness, environmental sensitivity, product quality, and price perception are important factors influencing organic food consumption. The findings indicated that health awareness is a key factor motivating consumers to buy organic food items. Nonetheless, high costs and restricted availability were recognized as significant obstacles hindering broader acceptance.

5. Paul, Modi, and Patel (2018) – “Predicting Green Product Consumption Using Theory of Planned Behavior and Reasoned Action”

Paul et al. (2018) examined consumer attitudes towards the purchase of eco-friendly products through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Theory of Reasoned Action. The research indicated that consumer perceptions of eco-friendly products, environmental awareness, and perceived effectiveness as consumers greatly impact buying intentions. Consumers who feel their buying choices can benefit the environment tend to prefer organic food items.

6. Rana and Paul (2020) – “Health Motive and the Purchase of Organic Food: A Meta-Analytic Review”

Rana and Paul (2020) performed a meta-analysis of various studies exploring the behavior of organic food consumption. The results indicated that health motivation is a key predictor of the intention to purchase organic food. Individuals who emphasize health and wellness are considerably more inclined to select organic food items. The research emphasized that health consciousness significantly impacts consumer perceptions and their readiness to pay higher prices for organic food.

7. Uikey et al. (2024) – “Decoding Intentions to Purchase Organic Food Products in an Emerging Economy via Artificial Neural Networks”

Uikey and associates (2024) explored the factors influencing organic food buying intentions in developing economies through artificial neural network analysis. The research indicated that health awareness, environmental issues, and perceived quality of products notably affect consumers' intention to buy. The authors emphasized that grasping consumer knowledge and awareness is essential for clarifying why the growth of organic food markets is slower in certain developing countries, even with rising environmental worries.

8. Singh, Jain and Verma (2025) – “Exploring Consumer Intentions to Purchase Organic Food with the Health Belief Model and Theory of Planned Behavior”

Singh, Jain, and Verma (2025) combined the Health Belief Model with the Theory of Planned Behavior to investigate consumers' intentions to buy organic food products. The research demonstrated that health advantages, perceived risk decrease, and favorable attitudes greatly impact the intention to buy organic food. The study highlighted that consumer knowledge about environmental sustainability and health safety encourages individuals to embrace organic food consumption habits.

9. Sharma et al. (2025) – “Examining the Nexus between Consumers’ Intention and Buying Behaviour towards Organic Food: Role of Motivation Opportunity Ability Theory”

Sharma and associates (2025) examined the elements influencing the connection between consumers' intentions and their actual purchasing behaviors regarding organic food items. The research utilized the Motivation–Opportunity–Ability (MOA) framework and discovered that awareness of organic food and health awareness significantly affect consumers' buying intentions. The results indicated that enhanced consumer awareness of organic food production techniques and certification can boost the probability of buying organic items.

10. Kang et al. (2026) – “Imagine it, Trust it: How Anatomical Depiction Influences Consumer Intention to Purchase Organic Food”

Kang and associates (2026) investigated the impact of visual marketing tactics on consumers' intent to buy organic food items. The research indicated that intricate product visuals can enhance consumers' confidence in organic food by aiding them in mentally envisioning the production and cooking process. This cognitive exercise increases confidence and ultimately reinforces buying intention. The study revealed that visual display can noticeably impact consumers' views and choices concerning organic food items.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study aims to examine the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention toward organic food products in developing countries and to analyze the moderating role of consumer knowledge in shaping this relationship. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate the impact of health consciousness on customers' intentions to buy organic food items.
2. To examine how customers' intentions to purchase organic food items are affected by environmental concerns.
3. To look into how customer attitudes affect their propensity to buy organic food items.
4. To assess how customers' intentions to buy organic food items are influenced by perceived product quality.
5. To investigate how consumer awareness influences the link between influencing factors and the intention to buy organic food.
6. To give marketers, legislators, and organic food producers the knowledge they need to create successful plans for encouraging the consumption of organic food in developing nations.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

With a focus on consumer knowledge as a moderating variable, the current study investigates the factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions toward organic food items in developing nations. Understanding how customer attitudes, perceived product quality, environmental concerns, and health consciousness influence consumers' decisions to buy organic food items is the main focus of the study. These factors are widely acknowledged in the literature on consumer behavior as significant factors influencing the adoption of organic food.

The study's geographic coverage is restricted to consumers who live in metropolitan and semi-urban areas, where access to and awareness of organic food products are more prevalent. The study focuses on those who are aware of organic food products and have either bought them or expressed interest in doing so. The research attempts to capture the attitudes, beliefs, and levels of knowledge that impact purchase behavior by concentrating on this consumer segment.

The investigation of the moderating function of consumer knowledge is another significant component of the study. How customers assess organic products and make judgments about what to buy may be influenced by their knowledge of organic food production techniques, certification requirements, health benefits, and environmental advantages. Thus, the study investigates how the relationship between influencing factors and purchase intention is strengthened or weakened by varying consumer knowledge levels.

The study employs a quantitative research methodology and analyzes customer perceptions and behavioral intentions using survey data gathered via a structured questionnaire. It is anticipated that the study's conclusions will give marketers, legislators, and producers of organic food useful information for creating tactics that effectively encourage the consumption of organic food. Additionally, by offering empirical data on the factors influencing the desire to purchase organic food and the moderating effect of consumer awareness in developing nation contexts, the study adds to the body of knowledge already available on sustainable consumption and consumer behavior.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the variables influencing the intention to purchase organic food and the moderating effect of consumer knowledge, the current study uses a qualitative and descriptive research approach based on secondary data. In order to create a thorough understanding of consumer behavior toward organic food items, the research focuses on evaluating previous theoretical and empirical investigations. In order to incorporate ideas from different academic sources and find recurring themes, parallels, and research gaps in the corpus of current knowledge, a literature review method is employed. This method enables the study to combine results from several settings and offer a more comprehensive view of the factors influencing the intention to buy organic food.

The study only uses secondary data about organic food consumption and consumer behavior that was gathered from books, research articles, conference papers, and peer-reviewed journals. To find pertinent research publications, academic databases like Scopus, ScienceDirect, Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar were utilized. These resources offer trustworthy and excellent academic material that advances knowledge of consumer attitudes, motives, and behavioral intentions about organic food items. The chosen studies mostly concentrate on significant factors

including customer attitude, perceived product quality, health consciousness, environmental concern, and consumer knowledge.

To guarantee the validity and applicability of the evaluated literature, pertinent research papers were chosen in accordance with particular inclusion criteria. The first requirement was that the studies be published in respectable scholarly journals, especially those that are indexed in scholarly databases like Scopus. Second, the articles had to concentrate on the consumption of organic food, the intention to buy it, or the variables affecting the decision to buy organic food. Third, works that were published between 2008 and 2026 were taken into account in order to incorporate both fundamental research and more recent advancements in the field. This period of time enables the study to document the development of consumer awareness and organic food consumption research.

The chosen literature was then subjected to a thematic analysis methodology, in which important variables and connections found in earlier research were methodically investigated and arranged into significant themes. The investigation concentrated on determining the most prevalent factors that influence consumers' intentions to purchase organic food, such as consumer attitude, perceived product quality, health consciousness, environmental concern, and consumer knowledge. Studies that examined the moderating or mediating function of information and awareness in influencing consumer decision-making processes received special attention. The theme analysis offers a structured knowledge of the key elements influencing consumers' intention to buy organic food items in developing nations by combining findings from several studies.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The current study's conceptual framework was created after a thorough analysis of the body of research on consumer behavior and organic food consumption. Previous studies have found a number of characteristics that affect customers' intentions to buy organic food items, especially in emerging nations where organic product availability and awareness are steadily rising. Among them, customer attitude, perceived product quality, environmental concern, and health consciousness are seen to be important factors influencing consumers' purchasing intentions. Furthermore, consumer education has a significant impact on how consumers view and comprehend organic food products, and it may also have an impact on how strongly these factors are associated with purchase intention.

The degree to which people care about their own health and wellbeing is referred to as health consciousness. Highly health-conscious consumers typically like organic food items because they think they are more nutritious and free of dangerous toxins. Consumer awareness and worry about environmental concerns including pollution, sustainability, and ecological balance are also reflected in environmental concern. People who care deeply about the environment are more inclined to favor organic agricultural methods and buy organic food.

Another significant element affecting buying intention is consumer attitude. Customers' propensity to buy organic products can be greatly increased by having a positive attitude about organic food, which is formed by ideas about product safety, environmental sustainability, and health benefits. Additionally, a significant factor in consumer decision-making is perceived product quality. Customers are more likely to acquire a stronger intention to buy organic food when they believe that it is better than conventional food products in terms of quality, freshness, and nutritional content.

In addition to these variables, consumer knowledge is regarded in this study as a significant moderating variable. Understanding organic food production techniques, certification requirements, and health advantages can improve customers' comprehension of organic goods and affect how they interpret information regarding environmental and health advantages. The link between the independent factors (health consciousness, environmental concern, consumer attitude, and perceived product quality) and the dependent variable (intention to purchase organic food) may be strengthened or weakened by the moderating effect of consumer knowledge.

The study's conceptual framework, which is based on the literature review, suggests that consumers' purchase intentions for organic food products are directly influenced by health consciousness, environmental concern, consumer attitude, and perceived product quality, while consumer knowledge moderates these relationships by affecting the strength of these effects.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The current study has some limitations that should be noted, even if it offers insightful information about the factors influencing organic food purchase intention and the moderating effect of consumer knowledge. First, the study's findings are based solely on secondary data and a review of the literature, which implies they are not based on primary empirical data but rather on previously published studies. The scope, technique, and settings of the previous research that were evaluated thereby influence the results reached in this study. Second, the research mostly concentrates on studies carried out in underdeveloped nations, which may restrict the findings' applicability to developed economies where there may be notable differences in consumer awareness, purchasing power, and organic food markets. diverse cultural, economic, and social circumstances may have diverse consumer behaviors regarding organic food items.

Third, only articles found in certain scholarly databases like Scopus, ScienceDirect, Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Google Scholar were included in this study. Some pertinent studies published in other sources might not have been included in the review, despite the fact that these databases offer excellent research articles.

Fourth, the study only takes into account a small number of factors, including customer attitude, perceived product quality, environmental concern, health consciousness, and consumer knowledge. However, consumers' intentions to purchase organic food items may also be significantly influenced by other crucial elements such as price sensitivity, product availability, belief in organic certification, and marketing impacts.

Lastly, the study does not statistically test the suggested analytical model because it is based on literature analysis rather than empirical research. In order to overcome this constraint, future study might validate the correlations suggested in the conceptual framework by empirical investigations employing primary data and sophisticated statistical methods like structural equation modeling (SEM). These restrictions provide future researchers the chance to broaden the study's focus and create a more thorough understanding of how people consume organic food.

CONCLUSION

Through a thorough analysis of the body of existing literature, the current study sought to investigate the factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions toward organic food items and to assess the moderating effect of consumer knowledge. The results of the examined research show that growing concerns about food safety, environmental sustainability, and health have led to a large increase in demand for organic food items in recent years. Customers are switching from conventional food products to organic ones as they become more aware of the safety and quality of the food they eat.

The review of the literature showed that a number of crucial factors influence consumers' intentions to buy organic food items. The most important variables affecting customer behavior were found to be health consciousness, environmental concern, consumer attitude, and perceived product quality. Customers are more likely to have favorable views about organic food goods and demonstrate greater intents to buy them if they are more conscious of the health advantages and environmental sustainability of these products. Additionally, people are more inclined to purchase organic food because they believe it to be safer, healthier, and of higher quality than conventional food items.

The substantial impact of consumer knowledge on organic food purchasing behavior is another noteworthy conclusion of the study. Customers' comprehension and trust in organic products are improved by knowledge of organic food production techniques, certification requirements, nutritional advantages, and environmental benefits. According to the review, consumer knowledge strengthens the link between important factors and purchase intention by acting as a moderating factor. Higher knowledge levels enable consumers to assess the advantages of organic food products more effectively, which increases the likelihood that they will make stronger buy intentions.

Overall, the study emphasizes how critical it is to raise consumer awareness and education about the advantages of organic food products for both health and the environment. In order to encourage sustainable consumption patterns, marketers and legislators should support educational initiatives, enhance consumer access to trustworthy information on organic food, and improve product labeling. By offering a structured understanding of the key factors impacting organic food purchase intention and the moderating influence of consumer knowledge, especially in the setting of developing nations, the findings also add to the body of current work.

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