

WHAT DRIVES INDIAN CONSUMERS TO PURCHASE ORGANIC FOOD? A STUDY OF DIFFERENT FACTORS USING SMART PLS

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ABSTRACT

The marketing of organic foods is advancing at a breakneck pace. There is a plethora of evidence to support the rising pace of organic goods expansion. Changes are significant, particularly among those who are financially secure and those who are concerned about their health. Indeed, the organic food sector has made major contributions to the development of the Indian economy's gross national product (GNP). Organic food businesses are attracting a great deal of interest from company owners and entrepreneurs. It has been growing at an impressive pace. The media's widespread distribution and popularity are to be credited. As a consequence, organic food as a business possibility is gaining traction. In these situations, organic food manufacturing companies place a premium on consumer purchase intent to maintain a consistent market reputation and build goodwill, because a satisfied customer is a valuable source of revenue. The purpose of this research is to ascertain and offer information on the variables that influence customer purchase intentions for organic food. This study will use a sample size of 395 individuals. Structural equation modelling was used to observe the result. This study may be used by business people who are developing strategies for growing their businesses in this sector to have a better grasp of the purchasing intention and the elements that influence it.

Keywords: Organic Food, Consumer, Health Consciousness, Environmental Consciousness, Purchase Intention

INTRODUCTION

People's outlooks on life and the extent of their knowledge changed dramatically at the end of the twentieth century. Organic food has seen a significant rise in popularity as a result of this paradigm change. Organic food cultivation restrains from using chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. They don't use industrial diluents or chemical food extraction procedures, and they don't use genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (Singh & Verma, 2017). Products made from organic ingredients are frequently touted as being better for the environment, healthier, and more flavourful than those made from conventional ingredients (Gottschalk & Leistner, 2013). As the organic food market continues to grow, it's part of a much larger trend toward organic food consumption and the development of a new marketing archetype known as "green." The value of organic food is increasing rapidly in sophisticated

economies (Bryła, 2016). "You are what you eat" is a widely held attitude among consumers, which has led to the global rise of the organic food business (Norman *et al.*, 2000). Organic food is gaining favour in industrialised countries like North America and Europe, as well as emerging countries like China and India, thanks to the widespread acceptance of sustainably produced and ecologically friendly food (Rana & Paul, 2017).

The aim of this study is to understand the post-pandemic upsurge in demand for organic food. The lingering COVID-19 pandemic has affected the food system due to panicked purchases of organic food and the abrupt consumption patterns of the buyers (Boyacı-Gündüz *et al.*, 2021). This study was done after COVID-19; hence, it attempts to know whether the same factors affect the purchase intention of organic food. There were some studies conducted on the purchase intention of organic food pre-COVID-19, which discussed the effect of the willingness to pay drivers on the purchase intention of organic food over the last two decades (Akgüngör *et al.*, 2010; Haghjou *et al.*, 2013; Katt & Meixner, 2020; Van Doorn & Verhoef, 2011). Besides, consumption decisions, socioeconomic variables, health, environmental concerns, knowledge/awareness, and trust are considered essential to knowing user fondness for organic food (Dangi *et al.*, 2020; Onyango *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, the main facilitators of organic food purchase are investigated as health motives, past purchase behaviour, knowledge, affordability, and trust in organic certification labels (Dangi *et al.*, 2020). Although several studies have been conducted on the same topic, no study is complete, and the goal of this article is to fill in the gaps left by previous studies. As an example, most of the research was carried out before the COVID-19 catastrophe, so there is a dearth of literature that has delved into the post-pandemic era. The present article addresses this major bottleneck.

To get better insight, this study considers certain factors to understand their impact on the purchase of organic food. Attitudes, subjective norms, moral norms, perceived behaviour, health consciousness, price, and environmental consciousness are some of the aspects that we are trying to understand consumers' intentions to buy organic food. The findings of this study will provide practitioners and marketers with additional insight into how to improve and adjust their marketing practices. Additionally, the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

(TPB) to dormant markets in organic food research has also been discussed. To this day, the TPB is still active and significant in the field of consumer behaviour research (Kachkar & Djafri, 2022; Nasir *et al.*, 2018). But several researchers have argued that the TPB should be tailored to the specifics of each research project (Ekpe *et al.*, 2016; Y. Kim & Han, 2010; Liao *et al.*, 2017). The modified theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is used in this study to look at why Indian consumers buy organic food.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

TPB Model and Purchase Intension

A common social-psychological model for analyzing and forecasting human behaviour is the TPB model (Ajzen, 2015). According to the TPB model, actual behaviour influences intentions due to the subjective norm, the sense of behavioural control, and the individual's attitude (Hsu *et al.*, 2016). Online purchase intention is also positively influenced by consumers' perceptions of ease of use, attitude, subjective norms, and trust (Ha *et al.*, 2019).

The TPB model is a valuable framework for studies on consumer recycling intentions, environmental-friendly behaviour, and consumer behavioural intentions to recycle garbage. The TPB Model effectively explains the relationship between eco-conscious purchasing intentions and environmental concerns (Kumar & Mohan, 2021). A study by Wang *et al.*, (2014) states that in terms of predicting human behaviour, the model is often regarded as one of the best. To better understand the cognitive underpinnings of behaviour, this idea has been extensively adopted since it was first proposed more than two decades ago (Barua, 2013). The TPB model simplifies the process of designing and explaining the mechanisms by which interventions are projected to alter behaviour.

In general, people believe that the best indicator of future behaviour is one's intentions. Managers evaluate new distribution methods to see whether the concept can be expanded and which geographic regions and consumer categories should be targeted to expand the strategy. Because of this, the motivational components that influence client behaviour must be studied. Customers' attitudes, evaluations, and the internal cause that drives them to make a purchase can all be used to understand their behaviour (Peña-García *et al.*, 2020). Health consciousness and awareness of modern lifestyle ailments, including heart disease and depression, and

an enhanced quality of life have a significant impact on organic food purchases (Rana & Paul, 2017).

Attitude

A person's attitude can be described as either positive or negative, good or bad, favourable or unfavourable, likable or unlikeable, good or bad, and so on (Albarracín *et al.*, 2005). The best way to understand consumer behaviour regarding organic food is to look at how people's attitudes influence their purchasing decisions (Basha *et al.*, 2015). According to some hypotheses (Singh & Verma, 2017), socio-demographic aspects have a genuine impact on consumer behaviour when it comes to buying organic food. As a result of favourable feelings and an appealing image, people are more likely to buy green items (Mohd Suki, 2016). Purchase intention perceived behavioural control, and perceived risk, benefit, and product knowledge are all influenced by the buyer's attitude. Increased awareness of organic food and increased worry about nutritional security have a significant impact on attitudes toward organic food and purchase intention (Le-Anh & Nguyen-To, 2020). The actions should therefore be carried out across numerous verticals rather than just one (Y. Wang *et al.*, 2013). Both consumer attitudes regarding organic goods and subjective norms have a major impact on consumer intentions to purchase organic foods (Teng & Wang, 2015). Based on these discussions, it was projected that customer attitudes about organic food have a positive effect on purchase intentions.

H₁: The intention to buy organic food is positively influenced by the attitude of the consumer.

Environmental Consciousness

"Psychological variables that determine consumers' predisposition toward pro-environmental activities" are referred to as "environmental consciousness" (Mishal *et al.*, 2017). As a result of growing environmental awareness, consumer views toward organic food have improved (Kim & Chung, 2011). Organic food is grown with organic manure, as well as control of pests and disease using natural methods, significantly reducing the environmental effect of the food. Environmentally conscious consumers are more likely to purchase organic food (Irianto, 2015). As a result of the five variables established by Wang *et al.* (2020), the causal chain switches from values and perceptions to high-focus beliefs about human-environment relations. Values, a new ecological worldview, an awareness of consequences,

responsibility attribution, and personal norms are all required components. In light of the previous discussion, the second hypothesis is as follows:

H₂: Environmental consciousness has a positive impact on purchase intentions for organic food.

Health Consciousness

"The degree to which health concerns are integrated into a person's daily activities" is the definition given for "health consciousness" (Jayanti & Burns, 2017). Fear, health awareness, and subjective knowledge about organic food are all factors that impact the assurance of food safety and organic food purchase intentions (Hsu *et al.*, 2016). Demographic factors like gender do have a remarkable effect on the health consciousness and purchase intention of organic food (Shin & Mattila, 2019). The two most important elements were found to be understanding and consciousness about health, which had a significant positive effect on customers' intentions to purchase organic food (Kapuge, 2016). Though consumer involvement, consumers' health consciousness and food safety concerns are favourably associated with their intentions to purchase organic food items (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021). Other factors, such as consumer's moral attitude and health consciousness, had a favourable effect on the consumer's desire to buy organic food (Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Based on the previous literature review, the following hypothesis was suggested:

H₃: Health awareness influences the desire to buy organic food.

Moral Norms

Ajzen (1991) defines personal moral norms as "the individual's judgment of the moral correctness or incorrectness of executing a given behaviour." When it comes to organic food, moral standards can be helpful because they demonstrate a consumer's care for their well-being as well as the well-being of society and the environment (Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Previous organic food intake has a good effect on attitudes towards purchasing organic food, as well as on personal finances, societal standards, and purchasing intentions. Apart from prior consumption, attitudes and personal norms are also major predictors of intentions to purchase organic food (Koklic *et al.*, 2019). Studies in the behavioural sciences have shown that including moral principles within the TPB is a good idea (Dowd & Burke, 2013). According to Chen & Lobo (2012), social norms, including subjective, personal, and moral standards, influence

consumers' propensity to buy organic food. They then apply this to the TPB model to account for this behaviour. Consumers with strong moral beliefs are more inclined to adopt pro-environmental behaviour and use sustainable products (Rezvani *et al.*, 2017). In light of the foregoing, the following assertion has been made:

H₄: Moral norms influence the desire to buy organic food.

Perceived Behaviour

Perceived behavioural control (PBC) refers to how easy or difficult it is to carry out an activity (Ajzen, 1991). Self-belief is one's ability to carry out a behaviour that influences consumer intention and behaviour (Cheng *et al.*, 2016). Confidence and accuracy of perceptions are critical to PBC's ability to accomplish behavioural success. PBC has been shown in studies to have an impact on both intentions and actions (Isika *et al.*, 2013). Perceived behavioural control has a substantial effect on purchasing intentions when it comes to organic food (Hasan & Suciarto, 2020). Le-Anh and Nguyen-To (2020) discovered that several factors impact people's attitudes towards organic food, including their understanding of organic food, their access to facts about organic food and their concern for nutritional security. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis to better understand the association between perceived behaviour and intention to purchase organic food:

H₅: Perceived behaviour influences the desire to buy organic food.

Price

The quantity of money that customers trade for a service or product, or the value that they get in return, is referred to as the price (Armstrong *et al.*, 2017). (Herrmann *et al.*, 2007) found that prices are an important consideration in customer purchases. Loyal clients who are willing to pay more for their preferred brand are a valuable asset to a company because of the influence that the product has on their purchasing decisions (Mirabi *et al.*, 2015). When considering the attitude-behaviour relationship, price sensitivity plays a substantial moderating impact (Ghali-Zinoubi, 2021). The obstacles to creating a favourable attitude toward organic food include a lack of understanding, a lack of financial viability, and the high cost of organic food (Rana & Paul, 2017). Price is the most significant hindrance to the growth of the organic

food business in Poland, followed by a lack of consumer knowledge, a shortage of organic goods, and short expiry dates for organic products (Bryła, 2016). In light of the foregoing, the following assertion has been made:

H₆: Price influences the desire to buy organic food.

Subjective Norms

If a consumer has confidence in a product or service, then they are said to have subjective norms. Consumers' proclivity to behave in line with the views of others is impacted by the perceived social pressure imposed on them by others. To put it another way, "subjective norms" refer to the perceived pressure exerted by others who engage in the activity of interest and so have an impact on the respondent's behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). One's subjective standards have a direct effect on one's online purchase intention (Leerapong & Mardjo, 2013). Subjective norms play a vital role in Malaysia, as family, friends, and co-workers serve as powerful points of reference for individuals (Afendi *et al.*, 2014). Consumption of halal food is impacted by consumers' perceptions of perceived societal pressure to do so (Shah Alam & Mohamed Sayuti, 2011). Knowing about organic foods and being health conscious have an indirect impact on the link between attitude, subjective norms, and the desire to buy organic foods (Pacho, 2020). The hypothesis can be presented as follows based on the above review of the literature:

H₇: Subjective norms influence the desire to buy organic food.

On the basis of these conversations, the conceptual model depicted in figure 1 was proposed.

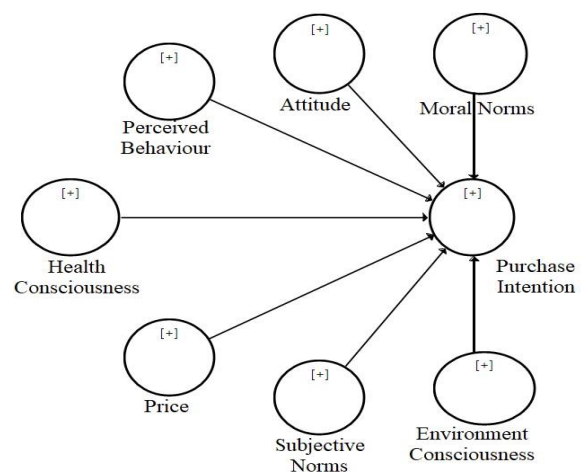


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After undergoing an intensive study of different factors and their impacts on consumers' purchase intentions for organic food, 8 constructs with 30 items are chosen (Table I). The research framework is based on the above constructs and shows how the constructs are linked together structurally.

Table I: The Origins of Items of Questionnaire

S. No	Constructs	Items	Authors
1	Moral Norms	3	(Pandey <i>et al.</i> , 2019)
2	Attitude	4	(Asif <i>et al.</i> , 2018)
3	Perceived Behaviour	3	(Asif <i>et al.</i> , 2018)
4	Health Consciousness	5	(Hsu <i>et al.</i> , 2016; Singh & Verma, 2017)
5	Price	5	(Grimmer <i>et al.</i> , 2016; Singh & Verma, 2017)
6	Subjective Norms	3	(Bai <i>et al.</i> , 2019)
7	Environmental Consciousness	5	(Rana & Paul, 2017)
8	Purchase Intentions	3	(Bai <i>et al.</i> , 2019; Singh & Verma, 2017)

It was important to undertake a pilot survey to assess the validity and reliability of the research instrument. To conduct the pilot survey, we have collected data from 60 respondents. The collected data is analysed to determine the questionnaire's reliability and validity. It was discovered that it was sufficiently trustworthy to proceed. The data was collected between March 2021 and September 2021, and 440 respondents filled out the questionnaire. Data was collected through the use of Google forms and emails. However, 395 replies were appropriate because they answered all the questions. The remaining respondents partly filled out the questionnaire. Out of a total of 100 percent responses, 35 percent were received via mail and 65 percent via Google forms. The study used a survey questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale to obtain data from participants. A snowball sampling method is used to gather all the data. The G*Power programme is used to determine the smallest possible sample (Faul *et al.*, 2007; Shiva *et al.*, 2020). According to G*Power software, the appropriate sample size for seven independent variables should be 218 (Koner *et al.*, 2022; Shiva *et al.*, 2020). The sample size for the research is 395, which is substantially greater than the needed sample size. It meets the standards for the appropriate sample size. The demographic profile of the respondents is given below:

Table II: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Respondents (In Numbers)
Age Groups	15+ years to 30 years	175
	30+ years to 45 years	162
	45+ years and above	58
	Total	395
Education	Up to 10 th standard	55
	Up to 12 th Standard	67
	Graduate	192
	Postgraduate	81
	Total	395
Marital Status	Unmarried	152
	Married	218
	Others	25
	Total	395
Income groups	Up to 25 thousand	61
	25 thousand + to 50 thousand	143
	Above 50 thousand	191
	Total	395

ANALYSIS

The research framework is built based on the above literature and indicates a structural relationship between the constructs. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is applied to study the link between constructs. SEM can be applied to determine incidental relationship between two or more constructs (Bhatt & Shiva, 2020; J. Hair *et al.*, 2017). The hypotheses are tested using partial least squares-structural equation modelling. Its exploratory character and complicated conceptual framework lead to the use of PLS-SEM as a methodology for this article. It is first tested for its internal reliability and convergent validity based on seven reflective dimensions comprising attitude, subjective norms, perceived behaviour, moral norms, health consciousness, price, and environmental consciousness. Internal consistency reliability is assessed using factor loading, Dijkstra and Henseler's rhoA, and Composite Reliability (CR). The data's convergent validity is determined using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) techniques. Factor loading, RhoA, and CR should be higher than 0.7 to demonstrate internal reliability, while the AVE needs to be greater than 0.5 to demonstrate convergent validity (J. F. Hair *et al.*, 2020; Koner *et al.*, 2021). Table III summarises the reliability and convergent validity findings for all reflective constructs. As shown in Table III, the loadings of environmental consciousness and subjective norms are less than the threshold limit, i.e., 0.7, but they are acceptable because the CR and AVE of both constructs are above the threshold limit (J. Hair *et al.*, 2017; Tajeddini *et al.*, 2021). When it comes to rhoA, the threshold limit lies in the range of 0.70 to 0.80 (Nunnally, 1978). However, values between 0.6 and

0.7 are tolerable when the Composite Reliability is above 0.7 and Average Variance Extracted is above 0.50 (Nunnally, 1978; Tajeddini *et al.*, 2021). Environmental consciousness and perceived behaviour are the two constructs that have a rhoA value below 0.7, but they are acceptable because the Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted are higher than their threshold limits (Nunnally, 1978; Tajeddini *et al.*, 2021). A few scale items have been eliminated owing to their low factor loadings.

Table III: Reflective Model Assessment

Constructs	Items	Type	Loading/Weights	rhoA	CR	AVE
Attitude	A1	Reflective	0.763	0.760	0.844	0.576
	A2		0.813			
	A3		0.744			
	A4		0.712			
Environment Consciousness	EC1	Reflective	0.852	0.681	0.809	0.587
	EC4		0.742			
	EC5		0.697			
Health Consciousness	HC1	Reflective	0.732	0.817	0.866	0.564
	HC2		0.782			
	HC3		0.764			
	HC4		0.725			
	HC5		0.751			
Moral Norms	MN1	Reflective	0.748	0.712	0.831	0.622
	MN2		0.843			
	MN3		0.771			
Perceived Behaviour	PB2	Reflective	0.809	0.600	0.828	0.707
	PB3		0.871			
Price	P1	Reflective	0.742	0.791	0.846	0.578
	P2		0.712			
	P3		0.795			
	P5		0.791			
Purchase Intension	PI1	Reflective	0.842	0.774	0.868	0.686
	PI2		0.838			
	PI3		0.805			
Subjective Norms	SN1	Reflective	0.684	0.735	0.813	0.594
	SN2		0.830			
	SN3		0.790			

(Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria for discriminant validity are next examined in research. A significant separation was evident between each structure and the rest. In the end, the study has been completed and is now ready for a final assessment (Table IV).

Table IV: Assessment of Discriminant Validity

Constructs	Attitude	Environment Consciousness	Health Consciousness	Moral Attitude	Perceived Behaviour	Price	Purchase Intension	Subjective norms
Attitude	0.759							
Environment Consciousness	0.372	0.766						
Health Consciousness	0.218	0.148	0.751					
Moral Norm	0.469	0.303	0.252	0.789				
Perceived Behaviour	0.371	0.247	0.154	0.341	0.841			
Price	0.122	0.105	0.147	0.099	0.053	0.761		
Purchase Intension	0.408	0.367	0.301	0.392	0.351	0.178	0.828	
Subjective norms	0.173	0.151	0.052	0.168	0.117	0.175	0.093	0.771

The HTMT ratio must be calculated to verify the discriminant validity of PLS-SEM. In a nutshell, discriminant validity proves that the ideas and their corresponding indicators are linked. Discriminant validity requirements for the HTMT ratio of correlation are met because it reflects the empirically established uniqueness of all constructs (Table V). The discriminant validity of an indicator reveals the close relationship between a construct and its indicators. According to (Henseler *et al.*, 2014), HTMT values must be less than 1, with a maximum correlation ratio of 0.85, allowing for an acceptable value of 0.90 (Gold *et al.*, 2015). In Table IV, HTMT ratios are all less than or equal to 0.85, indicating that the model may be trusted to make accurate predictions.

Table V: HTMT Ratio for Discriminant Validity Assessments

Constructs	Attitude	Environment Consciousness	Health Consciousness	Moral Attitude	Perceived Behaviour	Price	Purchase Intension
Environment Consciousness	0.512						
Health Consciousness	0.271	0.214					
Moral Norm	0.639	0.433	0.338				
Perceived Behaviour	0.555	0.401	0.221	0.532			
Price	0.156	0.152	0.178	0.135	0.090		
Purchase Intension	0.527	0.504	0.371	0.527	0.515	0.208	
Subjective Norms	0.231	0.217	0.155	0.222	0.172	0.198	0.135

Structural Assessment Model

Furthermore, criterion quality is assessed using the global fit indices SRMR (Standard Root Mean Square Relative) (J. F. Hair *et al.*, 2020). This is due to the fact that the SRMR value in this research is lower than the cut-off value of 0.08, which indicates that the model has a high degree of predictive ability (Henseler *et al.*, 2014; Hu & Bentler, 2009).

Rasoolimanesh *et al.* (2019) claims that R2 values larger than 0.2 are considered high. Figure 2 shows an R2 value of 0.317, which is an unusual but respectable value.

As part of the SmartPLS analysis, PLSpredict looked at the structural model's predictive significance (C. Ringle *et al.*, 2015; C. M. Ringle *et al.*, 2018). Structural model predictive relevance is predicted using a holdout sample of 40 (k = 10), while the rest of the 395 samples were used as training samples to run the model (Shmueli *et al.*, 2016). The RMSE values from the PLS-SEM analysis (Table VI) are lower than the naive LM benchmark for all of the items. RMSE and Q2 predict for PLS-SEM and linear

regression models are presented in the results (LM). As shown in the results, there is a very low difference in RSME between PLS-SEM and LM. The RSME value of PLS-SEM is lower than LM, and the difference in Q2 predict is positive. It has been demonstrated that the model has the good predictive capability (Shmueli *et al.*, 2019).

Table VI: Smart-PLS Predict Assessment of End Depend on Variable (Original Model)

Items	PLS-SEM		LM		PLS-SEM – LM	
	RMSE	Q ² _predict	RMSE	Q ² _predict	RMSE	Q ² _predict
PI1	1.181	0.160	1.202	0.129	-0.021	0.031
PI2	1.140	0.223	1.155	0.203	-0.015	0.020
PI3	1.177	0.192	1.199	0.161	-0.022	0.031

The structural model findings for seven hypotheses are shown in Table VII. Environmental consciousness (Std Beta = 0.190; p < 0.001) was discovered to be the most influential factor influencing customer purchasing intentions, thus validating H₂.

Table VII: Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Path Associations	Standardized Beta	t-values	Confidence Intervals (2.5%)	Confidence Intervals (97.5%)	Relationship Status
H ₁	Attitude -> Purchase Intension	0.161	2.890**	0.053	0.272	Supported
H ₂	Environment Consciousness -> Purchase Intension	0.190	3.728***	0.088	0.288	Supported
H ₃	Health Consciousness -> Purchase Intension	0.160	3.738***	0.080	0.247	Supported
H ₄	Moral Norm -> Purchase Intension	0.159	3.038**	0.052	0.257	Supported
H ₅	Perceived Behaviour -> Purchase Intension	0.165	3.416**	0.071	0.257	Supported
H ₆	Price -> Purchase Intension	0.097	2.282*	0.019	0.183	Supported
H ₇	Subjective norms -> Purchase Intension	-0.034	0.735	-0.114	0.081	Not Supported

The second most important construct in health consciousness influences customer purchasing intentions (Std Beta = 0.160; p < 0.001), indicating that H₃ is supported.

Additionally, the results of the hypothesis testing indicate that Attitude (Std Beta = 0.161; p < 0.01), Moral norms (Std Beta = 0.159; p < 0.01), and Perceived behaviour (Std Beta = 0.165; p < 0.01) all have a significant effect on purchase intention, indicating that H₁, H₄, and H₅ are supported. The result also shows that Price (Std Beta = 0.097; p < 0.05), has a moderate effect on purchase intention, indicating that H₆ is supported.

There is just one unimportant aspect, implying that buyers' subjective norms have no bearing on their purchase choices. As a result, H₇ is rejected.

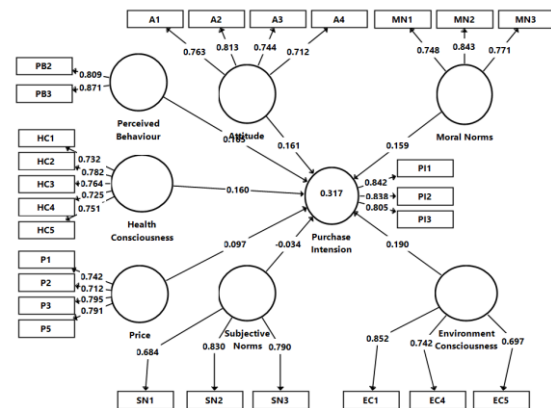


Figure 2: Structural Model Assessment

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the impacts of different factors on organic food purchases in India. Since 2000, most previous studies have examined a few factors impacting the purchase intention of organic food (Kriwy & Mecking, 2012; Liang, 2016; Rana & Paul, 2017; Teng & Wang, 2015; Vindigni *et al.*, 2002). However, the present study identified all the factors and their impacts on purchase intention simultaneously. This research shows the attitude toward organic food positively affects the intention to buy it, as revealed in earlier research also (Liang, 2016; Teng & Wang, 2015). Attitudes regarding organic foods and subjective standards have a significant impact on customer intentions to buy organic goods (Al-Swidi *et al.*, 2014; Basha *et al.*, 2015; Teng & Wang, 2015). Subjective norms had no significant effect on the intention to buy organic food in the study, showing that purchasing organic food has not yet become a vital standard, consistent with earlier studies (Arvola *et al.*, 2008; Magnusson *et al.*, 2001; Yadav & Pathak, 2016). People have become more health-conscious after the COVID-19 pandemic and are purchasing organic foods out of a genuine concern for their health rather than a sense of social obligation.

This study expanded on the previous research by examining the effect of environmental and health awareness on an individual's favourable opinion toward purchasing organic food. The findings indicate that health and environmental consciousness have a beneficial effect on the intention to purchase organic food. This finding is uniform with prior research indicating that concern for one's health and the environment are two reasons most commonly cited as elements of a favourable opinion toward purchasing organic food (Irianto, 2015; Kriwy &

Mecking, 2012; Rana & Paul, 2017; Vindigni *et al.*, 2002). Incorporating moral norms into the TPB has proved its pertinence in behavioural studies and thus shows a significant impact on the purchase intention of organic food, as depicted in the results, which supports the findings of previous research (Dean *et al.*, 2012; Dowd & Burke, 2013; Yadav & Pathak, 2016).

Further, this research examined the effects of price and perceived behaviour on people's willingness to purchase organic food. Although the perception of consumers toward organic food is reflected as a major barrier due to its expensive cost as compared to conventional food (Lea & Worsley, 2005; Smith & Paladino, 2010), this study demonstrates the positive attitude of consumers towards the purchase of organic food, irrespective of its high price, due to the health issues influencing their changing lifestyle. Despite the study's claims (Liang, 2016; Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006) that inconsistency in purchase intentions of organic food is affected by perceived affordability of price, several researchers (Isika *et al.*, 2013; Le-Anh & Nguyen-To, 2020) identified that consumers' intentions and behaviour are significantly influenced by their confidence. Hence, perceived behaviour has a significant impact on the purchase intention of organic food, which is also supported by this research.

CONCLUSION

The findings have significant practical implications for future research and the implementation of initiatives aimed at comprehending the consumer's cognitive process when it comes to purchasing organic food. Notably, this study reveals that customers' health and environmental consciousness are the most important factors influencing their purchase intentions for organic foods. As a result, businesses should demonstrate to consumers that they play a critical role in promoting environmental consciousness, which is just as vital as social responsibility. As a result, we develop a comprehensive model of organic food buying intention based on numerous theoretical viewpoints and attempt to know the function of each factor in buying intention by examining both the organic food itself and the function of factors in leading consumer behaviour. The current study's findings indicate that attitude, moral standards, and subjective standards all had a substantial effect on buying intention. In our study, price and perceived behaviour had a smaller effect on purchase intention than in the (Bryła, 2016)

study, which discovered a strong effect of price on buy intention. The findings also suggest that environmental and health concerns have a significantly high impact on purchase intention, in contradiction with (H. Y. Kim & Chung, 2011) study, where the impact was observed to be medium. The valid reason can be based on fear of the COVID-19 era when people became more conscious about their health and the environment in which they live. More importantly, these outcomes can be utilised to design their marketing strategy who are investing in the organic food industry. Subjective norms have no effect on the intention to purchase organic food, in contrast to the research of (Basha *et al.*, 2015), which demonstrates the influencing effect of subjective norms and attitude on the intention to buy organic food.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The study's findings have ramifications for manufacturers of organic products, merchants, and market regulatory organizations. It is necessary to design an appropriate approach in light of customers' concerns about health safety and the environment. The approach should be the segment-specific, aimed at increasing consumer consciousness and knowledge of organic food products while also assuring buyer satisfaction and happiness. Organic products are trustworthy; people may be unaware whether a product was cropped organically or conventionally unless instructed. As a result, customer knowledge of organically cultivated food acts a significant part in buying intention. This study makes recommendations and criteria for stores that sell organic foods. Additionally, the study can aid organic food producers in finding their target consumers by revealing the effect of socioeconomic status on organic food sales. The study can help health and wellness organisations realign their production and marketing strategies to meet growing customer demand for better food options and effectively plan for growth and development. The outcomes recommend that sellers of organic food products should carefully segment markets and tailor marketing strategies to convince potential buyer about the advantages of organic food products, which include healthy ingredients, production without the use of pesticide, and environmentally friendly. Additionally, consumers must be up-to-date about organic product supply, as many believe organic goods are uncommon on the market. Despite the impressive findings of the study, various limitations

must be addressed when illustrating the findings. The current study examined the influence of a few selected parameters on customer attitudes toward organic foods. Future research in this area should examine consumer attitudes regarding organic food items in the context of advertising, government regulation, and distribution.

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