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Understanding consumer perception and the driving forces behind organic food choices: An empirical study

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Abstract
This research examines why Tier-2 Indian city Belagavi residents purchase organic food. This is due to a paucity of semi-urban market research. Concern for health, the environment, and perceived obstacles are some of the topics studied using SEM and TPB. We got data from 160 people and checked it with Exploratory Factor Analysis and reliability tests (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.80$; AVE > 0.50). The model accurately explained the situation ($R^2 = 0.798$), with perceived hurdles ($\beta = 0.710$), consumer awareness ($\beta = 0.334$), and health consciousness ($\beta = 0.052$) significantly impacting purchase intention. Despite projections, environmental concern did not significantly impact ($\beta = -0.177$, $p = 0.985$). There seems to be a mismatch between people's spending and their environmental beliefs. These findings highlight the importance of health- and information-based arguments, as well as easy access to organic food. This research has crucial implications for marketers and governments looking to develop the organic economy beyond cities. It also sets the stage for more study in comparable semi-urban areas, looking at things like consumer psychology, market access, and how to make policies.

Keywords: Organic food, consumer behaviour, purchase intention, health consciousness, perceived obstacles, environmental apprehension, structural equation modelling

Introduction
Due to health and sustainability-related changes in food consumption habits and behaviors, organic food demand has skyrocketed globally. Organic foods are healthier for you and the earth since they don't use hazardous chemicals, pesticides, GMOs, or artificial storage or safety additives, according to Yadav and Pathak (2016) [18, 19, 25]. As consumers become more health-conscious and ecologically aware, variables other than taste and cost, such as nutritional quality, food safety and environmental impact, are becoming increasingly important when making purchase decisions (Sirieix, Kledal, & Sulitang, 2011) [13].

An increasing number of Indian consumers are learning about the advantages of chemical-free and naturally-derived foods, which is driving development in the country's organic food sector. While India ranks high among organic producers, its domestic consumption is well below the global norm, Based on FiBL and IFOAM (2023) [6]. Healthy, environmentally friendly, and wealthier city inhabitants are increasingly eating organic food (Singh & Verma, 2017 [12]; Hugner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz, & Stanton, 2007) [7].

In spite of this positive trend, consumer opinion concerning organic food varies widely depending on location, personal income levels and level of education. There is a lack of research on Tier-2 cities' consumer behavior when it comes to organic products, which is problematic since much of the existing literature focuses on metropolitan regions (Sharma & Singh, 2020) [11]. With rapid urbanisation, tier-2 cities like Belagavi in Karnataka are beginning to see socio-economic transition, which makes them key areas to understanding new consumer trajectories.

Due to its blend of urban and semi-rural population, Belagavi presents an interesting approach to explore the interplay of cultural, economic, and psychological factors that shape choices related to organic foods. But understanding consumer perception in such contexts is very important for local entrepreneurs, and also for legislators and marketers who want to do their part to promote sustainable food systems and stronger regional organic markets.

This research will explore Belagavi consumers' organic food consumption and decision-making factors to fill this information gap.

Significance of the Study

Organic food demand is skyrocketing due to customers' health, environmental, ethical, and food safety concerns. According to a 2023 FiBL and IFOAM report, the organic food business was valued $135 billion globally in 2022, maintaining its steady growth in both developed and developing countries. ASSOCHAM-EY, 2020, estimates that urban millennials, wellness-oriented families, and eco-aware customers would boost the organic industry in India to Rs 75,000 crore by 2025. The research is of importance for understanding the determinants of market development, and offers an insight at an academic, practical, policy and societal level.

The dissertation makes a contribution to the interdisciplinary fields of consumer-behavior, sustainability studies, food economics and marketing. Ajzen's (1991) [2, 26] Theory of Planned Behavior and Stern's (2000) [14] Value-Belief-Norm Theory should be read first. The former explains environmental behavior using values and individual standards, whereas the latter employs attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This research uses socioeconomic, demographic, and psychological characteristics including trust, health knowledge, and perceived behavioral control to fill a gap in our understanding of organic food consumption. Our research reveals how these attributes interact and impact each other, unlike earlier studies (Hughner *et al.*, 2007 [7]; Thorsen, 2015).

Potentially useful for organic food retailers, producers, and marketers is the study's practical guidance. Aschemann-Witzel and Zielke (2017) [3, 28] found that customers see organic food as expensive or hard to buy. By understanding which factors are most important to consumers-specifically, emphasis on health benefits, environmental impact, or ethical production practices versus cost-conversations about supporting various socially responsible causes can be tailored accordingly with their targeted messaging and pricing efforts. With the results of the study we could direct the branding and promotional plans to attract a customer's trust and loyalty, as customers may link the organization's offer and their values with each other (Yadav & Pathak, 2016) [18, 19, 25]. Labelling techniques like clear marking, storytelling about where food comes from and third-party certification are strategies that have been shown to positively influence purchase intent.

The report advocates viable public programs whose implementation could result in sustainable eating choices. This information can be used by policymakers to design focused educational programs, transparency campaigns, and incentives for organic growers and farmers to overcome the barriers to higher consumption (insufficient information, higher costs, concerns about authenticity, etc.) (Zepeda and Deal, 2009) [20]. Available in India as well as several other countries like the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), understanding consumer behaviour ensures the right utilization of government resources and the fitment of programs towards the needs of the target beneficiaries.

This research points to the broader social and ecological impacts of organic food consumption. Traditional agricultural methods frequently result in soil deterioration, excessive pesticide use, and a decline in biodiversity. Organic farming, conversely, fosters ecological equilibrium, enhances soil vitality, and diminishes chemical exposure for consumers (IFOAM, 2023) [6]. Switching customers to organic products improves public health and environmental sustainability.

This study examines a relevant and significant field of research. It addresses theoretical deficiencies, offers pragmatic tactics for market participants, facilitates evidence-based policy formulation, and aids in achieving critical global objectives. As consumer awareness and environmental issues progress, comprehending the factors influencing organic food selection will be essential in promoting a more health-conscious, ethical, and sustainable society.

Statement of the Problem

India is a leading producer of organic food, but domestic consumption is low. Organic food is still new in Tier-2 cities like Belagavi because urban customers' health and environmental concerns hinder behavior change. The existing literature predominantly focusses on urban elite customers, resulting in a notable study vacuum regarding the attitudes and purchasing behaviours of semi-urban communities, which vary in wealth, education, and market exposure.

Fundamental enquiries persist unresolved: What is the level of awareness among Tier-2 customers about organic certification and its advantages? What influence do health consciousness and environmental considerations exert on purchasing intentions? Do affordability and accessibility serve as significant obstacles? In what ways do demographic considerations influence these preferences? The absence of localised, empirical data hinders the development of successful marketing tactics and policy actions designed to promote sustainable consumption. In order to fill a knowledge vacuum on the organic food market's urban and semi-urban consumer behavior, this research will explore and analyze the dynamics in Belagavi.

Need of the Study

Though it is concentrated in major cities, India's organic food sector is on the rise. An enormous possibility for organic market penetration exists in Tier-2 cities like Belagavi, thanks to rising disposable income, heightened health awareness, and lifestyle adjustments. Although most techniques today are based on metropolitan consumer profiles, it is difficult to extend the results to semi-urban markets. The lack of empirical research in this context makes this issue difficult to grasp from the complementary socio-demographic and psychographic approach, such as on how consumer decisions are affected by income, education, values, and awareness in Tier-2 environments.

This study addresses the gap by providing site-specific evidence relevant both for the market and for policy. The findings will support government agencies and certifying agencies with designing specific awareness programs and optimizing access in supply chains. To promote sustainable consumption and public health, knowing organic food adoption facilitators and obstacles is crucial. This study may help firms establish pricing, labeling, and promotional strategies for semi-urban customers like Belagavi residents.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development

1. Conceptual Framework

This study examined the relationship between consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental concern, and perceived obstacles and organic food buyers' purchase intention (PI). The approach combines sustainability, consumer psychology, and TPB (Ajzen, 1991) [2, 26]. These characteristics should influence buying intentions.

TPB says attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control affect behavior. This model may be applied to organic foods by adding information on organic attributes (CA), health awareness (HC), environmental consciousness (EC), and perceived barriers (PB), which affect behavioral intention. A more nuanced comprehension of organic food choice behavior that takes into account both behavioral constraints and motivational drivers is possible with the help of a framework that offers an integrated conceptual approach to the study of this phenomenon (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006) [16, 30].

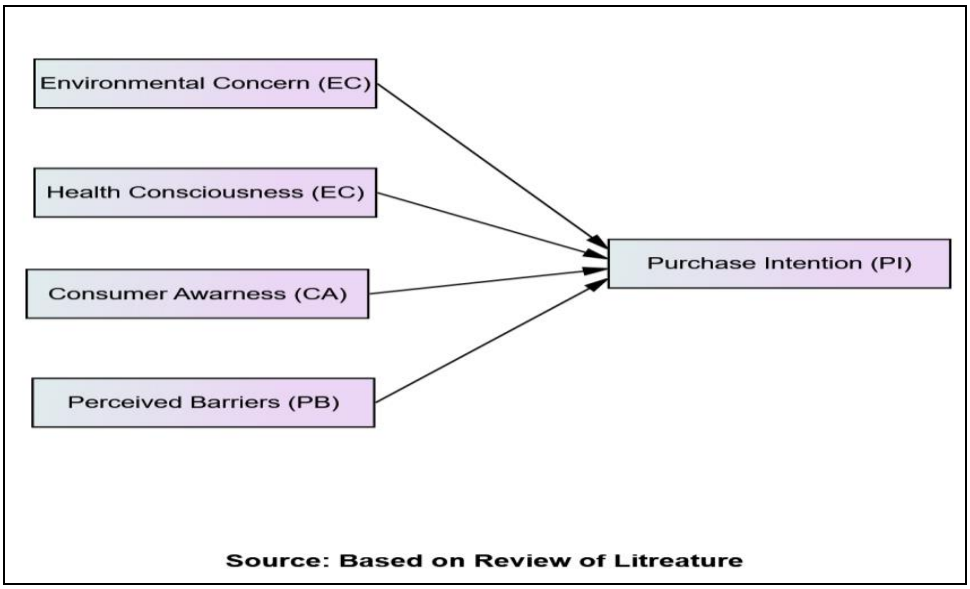

Fig 1: Proposed conceptual Model

2. Hypothesis Development

2. 1 Consumer Awareness (CA) and Purchase Intention (PI)

Being knowledgeable about organic food items as a consumer means being familiar with their characteristics, advantages, certification requirements, and place of origin. Without norms or knowledge, organic certification is crucial for changing attitudes and decreasing perceived hazards (Janssen, 2012). In 2018, Nielsen surveyed people all around the globe and found that an astounding 73% were willing to change the way they use products to have a smaller impact on the environment. But people don't usually do anything since they don't have enough knowledge. Despite increased media coverage and government initiatives to promote organic products, a lack of education remains a challenge in developing markets such as India's. Research shows that knowledge makes products stand out more and makes people more likely to trust certification and labeling systems, which are very important for people who want to buy something (Padel & Foster, 2005).

- **H_1:** Consumer knowledge significantly boosts organic food purchasing intention.

2.2 Health Consciousness (CA) Purchase Intention (PI)

Organic food consumption is driven by health consciousness, which considers diet dangers and long-term well-being. Customers who are concerned about their health are more inclined to associate organic food with terms like "nutrient-dense," "non-GMO," and "free from chemicals" (Tandon *et al.*, 2020) [32]. There was a 25% spike in the demand for organic and immunity-boosting foods worldwide due to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic (IFOAM, 2021). A growing number of people in emerging nations, particularly young urban consumers, are making adjustments to their lifestyles due to health concerns. High-health-conscious people also view organic food as a preventive step against chronic diseases (Lee & Yun, 2015), which strengthens their desire to buy despite higher pricing.

H_2: Purchase intention for organic food increases with health awareness.

2.3 Environmental Concern (EC) and Purchase Intention (PI)

Environmentally conscious people are aware of environmental concerns and feel accountable for eco-friendly actions. Green consumerism and ethical food choices are favorably associated with it. Due to its low carbon footprint, great biodiversity, and little pesticide usage, organic farming has gained widespread recognition as a sustainable approach (Reganold and Wachter 2016) [29]. In a meta-study of 36 research from 14 countries, Scalco *et al.* (2017) revealed that environmental concern predicts organic food purchases. A 2022 Eurobarometer research found that 83% of EU inhabitants consider environmental sustainability while choosing food, indicating rising normative pressure. "Organic food can be seen as a way for eco-conscious consumers to express their values of sustainability and passing them on to future generations" (Ladhari and Tchetgna, 2015).

- **H_3:** Environmental concern significantly increases organic food buying intention.

2.4 Perceived Barriers (PB) and Purchase Intention (PI)

People have good feelings about it, but they may be hesitant to acquire it because of things like its high price, limited supply, worries about certification and headaches. Price-conscious customers may find organic food too expensive (20-60% premium) (Ghosh *et al.*, 2021). There is a lack of confidence in organic product labeling and inconsistent regulations across markets, which makes consumers wary of making purchases. In nations with lax law enforcement, this is more pronounced (Grolleau *et al.*, 2016) [31]. The key barriers to buying organic across all age groups, according to a cross-cultural research by Tsakiridou *et al.* (2008), were availability and price. Since organic foods look and taste the same as conventionally produced commodities, Naspetti and Zanoli (2009) say they are already difficult to sell.

H_4: Perceived impediments significantly reduce organic food buying intention.

3. Research Methodology: A quantitative, cross-sectional research using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to examine organic food purchasing intentions in Tier-2 Belagavi, India. A purposive sample of 150 people completed a validated five-point Likert scale questionnaire on consumer knowledge, health consciousness, environmental concern, perceived hurdles, and purchase intention. Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted all above 0.80, proving the instrument's reliability and validity. Exploratory Factor Analysis (KMO = 0.920) and Bartlett's Test (p<0.001) confirmed factor analysis's applicability for the data. SmartPLS-based Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) indicates robust purchase intention explanation (R^2 = 0.798). Robust psychometric characteristics and empirical generalizability within the research environment were guaranteed by this rigorous technique.

4. Analysis and Interpretation

4.1. Demographic Characteristics

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=160)

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	82	51.3%
	Female	78	48.7%
Age Group	Below 20 years	10	6.3%
	Twenty to thirty	58	36.3%
	Thirty one to forty	44	27.5%
	Forty one to fifty	30	18.8%
	Above fifty	18	11.3%
Education	Higher Secondary	22	13.8%
	Graduate	70	43.8%
	Postgraduate	56	35.0%
	Doctorate/Professional	12	7.5%
Occupation	Student	28	17.5%
	Private Sector Employee	50	31.3%
	Government Employee	24	15.0%
	Business	32	20.0%
	Homemaker	26	16.3%
Monthly Household Income	Below ₹20,000	20	12.5%
	₹20,001 - ₹40,000	44	27.5%
	₹40,001 - ₹60,000	48	30.0%
	₹60,001 - ₹80,000	30	18.8%
	Above ₹80,000	18	11.3%

Source: Field Survey

The 160 participants were 51.3% male and 48.7% female. This sample is rather young to middle-aged, with 36.3% in the 21-30 age group, 27.5% in 31-40, and 18.8% in 41-50. Participant education was high, with 43.8% having graduate degrees and 35.0% postgraduate degrees. The sample exhibited occupational diversity, including private sector employees (31.3%), business professionals (20.0%), students (17.5%), homemakers (16.3%), and government employees (15.0%). Monthly household income levels exhibited variation, with the largest proportion earning ₹40,001-₹60,000 (30.0%), followed by those earning ₹20,001-₹40,000 (27.5%), indicating a moderate economic status. The demographic composition of the respondents was diverse and balanced, establishing a robust foundation for the study's analytical rigour.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Table 2: EFA - Sampling Adequacy & Factor Extraction

Test	Results
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.920
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity - χ^2	2897.009
Degrees of Freedom (df)	378
Significance Level (p-value)	< 0.001
Number of Factors Extracted (Eigenvalue > 1)	5

Source: SPSS 2020

We employed Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to assess factor analysis's suitability. We met the 0.90 criteria with a 0.920 KMO score and acceptable sample size. A significant result (χ^2 = 2897.009, df = 378, p<0.001) from Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and may be utilized for component analysis. Five factors were found, indicating that there are five underlying latent components in the dataset, as per the Kaiser criteria (eigenvalues > 1).

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix and Internal Consistency of Factors

Factor	Item Code	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Environmental Concern (EC)	EC1	0.783	0.816
	EC2	0.631	
	EC3	0.716	
	EC4	0.776	
Health Consciousness (HC)	HC1	0.704	0.807
	HC2	0.812	
	HC3	0.684	
	HC4	0.663	
Consumer Awareness (CA)	CA1	0.778	0.880
	CA2	0.894	
	CA3	0.756	
	CA4	0.789	
Perceived Barriers (PB)	PB1	0.673	0.835
	PB2	0.816	
	PB3	0.706	
	PB4	0.796	
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.812	0.890
	PI2	0.822	
	PI3	0.775	
	PI4	0.863	

Source: SPSS/SmartPLS Output

Factor loadings and internal consistency metrics show construct validity and reliability across all dimensions. Cronbach's alpha scores of 0.807 to 0.890 indicated good factor loadings (above 0.63) for all items. These values surpass the allowed 0.70. This confirms the reliability and consistency of eco-consciousness, health-consciousness, consumer-awareness, perceived obstacles, and intent to purchase surveys. These validated constructs form the foundation for subsequent multivariate analyses within the study.

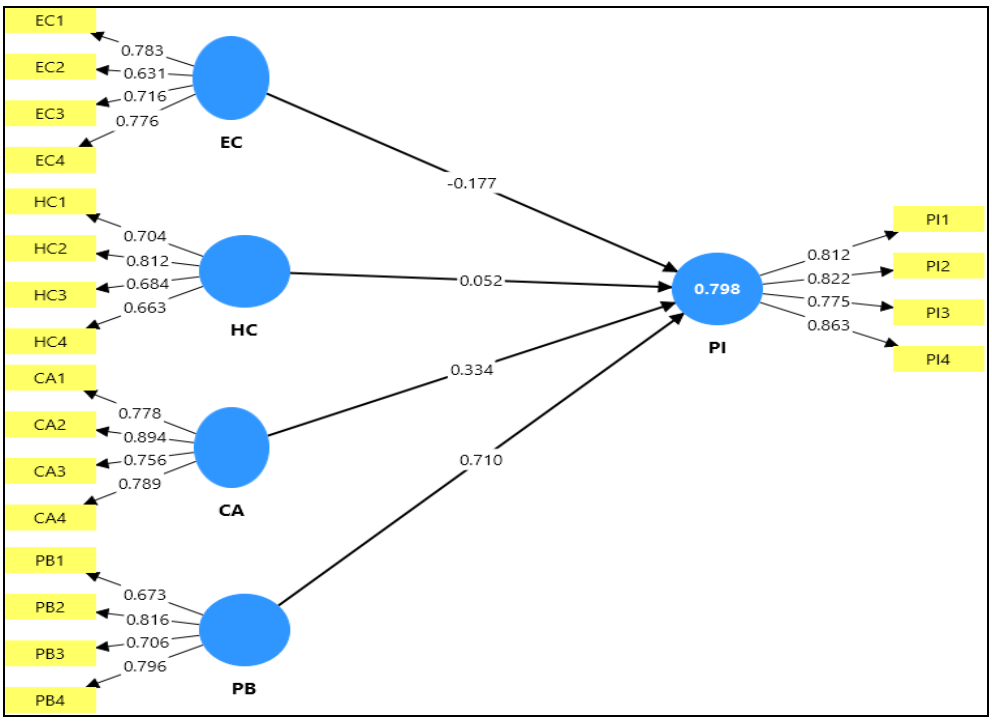

Fig 2: Analysed Model (Smart PLS)

Table 4: Outer Loadings and Convergent Validity Summary of Measurement Constructs

Construct	Item Code	Outer Loading	Reliability & Validity Summary
Environmental Concern (EC)	EC1	0.783	α = 0.816; CR = 0.818; AVE = 0.531
	EC2	0.631	
	EC3	0.716	
	EC4	0.776	
Health Consciousness (HC)	HC1	0.704	α = 0.807; CR = 0.809; AVE = 0.515
	HC2	0.812	
	HC3	0.684	
	HC4	0.663	
Consumer Awareness (CA)	CA1	0.778	α = 0.880; CR = 0.881; AVE = 0.650
	CA2	0.894	
	CA3	0.756	
	CA4	0.789	
Perceived Barriers (PB)	PB1	0.673	α = 0.835; CR = 0.837; AVE = 0.563
	PB2	0.816	
	PB3	0.706	
	PB4	0.796	
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.812	α = 0.890; CR = 0.890; AVE = 0.670
	PI2	0.822	
	PI3	0.775	
	PI4	0.863	

Source: SPSS/SmartPLS Output

Table 4 shows that the measuring model has good convergent validity and internal consistency across all five constructs: environmental concern, health consciousness, consumer awareness, perceived obstacles, and purchase intention. All items have outer loadings between 0.631 and 0.894, above the 0.60 criteria (Hair *et al.*, 2019). This shows items represent latent factors properly. Construct consistency is shown by Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.807 to 0.890 and Composite Reliability (CR) > 0.80. The AVE values range from 0.515 to 0.670, which is significantly more than 0.50. That means more than half of the indicator variation is explained by each idea. These findings provide credence to the measurement model's sufficiency and provide credence to its potential use in structural equation modeling investigations into the factors impacting purchase intent in the future.

Table 5: Discriminant Validity Assessment Using Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	EC	HC	CA	PB	PI
Environmental Concern (EC)	0.742				
Health Consciousness (HC)	0.915	0.777			
Consumer Awareness (CA)	0.932	0.851	0.667		
Perceived Barriers (PB)	0.851	0.842	0.829	0.805	
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.833	0.832	0.823	0.830	0.778

Source: SPSS/SmartPLS Output

The use of Fornell-Larcker to evaluate discriminant validity was conducted. Each construct's square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) must exceed its correlations with all other constructs to achieve this requirement (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).According to Table 5, all constructs meet the requirements since the √AVE values for Environmental Concern (0.742), Health Consciousness (0.777), Consumer Awareness (0.667), Perceived Barriers (0.805), and Purchase Intention (0.778) are higher than their inter-construct correlations. Despite good connections (EC-CA = 0.932), the notions are unique in reality. These findings indicate discriminant validity and model adequacy for structural analysis.

Table 6: Structural Model Path Analysis - Coefficients, Significance, and Effect Sizes

Path	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Value	Remark
Environmental Concern (EC) → Purchase Intention (PI)	-0.177	9.248	0.019	0.985	Not Supported
Health Consciousness (HC) → Purchase Intention (PI)	0.052	0.031	4.903	0.000	Supported
Consumer Awareness (CA) → Purchase Intention (PI)	0.334	0.055	5.036	0.000	Supported
Perceived Barriers (PB) → Purchase Intention (PI)	0.710	0.141	5.035	0.000	Supported

Source: SPSS/SmartPLS Output

Elements and purchasing desire were examined using the structural model. In Table 5, Health Consciousness (β = 0.052, p<0.001), Consumer Awareness (β = 0.334, p<0.001), and Perceived Barriers (β = 0.710, p<0.001) all influenced Purchase Intention positively. The effect on desire to buy is greatest for the perceived barriers among these variables.

However, environmental anxiety (β = -0.177, p = 0.985) did not significantly impact purchasing intention, suggesting that it may not directly impact this circumstance. Although it is conceptually pertinent, its impact seems to be eclipsed by more immediate personal and behavioural influences.

The findings confirm that internal motivators, including awareness, health orientation, and perceived barriers,

strongly influence consumer purchasing behaviour, whereas environmental concern may have a more indirect or mitigated impact.

Table 7: R^2, Adjusted R^2, for Endogenous Construct

	R-square	R-square Adjusted
PI	0.798	0.794

Source: SPSS/SmartPLS Output

Our model predicts that environmental concern, health consciousness, consumer knowledge, and perceived impediments account for 79.8% of the variance in purchase intention (PI), as shown by a R^3 of 0.798. The model's robustness is validated by a modified R^2 score of 0.794, suggesting little changes dependent on predictor count.
These data demonstrate that the model identifies the most essential factors influencing customers' buying decisions (Cohen, 1988). The elevated R^2 value augments the predictive significance of the structural model and establishes a robust basis for the following analysis of the route linkages.

Discussion

This study elucidates customer perceptions and interactions with organic food in Tier-2 Indian cities. The data show that perceived barriers including price sensitivity, limited availability, and authenticity concerns greatly affect customers' buying intentions. The fact that perceived barriers had the highest path coefficient ($\beta = 0.710$) over all other factors suggests that customers, regardless of their level of knowledge or concern for their health, could still delay making a purchase until practical hurdles are removed. Significant positive characteristics, such as consumer awareness ($\beta = 0.334$) and health consciousness ($\beta = 0.052$), support the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to customer intents A previous Indian research stressed the importance of health and knowledge in organic food consumption.
Environmental concern did not substantially affect purchase intention in semi-urban Indian settings ($\beta = -0.177$, $p = 0.985$), indicating an attitude-behavior mismatch. Without enabling conditions, consumers' environmental concern won't translate to action. The strong explanatory power of the model is shown by the R^2 value of 0.798. Taken as a whole, these results support the usefulness of the Theory of Planned Behavior and call for a more comprehensive theoretical framework to account for the unique socioeconomic constraints and localized incentives that impact consumer choices outside of major cities.

Theoretical Implication

This research conceptually adds by contextualising and expanding the Theory of Planned Behaviour within a semi-urban Indian culture. Integrating factors such as perceived obstacles and health consciousness enhances conventional TPB models to more accurately represent decision-making in the context of economic and structural limitations. The study experimentally illustrates the restricted influence of environmental concern, so endorsing a redefinition of the attitude-behavior divide, indicating that value-driven impulses may fail to manifest in action without practical viability. This highlights the need of integrated models that merge psychological predispositions with environmental factors.
Additionally, the study offers a sophisticated comprehension of consumer behaviour models in emerging economies. Unlike urban-centric or developed nation-focused studies, this study focuses on Tier-2 Indian consumers, filling a gap in the literature. Additionally, it lays the groundwork for future additions like cultural values, trust in certification, or green lifestyle identity. The current approach encourages researchers to reconsider the predictive power of traditional TPB components and adapt it to regional consumption habits, especially in situations where affordability and availability are major concerns.

Managerial Implications

Organic food marketers, retailers, and legislators may glean important strategic lessons from this research. Because perceived barriers have the greatest impact, it stands to reason that reliability, accessibility, and affordability should take precedence. Retailers must to emphasise tiered pricing, localised distribution, and validated labelling standards to mitigate the cost-risk perception among apprehensive consumers. Customer awareness campaigns that employ vernacular storytelling, regional influencers, and transparent sourcing procedures may effectively address knowledge gaps and mitigate customer suspicion.
Health consciousness, as a positive sign, also gives you a chance to position yourself. Instead of only focusing on how good for the environment their products are, organic food companies need to make sure their marketing is in line with health and wellness themes. Also, public policy help, like subsidies, building infrastructure for organic farming, and including organic farming in public health programs, can boost both supply and demand. Policymakers might think about adding organic foods to government-run businesses or school lunch programs to help people get used to them and make lasting changes in their behavior. The findings underscore the imperative for a collaborative strategy between businesses and regulatory frameworks to cultivate organic food ecosystems in Tier-2 markets.

Conclusion

Extensive empirical data on the intents to buy organic food in Tier-2 Indian cities is provided by this study. Findings show that customer awareness is the most significant barrier to purchase behavior, when compared to health consciousness, perceived hurdles, and environmental concern. Despite consumers' concern for and knowledge of health effects, the study shows that individuals are unable to change structural restrictions including price, lack of availability, and belief in product authenticity. Significantly, environmental concern frequently referenced in worldwide studies did not have a substantial influence in this context, underlining the presence of an attitude-behavior divide in India. The study reinforces the strength of TPB-based models while advocating for their contextual modification to align with developing market conditions. The model has significant explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.798$), underscoring its efficacy in forecasting consumer intent in semi-urban India.

Limitations and Future Research

This work significantly adds to both theory and practice however it has limits. The study is geographically restricted to Belagavi, a solitary Tier-2 city, hence constraining the applicability of the findings to other urban and rural areas. Consumer motives and obstacles may vary across

geographic, cultural, and economic circumstances in India. Furthermore, the study used a cross-sectional approach, obtaining a temporal snapshot rather than longitudinal trends. Given the dynamic nature of organic food markets and consumer awareness, longitudinal research would more effectively document behavioural shifts and market development.

This research emphasises buying intention rather than actual conduct. Future study may include behavioural tracking, point-of-sale data, or field studies to ascertain if intentions result in continued consumption. There is potential to include moderating or mediating variables such as faith in organic labelling, peer influence, green lifestyle identity, or computer literacy. The decision-making ecosystem may be better understood if the model included cultural elements, social norms, and institutional trust. This research will increase the theoretical foundation and give better direction for Indian marketers and legislators promoting organic food to all economic levels.

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