



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR & PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD: A REVIEW & RESEARCH

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*Abstract:* The article discusses and review the various factors affect the consumer behaviour towards organic food. The findings are extracted from various research studied conducted around the globe, factors are analyzed and suggestions are provided for the future research. We explore that awareness and knowledge make people health conscious which change the preferences of consumer towards organic food over conventional food. The positive shift in the attitude of consumers occurs due to demographic change like growing income and education in the modern consumers. Some other factors like due to modern life style people are facing some lifestyle diseases like obesity, heart disease depression also influenced people to make a healthy food choice. This kind of choice create a huge opportunity for retailers, distributors, farmers and marketers to accelerate their organic food business.

*Keywords :* Organic Food, Perception, Attitude, Trust, Consumer awareness, Knowledge

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Introduction

There is paradigm shift in the eating behaviour of consumers motivate the marketer to study about the attitude and purchase intention of buying behaviour of consumers towards organic food. Earlier the many farmers were unaware about the scientific techniques of agriculture they just grow crop without any fertilizers and preservatives for their self-food consumption. The trend of organic food was emerged between 1940s and 1960s where farmers applied more intensive and advance food production techniques. In fact, it is now ethical eating culture by some of the societies in various countries (Groslik, 2016). This trend was continued if there were no increase in population but explosion in population and age of baby boobers due to World War II, famines and availability of fertilizers, chemicals, preservatives farmers were interested in production of conventional food. That's why organic farming left behind and conventional food become the priority of people because it was available in large amount in lower price (MUTLU, 2007). There is high rate of decease raised by wrong food habit and fast lifestyle made the people realise about the worth of healthy, pure and safe food (Menrad, 2003; Roberfroid, 2002). People in these days believe in the life motto "you are what you eat" which increase the demand of organic food (Norman et al; 2000). Due to the safety and purity of organic food the people of developed countries like Europe and North America are buying the consumers of developing countries like China and India also attracting towards organic food (Patel et al; 2007; Paul et al; 2016). This shift shows the change in attitude of consumers The shift in consumer attitude occurred because organic food has fulfilled the expectations of modern consumers. Organic agriculture includes various efforts like local seed, natural fertilizer without any chemical, natural growing which make the organic food very healthy and safe (Adamtey et al;2016). Another factor which Also affect the consumer intention to purchase the organic food is increase in disposable income of consumers, by which they can afford better life, quality food (Kriwy and Mecking, 2012). All of this is heading the marketer to being curious about knowing the attitude and

purchase intention of consumers towards organic food (Bublitz and Peracchio, 2015). Thus, we can see the healthy food habit promote marketer to shift towards the study of consumer attitude they are They argued that adapting successful industry practices to promote a healthy shift in the eating habits of consumers will help businesses producing such healthy products to thrive. For this, marketers need to know about the opinion of consumers that what they are thinking about organic food, to whom I have to target, what are the factors that affects the consumers buying behaviour and their purchase intention. But the above literature does not show complete framework, we have to identify the factors affecting consumer to purchase organic food, who are the consumers of organic food, what are the consideration to develop the purchase intention towards organic food. Overall, it will provide an analytical framework for the attitude and purchase intention towards organic food. In the above context the objective of the study can be stratified as follows:

- i) Analyse the reason to shift of consumer's attitude towards organic food
- ii) Gather the factors which is primarily affect the consumer attitude and purchase intention towards organic food.
- iii) To identify the factors which are neglected but positively affect the attitude of consumers towards organic food.

To identify the research gap and help in making organic food more popular over consumers we need to address these objectives. The article is divided into 8 section, section 2 deals with objectives of the study, section 3 outlined the methodology of the study. The trends & overview is outlined in section 4 while section 4 will discuss the findings of the study. Section 6 discuss a new framework developed which can be helpful for marketer dealing with organic food consumers. The scope for the future research is discussed in section 7 & section 8 includes concluding observation.

## 2. Method

For addressing the all objectives, the methods adopted by earlier articles related organic food (Canabal and White, 2008; Terjesen et al., 2016) & conducted depth intensive broad research on organic food with all the multidisciplinary literature during (i.e., 1985-2020) years. For searching the data, we downloaded more than 400 articles published during 1985 to 2020 all the articles were from Google Scholar, EBSCO, Scopus and social science research networks sites. The keywords were used during literature review were consumer attitude, purchase intention, factors affecting consumer behaviour, buying behaviour of consumers etc. After careful consideration of all the factors and after discussion with co-authors on the basis of several parameters 150 article were selected for the as final sample which identify purchase intention, consumer attitude, and factors affecting consumers buying behaviour towards organic food. As government reports are non-commercial and have greater authenticity, we also covered some government papers from websites such as United States Department of Agriculture. We chose three decades (1985-2020) to encompass all the most important factors and variables which influence purchase intention & consumers attitude towards organic food. We only reviewed those articles which are contributed to our understanding purchase intention, consumers attitude, organic food and factors affecting organic food

### Literature and theory

There are general trends related organic food discussed in this section which will help us to understand the organic food nature and its image in mind of consumers.

#### 3.1. An overview

##### 3.1.1 Organic Food

The food which is free from fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, antibiotics and which is naturally grown (Marwa and Scott, 2013). Therefore, production and consumption of organic food are healthy and safe because grown without any synthetic chemical (Suprpto and Wijya, 2012). The literatures include various terms about organic food like pure food, local and natural food, fresh food without preservatives etc (Chan, 2001). Organic food is always a healthy option for the consumers of all over the world at least marketer understand it (Canavari and Olson, 2007).

##### 3.1.2. Consumer attitude & behaviour

The most important predictor of purchase intention is consumer attitude because purchase intention and attitude are having a positive & significant relation to each other (Kozup et al; 2003). The other factors like subjective norms and personal norms also influence consumers attitude in way (Aertsens et al., 2009a, 2009b). The organic food caring neutrino with information on packet strongly influence the consumer purchase intention to buy organic food. The food product having detailed information on packet motivate positively to consumers to buy organic food (Kozup et al., 2003). The efforts like making aware to consumers about organic food and their benefits after using it helping in develop a positive attitude towards organic food and motivate them to live a healthy lifestyle (Gould, 1988; Baker et al., 2004).

There is a significant relationship in awareness & perception towards organic food (Rather & Rajendran, 2014) . Students who were aware about organic food having positive perception towards organic food (Tandan & Sethi, 2016) . Consumer attitude is affected by health and social benefit (Tandon & et, al, 2020) .

**3.2. Theoretical models and frameworks** Many researchers have given various diverse framework and theoretical model to understand the concept of purchase behaviour of consumers. Successful Theories like Theory of planned behaviour, & Theory of Reasoned action has been used by various researchers to examine and predict the purchase behaviour of consumers towards organic food (Paul et al., 2016; Smith & Paladino, 2009; Tarkiainen & Sundqvist, 2005). The researchers like Zapeda & Deal (2009) were applied Attitude – Behaviour- Context (ABC) & Value – Belief- Norm (VBN) to analyse the reason to buy the organic food by consumers. To explain the buying behaviour for organic & local food they interviewed the consumers and develop a new framework called as Alphabet Theory. Similarly, a five-stage model has been developed by Zanolli & Naspetti (2002) to understand the decision-making process of consumers towards organic food. This five-stage model includes need identification, information search evaluation of various alternatives, action, post purchase behaviour. Another framework developed by Paul & Rana (2012) which the relative importance among the factors like health consciousness, consumer awareness perception are the determinants of purchase intention and consumer buying behaviour. A framework named sequential choice process model developed by Sierra et al. (2015a, 2015b) for the neutrino information usage, self-esteem, feelings about shopping mart for healthy food.

#### **4. Findings and discussion**

The previous researcher discussed lot about various factors which affect the demand of organic food over a period of times. The factors like self-esteem, food quality, income, gender, price are some other factors, that affect the attitude towards organic food (Haugtvedt et al., 1960). Some other studies highlighted that awareness, food knowledge, food quality, food safety are the drivers of organic food demand (Loureiro et al., 2001; Botonaki et al., 2006; Kihlberg & Risvik, 2007). The studies also cited that due to being eco-friendly product it's another drive to being demanded in market. People who have concern for environment they think that eco-friendly product can save the environment because organic foods are natural food without any preservatives & pesticides. The consumers tend to consume organic food due to their healthy and safe spectrum Honkanen et al., 2006). Most importantly high nutritional value of organic food make it in demand (Kihlberg & Risvik, 2007; de Magidtris and Garcia, 2008). Some other studies also scored health awareness as purchasing factor for organic food, as we can say health consciousness make people aware which tend them to lead towards buying organic food, in the other words we can say consumers are being health conscious which enables them to make a purchasing decision of organic food over conventional food due to high nutritional value (Harper and Makatouni, 2002; O'Donovan and McCarthy, 2002). As we can see in several developing countries are also adopting organic food as their prime food habit to improve their health (Latacz-Lohmann and Foster, 1997). Despite of vary out food policy, marketing objective of many brands the practitioners can understand the determinant of purchase from consumers' unhealthy beverage and food choice (Sierra et al., 2015a, 2015b). Insights provided by Bruschi et al. (2015) accentuate the attitudes and perceptions of urban Russian consumers towards organic food, as well as factors that facilitate or prevent them from purchasing those products. Based on investigations undertaken using a mixed-method approach, they found that consumption of organic food is mainly motivated by personal well-being and proportionally less by social or environmental concerns. Over the years, some key factors have influenced consumer demand and sales of organic food in a positive manner. Yet, the market size of organic food remains relatively small (Gil et al., 2000; Stefanic et al., 2001; O'Donovan and McCarthy, 2002). On the basis of all the above discussion it become very important to gain information about the most & least effective stimulus of the consumer attitude towards organic food. This help in creating awareness about the important factors to nourish positive attitude of consumers towards organic food for marketer to promote and market their product. On the other hand, it will to identify the least important factors that affect attitude of consumers towards organic food that marketer can side-line to those factors.

##### **4.1 Factors influencing consumers attitude towards organic food**

In the modern era new trend is flourishing in the air that is healthy life style for that media is also playing a vital role every form of communication is talking about good food habits which included talks about organic food. The rise of global warming and when the people are talking about “go green” mantra (Peattie and Ratnayaka, 1992). If we consider the geographical awareness the people of Eastren & central Europe are asking for nutritive, safe & healthy food the reason is knowledge about global warming and increasing level of education and income (Anderson, 2000; Zakowska-Biemans, 2011). On the other side the consumers of Asian countries also attracting towards organic food due to anxiety about the

conventional food (Williams and Hammitt, 2001), as we know these foods are and somewhere responsible for lifestyle diseases like sugar, obesity, blood presser etc (Cummins, 2001; Schmidt, 1999; Birchard, 2001; Hansen et al., 2002). In spite of organic food being premium consumers are ready to pay the premium price for pure food (Zepeda and Li; Roitner-Schobesberger et al., 2008; Tsakiridou et al., 2008). This is reason that many marketers have their separate section for the organic food in their retail store (Nasir and Karakaya, 2014). Now we will discuss the factor affecting consumer attitude towards organic food some are most important and some are least important.

#### **4.1.1 Health Consciousness & Consumers attitude**

Health consciousness is a degree of person involvements towards health in their daily life. According to him female is more health consciousness in comparison to male (Akhondan & et, 2015). There is a positive effect on Health consciousness and attitudes towards organic food have a significantly positive effect on consumer attitude (Hsu, 2016). Researcher explore that health consciousness and environmental attitude develop a positive attitude towards organic food (Chen, 2009). It has been observed that health motive & knowledge are also main facilitator of consumer attitude towards organic food (Dangi & et, 2020). The researcher has found a significant relationship in self-image (age, gender, education etc) and health consciousness (Hanspal & Devasagayam, 2017), (Grotza & et, 2011). Survey research over 136 lectures (University Teknologi Mara in Malaysia) explore that health consciousness is extremely important factor to motivate consumers to purchase organic food. Health consciousness mandate the inclusion of pure nutritive food in consumers diet and this is the link between purchase intention and consumers buying of organic food (Jolly et al., 1989; Buzby and Skees, 1994; Bonti-Ankomah & Yiridoe, 2006; Megicks et al., 2008; Kumar & Ali, 2011; Paul & Rana, 2012). There are same results obtained by Zanolli & Naspetti (2002) that Similar results were obtained by Zanolli and Naspetti (2002) using data on consumer perception and knowledge of organic food in Italy which suggested that pleasure and wellbeing are the foremost values in the minds of consumers. These factors were also confirmed in previous studies conducted in other countries, including America and Sweden (Groff et al., 1993). In fact, it was found that consumers will lap up the food marketed as rich in nutrients and micronutrients, even if such a claim is J. Rana, J. Paul Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 38 (2017) 157–165 159 unsupported by scientific evidence (Canavari and Olson, 2007).

#### **4.1.2. Organic food & Consumer Awareness**

Awareness is the key factor for developing a positive attitude towards organic food. People from south India are more aware about organic food in comparison to North India (Sundaresh, 2018). People of Pondicherry as well foreigners living in Pondicherry were 96 % aware about the benefits of organic food which develop the attitude of buying organic food (S S. , 2015). Awareness makes people knowledgably, people can get know about the benefits of organic food that's why they are having intention to purchase organic food (Maheshwari, 2014). There is questionnaire based on HEP-NEP (Dunlap, 2008) conclude that in spite of being fully aware about the organic food it not turning into buying. The non-consumption behaviour of consumers is based on several factors like awareness, belief, quality, trust, etc. (Ashraf & et, 2018). Consumer awareness develop a positive attitude towards healthy life style which give a tendency to purchase organic food (Nagaraj, 2020). consumer awareness in Jammu and Kashmir is very low because of low awareness about organic food develops a low interest towards buying organic food. (Muttalageri & S, 2015). (Maheshwari, 2014) explores that the behaviour of consumers towards organic food based on the strategy for marketing they take and awareness towards organic food. There was a HEP-HEN based questionnaire (Dunlap and van Liere, 1978) explored that 40 % of consumers were unaware about organic food while 60% of ware knowing about the organic products which affect the buying behaviour of consumers. (Muttalageri & S, 2015) explored that consumer were fully aware about the organic food and they were purchasing organic vegetables. Consumer knowledge and awareness develop purchase intention in consumers (Mangafic, 2017).

#### **4.1.3. Consumer Perception & Organic food**

The consumer perception basically based on some factors viz individual belief, trust towards organic food, food quality and its utility etc. Ashraf et al. (2018). (Olsen & Nystrand, 2020) explore that attitude was strongly associated with the perception towards organic food. Consumer perception affected by demographic factors as well as trust and attitude towards organic food (Sundaresh, 2018) . There is a significant relationship in awareness & perception towards organic food (Rather & Rajendran, 2014) . (Tandan & Sethi, 2016) Explored in his research for university students about their perception in buying green and organic products they all were aware about organic food and their perception was good about organic food. Consumer attitude is affected by health and social benefit (Tandon & et, al, 2020).

#### 4.1.4. Other factors affecting consumer behaviour

There are many other factors affecting consumer behaviour like premium price, certification Premium price of organic food, low financial feasibility & lack of awareness are the major challenges in the path of organic food attitude development in market (Grunet and Juhl, 1995; Maguire et al., 2001; Greene and Kremen, 2003). These factors discourage consumer demand but farmers can increase the consumer base by improving the distribution channels of organic food supply (Canavari et al., 2007). Certification is another important factor which encourages consumers to buy organic food. In order to gain consumer trust, it is important for farmers to authenticate and validate their products through government's certification (Deliana, 2012). The middle to upper income groups constitutes the target market for organic food as these groups can pay higher prices (Deliana, 2012). Gil et al. (2000) confirmed through their study that farmers should aim to increase consumption among those segments that are appreciative of the positive attributes of organic food. They also found that farmers should focus on domestic markets because these markets have the potential to expand in the future.

**4.1.6. Fashion trends and unique lifestyle** in an overview of the organic food sector in Italy and United States, Canavari and Olson (2007) indicate that certain foods are consumed as a status symbol. For this reason, serving organic food, which is expensive and exclusive has become the latest trend in elite society of some countries. It marks a show of the purchasing power and luxurious lifestyle of consumers with greater disposable income.

**4.1.7. Social consciousness Purchase behaviour**, choice of media and innovation are related to personality of individuals (Kassarjian, 1971). It is understood that each consumer behaves differently and consumes products that suit their personality. Some consumers are concerned about societal welfare, which cause them to be concerned about their food and health choices. Based on the theories of sustainable consumption and ecological citizenship, Seyfang (2006) used the first empirical investigation of Eostre Organics, an organic food producer cooperative in the United Kingdom, to show that 65.2% of respondents cited a desire to support and strengthen the local economy and community, including greater self-reliance and independence from global corporations and supermarkets. These aspirations encourage some prominent consumers to purchase organic food to set an example and inspire others to modify their consumption patterns for societal benefit (Canavari and Olson, 2007). Social influence is an incredibly broad area that affects one's emotions, opinions and behavior (Wood and Hayes, 2012).

#### 4.2. Organic food & Demographic factors

Consumer behavior is affected by various demographic factors specially education and income in Rajasthan highly educated people purchase more organic food and people having high income were interested more towards organic food. Female who was post graduate followed by graduate women were taking the advantage of benefits of organic food. . (Rathore, 2017). Education & income having a huge impact on consumer buying behaviour in Chennai city, 36.5 % consumers were postgraduate while 29.2 % of consumers were belongs to higher income group (S A. , 2018). The analysis of consumer awareness and preference are based on six demographic characteristics viz, age, income, qualification, gender, city, occupation (Patel, 2016). The youth are the key buyer of the future educate them about the benefit of the product can make a huge difference in buying behaviour and purchase intention. (Adnan, 2017). Demographic characteristics are having direct link with the consumer's age and income, age group of 36-45 age groups consumers are having frequent buying habit for organic food & higher income groups are more interested in buying organic food due to premium quality (Chaturvedi, Rashid, & Rahman, 2021). (Karpagavalli & Nathiya, 2016) researcher found that mostly male and educated, highly incomeed people were interested in buying the organic food. Income & education got biggest impact on consumer willingness to buy organic food & willingness to pay premium (Ali & Ali, 2020).

#### 5. A new framework

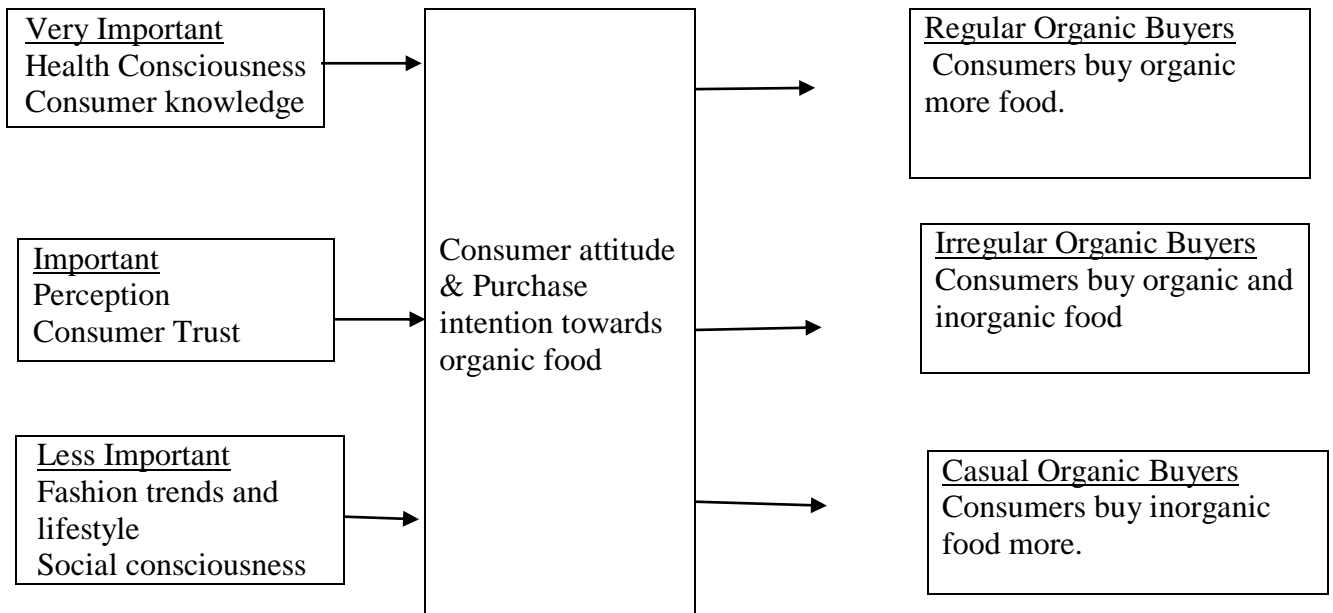
This section confirmed that consumer awareness & health consciousness are the best predictor of consumer attitude towards organic food. (Michael and Hassan, 2008; Dickieson et al., 2009; Lane and Bruhn, 1992; Shaharudin et al., 2010; Paul and Rana, 2012). There is health factor is mostly creat a positive attitude in consumers it's the only way to prevent disease (Groff et al., 1993). The industry of health and organic food industry can easily promote it to eat organic and stay fit because it is associated with the purchase intention of consumers & as we know it is positively associated with consumers buying behaviour. (J. Rana, J. Paul Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services 38 (2017) 157–165 160). Another important factor is environmental concerns, it is also a primary reason to develop a positive attitude of consumer to buy organic food (Brugarolas Mollá-Bauzá et al., 2005; Makatouni, 2002; Smith and Paladino, 2009; Valerian et al., 2011).

Table 1 Notable research on factors affecting consumer attitude and demand for organic food

Author(s) & Year of publication	Country	Method	Product & Sample Size	Important Factors
Massoud Moslehpour and Pham Van Kien, Ilham Danyfisl(2016)	Taiwan	Empirical tests, using consumers	Organic rice 415	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Income</li> <li>• Marital Status</li> <li>• Education</li> </ul>
Femke Hilverda, Manon Jurgens and Margot Kuttschreuter(2016)	Netherlands	Questionnaire (Correlation and Regression):	Organic food Meat and vegetable 154	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health consciousness</li> <li>• Natural Food Quality</li> <li>• Organic food</li> <li>• Environment friendly</li> </ul>
Shu-Yen Hsu, Chiao-Chen Chang and Tyrone T. Lin(2016)	Taiwan	Questionnaire (Descriptive Analysis, Correlation, Coefficient Analysis):	Organic food 252	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness</li> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Health Consciousness</li> <li>• Purchase intentions</li> <li>• Purchase intention</li> </ul>
Richa Mishra & Deepak Singh(2016)	India	Questionnaire (Descriptive statistics, Chisquare, ANOVA and Factor Analysis)	Organic food Grocery item 152	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health consciousness</li> <li>• Food safety</li> <li>• Trust life style</li> <li>• Lack of awareness</li> <li>• Consumer Attitude</li> <li>• Consumer knowledge</li> <li>• Life style</li> <li>• Green products.</li> </ul>
Mohd Suki, N. (2016).	Malaysia	Questionnaire (Chi-square, ANOVA):	Vegetable and food item 350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic food</li> <li>• Age, income, gender other demographic variables.</li> <li>• Purchase intention</li> </ul>
Omar, Nazri, Osman & Ahmad (2016)	Malaysia Klang Valley	Survey and Structural Equation Model	Vegetables, fruits, cereals, Bakery Products, Eggs, Dairy Products 150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic food</li> <li>• Age, income, gender other demographic variables.</li> <li>• Purchase intention</li> </ul>

The above table 1 shows the important factor influence the consumer behaviour and purchase intention. As we can see these are the only factors that mostly countries are considered as important factor for organic food purchase behaviour.

**6. Future research agenda** the section 5 gives the article a view that health consciousness, perception, consumer knowledge, attitude & trust were identifying factors that affect the buying behaviour of consumers. There are some other factors which are less important like certificate, test, design etc were given less importance. There are still some untouched areas remain which has to be explored in the future like availability in NCR, They are categorising in six factors



### 7. Managerial implications and strategies

There is important managerial implication that need to be discussed here that retailers can make consumers aware about organic food and they also need to educate consumers about organic food. There is need to be more visible in the market by availability of organic food at the affordable price O'Donovan and McCarthy (2002). It also observed that consumers can purchase on regular basis if it is easily available in the market Tsakiridou et al. (1999). Ther thing that retailer need to some work on assortment that they should be more visible and attractive to consumers (Harris et al., 2000). There are many other factors affect the attitude of consumers towards organic food (Midmre et al., 2005).

### 8. Conclusion

The paper is concluded on some important factors like attitude, health consciousness, consumer knowledge, trust are the important factors that influence consumers to buy organic food. The marketer needs to understand the need of making consumers aware about the benefits of organic food as well as they need to educate about the process of naturally grown organic food, because all the factors influence the availability of organic food and increase their demand in market Marketer can make some promotional strategy to aware & educate consumers about organic food. Marketing manager can gain fruitful insight to make marketing strategy for segmentation, targeting and positioning.

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