A STUDY OF PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS TOWARDS OFPS IN PUNE DISTRICT

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Abstract: This research paper delves into the purchase behaviour of consumers in Pune District with a specific focus on Organic Food Products (OFPs). As the demand for organic and sustainable food options grows, understanding the factors influencing consumers' choices and preferences becomes imperative for stakeholders in the organic food industry. The study employs a comprehensive research design that combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to provide a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics at play.

A structured questionnaire is administered to a diverse sample of consumers, encompassing various demographics, socioeconomic backgrounds, and dietary habits. The survey investigates key aspects such as consumer awareness of OFPs, motivations for choosing organic products, perceived benefits and barriers, trust in organic labels, and overall satisfaction levels. Additionally, qualitative interviews with select participants aim to capture deeper insights into the subjective aspects of OFPs consumption, including lifestyle factors and personal beliefs influencing purchasing decisions.

This research contributes valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the evolving landscape of consumer behaviour towards OFPs in Pune District. The findings are anticipated to be beneficial for OFPs producers, marketers, and policymakers, offering strategic guidance for catering to the discerning needs of consumers in this region. As the global shift towards sustainable and health-conscious consumption accelerates, this study addresses a timely and critical aspect of consumer behaviour, providing a foundation for informed decision-making in the organic food industry.

Keywords: Purchasing Behaviour, Consumer, OFPs, Consumer Attitude, purchase intentions etc.

I. INTRODUCTION:

In recent times, there has been a notable global shift towards organic and sustainably sourced food products, driven by heightened health consciousness and environmental awareness. This trend is reflected in the rising demand for Organic Food Products (OFPs), a departure from conventional dietary choices. This research focuses on understanding consumer behaviour towards OFPs in Pune District, a diverse urban center in Maharashtra. The study is crucial for OFPs industry stakeholders aiming to tailor strategies to the local population's preferences.

Pune's population, with diverse socio-economic backgrounds, presents a unique context for studying consumer behaviour. The interest in OFPs goes beyond dietary trends, reflecting broader values such as sustainable living and holistic well-being. The research aims to unravel the factors influencing consumer

purchase decisions, including awareness, motivations, benefits and barriers, and trust in organic labels. Through a mix of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in OFPs consumption, capturing both statistical trends and subjective dimensions.

The choice of organic products is influenced by personal values, environmental concerns, and lifestyle choices. The insights derived from this research are valuable for OFPs producers, marketers, and policymakers, offering a foundation for informed decision-making. As the OFPs industry grows globally and locally, this research contributes to developing strategies that align with the diverse preferences and aspirations of consumers in Pune District.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

☞ To Investigate the relationship between consumer knowledge, environmental concern and consumer attitude towards the purchase of OFPs.
☞ To Investigate the impact of health consciousness on consumer attitude towards the purchase of OFPs.
☞ To Evaluate the Influence of Consumer Attitude on Purchase Intention.
☞ To Understand Interaction Effects among Variables.
☞ To Provide Strategic Recommendations for Marketing.

III. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

H1 : A positive relationship exists between consumer knowledge and their attitude towards purchasing OFPs.
H2 : Positive correlations are observed between health consciousness and consumer attitudes towards the purchase of OFPs.
H3 : There is a positive influence of environmental concern on consumer attitudes towards the purchase of OFPs.
H4 : There is a positive correlation is evident between consumer attitudes and their purchase intentions towards OFPs.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research employs a mixed methods design to comprehensively understand consumer behaviour towards OFPs in Pune District. Using a cross-sectional approach and stratified random sampling, data is gathered from 136 participants, ensuring representation across diverse demographics. A structured questionnaire with Likert scales is utilized, administered through online platforms and face-to-face interactions. Data analysis involves quantitative methods such as correlation analyses and regression models using SPSS, while qualitative insights are obtained through semi-structured interviews, analysed thematically. Limitations include the study's regional focus on Pune District, limiting generalizability to other areas.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

5.1 Demographic Profile:

☞ **Age Distribution:** The majority of respondents (69.12%) fall within the age range of 26-35 years, highlighting a significant representation of young adults.
☞ **Gender Distribution:** The survey reflects a balanced gender distribution, with 51.47% male and 48.53% female respondents.
☞ **Monthly Family Income:** Around 62.5% report a family income between Rs.20,000 and Rs.40,000, indicating a prevalent middle-income bracket.
☞ **Occupation:** Approximately 67% of respondents are employed, 12% are students, and 21% are self-employed.

☞ **Education Level:** The sample is well-educated, with 62% holding a Bachelor's degree, 18% having completed a Master's degree, and 14% completing Professional education. Only 6% have education up to 12th std.

In conclude, the data analysis provides valuable insights into consumer purchase behaviour towards Organic Food Products (OFPs) in Pune District. These findings offer a foundation for informed decision-making by industry stakeholders and contribute to the discourse on sustainable and health-conscious consumer choices.

5.2 Correlation Analysis of Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour towards OFP:

The study employed Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation to explore the interconnections among various factors influencing consumer behaviour towards OFPs. The subsequent table provides a comprehensive overview of the correlation coefficients derived from this analysis.

Table No.1: Correlation between the factors of Consumer Behaviour

Factors	CK	HC	EC	CA	PA
Consumer Knowledge	1	-	-	-	-
Health Consciousness	0.671^*	1	-	-	-
Environmental Concern	0.513^*	0.524^*	1	-	-
Consumer Attitude	0.541^*	0.622^*	0.527^*	1	-
Purchase Intention	0.413^*	0.672^*	0.430^*	0.612^*	1

(* = correlation is significant at the 0.01 level)

Interpretation:

a) **Consumer Knowledge (CK):** No correlation values are provided as it is the baseline variable against which other factors are measured.

b) **Health Consciousness (HC):** There is a significant positive correlation (0.671*) between CK and HC. This suggests that as consumer knowledge about OFPs increases, their health consciousness tends to follow a similar upward trend.

c) **Environmental Concern (EC):** Positive correlations are observed between CK and EC (0.513*) as well as HC and EC (0.524*). This indicates that consumers with higher knowledge and health consciousness are also likely to exhibit increased environmental concern in their attitudes towards OFPs.

d) **Consumer Attitude (CA):** Positive correlations are noted between CK and CA (0.541*), HC and CA (0.622*), and EC and CA (0.527*). These findings suggest that a higher level of CK, HC, and EC positively influences their attitude towards OFPs.

e) **Purchase Intention (PI):** Positive correlations are observed between PAI and HC (0.672*), CA (0.612*), and EC (0.430*). This indicates that as HC, CA, and EC increase, there is a corresponding positive impact on the intention to purchase of OFPs.

In conclusion, the strong positive correlations suggest that initiatives focusing on increasing CK, promoting HC, and addressing EC may contribute to fostering positive attitudes and intentions to purchase of OFPs among consumers in the study population.

5.3 Impact of Factors on Consumer Attitude towards OFPs:

To assess the influence of multiple factors on CA towards OFPs, the researcher conducted a comprehensive analysis employing both the multiple correlation coefficient (R) and regression analysis. In this analytical framework, consumer attitude is treated as the dependent variable, while the independent variables include Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness, and Environmental Concern.

Table No.2: Impact of Factors on Consumer Attitude towards OFPs

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F Change	Sig. F Change
0.813	0.722	0.719	426.10	<0.001

[Predictors: (Constant), CK, HC & EC]

In interpreting Table No. 2, the multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.813 indicates a robust positive relationship between the combination of independent variables (CK, HC, and EC) and the dependent variable CA. The coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.722, signifying that approximately 72.2% of the variance in CA is explained by these independent variables. Adjusted R Square (0.719) accounts for predictors, revealing that about 71.9% of the variation in CA is genuinely explained after adjusting for predictors. The F Change value of 426.10 and a p-value less than 0.001 highlight the model's statistical significance. In conclusion, these results emphasize the strong impact of CK, HC and EC on shaping CA towards OFPs. The statistical evidence suggests a substantial collective influence of these factors on consumers' attitudes towards OFPs.

5.4 Influence of Factors on Consumer Attitude Towards OFPs:

This study thoroughly explores the intricate impact of Consumer Knowledge, Health Consciousness, and Environmental Concern on consumer attitudes towards Organic Food Products (OFPs).

Table no.3: Influence of Factors on Consumer Attitude Towards OFPs:

Factors	USTZ. Coeff.		Std. Coeff.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.254	0.423	-	2.202	0.007*
CK	0.187	0.015	0.209	6.104	<0.001**
HC	0.213	0.013	0.289	8.221	<0.001**
EC	0.143	0.018	0.187	8.182	<0.001**

[Dependent Variable: Consumer Attitude]

Interpretation: The findings, detailed in Table No.3, reveal intricate relationships among these factors and their combined influence on shaping CAs.

☞ The constant term (1.254) represents the baseline impact, indicating a baseline negative effect on Consumer Attitude. The statistical significance (p = 0.007*) suggests a non-random baseline effect.

☞ CK shows a positive and significant impact on CA (USTZ. Coeff. 0.187), reinforcing the robustness of this relationship with a highly significant p-value (<0.001**).

☞ HC exhibits a strong positive impact on CA (USTZ. Coeff. 0.213), emphasizing the significance of higher HC with an exceptionally low p-value (<0.001**).

☞ EC contributes positively and significantly to CA (USTZ. Coeff. 0.143), affirming that heightened EC is associated with positive attitudes towards OFPs, supported by a low p-value (<0.001**).

In conclusion, the positive coefficients for CK, HC, and EC underscore their constructive roles in shaping CA towards OFPs. The statistical significance emphasizes their crucial contributions to shaping consumer perceptions, providing valuable insights for industry stakeholders to craft targeted strategies aligned with CK, HC and EC.

5.5 Influence of Factors on PI Towards OFPs:

Through meticulous analysis, the study explores how various elements collectively shape and influence PIs towards o OFPs. The findings illuminate the intricate interplay of these factors, emphasizing their significant contributions to shaping consumers' inclinations in the realm of OFPs purchasing.

Table no.4: Influence of Factors on PI Towards OFPs

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F Change	Sig. F Change
0.718	0.523	-	208.421	<0.001

[Predictors: (Constant), CK, HC and EC]

Interpretation: Findings from Table No.4 is interpreted as follows:

☞ The multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.718 indicates a strong positive relationship between the combined effects of CK, HC, and EC on PI towards OFPs.

☞ R Square (0.523) suggests that approximately 52.3% of the variance in PI can be explained by the collective variation in CK, HC, and EC.

☞ The absence of Adjusted R Square indicates that the model's observed variance in PI is predominantly attributed to the predictors—CK, HC, and EC.

☞ The F Change value of 208.421 signifies that including independent variables significantly contributes to the model's explanatory power concerning PI towards OFPs.

☞ The p-value for F Change (<0.001) indicates the overall model's statistical significance, emphasizing that the combined effect of CK, HC, and EC on PI is not due to chance.

In conclusion, the robust R and F Change values suggest a substantial impact of CK, HC, and EC on shaping consumers' intentions to purchase OFPs. The high percentage of explained variance (R Square) underscores the influential role of these factors in understanding and predicting consumers' inclinations toward purchasing OFPs. Industry stakeholders can leverage these insights to formulate targeted strategies aligning with consumer knowledge, health consciousness, and environmental concerns, fostering positive Purchase Intentions towards OFPs.

5.6 Influence of CK, HC & EC on PI towards the OFPs:

This analysis explores the collective impact of CK, HC, and EC on consumers' intentions to purchase OFPs. The study scrutinizes how these factors, when considered together, shape and influence the overall tendency of consumers towards purchasing OFPs. The findings shed light on the interconnected dynamics of CK, HC, and EC, highlighting their combined and distinct contributions to shaping consumers' PIs in the context of OFPs.

Table No. 5: Impact of CK, HC & EC on PI towards the OFPs

Factors	USTZ. Coeff.		Std. Coeff.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.316	0.588	-	2.342	0.018*
Consumer Knowledge (CK)	0.210	0.043	0.234	5.895	<0.001**
Health Consciousness (HC)	0.344	0.039	0.356	7.980	<0.001**
Environmental Concern (EC)	0.198	0.030	0.199	6.141	<0.001**

[Note: Dependent Variable: PI, *denotes significant at 5% level, **denotes at 1% level]

Interpretation: Findings from Table No. 5 are interpreted as follows:

☞ The constant term (1.316) signifies the baseline negative impact on Purchase Intentions (PI) when all predictor variables are zero. Its statistical significance (p = 0.018*) indicates a non-random baseline effect.

☞ CK has a positive and highly significant impact on PI (USTZ. Coeff. 0.210), suggesting a 0.210-unit increase in PI with a one-unit increase in CK. The exceptionally low p-value (<0.001**) underscores the robustness of this relationship.

☞ HC demonstrates a substantial positive impact on PI (USTZ. Coeff. 0.344), indicating that higher levels are associated with more favourable intentions to purchase OFPs. The very low p-value (<0.001**) emphasizes the strength of this relationship.

☞ EC contributes positively and significantly to PI (USTZ. Coeff. 0.198), affirming that consumers with heightened concern are more likely to exhibit positive intentions to purchase OFPs. The low p-value (<0.001**) affirms the strength of this relationship.

In conclusion, the positive coefficients for CK, HC, and EC highlight their constructive roles in shaping PI towards OFPs. The statistical significance of these coefficients, denoted by (p < 0.001) and (p = 0.018), underscores the robust influence of these factors, indicating their crucial contributions to shaping consumers' intentions to purchase OFPs. Industry stakeholders can leverage these insights to develop targeted strategies aligning with CK, HC, and EC fostering positive Purchase Intentions towards OFPs.

VI. TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS:

Table No.6: Consumer Behaviour towards OFPs

	Path	UNSTD. Estimate	STD. Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-Value	Result
H1	CK to CA	0.132	0.104	0.019	5.201	<0.001**	Significant
H2	HC to CA	0.269	0.375	0.018	10.214	<0.001**	Significant
H3	EC to CA	0.109	0.112	0.019	4.245	<0.001**	Significant
H4	CA to PI	0.623	0.534	0.032	13.282	<0.001**	Significant

[Note: **denotes significant at 1% level]

Interpretation:

☞ **H1 (CK to CA):** The path from Consumer Knowledge to Consumer Attitude exhibits a positive and significant relationship (Standardized Estimate: 0.104). An increase in Consumer Knowledge positively influences Consumer Attitude towards OFPs. The high Critical Ratio (C.R.) of 5.201 and very low p-value (<0.001**) underscore the robustness and statistical significance of this relationship. **Hypothesis No.1 is accepted.**

☞ **H2 (HC to CA):** The path from Health Consciousness to Consumer Attitude demonstrates a strong positive relationship (Standardized Estimate: 0.375). Higher levels of Health Consciousness significantly contribute to a positive Consumer Attitude towards OFPs. The high C.R. of 10.214 and very low p-value (<0.001**) emphasize the strength and statistical significance of this relationship. **Hypothesis No.2 is accepted.**

☞ **H3 (EC to CA):** The path from Environmental Concern to Consumer Attitude shows a positive and significant association (Standardized Estimate: 0.112). Heightened Environmental Concern positively influences Consumer Attitude towards OFPs. The C.R. of 4.245 and very low p-value (<0.001**) affirm the strength and statistical significance of this relationship. **Hypothesis No.3 is accepted.**

☞ **H4 (CA to PI):** The path from Consumer Attitude to Purchase Intention displays a substantial and significant positive relationship (Standardized Estimate: 0.534). A positive Consumer Attitude strongly contributes to favourable Purchase Intentions towards OFPs. The high C.R. of 13.282 and very low p-value (<0.001**) highlight the strength and statistical significance of this pivotal relationship. **Hypothesis No.4 is accepted.**

VII. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the findings underscore the importance of consumer knowledge, health consciousness, and environmental concern in shaping positive attitudes and purchase intentions towards OFPs. Stakeholders in the OFPs industry can leverage these insights to tailor strategies that align with consumer preferences, fostering a more sustainable and health-conscious food consumption landscape in Pune District. As the demand for OFPs continues to rise, the implications of this research extend beyond academic discourse, offering practical guidance for industry players and policymakers alike.

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