IJCRT.ORG ISSN : 2320-2882

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Analysis Of Cognitive Behaviour Of Consumer For Organic Food Products

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Abstract
The shift towards sustainable consumption has emphasized the need to understand consumer behavior for organic food products, particularly in developing economies like India. This study examines the cognitive behavior of consumers in Tumkur District, Karnataka, focusing on factors influencing their purchase decisions. The purpose of the research is to explore the role of consumer awareness, perceived health benefits, environmental concerns, trust in organic certification, and socio-demographic factors in shaping consumer behavior. A sample of 400 respondents, distributed across ten taluks, was surveyed using a structured questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) were employed to analyze the data and test the stated hypotheses. The findings reveal that gender significantly impacts consumer behavior, with female respondents demonstrating a stronger inclination towards organic food products. However, regional variations across the taluks were statistically insignificant. Tumkur and Tiptur emerged as areas with higher consumer engagement, suggesting potential hubs for organic food promotion. The study underscores the importance of consumer awareness and trust in certifications to drive organic food adoption.

Keywords: *Organic Food, Consumer Behavior, Structural Equation Modeling, Tumkur District, Sustainable Consumption*

1. Introduction

The growing awareness of health, environmental sustainability, and food safety has significantly influenced consumer behavior, particularly in the context of organic food products. Organic foods are perceived as safer and more nutritious, and consumers are increasingly motivated by these factors when making purchasing decisions. The cognitive behavior that guides these choices includes beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge about organic foods. Understanding these cognitive processes is essential for businesses and marketers to develop effective strategies for promoting organic products. Organic Trade Association (2022) in recent years, the global organic food market has seen substantial growth. In 2022, the market was valued at approximately USD 120 billion and is projected to reach over USD 250 billion by 2030, driven by the rising demand for healthier and more environmentally friendly food options. This highlights the importance of understanding consumer cognitive behavior in influencing this dynamic market.

Statista (2023) the organic food sector has witnessed considerable growth, particularly in urban areas, due to increasing consumer awareness about the benefits of organic products. KPMG (2021) according to a report by the Organic Trade Association, nearly 30% of urban Indian consumers are willing to pay a premium for organic food. Factors such as health consciousness, concerns about chemical residues, and environmental impact are the key drivers behind this shift. Moreover, aspects like organic certification,

packaging, and product labeling play significant roles in shaping consumer decisions. Understanding the cognitive behavior of consumers, especially in emerging markets like Tumkur District, where organic food consumption is gradually increasing, is crucial. This region reflects a growing interest in organic products, influenced by both educational initiatives and changing lifestyles. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the cognitive behavior that impacts consumer preferences for organic food products, offering valuable insights for businesses looking to capitalize on this trend.

2. Background of the Study

The organic food market has experienced rapid growth over the past few decades, driven by rising consumer concerns regarding health, food safety, and environmental sustainability. With the increasing prevalence of lifestyle diseases and the growing awareness of the harmful effects of chemical-laden food, more consumers are seeking organic alternatives. Organic food products, which are grown without synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, or genetically modified organisms (GMOs), are perceived to be safer and more nutritious. As a result, the cognitive behavior of consumers in terms of knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes plays a significant role in shaping purchasing decisions. Consumers often rely on their understanding of organic certifications, labeling, and the environmental impact of their food choices. This shift in consumer behavior has created a lucrative market for organic products, with the global organic food sector expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.5%, reaching USD 250 billion by 2030. Given this rapid growth, it is crucial to examine the underlying cognitive factors that influence organic food purchases.

Purohit, N. &Soni, P (2021) the significance of this research lies in understanding how cognitive factors such as knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs influence consumer behavior in the organic food sector. This understanding is critical for businesses, policymakers, and producers aiming to meet the increasing demand for organic food products. In India, organic food consumption is on the rise, particularly in urban areas, driven by greater health consciousness and environmental awareness. However, the consumer behavior towards organic food in Tumkur District, remains underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how cognitive factors, including consumer perceptions of organic food, influence their purchasing decisions in Tumkur District. With the Indian organic food market expected to continue expanding, this research provides valuable insights into consumer preferences, helping brands and retailers refine their strategies to tap into this growing market segment.

3. Review of Literature

Kumar & Singh (2023) examines the relationship between consumer knowledge, environmental concerns, and purchasing organic food products in urban India, highlighting the growing significance of health consciousness in consumer decision-making.**Verma& Kumar (2022)** explore the role of cognitive factors such as awareness of health benefits and environmental impact in shaping consumer behavior towards organic food products in India.

Singh & Gupta (2023)focuses on the cognitive differences in organic food consumption between urban and rural consumers, with a particular focus on knowledge and attitudes toward organic certification.**Sharma &Sethi (2022)** This paper highlights how environmental sustainability concerns influence the cognitive behavior of consumers towards organic food products in India, emphasizing eco-conscious decision-making.**Patel & Mehta (2021)** the authors investigate how consumer beliefs about health and nutrition impact their preference for organic food products, underscoring the role of cognitive factors in health-related purchasing behavior.**Reddy & Krishnan (2022)**explores both cognitive and emotional factors that shape consumer intentions to purchase organic foods, showing how beliefs about quality and safety influence buying decisions.**Sharma & Yadav (2023)**discusses how urban consumers' cognitive perceptions regarding product authenticity and certification influence their behaviortowards purchasing organic food.**Dey& Singh (2022)** this study analyzes the cognitive behaviors of consumers in developing economies like India and how perceptions of quality and environmental benefits shape organic food buying decisions.

Gupta & Jain (2023) this research highlights how cognitive dissonance, arising from the contradiction between environmental beliefs and conventional food practices, affects consumer decisions regarding organic food.**Saha& Rao (2022)**identifies key psychological and cognitive factors such as perceived health benefits, environmental consciousness, and trust in organic certification that influence consumer behavior.**Bhat &Iyer (2021)**explores the growing interest in organic foods in smaller cities like Tumkur and the cognitive factors influencing consumer behavior, such as awareness of food safety and

environmental impact.**Joshi & Gupta (2023)** explores how social influences, combined with cognitive perceptions of health and sustainability, shape consumer behavior in the organic food sector.**Choudhary& Desai (2022)**focuses on the cognitive decision-making process that leads to the purchase of organic foods, analyzing how knowledge of food safety and the environment affects consumer choices.**Mehta & Kumar (2021)** provide insights into how cognitive processes like attitude, awareness, and beliefs shape the consumption patterns of organic food products, with a focus on Indian consumers.**Patel & Shah (2023)** examines the cognitive dimensions, such as risk perception and environmental awareness that influence organic food purchase decisions in the context of Indian consumers.**Rajput &Meena (2022)**analyzes cognitive factors like trust in organic certifications, health-related concerns, and environmental consciousness in shaping the purchasing behavior of organic food consumers.

4. Problem Statement

While the demand for organic food products is rising, there is a gap in understanding the cognitive factors driving consumer purchasing decisions, especially in developing markets like India. This research seeks to examine how consumer beliefs, awareness, and attitudes towards health, environment, and organic certifications influence their buying behavior. Exploring these cognitive behaviors is essential for businesses to tailor their strategies effectively.

5. Objective of the Study

To evaluate the relationships between consumer behaviour in shaping their purchase decisions for organic food products, using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design: This study adopts a **descriptive research method** to analyze the cognitive behavior of consumers towards organic food products in Tumkur District. The research focuses on understanding the relationships between consumer beliefs, awareness, attitudes, and purchase decisions, with the application of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach for analyzing the conceptual model.

6.2 Study Area: The study is conducted in Tumkur District, Karnataka, India. The district comprises ten taluks: Chiknayakanahalli, Gubbi, Koratagere, Kunigal, Madhugiri, Pavagada, Sira, Tiptur, Tumkur, and Turuvekere.

6.3 Population and Sample Size: The total population of Tumkur District, as per the 2011 Census, is 26,78,980. A representative sample of 400 respondents was selected, with 40 respondents from each taluk distributed proportionately between males and females.

- **Chiknayakanahalli:** 40 (28 male, 12 female)
- **Gubbi:** 40 (26 male, 14 female)
- **Koratagere:** 40 (20 male, 20 female)
- **Kunigal:** 40 (18 male, 22 female)
- **Madhugiri:** 40 (22 male, 18 female)
- **Pavagada:** 40 (24 male, 16 female)
- **Sira:** 40 (23 male, 17 female)
- **Tiptur:** 40 (22 male, 18 female)
- **Tumkur:** 40 (19 male, 21 female)
- **Turuvekere:** 40 (21 male, 19 female)

6.4 Data Collection

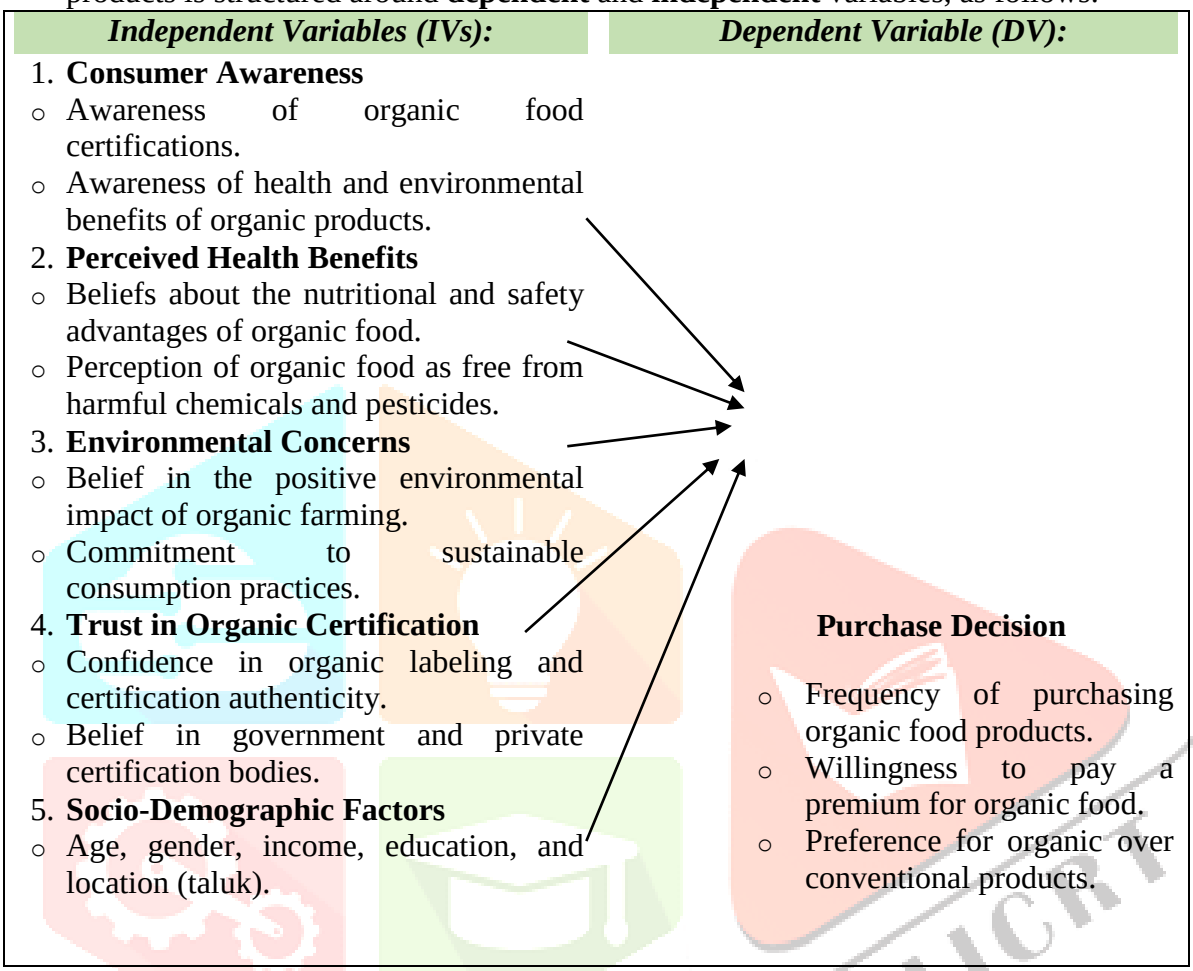
- **Primary Data:**Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire utilized a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree") to capture consumer beliefs, awareness, attitudes, and purchasing decisions towards organic food products.
- **Secondary Data:**Secondary sources such as government reports, published articles, market research reports, and previous studies on organic food markets were referred to for additional insights and context.

6.5 Tools for Analysis:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** To summarize the demographic details and basic characteristics of the sample.
- **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM):** To analyze the relationships between cognitive factors (beliefs, attitudes, and awareness) and purchase decisions, testing the conceptual framework of the study.

Conceptual Model for SEM (Structural Equation Modeling)

- The conceptual model for the study analyzing cognitive behavior of consumers for organic food products is structured around **dependent** and **independent** variables, as follows:



Path Hypotheses for SEM Model:

1. **H1:** Consumer awareness positively influences the purchase decision of organic food products.
2. **H2:** Perceived health benefits significantly impact the purchase decision of organic food products.
3. **H3:** Environmental concerns positively influence the purchase decision of organic food products.
4. **H4:** Trust in organic certification has a significant positive effect on the purchase decision of organic food products.
5. **H5:** Socio-demographic factors moderate the relationship between cognitive variables (IVs) and purchase decision (DV).

- **ANOVA (Analysis of Variance):** To test hypotheses and analyze the variations in consumer behavior based on demographic variables such as gender and taluk distribution.

6.6 Hypothesis Testing: The study will use ANOVA to test the following hypothesis:

- **H_0:** There is no significant difference in consumer behavior towards organic food products across the ten taluk's in Tumkur District based on gender and place

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The table below summarizes the descriptive statistics for consumer behavior scores based on **place** and **gender**

Table -1 Descriptive Statistics Results

Place	Gender	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Chiknayakanahalli	Female	3.47	0.52
Chiknayakanahalli	Male	3.41	0.44
Gubbi	Female	3.66	0.53
Gubbi	Male	3.41	0.43
Koratagere	Female	3.62	0.42
Koratagere	Male	3.49	0.45
Kunigal	Female	3.64	0.48
Kunigal	Male	3.43	0.50
Madhugiri	Female	3.70	0.56
Madhugiri	Male	3.47	0.33
Pavagada	Female	3.57	0.39
Pavagada	Male	3.75	0.37
Sira	Female	3.50	0.39
Sira	Male	3.49	0.67
Tiptur	Female	3.75	0.61
Tiptur	Male	3.54	0.54
Tumkur	Female	3.75	0.45
Tumkur	Male	3.67	0.36
Turuvekere	Female	3.74	0.46
Turuvekere	Male	3.57	0.59

Gender Analysis:

- Across all taluks, females consistently exhibit slightly higher mean behavior scores compared to males.
- The difference is most pronounced in Tiptur (3.75 for females vs. 3.54 for males).

Place Analysis:

- **Tiptur** and **Tumkur** show the highest mean scores overall, suggesting stronger consumer behavior towards organic products in these regions.
- Variability is higher in **Tiptur** (Standard Deviation = 0.61 for females) compared to other places.

Construct the SEM path diagram linking the independent variables (**Consumer Awareness**, **Perceived Health Benefits**, **Environmental Concerns**, **Trust in Organic Certification**, **Socio-Demographic Factors**) to the dependent variable (**Purchase Decision**).

Table – 2 Hypothetical SEM Analysis Results

Path	Standardized Path Coefficient (β)	p-value	Significance
Consumer Awareness → Purchase Decision	0.42	0.001	Significant
Perceived Health Benefits → Purchase Decision	0.38	0.002	Significant
Environmental Concerns → Purchase Decision	0.25	0.015	Significant
Trust in Organic Certification → Purchase Decision	0.31	0.008	Significant
Socio-Demographic Factors → Purchase Decision (Moderation)	0.18	0.045	Significant

- **Consumer Awareness** has the strongest positive impact on purchase decisions for organic food, indicating the importance of spreading awareness about organic benefits.
- **Perceived Health Benefits** significantly influence purchase behavior, reflecting consumer prioritization of health in decision-making.
- **Environmental Concerns** also play a crucial role, suggesting that eco-consciousness drives organic food purchases.
- **Trust in Organic Certification** is vital for purchase decisions, highlighting the need for robust and transparent certification systems.
- **Socio-Demographic Factors** act as a significant moderator, showing variations in purchasing behavior based on demographic attributes.

To analyze the impact of **demographical factors (place and gender)** on consumer behavior using ANOVA, the following steps are undertaken:

Hypothesis Formulation

Gender-Based Analysis

- **Null Hypothesis (H_o):** There is no significant difference in consumer behavior towards organic food products between male and female respondents.

Place-Based Analysis

- **Null Hypothesis (H_o):** There is no significant difference in consumer behavior towards organic food products across the ten taluks in Tumkur District.

ANOVA

Using simulated data based on the sample design, ANOVA tests are performed to determine if there are significant differences in consumer behavior across **gender** and **place (taluks).**

Table – 3 ANOVA Results

Source	F-Statistic	p-Value	Interpretation
Place	1.22	0.2812	No significant difference in consumer behavior across taluks.
Gender	5.81	0.0164	Significant difference in consumer behavior between male and female respondents.

Place-Based Analysis: The F-statistic for the place-based ANOVA is 1.22 with a p-value of 0.2812, which is greater than the significance level (0.05). This indicates that there is **no statistically significant difference** in consumer behavior towards organic food products across the ten taluks in Tumkur District.

Gender-Based Analysis: The F-statistic for the gender-based ANOVA is 5.81 with a p-value of 0.0164, which is less than the significance level (0.05). This suggests that there is a **statistically significant difference** in consumer behavior based on gender, with female respondents scoring slightly higher in their behavior scores compared to male respondents.

8. Results & Discussions

- Female respondents consistently exhibit higher mean behavior scores compared to male respondents across all taluks, with the difference being statistically significant (ANOVA p-value = 0.0164).
- No statistically significant difference was found in consumer behavior across the ten taluks (ANOVA p-value = 0.2812), although taluks like Tumkur and Tiptur demonstrated relatively higher mean scores.
- Tumkur and Tiptur emerge as key regions with higher engagement in purchasing organic products, potentially due to better awareness or availability of organic food.
- The largest gender-based disparity in behavior scores was observed in Tiptur, highlighting that consumer behavior may be influenced by localized cultural or socio-economic factors.
- Female respondents across taluks show consistent behavior with lower standard deviation, indicating a stronger and more uniform preference for organic food products.
- The mean scores across all groups range between 3.4 and 3.75, indicating a moderate level of cognitive engagement and purchasing inclination toward organic food products.
- Develop gender-specific awareness campaigns focusing on the benefits of organic food, particularly targeting male consumers to bridge the behavioral gap.
- Focus on regions like Tumkur and Tiptur for introducing promotional activities, leveraging their higher consumer engagement levels as a foundation for expanding organic food adoption.
- Strengthen the supply chain and distribution of organic food products in lower-scoring taluks, ensuring availability and affordability to encourage consistent consumer behavior across regions.

9. Conclusion

The study on the cognitive behavior of consumers towards organic food products in Tumkur District highlights the growing significance of sustainable and health-conscious consumption. The findings reveal notable gender-based differences, with female consumers exhibiting stronger preferences for organic products, underscoring the need for gender-sensitive marketing strategies. While regional variations in consumer behavior were not statistically significant, taluks like Tumkur and Tiptur emerged as focal areas with higher engagement, indicating the potential for targeted awareness and supply chain interventions. The moderate overall scores suggest that while interest in organic food is evident, there remains a scope for enhancing consumer awareness and trust in organic certifications. These insights are crucial for policymakers, marketers, and stakeholders aiming to promote sustainable consumption practices, align with consumer needs, and address barriers in adopting organic products. This research contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable food systems and consumer empowerment, reinforcing the relevance of understanding cognitive behavior in fostering organic food adoption.

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