



## Consumer Purchase Intention for Organic Food in Gujarat State: From Literature Perspective

Mr. Haresh Oza

Assistant Professor, V M Patel College of Management Studies, Ganpat University,  
E-mail: haresh.oza@ganpatuniversity.ac.in, M: 097234 10488

**Abstract:** Back in the 1960s and the 1970s, India sensed a keen need to multiply its agricultural need in order to sustain a burgeoning population. While the country certainly reaped the rewards of this major agricultural restructuring in the form of increased yield and greater exports, there was a price to pay as well. Increased use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and insecticides has taken the nation and Indian society far from traditional farming methods and organic food. The adverse effects of these fertilizers and chemicals are now a major concern in India. The shift in India towards organic food is not a surprising one. It is a return to the original ways of our ancestors. Not only were we growing natural and organic foods in ancient India, we were almost wholly reliant on herbs and plant extracts for healing medication and health food. It is to this glorious lifestyle that modern India is now returning. Organic foods are fresher, though they may not last long in storage. They contain no traces of chemical pesticides unlike conventionally grown foods. This makes them a much healthier food choice. Apart from this, organic farming is also eco-friendly. It does not involve any of the air, soil, or water pollutants used in traditional farming. This makes the world a better place for us. The researcher in the paper examines conceptually the reasons why the consumer intend to purchase the organic food after undergoing the extensive literature review.

**Key words:** *Consumer, Purchase Intention, Organic Food, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Gujarat State.*

### INTRODUCTION

The survival of a nation depends on sustainable development which requires satisfying the needs and values of the society as well as country. The rapid economic growth has witnessed the changing consumption pattern recently, and it has been laying a direct impact upon food prices, which has been consequently affecting food accessibility of the poor. Various researches to date have been undertaken the production aspect of food security and sustainability systems. This omission does not contradict the fact that food consumption patterns and trends have a direct and significant influence on food production patterns and overall food security. We cannot ignore the fact that consumptive drivers shape and largely dictate the design of production systems. Despite of focusing only on productive supply, we need to address consumptive demand. The rural population is now a days shifting towards urbanism. This rate of urbanization will have important impact especially in the sector of luxury items. These changes in consumption patterns brought about by urbanization can significantly affect food supply .The urban consumers have been

taken for the study with the expectation of neither an increasing demand for all food products despite the special one. It allows consumers to develop their thinking on the systemic changes that may be necessary to re-orientate their food consumption patterns. Organic food is food produce which has been grown on farms using environment-friendly practices and is free of artificial fertilizers, and chemical insecticides and pesticides. Organic food does not include any form of genetically modified crop. Organic foods are grown with natural fertilizers such as manure and compost as opposed to synthetic petroleum-based or sewage sludge-based fertilizers. Instead of using chemical herbicides weeds are controlled by natural methods such as hand-weeding, crop rotation etc. Certified natural insecticides are also used. The consumer's knowledge and awareness in context of organic food market exhibits two things. (a) There is still available segment of the potential market that is not yet informed about organic foods. For example, in a study reported that knowledge and awareness was considered the most prime reason why consumers do not buy organic food, 59% respondents indicated that so they do not consider the organic foods. They did not know about them. (b) A second dimension to the knowledge and awareness is the possibility that they do not have enough detailed information related to the unique attributes of organic food from conventionally grown food alternatives. Knowledge and awareness can affect attitudes and perceptions about the organic product and most important buying decisions. The cases of mislabeling and fraud are assuaged, can change the perceptions about the appeal and characteristics of organic may translate into actual demand of the same. Consumer preferences are based on attitudes toward alternative products. Consumer preference for organic (versus conventional) products is based on comparison of consumer attitudes toward the production systems with the actual product characteristics. Various literatures suggest that, various consumer attitudes work in two ways; for and against purchasing organic products. Consumer preference for organic food is based on a general perception of consumers regarding desirable characteristics. Human health, food safety and environmental relationship, along with several product characteristics such as nutritive value, taste, freshness, appearance, and other sensory characteristics influence consumer preferences. Some studies explain product quality in terms of sensory and nutritive characteristics, while others differentiate sensory characteristics from nutritive attributes. Consumer willingness-to-pay for organic products versus conventional foods reflects not only consumer alternative, but also the consumer preferences willingness to pay a price premium for organic products is important for financial sustainability of the sector. Own-price elasticity of demand is relatively higher for organic products because organic products have a wider range in appearance, and limited availability during seasons.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

An individual who buys products or services for personal use and not for manufacture or resale is known as consumer. A consumer is someone who can make the decision whether or not to purchase an item at the store, and someone who can be influenced by marketing and advertisements. Any time someone goes to a store and purchases a toy, shirt, food product, beverage, or anything else, they are making that decision as a consumer. The willingness of a consumer to buy a

certain product or a certain service is known as purchase intention. The purchase intention is based on what the consumer perceives out of the purchase. The consumer will examine the expected benefits to be obtained from the product and expected costs to be incurred for obtaining the product. The purchase intention of the consumer generally is about knowing the reaction of the consumer about stimulus/ trigger, outcome expectation, aspirational value, recommendation as well as emotional association. Behavioral attitude means the degree to which a person evaluates a behavior as desirable or undesirable (Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Attitude can be referred to a person's viewpoint toward intended action. Attitudes have a significant effect on a person's behavior and even when it is health-related, the relationship will be more intense. In any case, doing or not doing behavior is related to the judgment of the person. It is necessary, individuals see the results of the evaluation and have a positive belief that the effect of that attitude will be favorable and ultimately may lead to intent and conduct. Kasarjian found that the attitude toward air pollution was the most crucial variable in determining consumer behavior towards the product. Also, Balderjan (1988) emphasizes the healthy lifestyle indeed exert effects on the intention to purchase and use environmentally friendly products. Social psychologists believe studying attitudes to understand vital behavior is crucial; they consider behavioral attitudes and changes in behavior as a requirement to change in attitude (Ranjbar & Omid, 2004). Knowledge of organic products is the science of the application of voluntary environmental standards. It includes methods for using qualified products without any synthetic chemicals and the remaining elements, metals and harmful substances. Also, knowledge of organic products is influenced by the provision of information by the general government, mass media and native associations and sales sites; therefore, the level of knowledge of organic products depends on the demographic characteristics, lifestyles and information on available organic products (Garcia & Magistris, 2007). Organic knowledge has a positive effect on the consumer purchase attitudes and intention towards organic food products. Researchers have found that consumers who prefer organic products, like to do nature-friendly activities and show their concern for the environment. Lifestyle can be interpreted as a set of behavior adopted by individuals not only to fulfill their current needs but also to manifest a particular narrative chosen as their identities (Rahmat & Aghabakhshi, 2006). Lifestyle is an attempt to transform individual behaviors to achieve fundamental values throughout life, even when the environment changes, so the way of life changes over time systematically, not suddenly or accidentally. However, it maintains the balance in environmental change and also preserves this equilibrium in its value system. That is why the classification of lifestyle is often used to predict consumer behavior in line with marketing objectives. Lifestyle is an important factor that has a close relationship with various aspects of health including the quality of life (Feizi et al., 2012). A healthy lifestyle is comprised of healthy behavior patterns based on people's choices and conditions of their lives. Activities such as alcohol consumption, smoking, consuming chemically processed food and so forth. Can strengthen to weakening a person's position in life. In other words, a healthy lifestyle is a set of choices made by people by the conditions of their lives while these choices tend to affect their health. A healthy lifestyle is also linked to a change in diet to

maintain or improve individual's health and their living environment. A healthy lifestyle is scientifically shaped in the form of specific activities such as the consumption of natural foods, health care, balance in life and the creation of peace in life. People with healthy lifestyles always look for information about green brands to minimize the risk of physical and even mental disorders by adopting a suitable diet. Numerous studies indicate that encouraging a healthy lifestyle in target markets is considered one of the most important factors for the success of marketing programs (Divine & Lepisto, 2005). Chen (2015) showed that a healthy lifestyle has a positive impact on the attitude and the consumer purchase intention towards organic food products. Therefore, a healthy lifestyle is a good predictor of consumer purchase attitudes and intention towards organic food products. Health awareness refers to the degree to which people are concerned about health in daily activities. Consumer's health considerations are one of the most critical factors in purchasing food products. Consumers who are most concerned about their health tend to be more likely to buy organic products. Organic foods are generally regarded as a healthier option compared to non-organic ones and health concerns are considered as the most critical factor in stimulating consumer purchase attitudes and intention towards organic foods (Yadav & Pathak, 2015). Environmental concerns provide a degree of awareness among individuals to solve environmental problems. Individual's concern for the environment is related to their friendly behaviors with nature. It seems that citizens and various organizations and institutions around the world have been concerned with environmental issues for more than a few decades. During this period, the world has witnessed a considerable increase in activities promoted by environment protection groups that focus on preventing environmental damage (Chegini & Saleh, 2016). In recent years, environmental and social issues have gained special importance in purchasing decisions made by consumers. Society's concern about the environment has led to the emergence of a new type of consumers that reflect these concerns in their purchasing decisions. Responsibility in dealing with environmental issues not only helps organizations to remain competitive and increase their market shares but also there is evidence indicating increased consumer loyalty toward such organizations (Chegini & Saleh, 2016). Therefore, environmental concerns play a key role in determining the intention to purchase organic food, so that the purchases of organic food are considered environmentally friendly behaviors (Yadav & Pathak, 2015). A significant number of psychological studies indicate that subjective norms are an important factor in the intention to do the behavior. Subjective norms include very strong cognitive elements that are formed by judged expectations of important individuals. Subjective norms are reflections of social pressures that are perceived by a person and form certain behaviors. Subjective norms indicate how customers are influenced by the behavior of some important people in their lives. The perceived behavioral control means how much one feels that doing or not doing a behavior is under his/her voluntary control. Perceived behavioral control can directly or indirectly affect behavior through behavioral intention (Hesami & Parvinchi, 2014). Individuals with a higher degree of behavioral control have a stronger intention for certain behaviors. The theory of planned behavior has been substantially criticized for this reason, which does not consider the effect of ethics on behavior. An ethical attitude

has an important role when there is a conflict between personal and social interests. Ethical commitment can affect attitudes towards organic food, so that people may have personal concerns about themselves, the community and the environment with the intention to purchase organic food products. Therefore, it is possible that the conflict derives from personal and social interests. Adding an ethical attitude to the theory of planned behavior proves its applicability in behavioral studies

### **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

The above perspectives on organically produced foods are useful in many ways, they provide relevance in our conception of consumer decision-making, and in understanding consumer preferences and attitude towards organic foods. Organic food consumers tend to perceive such products as having particular quality and safety characteristics. In reality, a consumer's decision choice in favor of organic is made by comparing a various (observable and unobservable) characteristics of the good. These goods are logically named as credence goods with credence characteristics. In practice, organic product attributes are not easily assessed by the consumer. Studies have analyzed organic goods as credence goods .The credence characteristics of a good are qualities which are difficult or, impossible to detect credence good is one for which a buyer's decision choice is dominated by perceptions about the product's credence characteristics. The credence characteristics and quality aspects of organic products are important because a consumer may not necessarily associate 'organic' with the production process, but with the quality attributes of the product. The characteristics of goods can be substituted when prices relationally change. A price premium paid for the characteristics of organic foods suggests that consumers place a higher value on such attributes (Lancaster (1966). According to him, a good which does not possess all the characteristics a consumer desires cannot be a dominant, no matter how low its price, while a good that has characteristics not possessed by any other good cannot be inefficient no matter how high the price. In connection with this, Grossman (1972) applied Lancaster's (1966) theory of consumer demand to develop a model of consumer demand for "good health". To purchase originally grown food, in like a Insurance. An example of such "insurance" that a consumer may consider purchasing is healthy food. The characteristics of organic food may therefore be an input into the consumer's demand function for "good health", and price of organic food becomes the cost of the investment in "good health". This discussion shows a possible link between food quality attributes and consumer demand for organic food. In recent years new food trends have been emerged. One of the most popular is the "organic trend". For many conventional products there is now an organic version, as well. Natural foods have begun to appear on grocery items alongside conventional and organic products.

### **CONCLUSION**

It may not be clear to the average consumer what these different products are and how they are different from one another. If consumers do not understand how these products are different from each other's they may be purchasing a product that has attributes that they do not want to pay for. They may be paying a higher price than they should be paying. In this study the objective is to determine at how the knowledge of organic food affects their willingness to pay Due to very rapidly

growing sector and greater inclination of consumers towards the organic food attracts researcher to study on organic food industry. Various studies and researches has been made on this industry for the quality, safety and improvement in organic food industry. However the planned behaviour of the consumer in context of attitude, knowledge, lifestyle, health awareness, environmental concerns, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and ethical orientation significantly affects the intention of the consumer to purchase the organic food. The attempt is to measure the impact of all the factors on the purchase intention of the consumers across the major cities of Gujarat State.

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