

## Impact of Health Consciousness and Food Safety Concern on Consumer Buying Behaviour - A Review on Organic Food products

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### Abstract

Higher Disposable income and greater health awareness have resulted in an increased domestic demand for organic food. Organic foods products are grown and produced by preventing any type of environmental pollution or harmful conditions. However, it is the increasing concern over health aspects and food safety which is increasing the demand for organic food products. Normal food products are restricted with respect to nutritional status, quality or cleanliness but organic food products are perceived by the consumers to be fresh, chemical-free, nutritious, natural, and produced in an environmentally-sustainable manner. It is the rising consciousness for health, fitness and health benefits of organic foods that are influencing the consumer behaviour for purchase of these food products. Therefore, this paper reviews the effect of health consciousness and food safety concern as the driving factors over the buying behaviour of consumers purchasing organic food products. Based on the review, it was identified that there are various factors influencing consumer purchase decision for organic food products. The studies also indicated that consumers are currently health conscious and show their preference for food safety aspects while purchasing organic food products. However, the review of prior studies has also highlighted the research gap. The findings suggest that it is essential to understand the level of influence of health consciousness and food safety on the consumer buying behaviour for organic food products through further research.

**Keywords:** *Organic food products, Consumer buying behaviour, Health consciousness, Food safety, Organic farming, agriculture, health awareness, sustainability*

### 1. Introduction

Agriculture is considered to play an important role in the progression of economic development specifically in less developed nations such as India (Cervantes-Godoy & Dewbre, 2010; Arjun, 2013). For India, agriculture has been the main source of national income and occupation at the time of Independence as 72% of the population were occupied in agriculture (Golait, 2007). To accomplish the goal of self-sufficiency in agriculture, a new agricultural strategy was initiated in 1966-67 also known as New Agricultural Strategy or Green Revolution (Evenson & Gollin, 2003). Majority of the success of this first Green Revolution was caused by combining high rates of investment in crop research, infrastructure, and market development and appropriate policy support. The Green Revolution strategy for food crop productivity growth was mainly dependent on the fact that if appropriate institutional mechanisms are provided, technology spillovers across political and agro climatic boundaries could be captured (Pingali, 2012). With efforts made for this strategy, success was achieved for crop production in agriculture by increasing production by use of harmful pesticides and fertilizer. The programmes that were included in the new strategy were the high yielding varieties programme, multiple cropping programme, integrated development of dry areas, plant protection measures, increased use of fertilizers, and new irrigation concept (Lynch, 2007). The Green revolution had positive as well as negative effects (Roy et al., 2007). For India, positive effects were observed with the fact that from once being dependent on import of food grains for satisfying the needs of its population, the country gradually became an exporter of food grains (Bantilan, 2005). However, the negative impacts of the Green revolution included loss of biodiversity, gas emissions, dependence on non-renewable resources, land degradation, severe impact on health, and excessive use of pesticides leading to ailments and cancer (Kumar, 2007).

Food fulfilment or sufficiency is among the most basic human rights and the determinant factor in national security. Even though the Green revolution contributed significantly toward food sufficiency, it developed severe other problems related to the environment and health (Kishi, 2012). Therefore, the organic farming system, termed to be eco-friendly agriculture, was anticipated to be the most suitable solution in limiting or even removing the negative effects of conventional farming (Hazell, 2009). As organic farming has the capability to take care of various problems generated as outcomes of the Green revolution, the shifting towards organic food and farming started again (Chandrashekar, 2010). The environmental concerns faced by humanity are associated with unsustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles (Goudie, 2018; Hoekstra & Wiedmann, 2014; Woods, 2010). In this context, sustainability is defined as that consumption pattern which enables meeting the requirements of current generations with no compromise on the requirements of future generations (Thiele, 2016; Caradonna, 2014). This concept is linked with the basic requirements such as food as the current food chain is majorly dependent on food scarcity, application of pesticides, and industrialized set-up of the agricultural system. The rising consumer demand for organic food can be observed to be based on most of these facts (Hamzaoui-Essoussi & Zahaf, 2012).

Due to the rise in demand for organic food and establishment of an organic food market, there is an immense premium in selling organic products in the export markets as well as to substantial, health conscious national consumers (Sahota, 2009; Dimitri & Dettmann, 2012). Considering the demand side of organic food markets, there are many factors that influence consumer choices (Manaloor et al., 2016). The rising awareness of the health-fitness and health benefits linked with organic foods are powering the demand for these products across the world (Ashaolu & Ashaolu, 2020; Szalonka et al., 2016). The consumers of organic food products are food phobic's, humanists and welfare enthusiasts, environmentalists, hedonists, and healthy eaters. Therefore, it is vital to have an apparent understanding of the factors that drive the consumers' willingness to consume organic foods (Eynade et al., 2021; Basha et al., 2015). This awareness and perception for organic foods among consumers is in response to various factors including concern for the environment, food safety, animal welfare, as well as human health (Barański et al., 2017; Rizzo et al., 2020). Therefore, there is a need to understand the consumer buying behaviour for organic food products with specific impact of factors related to health and food safety. In consideration to the above mentioned aspects related to organic food products, this paper is aimed at reviewing the significant effect of factors such as health consciousness and food safety on consumer behaviour in purchasing organic foods in the present settings and from the perspective of future opportunities.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Overview of Organic food products market

The processes followed for conventional agricultural practices have existed since decades and have contributed to the soil and water pollution. The misapplication or overutilization of pesticides and many other synthetic chemical substances are damaging the environment as well as the biodiversity and most importantly human health (Popović et al., 2016). Producing food through organic agriculture not only preserves the natural environment but it also sustains the economic growth, contributes in the optimal utilization of resources, development of rural regions as well as villages, supports sustainable exports and enhances the living standards. The organic food products market and its demand are continuously increasing, and its production in various regions is increasing daily (Golijan & Dimitrijević, 2018). Organic products are described as those organic foods or products of cultivation which prevent the application of artificial and harmful agriculture enhancers such as fertilizers or pesticides and insecticides (Chattopadhyay & Khanzode, 2019). Also termed as green foods, organic food products are produced based on the principle of sustainable development, fine quality, nutrition, health and safety (Khan et al., 2015). With the emergence of organic food products, formation and configuration of a new market is being witnessed which is further leading to development of the organic food market supported by favourable economic, social and technological factors. Therefore, the organic food market is defined as that economic entity which develops a suitable environment for the sale (wholesale sale) of agricultural products comprising food products, within particularly equipped and appointed places in conformity with the law (Bazaluk et al., 2020).

In the current scenario, the organic food market has been developing gradually with 25-30% that reflects the massive prospective demand of organic products. In context to India, the organic food sector has observed amazing growth in the past few years (Manaloor et al., 2016). Organic food production is considered as a vital

approach to attain transformations towards higher sustainability within the food sector (Hansmann et al., 2020). Moreover, organic food products are also viewed to be greatly related to improvements in food quality and health. Therefore, the demand for organic products is crucial for transforming agricultural production in more ecological and sustainable directions (Aryal et al., 2009). The development of organic food product markets is enabled by the two categories of factors namely affecting producers and affecting consumers. Moreover, the development of the organic food products is driven by the regulatory system development, the guarantee system including organic farming standard, certification, certification body, producer certification, producer inspection, and labelling of the finished products (Nechaev et al., 2018).

According to Dias et al. (2020), in addition to the environmental aspects related to organic products, new values of organic food products also comprise participative procedures, alternative markets, certification as well as the food traceability and all of these are aspects associated with hygiene and dietary reeducation. The conversion of these values, when implemented to business strategies within the scope of agriculture which is working with organic production, indicates significant relations currently in the process of constructing new markets. Therefore, the food quality, or the new values characterized by it, is dependent on the institutionalization of social and environmental concerns and emerges as important elements to understand the market and consumption. Brantsæter et al. (2017) specified that even though organic products have a minor share in the world food market, the rise in certified commodities and their availability in mainstream supermarkets have made organic food among the fastest growing segment of the food industry.

The organic food market facilitates the production of safe, controlled certified and high-quality food products simultaneously entailing a high economic and environmental profit thus resulting in the preservation of a healthy environment. Consumer interests in food products of organic origin have been widespread over the last two decades. Countries across the globe have recorded a trend of continual growth in the organic food and beverage market and food products such as fruits, vegetables, bread, cereals, drinks, milk and meat have the biggest share in the organic food market. In terms of international trade, fresh fruits take the first position and although the production and sale of organic food products is highly concentrated in developed economies, less developed countries are also gradually becoming significant producers and exporters of these products (Golijan & Dimitrijevic, 2018).

## ***2.2 Benefits of Organic foods and its consumption***

Chattopadhyay & Khanzode (2019) explained that organic foods are linked with benefits that aim towards a healthy atmosphere or environment along with improvement in public health conditions. Production of organic foods assists in restoring food quality and food safety with reduced agricultural costs. The further benefits of organic foods and its consumption includes securing better health, reduced exposure to antibiotics injected to Livestock through consumption of meat, eggs or milk, better taste, availability of fresh products, and guilt free products. Ashaolu & Ashaolu (2020) stated that the core benefits related to organic foods development is food quality improvement, promotion of consumers' health, and ecological environment protection for sustainable development. Being attributed to be as safe, nutritive, pollution-free and of high quality, organic foods are advantageous due to safe and healthy consumption, limited application of less chemicals, and rich in higher vitamin and mineral contents as compared to conventional foods. It was further affirmed that organic foods are low-calorie foods and therefore, healthy with higher levels of antioxidants and less harmful chemicals. McCarthy (2015) agreed that benefits related to organic foods include safety, freshness, seasoned sourcing, reputable production lines, competitive pricing, usage of humanely treated livestock, good tastes, self, and family future health.

Organic foods are attributed with high nutritional value and pose advantages for human health. The health benefits of organic food and environmental benefits of organic food production possess advantages over conventional foods (Gopalakrishnan, 2019). Gopalakrishnan (2019) also agreed that organic foods taste better, are safe, avoids pesticide contamination preserve the immune system, have antibiotic resistance, greater antioxidants value, higher standard quality, and assists in environmental sustainability. In consideration of the health benefits, organic food consumption has been decisively exhibited to expose consumers to limited amounts of pesticides related to human disease. Organic farming has been displayed to have reduced environmental effect in comparison to conventional approaches. (Forman & Silverstein, 2012). Among the presented advantages of organic food production in market are environmental appeal with significant improvement, vanishing of pesticides, reduction in pollution, and diminishing impact of global warming (Dias et al., 2020). Brantsæter et al. (2017) specified that claimed health benefits of consuming organic food include limited exposure to contaminants or higher nutritional value. Consumers perceive and value the lower risk of

exposure to contaminants regarding organic food products and consider it more important in comparison to higher content of nutrients.

The nutritional content of organic food products address the potential health concerns and offer benefits through consumption. Among the nutrition content, antioxidant activity is the common primary outcome relevant to human health with respect to organic food products and many health benefits have been attributed to antioxidants after consumption (Dangour et al., 2010). Popa et al. (2019) also agreed that the total amount of nutrients accessible to growing plants is comparatively lower but the nutritional value of organic crops is little higher compared to conventional crops. The health benefits related to organic food products comprises higher levels of health-benefiting phytonutrients and few vitamins and minerals with lower levels of insecticide residues.

From a different perspective, organic farming provides developing nations with a wide range of social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits. The effect of these benefits can be observed within the global markets that have certified organic products and are increasing rapidly. The process of producing organic food products and quality lays the foundation for the further health benefits to humans (Eyinade et al., 2021). The expected health and environmental benefits support the consumption of organic food products and therefore assists the purchase of organic food products. The benefits of organic food products are observed to be availed by consumers based on their increased awareness, perception for prices and food labels, and motives for healthy food products (Varma, 2016). Rodriguez (2011) also agreed that the benefits of organic food products and their consumption are based on the personal system of consumers in making food choices which is further based on concern for health, ethical moral, political or religious motives, the quality and safety or safety of conventional foods, environmental considerations, and personal values. Therefore, the consumer benefits are the most significant aspects in identifying the consumer behaviour for organic food products and the success of organic food in the market. According to Das et al. (2020), the in-direct benefits of producing organic food for consumption is related to sustainable development of the environment for humans with better natural landscape and agro-ecosystem, prevention of overexploitation and pollution of natural resources, better natural ecosystem, safe and secure environment, economic balance in a community, better agricultural development, and positive impact on environmental and socioeconomic status.

### ***2.3 Factors influencing the consumer buying behaviour for organic food products***

Rising health consciousness along with increasing disposable income and emergence of organized retail has driven the growth of the organic foods market in India at around 19% during 2012-2017. The market for organic foods in India is growing at an compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 20-22% (Dangi et al., 2020).

Subha & Lavanya (2017) performed a study to determine the factors including consumer behaviour for organic foods and found that health consciousness, knowledge about organic food, environmental concern, and attitude for food safety were among the significant factors. Figure 1. Represents the framework of the factors.

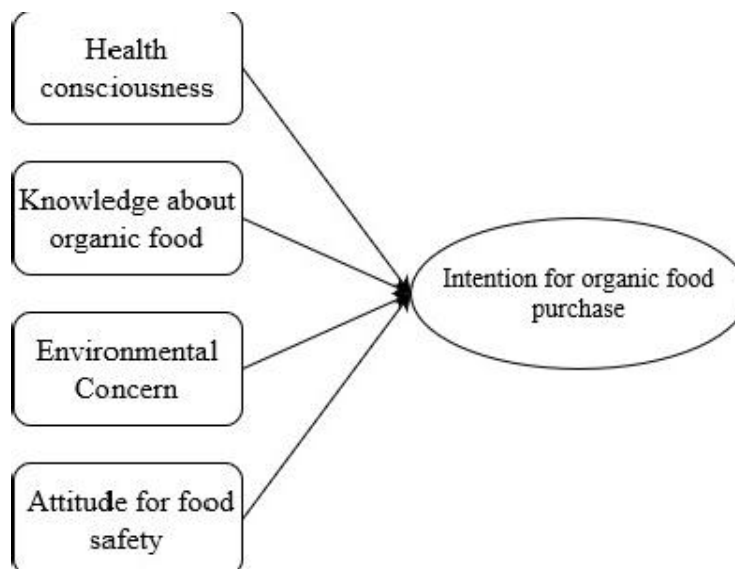


Figure 1. Factors that influence purchase decision of organic food consumer (Source: Subha & Lavanya 2017)

According to Chattopadhyay & Khanzode (2019) in recent years the consumer behavior with respect to factors affecting their consumption pattern of organic food products, have experienced myriad changes as individuals have become more aware of the changes in the factors like climate, pollution, the deteriorating air quality, excessive use of chemicals in the farms, rise in carbon particles in the environment and the r impact on the population. Laheri & Arya (2015), stated that awareness is one of the major factors that influence the buying behavior of consumers towards organic food products and therefore the organization of awareness programs by the government, marketers, and environmental agencies to educate consumers regarding the use of eco-friendly products that are good for health and simultaneously safe for the environment, is mandatory.

According to the results gathered from various studies, Singh & Verma (2017), suggested that the four factors such as health consciousness, knowledge, subjective norms, and price have a huge influence on the consumers' attitude and preference towards organic food products. Based on the study performed, reasons for organic food purchasing are presented in

Figure 2.

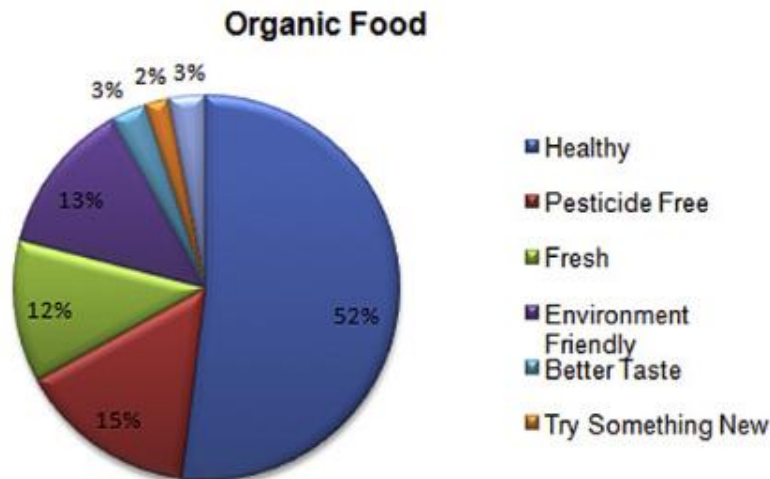


Figure 2: Reasons for organic food purchasing (Source : Singh & Verma (2017)

Nechaev et al. (2018) also explained that the factors which determine the growth of consumer demand for organic food includes health status, healthy lifestyle, environmental care, awareness, income level and state support of consumers, nutrition, physical and economic availability of goods, and the development of market infrastructure.

However, in addition to these, buying behaviour is also majorly affected by the availability of these products. The easy availability of organic food products positively affects the purchase intention of consumers as they prefer such products that are easily available. Further demographic factors such as age, education, and income also have an influence on the actual buying behaviour of consumers (Jayanthi, 2015).

Krishna & Balasubramanian (2018), in their study, incorporated factors such as consumers' willingness to pay, certifications, and labelling concerning organic food products and their quality and safety, as some of the significant factors influencing the purchase intention of consumers towards organic food products. The data from the study revealed that consumers' concern for health, environment, and the need for quality food products are the main factors that fostered them to pay an additional premium while making their purchase. Therefore the higher an individual's perseverance towards the worth of purchasing organic products, the higher will be their willingness to pay for them. Further, factors such as awareness with respect to various certifications and labels,

advertisements, processing, etc concerning organic food products also play a vital role in consumers' knowledge enhancement. Certification and labelling are two important factors that inspire consumers to buy organic products. Apart from that, the quality and safety of organic food products are consistently encouraged by the governments, healthcare industry experts, etc, as the physical appearance of an organic product is associated with its inner quality.

Familiarity is also an important factor while buying organic food products especially due to the fact that consumers usually do not have any prior expertise or understanding of the products. Low familiarity with regard to the uses of the product, the nutritional value derived from it, the quality it possesses, its taste and environmental benefits, as well as social concerns, are a few of the critical factors which decide the consumption patterns for the organic food products. Basha et al., (2015) recognized that, despite having a positive outlook over such products, dearth of familiarity is a key determinant for the fall in the purchase rate of such organic foods, therefore determination of how far the consumers are exposed to media in order to gather information regarding these organic food products with respect to their quality, safety, and environmental benefits is indispensable.

Teng & Wang (2015) claimed that in many countries consumers consider the purchase and consumption of organic food products as an indicator of their living standards or status symbol. Hence, consumers' purchase of such products turns out to be a sign of luxury and is one of the most common trends among the elite class of consumers in society. It signifies the increased purchasing power and luxurious lifestyle of consumers as a result of greater disposable income. Matic & Puh (2016) proposed that consumers with higher disposable income prefer the consumption of organic food products mainly due to the intention of showcasing their level of awareness, attitude as well as a status symbol. Another major factor that stimulates consumer awareness is brand recognition as there are certain specific brands that are chosen by consumers due to their higher quality and hence such considerations influence their buying behaviour.

#### ***2.4 Health Consciousness and effect on consumer buying behaviour for organic food products***

Health consciousness refers to the readiness of a consumer to undertake health-related actions. With respect to the organic food market, health-conscious consumers tend to be more aware and concerned about their wellness and are inclined towards improving and maintaining their health, standard, and quality of living in order to prevent ill health by indulging in healthy behaviours and being self-conscious with regard to health (Akhondan & Carroll, 2015). Nutrition and physical fitness are the two concerns of health-conscious individuals. Studies on the determinants of buying behaviour of consumers towards organic food products have identified health consciousness as a primary motive for the purchase of these products. In addition to that, health consciousness helps in predicting the attitudes, preferences, and purchase intentions of consumers towards these products (Rana & Paul, 2017).

Brantsæter et al. (2017) argued that the health factor associated with organic food products is the reason why there is a growing interest in organic food products worldwide. According to the study, health consciousness is the driving force behind consumers buying behaviour as the health benefits associated with organic food products include reduced exposure to chemical contaminants and increased exposure to nutritional value. Consumers tend to prefer the lower risk of exposure to contaminants as more important than higher content of nutrients. Pacho (2020) in his study also suggested that the behaviour compelling the consumers' intention to buy organic food products depends upon a number of factors; however, findings revealed that health consciousness is one of the most important factors that have an impact on the purchase decisions of the consumers. Health consciousness has an indirect effect on the relationship between other factors such as attitude, subjective norms, and the intention to buy. Several such factors contribute to consumers' motivation to purchase organic foods but most studies conclude that health-conscious consumers show the highest preference for organic food products over other conventionally grown food products. In fact, health consciousness has been considered to be the best indicator of consumer attitude and behaviour towards such food products (Katzeff et al., 2020).

A healthy diet and lifestyle are becoming increasingly important for the consumers parallel with economic growth as this process makes consumers more inclined towards organic food products thus being favourable for the development of the organic food industry. The analyses of the major factors that influence the purchase behaviour of consumers towards organic food products revealed that health issues represent the main reasons for

buying organic food and the health factors have become as important as the psychological ones while consumers make decisions with respect to food products (Percsi & Fogarassy, 2019). Rana & Paul (2017) also followed the same direction of analysis and found that health-conscious consumers show an increasing preference for organic food over other conventionally grown food products. This major shift in the attitude of modern consumers is mostly influenced by the rising incidence of lifestyle diseases, such as heart ailments and depression. It has occurred due to the fact that organic food has fulfilled modern consumers' expectations with regard to food products. All this has led even the retailers and marketers to promote their products as being healthy which differ from the promotional efforts related to conventional hedonic food items. They also argued that successful adaptation to such industry practices that promote a healthy shift in the consumption habits of individuals will further help businesses produce healthy food products to thrive.

According to Shin & Mattila (2019) in response to the rising demand for organic food products several restaurants have begun to add options for healthy food items into their menus. In order to highlight the impact of organic food choices in the context of a restaurant, the scholars examined the joint effect of gender and health consciousness on other food choices that is both healthy and unhealthy and found that males and females with low levels of health consciousness are more likely to select unhealthy food options whereas those with higher levels of health consciousness are more likely to choose healthy food options. Consumption patterns around the world indicate consumers' increasing interest in the purchase of organic food due to the growing consciousness of personal health among consumers. Scholars have attributed this growing interest in organic food products to a number of reasons, the major one being the adverse effects of chemically grown food products on the environment and on consumers' personal health. Organic food is considered to be more eco-friendly, natural, unadulterated, and thus, healthier than food products grown using chemical fertilizers and pesticides (Tandon et al., 2021).

### ***2.5 Food safety and effect on consumer buying behaviour for organic food products***

The rising demand of organic food products is driven by many factors and safety of food is among the main factors that is shaping the rising consumers' consciousness and buying behaviour. It is evident that the determinants of organic food consumption that drives the consumer buying behaviour for organic food products can be majorly positioned as health problems, safety of organic foods and the belief that organic foods contribute to the ecological system. Organic food is attributed to be safe and healthy for consumption based on its composition, method of production, minimal impact on the environment, and high nutrition, consumers perceive food safety as a vital aspect for buying organic food products. (Krishnakumare & Niranjan, 2017). Customer enthusiasm for organic products can be viewed as proactiveness of consumers to their physical risks of food consumption. The expectation is that the traceability of all stages of the supply chain ensures the organic food safety and has become an important consideration for consumers (Waqas & Hong, 2019). Waqas & Hong (2019) performed a study to understand the effect of selected variables on the consumer buying behaviour for organic foods and the study findings revealed that organic food attitude and safety of food were significant factors for consumer intentions to purchase organic food.

It is fundamental that health attributes play a contributing role in generating consumer preferences for organic food products (Rizzo et al., 2020). A consumer buying organic food products can be profiled as altruistic, hedonically motivated, and concerned about the quality of the products which is freshness and taste, and food safety (Hashem et al., 2018). Besides the health consciousness that significantly influences consumer buying behaviour, food safety along with ecological values (environmentally friendly), taste and quality assurance (label of certificate) are equally significant (Cachero-Martínez, 2020). Li & Xin (2015) performed a study to examine a set of factors that influences the consumption of organic food products and the studying findings confirmed that food safety, nutrition, and environmental friendliness are important factors that affect the purchase of organic food while considering the demographic variables.

Consumers that have overcome the barriers of price related to purchase of organic food products and are ready to spend for the comparative high prices, are more concerned about food quality. They perceived safe food based on quality to be their main aspect for buying organic food products. Food safety with better quality is being considered as a critical aspect for health consciousness consumers (Darsono et al., 2018). Due to the emergence of lifestyle diseases and high incidence of diabetes and heart disorders have raised an alarm that have further made consumers realize the significance of food quality and safety. The demand for organic food products is observed to be higher based on the health and safety spectrum of organic food as the conventional food products are polluted due to the presence of chemical residues, pesticides and toxins. Food safety as a vital factor increases the consumption of organic food products and is actively promoted by governments, healthcare

industry professionals, and researchers (Rana & Paul, 2017). Le-Anh & Nguyen-To (2020) performed a study to analyze those factors that affect the consumers' attitude towards organic food and their purchase intention for this type of food products in an emerging market. The study outcomes indicate that awareness of organic food, information on organic food, food safety concern and perceived value of organic food have positive impacts on attitude towards organic food. Therefore, food safety includes adequate information about the food product with offered value. Alshammari (2020) mentioned that due to changing lifestyle and eating habits, consumers are more focused on healthy food products which are accessible through organic food products. Alshammari (2020) performed a study to determine the factors affecting consumers' attitudes and purchase intention toward organic food products. The study findings revealed that issues relating to food quality and scepticism impact the most the consumers' attitudes toward organic food products. Moreover, the study findings even revealed that organic food knowledge and health consciousness are also significant in influencing consumer attitudes toward organic food in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, marketers must consider food safety as an important aspect while designing strategies for organic food products in market as the more favourable the attitude is toward organic food, the more consumers are willing to purchase the products.

### 3. Research Gap

Due to the adverse effects of genetically modified organisms, pesticides, and further artificial chemical products utilized in traditional agricultural practices on health and environment, different segments of people are being interested in organic food products. Consumers are considering organic food products to be more environmentally friendly, highly nutritious, and safe as well as healthy. Organic food products tend to be satisfying for people that perceive the benefits of consuming these organic food products due to concerns for health and food safety. Based on the review of previous studies, it is found that there have been a lot of studies that focus on determinants of organic food consumption and factors affecting the consumer buying behaviour for organic food products. The prior studies have identified factors that potentially influence the consumer buying behaviour and organic food consumption which includes consumers' concerns regarding health consciousness, food safety, the environment, animal welfare, and a wholesome lifestyle. However, as the main concerns of consumers are related to health and food safety as a high number of consumers are becoming health conscious, organic food purchase and corresponding consumer buying behaviour appears to be impacted by majorly these two factors. Previous literature studies include very few studies exploring the influential effect of health consciousness and food safety on the organic food purchase among consumers specifically. This highlights a major research gap, as it is necessary to identify the actual purchase behaviour of consumers based on their health concerns and food safety preferences in existing settings. Since most of the consumers that prefer buying organic food products are concerned for health and food safety, it is essential to understand in detail the effect of these factors specifically on consumers' organic food purchase behaviours. Based on this consumer analysis, it will be easier for marketers to create and formulate successful strategies that influence actual consumer purchase behaviour.

### 4. Conclusion

Due to the rising improvement in people's awareness, organic food products are starting to become mainstream and also have the potential to improve the future health of human populations. The organic food market has undergone an unparalleled growth with time as the consumers buying behaviour for these food products is driven by healthfulness, taste, environment-friendliness, safety, and local agriculture support. A consumer-based approach to understand the organic food products market and consumer behaviour for purchasing these products is useful not only for better understanding of the varying organic market dynamics but also for organic consumer demand and market analysis. The quality attributes of organic food accounts for inputs into a consumer's demand function for improved human health and general well-being. Concern with food safety and health risks has driven various kinds of consumers to search for foods whose qualities and safety attributes are guaranteed. Organic products are perceived by consumers to offer enhanced health value, and to be safer for consumption. As the horizons of consumer's progress beyond basic concerns regarding food availability, and their budgets are allowing for higher discretionary spending, the food safety factor has started gaining importance. Consumers are becoming highly health conscious and are inclined towards consuming healthier and more nutritious food products. They reflect willingness to pay for better health value and food quality, and are ready to spend more time researching the organic food marketplace. It is evident from this review that food safety, human health consciousness, and environmental concerns influence consumer preferences. However, a detailed understanding of the effect of food safety and human health consciousness as main factors impacting consumer buying behaviour is identified as a research gap which needs to be addressed with detailed insights.



An empirical study aimed at understanding the linking between organic food products purchased by consumers and health consciousness with food safety as the influencing variables to comprehend better the way consumers really perceive the food quality and safety attributes of organic products along with health benefits in comparison to their conventional counterparts. The focus on the aspects of food safety and health value will also reveal the consumers' behaviour towards organic food products and their place in the food marketplace along with the level of impact that each of these variables contribute to the purchasing decisions of organic foods.

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