

Why is no one buying organic food? The role of nature experience and attitude antecedents on purchase intention

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Abstract

Food choice has become a global interest for health and sustainability, pursuing consumers. The escalating environmental concern influences consumer behavior, with a rising portion of purchasers making decisions based on environmental concerns. This study aims to examine the impact of antecedents of attitude on organic food purchase intention. In addition, nature experience moderates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention. A structured questionnaire was completed by 444 people who purchased organic food in the last 30 days. An online survey was conducted, and the proposed hypothesis was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) generated by AMOS 21. The study's findings revealed that the three antecedents of attitude, trust, and health consciousness positively related to organic food purchase intention. Furthermore, attitude positively mediates trust, health consciousness, and purchase intention. The current study demonstrates the stimulating role of attitude through natural experience for organic food purchase intention. The research will help policymakers and suppliers identify key antecedents and design short—and long-term marketing tactics to develop the organic food market.

Keywords: Attitude, Health consciousness, Nature experience, Organic food, Subjective norms, Trust.

Introduction

With the improvement in their living standards, consumers' quest and demand for nutritious and high-quality organic food has become a trend (Watanabe et al., 2021), and the global demand for organic food has increased drastically (Ferrari et al., 2023). With global sales of more than USD 100 billion in the last two decades, food buying behavior has evolved to choosing healthier, safer, and better-quality food while considering the environment and health rather than just gratifying hunger (Güney and Giraldo, 2019). Organic food is regarded as food produced naturally without the use of synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, making it a healthier way to consume (Teuber and Jensen, 2021). Although there is increasing awareness of the benefits of organic food, studies have indicated that the actual intention to purchase it is lower than anticipated (Ahmed et al., 2021; Dangi et al., 2020). Talwar et al. (2021) found a significant gap between customers' expressed interest in organic products and their actual purchasing behavior, indicating a discrepancy between stated preferences and actions. This understanding is vital for devising effective methods to increase consumer involvement in this sector and purchase intention is gaining interest from academicians (Guiao et al., 2022).

Climate change has become a pressing global issue, driving the need for environmental sustainability and influencing consumer behaviors (Kang et al., 2023). As the world seeks sustainable solutions, there is a growing emphasis on activities that minimize environmental harm, such as the purchase of electric cars, installation of home insulation, and the consumption of organic food (Farrukh et al., 2023; Jaiswal and Bihari, 2020; van Valkengoed et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2020). These pro-environmental behaviors are integral to mitigating climate change impacts, as they reduce carbon footprints and promote sustainable practices. Modern consumers are increasingly adopting pro-social and pro-environmental behaviors, with a notable shift towards organic food consumption as part of their contribution to environmental conservation. Sustainability has been a concern for global think tanks, influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors towards environmental responsibility (Van Heezik et al., 2021). According to the United Nations (2022), The Sustainable development goals, Life on Land, Biological diversity, and a healthy ecosystem are supported by food, water, medicine, and other material goods. However, human activities have severely changed the terrestrial ecosystem, endangering the environment. Around one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions are the outcome of our food system, an area for awareness and prospect to diminish climate change; hence, purchasing locally produced and organic food is essential (United Nations, 2023). The organic food business has proliferated in the last few years. Since underdeveloped nations are less likely than developed ones to produce organic goods, it is critical to research the variables influencing consumers' purchase decisions (Bazhan et al., 2024). Therefore, it is crucial to research consumers' intentions to purchase organic food products (Wee et al., 2014).

Studies on organic foods have been conducted examining the moderating effect of health consciousness (Li and Cui, 2021), consumer innovativeness (Persaud and Schillo, 2017), awareness (Asif et al., 2018), knowledge (Pacho, 2020), and safety food concerns (Tandon et al., 2020a); however, there is a dearth of studies that explore the moderating effect of nature experience (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012; Schmuck et al., 2018; Liao et al., 2020). Previous research investigations have established a significant correlation between customer attitude towards green products

and green purchase intention (Zaremohzzabieh et al., 2021), and multiple studies indicate that attitude has a crucial role in forecasting pro-environmental behavior, such as the purchase of environmentally friendly products (Wang et al., 2022). It is essential to underscore the significance of social influence in impelling consumers' decisions to buy environmentally friendly products (García-Salirrosas and Rondon-Eusebio, 2022). It offers a foundation for recognizing and promoting sustainable consumption (Goldsmith and Goldsmith, 2011). According to Sharma (2021), social reference groups' effects on green conduct and preferences can be investigated using the social influence theory. A study conducted by Wang (2014) on the influence of social factors and consumer characteristics towards green purchase intentions employed social influence theory. It depicted that social exchange theory provides the groundwork for comprehending and encouraging sustainable consumption. According to Gani et al. (2023), few studies have used social influence theory in the scope of organic purchase intention and suggested employing the theory to understand the behavior of consumers.

Based on the above discussion, the research questions of this study are two-fold: first, to explore the effect of trust, subjective norms, and health consciousness on attitude towards organic food, and second, to evaluate the moderating role of nature experience between attitude and purchase intention towards organic food. For this purpose, a research model is proposed, as shown in Figure 1. The second section of this study reviews the literature and the theoretical framework and formulates individual hypotheses. They are followed by data collection and analysis using structural equation modeling. Moreover, the study is completed with a discussion of the results, implications of the study, limitations, and future research agenda.

Literature Review

Several theories and conceptual frameworks have been developed to understand the factors influencing purchase intentions for organic food. Among these, social influence theory provides a particularly relevant lens for examining how social factors shape consumer behavior. In this study, we specifically focus on social influence theory to explore its role in driving organic food purchase intentions.

Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory is a well-recognized groundwork for understanding the social behavior of an individual, which is influenced by compliance (social norms), identification (social identity), and internalization (enjoyment) (Kelman, 1958). In other words, an individual's attitude, beliefs, and successive behavior are influenced by their reaction to others around them, wherein a closer community has the biggest inspiration (Lim et al., 2022). Due to the low concentration of pesticides, fertilizers, and chemicals, consumers consider organic foods environmentally and socially appropriate (Yu and He, 2021). When used to organic food purchase intention, this theory depicts how individuals change their behavior to come along with the ethics and values of the community they belong to (Sadiq et al., 2021). Additionally, with the progress of healthy culture and social mindset toward organic food, organic food consumption has become a new lifestyle and prestige (Sound, 2023). Deutsch and Gerard (1955) propose that people verify their knowledge, information, and sources with other people as evidence of reality in one way.

On the other hand, they demonstrate behaviour as the expectation of others and the norms and values of their community. Under social influence, individuals are influenced to purchase and consume organic food (Kashif et al., 2023). Many studies have confirmed that social groups, peer opinion, social recognition, social values, and other social influences significantly impact the purchase and consumption of eco-friendly and sustainable products (Awuni and Du, 2016). However, social influence theory should be used to investigate green preferences and green purchase behaviour (Sharma, 2021).

Purchase Intention

A consumer's intent to purchase may influence or forecast their future purchasing decisions or behaviors (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). Purchase intention, which is influenced by a customer's trust in and attitudes towards a product or service, is the consumer's confession of willingness to do an action in connection with purchasing a particular good or service (Kim, 2020). When buying organic food products is motivated by an impulse to fulfil a goal connected to community, individual, or ecological benefits, consumers are most likely to make that purchase (Leyva-Hernández et al., 2021). Further research is required to establish a direct correlation between purchasing intention and attitude related to green initiatives, as Oztekin et al. (2017) recommended. The majority of studies on consumers' intentions to make green purchases have mainly focused on developed nations; yet, because consumers' attitudes and viewpoints about green products differ in emerging economies, a more thorough examination of consumers' intentions to make green purchases in these economies is necessary (Prakash et al., 2023). Studying purchase intention has a significant advantage for many organizations. In recent times, enterprises and researchers have focused on consumer purchase intention. This is because by thoroughly understanding consumer purchase intention, they can discover innovative ways to meet the needs of their target customers and enhance their future sales performance (Kim et al., 2023). Pادمi and Suparna (2021) assert that studying purchase intention is crucial as it provides insights into consumers' predisposition to take action before purchasing a product or service and enables businesses to devise appropriate marketing strategies to shape and satisfy customer preferences through the anticipation of consumer behavior (Chen, 2024). Hence, this study examines the purchase intention because there are limited studies in the context of organic products (Kipness, 2019).

Table 1: Previous studies related to organic food purchase intention

Author(s)	Sample	Title	Journal Name	Findings
Sardar et al. (2024)	471	Examining the influence of source factors and content characteristics of influencers' post on consumer engagement and purchase intention: A moderated analysis	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	The study found that product involvement moderates the link between source factors, content features, and customer engagement.
Bazhan et al. (2024)	530	Factors affecting purchase intention of organic food products: Evidence from a developing nation context	Food Science & Nutrition	The health consciousness, subjective norms, and education factors exhibited the most significant overall impact.
Gutiérrez-Rodríguez et al. (2024)	1,296	Purchase intention of fashion brand retailers: a journey through consumer engagement and happiness.	Management Decision	This study found that customer brand engagement and happiness significantly impact fashion brand purchase intentions.
Akram et al. (2024)	337 from India and 391 from China	Exploring the roles of green marketing tools and green motives on green purchase intention in sustainable tourism destinations: a cross-cultural study	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	Green marketing tools improve green brand image and trust, which mediate the relationship between green marketing tools, motives, and green purchase intention, which increases satisfaction and WOM, and brand experience moderates this relationship.
Khan et al. (2023)	787	What drives attitude, purchase intention and consumer buying behavior toward organic food? A self-determination theory and theory of planned behavior perspective	British Food Journal	The findings reveal TPB characteristics such attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, purchase intention, and buying behavior had significant effects. Trust also mitigated the attitude-purchase intention relationship.
Lv et al. (2024)	649	Impact of perceived value, positive emotion, product coolness and Mianzi on new energy vehicle purchase intention	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	Findings show that perceived value and product coolness positively impact purchase intention. Positive emotion and perceived value moderate the link between product coolness and purchase intention.

Nguyen and Dang (2022)	300	Organic food purchase decisions from a context-based behavioral reasoning approach	Appetite	Findings showed strong cognitive directions from values to reasons and attitudes. Attitudes and motives also influenced buying intentions. Additionally, reasoning and attitudes did not mediate. Supportive attitudes and factors increased trust while decreasing opposition.
Rita et al. (2024)	301	The role of micro transactions in impulse buying and purchase intention in the video game market	Entertainment Computing	The study demonstrated a favorable correlation between performance, hedonic content, social factors, flow experience, and impulse purchase.

Trust

Trust is the key constituent for any market development (Bai et al., 2023; Chan et al., 2021; Lee and Zhong, 2020) and is believed to be one of the key predictors in elucidating consumer behavioral intention (Wong, 2023). Blomqvist (1997) defined trust as an individual's expectation of how the other person would behave in some future occurrences, such as the function of the target person's current and previous assertions. Trust in organic food is a crucial component of customer buying attitudes, and food trust variables include health content, production methods, and ingredients (Lee et al., 2019). Previous research has found that trust in organic goods favors attitudes toward organic foods (Sriyakul et al., 2020). Trust boosts the reputation of suppliers or service providers as it works as a reference for quality, satisfaction, and value (Milan et al., 2015). Some studies have found that trust partially moderates the association between consumer attitude and organic buying behavior (Tandon et al., 2020b).

In a social context, trust has been a dominant variable for researchers. Various studies have extensively used the social identity theory to explain how consumers relate themselves to socially accountable retailers and cultivate trust toward such retailers (Dang et al., 2020). The findings revealed that consumer trust had a positive significant impact on consumer attitude, and thus, the following hypothesis is presented:

- H1** Trust positively affects consumers' attitudes toward organic food.
- H2** The relationship between trust and purchase intention of organic food is mediated by attitude towards organic food.

Subjective Norms

One of the antecedents of TPB is subjective norms, defined as the effect of social pressure on an individual to perform some specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Cheah et al., 2020). Subjective norms influence purchase decisions significantly, and an individual performs particular behavior because he/she believes that people near and close would prefer him/her to behave in such a way (Ho and Rezaei, 2018). It reflects the profound effect on an individual's initial disagreement toward action. However, if an important reference object believes the individual should perform a certain behavior, the individual will perform that specific behavior (Zhuang et al., 2020). Numerous studies have shown a beneficial association between subjective norms and attitudes toward organic food (Li and Jaharuddin, 2020). For instance, a study conducted by Tarkiainen and Sundqvist (2005) revealed that subjective norms positively affect the attitude toward organic food and, thus, the purchase intention. Another study by Carrión Bósquez et al. (2023) depicted that subjective norms considerably influenced the intention to buy organic foods.

Social identity theory describes that normative behavior is relevant and active when adopted in an in-group (Villalobos et al., 2023). As a result of the preceding literature, this study assumes:

- H3** Subjective norms positively affect consumers' attitudes toward organic food.

- H4** The relationship between subjective norms and purchase intention of organic food is mediated by attitude towards organic food.

Health Consciousness

The degree to which someone attends to or focuses on his or her health, an inner state of self-attention to self-relevant indicators expressed in cognitive and bodily feelings, is known as health consciousness (Gould, 1990). These days, digital influencers enjoy endorsing healthy, natural, and organic food without sugar, oil, and lactose (Silva et al., 2020). Moreover, customers' loyalty toward the organisation increases if the products are safe, healthy, and environmentally friendly (Samudro and Susanti, 2022). Previous studies have found health to be an important predictor of consumers' attitudes toward organic food (Kim, 2019). Similarly, health consciousness is a chief motivation to purchase organic food (Parashar et al., 2023). Pacho (2020), for example, looked at the relationship between subjective norms, attitude, and behavior in a study. The use of health consciousness as a mediator revealed a substantial link. Even though this link was positive, it had no bearing on one's opinion toward organic food (Alshammari, 2020).

Social identity theory depicts that social identities are associated with the negative or positive health outcomes of an individual understanding and response to the social hierarchical condition in which they fit themselves (Haslam et al., 2009). Thus, this study hypothesized that:

- H5** Health consciousness positively affects consumers' attitudes toward organic food.
- H6** The relationship between health consciousness and purchase intention of organic food is mediated by attitude towards organic food.

Attitude and Purchase Intention

The more positive one's attitude toward particular conduct, the stronger one's intention to perform that behavior. In many circumstances, attitude is found to have a major impact on intention (Ajzen, 1991). Much research has shown that having a positive attitude about an action improves performance (Dangi et al., 2020). According to Pacho (2020), a good attitude toward organic food favorably connects with and considerably impacts purchasing intention. Similarly, a study by Apasrawirote and Yawised (2022) depicts consumer behavioral intentions as being established in one way: attitude leads to habit, and habit encourages the intention to make repeat purchases. On the other hand, a study conducted by Nijhof et al. (2018) found that the relationship between attitude and intention is small, confirming that consumer attitude does not positively influence purchase intention and the lack of communication and unconsciousness in the context of organic food is to blame for the weak association between consumer attitude and purchase intention. The more positive one's attitude toward an activity is, the more likely one is to engage in the conduct in question (Ajzen, 1991). The mindset of an individual has always backed up the purchase and eventual consumption of organic food, and it is an important exploratory variable (Sriyakul et al., 2020). On the contrary, Rivaroli et al. (2019) confirm that attitude is a secondary determinant of purchasing intention. Based on prior research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

- H7** The Consumers' attitude toward organic food positively affects consumers' purchase intention.

The Moderating Effect of Nature Experience

Nature experience is a psychological factor that influences behavioral intention, often conceptualized as natural brand imagery (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáez, 2012). This study argues that exposure to nature-related visuals can enhance positive beliefs about products, making environmentally friendly features more prominent. For instance, Reynolds et al. (2018) found that virtual nature experiences reduced stress and negative emotions in patients with dementia, highlighting the powerful psychological effects of nature. Despite this, there is limited understanding of how nature experience directly influences consumer behavior (Lu et al., 2021).

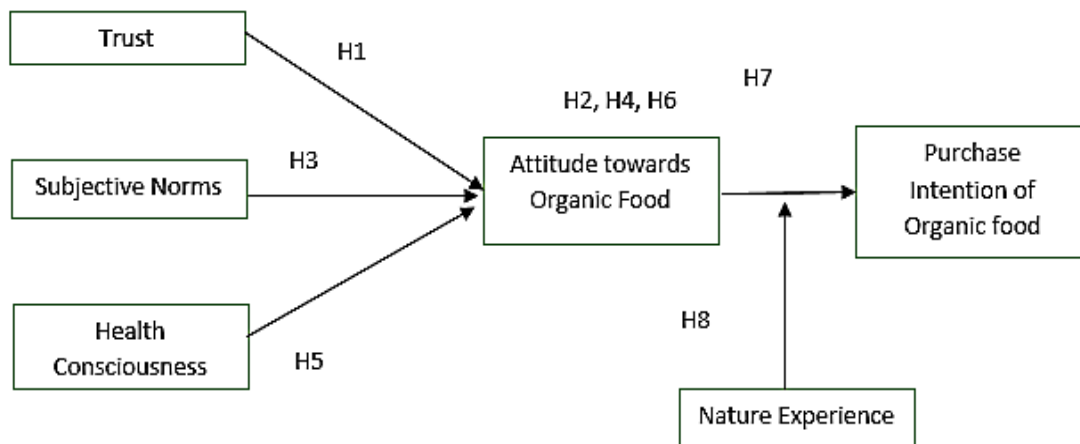
Nature experience also plays a significant role in promoting social and economic development through social entrepreneurship (Zainol and Yasin, 2023). There is a growing interest in how nature experience affects consumer behavior in the organic food sector (Szolnoki and Hauck, 2020). Research suggests that nature experiences can significantly enhance an individual's environmental attitudes and behaviors, thus contributing to environmental sustainability (Van Heezik et al., 2021).

Previous studies have suggested further exploration of nature experience as a moderating factor between attitude and intention to deepen understanding in this area (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáez, 2012). For example, Schmuck et al. (2018) used virtual nature experience as a mediating variable for brand attitude, advocating for the use of nature imagery in green marketing. Liao et al. (2020) linked green psychological benefits to green purchasing intentions, with nature experience being one of the key components.

However, there is a notable gap in research that examines nature experience as a moderating variable in the context of organic food purchase intention. Most studies have focused on its role in tourism (Alakoski and Tikkanen, 2019), tree houses (Brochado, 2019), and architecture (Wielenga, 2021). Thus, the current study explores nature experience as a moderator in the relationship between consumer attitude towards organic food and their purchase intentions.

The moderating role of nature experience suggests that individuals who frequently engage with or value nature experiences may develop stronger positive attitudes toward organic food, which in turn could increase their intention to purchase these products. In other words, nature experience could enhance the impact of a positive attitude on the likelihood of purchasing organic food by reinforcing the alignment between one's environmental values and consumer behavior. Based on the relationships identified and research objectives, Figure 1 presents the research model. From the above literature, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

- H8** Consumer-perceived nature experience positively moderates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention.

Figure 1: A proposed research model for the study

Methodology

An online survey was conducted to test the hypothesis. Google Form was used to distribute the questionnaire as it is one of the most multipurpose technological tools for data collection (Lohmann et al., 2023). A total of 444 responses were received. The questionnaire was sent to those individuals who have purchased organic food in the last 30 days. Google forms were sent through various social media platforms: Facebook, Google Mail, and Twitter. The data was collected via a closed-ended questionnaire with two sections: demographic data (gender, age, education, and family income) and six latent variables (trust, subjective norms, health consciousness, attitude, nature experience, and purchase intention). The hypothesis was tested using structural equation modeling. This study used a two-step technique (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) in Amos 21 to investigate the stated hypothesis. The first step is the measurement model, which entails exploratory factor analysis (EFA), item-to-total correlation, Cronbach's alpha, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). At the same time the second is the structural model, which entails the model's goodness of fit.

Data was collected from local consumers from Nepal. It was a prerequisite that the respondents were above 18 years old and had purchased organic food in the last 30 days. Male respondents comprised 59.5 per cent of the total, while females comprised 4.5 per cent. It is also worth noting that 65.3 per cent of the respondents possessed a master's degree, indicating their ability to comprehend the questions. In addition, 39.0 per cent of respondents were between the ages of 41 and 50, and 32.4 per cent had a family income between 350 \$ and 450 \$.

The Measures

The measurement scale, which consists of multiple scales from previous studies, was adapted for this study. Items from Canova et al. (2020) were adapted to measure trust (T): t1, *I perceive organic food to be reliable*; t2, *I trust in organic food products*; t3, *I trust in purchasing organic food products*. Subjective norms (SN) were adapted from Arvola et al. (2008): sn1, *most people I value would buy organic food rather than non-organic food*; sn2, *my family thinks that I should buy organic food rather than non-*

organic food; sn3, *People I value, such as my teachers, think I should buy organic food*; sn4, *most friends whose opinions regarding diet are important to me think that I should buy organic food*. Health consciousness (Hc) was adapted from Tarkiainen and Sundqvist (2005): hc1, *I choose food carefully to ensure good health*; hc2, *I think of myself as a health-conscious consumer*; hc3, *I often think about health issues*.

The scale from Pham et al. (2019) was used to measure attitude (A): a1, *buying organic food is beneficial*; a2, *I am pleased to buy organic food*; a3, *I have good experience with organic food*; a4, *I am right in buying organic food*. Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez's (2012) scale was used to measure nature experience (NE): ne1, *Organic food makes me feel close to nature*; ne2, *Organic food makes me think of nature, fields, forests, and mountains*; ne3, *Organic food reminds me the sensation of being in nature*. Finally, the study used the scale from Arvola et al. (2008) to measure purchase intention (PI): pi1, *I am willing to purchase organic foods if they are available*; pi2, *I Intend to buy organic foods if they are available*; pi3, *I plan to consume organic foods if they are available for purchase*; pi4, *I try to consume organic foods if they are available for purchase*. A 5-point Likert-type scale assessed all measurement items and latent components (1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree). The EFA results in SPSS removed one item from subjective norms because the factor loading was less than .7. This practice is consistent with previous studies (Pham et al., 2019; Canova et al., 2020).

Results

Measurement Model

As previously stated, the data were analysed in two steps: the measurement model and the structural model. According to Jackson and Tweed (1980), the functional commonalities and canonical correlations between common factors and observed variables are square multiple correlations (SMCs), which reflect the value of the predicting variable indicating measurement reliability and the variance percentage explained by the latent variable shown in Table 2.

The values of SMCs in Table 2 depict that each variable is between the criterion value ranges of .50-.70. The reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha. The result of Cronbach's alpha presented in Table 1 shows the value of trust (.902), subjective norms (.889), health consciousness (.998), attitude (.930), nature experience (.9456), and purchase intention (.9829) defining the reliability.

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the convergent validity of each construct should meet the following three conditions: (a) Factor loadings must be significantly greater than .50, (b) Composite reliability (CR) must be greater than .50 and (c) Average variance extracted (AVE) must be greater than .50. The factor loading values of this study were above the threshold value of .50 (ranging from .741 to .99) and the CR values ranged from .91 to .99 which is higher than the threshold value of .50.

Finally, the AVE of each construct ranged from .86 to .99, which is also higher than the threshold value of .50. Table 2 summarizes the reliability and validity of the constructs. The square root of AVE is used to calculate discriminant validity by evaluating the

correlation between the constructs. The AVE of each multi-item concept indicates it, and it is bigger than the common variance between constructs. The AVE square value was higher than the correlation values describing discriminant validity acceptance.

Table 2: Reliability and convergent validity

Constructs	Items	Factor Loadings	SMC	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Trust	T1	.873	.719	.902	.902	.755
	T2	.885	.783			
	T3	.848	.763			
Subjective Norms	SN2	.851	.724	.889	.904	.758
	SN3	.897	.805			
	SN4	.833	.694			
Health Consciousness	HC1	.998	.995	.998	.998	.995
	HC2	.997	.994			
	HC3	.993	.995			
Attitude	A1	.991	.982	.930	.966	.880
	A2	.995	.991			
	A3	.741	.549			
Nature Experience	NE1	.862	.742	.908	.903	.756
	NE2	.888	.788			
	NE3	.881	.776			
Purchase Intention	PI1	.949	.900	.963	.963	.868
	PI2	.904	.817			
	PI3	.922	.850			
	PI4	.952	.905			

Factor Analysis and Validity Testing

The covariance matrix was used to assess the study's structural model, which was then calculated using maximum likelihood in AMOS. The structural model's overall fit indices (CMIN/df= 3.482, GFI= .902, and RMSEA= .075) were adequate. However, AGFI was .879s, slightly lower than the .9 threshold number, while CFI was .975, higher than the .90 threshold value. The researcher covaried NE3 with NE1 and NE2 of natural experience and SN4 with SN3 and SN2 of the subjective norms construct to get the best model fit. In contrast, one item (S1) from subjective norms and one item (A4) from attitude was eliminated to get the best model fit.

According to Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria, the values in the diagonal bold are the square root of AVE, and other values are the inter-variable correlation values. To establish discriminant validity, the diagonal values should be higher than those in their respective rows and columns. Table 3 shows the discriminant validity. Hence, the variables have good discriminant validity.

Table 3: Discriminant validity

	Trust	Subjective norms	Health consciousness	Attitude	Nature experience	Purchase intention
Trust	.869					
Subjective norms	.730	.870				
Health consciousness	.663	.673	.998			
Attitude	.688	.702	.634	.938		
Nature experience	.709	.736	.657	.674	.870	
Purchase intention	.670	.770	.659	.809	.650	.932

Five hypotheses were proposed for the study, and Beta values were calculated using AMOS to determine the significance threshold. The path coefficient values for the relationships between trust, subjective norms, health consciousness with consumer's attitude, and consumer's attitude with purchase intention were $\beta = .416$, $P = .000$, $\beta = .115$, $P = .141$, $\beta = .328$, $P = .000$ and $\beta = .279$, $P = .000$ in this model, respectively. Since the P values of H1, H3, and H4 are below the threshold value, i.e., .050, H1, H3, and H4 are supported, and H2 is rejected.

Table 4: Regression weights

		Path		Estimate	SE	CR	P	Remarks
H1	Attitude	<---	Trust	.416	.071	5.878	***	Supported
H2	Attitude	<---	Subjective Norms	.115	.078	1.472	.141	Rejected
H3	Attitude	<---	Health consciousness	.328	.044	7.38	***	Supported
H4	Purchase intention	<---	Attitude	.279	.034	8.247	***	Supported

Moderating Effects

The study analyses the role of natural experience in influencing people's attitudes toward organic food and their intentions to buy it. Nature experience moderates the association between attitude toward organic food and desire to acquire organic food, according to Hypothesis 5. With a path coefficient of $\beta = -.223$ $P = .000$, the interaction term (NE×A) negatively but significantly impacts the intention to purchase organic food, supporting hypothesis 5.

Table 5: Moderation testing

		Path		Estimate	SE.	CR.	P	Remarks
H5	Purchase intention	<---	Nature experience × Attitude	-.223	.021	-1.541	***	Supported

Mediation Testing

The mediation test took trust, subjective norms, and health consciousness as independent variables, whereas purchase intention was a dependent variable, and nature experience was a mediator. The mediation analysis was based on Baron and Kenny's (1986) classical approach guidelines. Direct and indirect effects based on bootstrap (444 samples) and bias-corrected with a 90% confidence level were used to perform mediation analysis. Results are provided in Table 6.

Results show that attitude partially mediates the relationship between trust and purchase intention toward organic food, as indirect effects are statistically significant ($\beta = .110$, $P < .050$). Furthermore, attitude mediates the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intention with $\beta = .094$, $P < .05$. In contrast, attitude does not mediate the relationship between subjective norms and purchase intention because $\beta = .043$ and $P > .05$. Based on the above result, we accept H2 and H6 and reject H4.

Table 6 Mediation testing

	Path	Direct effects	Indirect effects	Total effects	Remarks
H2	T>A>PI	0	.110***	.110***	Supported
H4	SN>A>PI	0	.043	.043	Rejected
H6	HC>A>PI	0	.094***	.094***	Supported

Discussion

The findings of this study put forward factors that influence consumers to purchase organic foods. These factors are trust, subjective norms, and health consciousness, which develop consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions toward organic food. This study's output elucidates that trust significantly influences the purchase intention of organic food, and the result is similar to Ngo et al. (2023) and Cao et al. (2024). Murphy et al. (2022) examined consumer trust in organic meat and vegetables across four European countries, namely Italy, Poland, the UK, and Germany, and found that overall consumer trust in organic certification leads to purchase intention. The study confirms that if consumers trust the information given by a retailer, they will have a positive attitude toward organic food (Nguyen et al., 2022). Trust is an essential element that motivates consumers to make decisions in complex food markets (Hasan et al., 2023). The findings of this paper support the idea that if consumers trust that the product they are purchasing is organic, their attitude towards the product increases, leading to purchase intention. Hence, trust in the supplier and product will lead to a positive attitude and buying the product.

Our study illustrates that health consciousness is another crucial variable that positively influences attitudes toward organic food. Previous literature has explained that health consciousness is important in determining consumers' purchase intention (Parashar et al., 2023; Bazhan et al., 2024).

Iqbal et al. (2021), who studied the effect of health consciousness and food safety concerns on organic food purchase intention, revealed that health consciousness positively and significantly influences Pakistan's organic food consumers.

Consumption of organic food presents a high sense of health consciousness and a positive attitude towards it. When consumers are health and environment conscious, they purchase products without harming their bodies or having a negative environmental impact. Additionally, when they do not experience issues in their health and environment while consuming organic food, their intention to purchase organic food increases (Pacho, 2020).

Subjective norms positively influence the attitude toward organic food. Although there is a positive association between subjective norms and attitude, as Kaba et al. (2023) found, subjective norms had a minor influence on attitudes toward organic food. A study conducted by Roh et al. (2022) that investigates the effect of green perceived value, perceived knowledge, attitude, subjective norms, and trust on organic food consumption articulates that subjective norms have a positive and significant effect on organic food consumption. Similarly, Roseira et al. (2022) studied the intention to purchase organic food by Norwegian and Portuguese young consumers and found that subjective norms positively influence the intention to purchase organic food. One reason behind this can be that the peers and family circle they share give little importance to organic food, which prominently may include price and family income (Katt and Meixner, 2020). Another justification could be that consumers might not care what others think about their consumption patterns. Hence, subjective norms do not influence attitudes toward organic food or purchase intention.

Pro-environmental consumers are connected with nature-related things, developing values and attitudes. Our study proves that natural experience has a negative but significant influence on the purchase intention of organic food, which is similar to the recommendations given by Curvelo et al. (2019). In other words, consumers would not buy organic foods even though the manufacturers or suppliers of organic food use natural images or scenery while advertising their products. Hence, marketers are advised to plan their strategies in a natural setting that would influence consumers' intention to buy. The findings provide an additional, comprehensive understanding of the association between consumer attitude and purchase intention.

Theoretical Implications

This study also provides pertinent theoretical implications. Previous studies have focused on the antecedents and influence of attitude. This study adds to the knowledge by understanding attitudes toward organic foods. It adds to the present literature on attitude both empirically and conceptually. It mainly focuses on how trust, subjective norms, and health consciousness influence the consumer's attitude towards organic food and subsequently determine the purchase intention of organic food. Faith in suppliers and products and the health benefits of products is the basis for consumer positive attitude and purchase intention of organic food (Huang et al., 2019). Thus, trust and health consciousness about the product are more crucial than advice and suggestions from people around them.

This study used social identity theory to examine the influence of trust, subjective norms, and health consciousness on attitudes toward organic food. Finally, it examined the moderating role of nature experience on the purchase intention of organic food. Social identity theory depicts an individual's sense of belonging to the social world as grounded in affiliation with various groups (Williams and Maxwell, 2022). Social

identity theory helped determine the variables chief in purchase intention and attitude towards organic foods. It found the significant influence of trust and health consciousness instead of subjective norms. The outcome of this study primarily contributes to the literature on trust, subjective norms, health consciousness, and attitude and purchase intention in the scope of organic food. The theoretical structure established in this study supports the idea of the factors, and the theory can promise numerous implications to managers in improvising their attitudes towards organic food and purchase intention towards organic food for their commercial campaign.

Lastly, the study provides a novel exploration of how nature experience interacts with social identity to moderate the relationship between attitude and purchase intention. While previous research has predominantly relied on theories like the Theory of Planned Behavior or the Theory of Reasoned Action to explain eco-friendly purchase intentions, this study pioneers using SIT to incorporate natural experience into this context. It posits that nature experience strengthens the link between a consumer's social identity and purchase intentions, offering new insights into how personal experiences with nature can influence eco-conscious consumption decisions. This is a distinct contribution, as it is the first to integrate nature experience with SIT in the context of organic food purchase intentions.

Limitations and Future Research Direction

This study aims to recognize the critical variables of attitudes, which can also affect the purchase intention toward organic food. The findings of this study put forward factors that influence consumers to purchase organic foods. These factors are trust, subjective norms, and health consciousness, which develop consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions toward organic food. Some limitations to this study should be considered when interpreting the results. To begin with, the data was obtained via social media from the major cities in Nepal's eastern region, including Biratnagar, Itahari, Damak, and Birtamode. That means other potential respondents needing access to the Internet or social media platforms were excluded. Future studies must use a much bigger sample size and access their respondents through multiple channels to ensure the entire population is included.

Nonetheless, the constructs used in the study framework are based on past research. Thus, future studies can use the model to investigate the same topic, adding additional constructs. The study's final limitation is that organic foods are examined in general rather than a specific brand, resulting in differences in results when a specific product brand is studied. Finally, more studies should be done to propose and test a new model with various constructs and moderators in various scenarios.

Practical Implications for Asian Business

This study provides numerous valuable managerial implications for the organic food market. First, this study recommends that consumer trust plays a beneficial role in consumers buying organic food. We indicate that consumers will buy organic food if they trust the suppliers and retailers. Therefore, marketers and managers of organic food should provide the required authentic information. Social media platforms like Meta and Instagram are prominent platforms on which to promote their products.

Furthermore, customers' feedback about the product should be shared via social media to earn more trust. Additionally, traditional media like TV, radio, and newspapers should be effectively used to grab consumers' attention. These findings are valuable for organic product marketers to formulate strategies and policies that will eventually influence purchase intention.

The results of this study will significantly impact managers, producers, the government, and policymakers in Nepal when it comes to creating policies that will increase the intention of people to purchase organic food. Numerous previous research has clarified that the primary reason behind consumers' intentions to purchase organic food is the retailers' inability to connect with potential organic customers due to the need for more awareness and advertising avenues. This study intends to assist vendors and managers in framing their marketing strategies to help them reach potential customers of their organic products, as it has focused on investigating the factors that influence organic consumers' purchase intentions for organic foods.

Marketers should seek a suitable avenue to upgrade their marketing campaign, primarily in organic products. Enhancing the green marketing campaign would encourage consumers to have a more positive attitude towards green products and to plan to buy green (Liao et al., 2021). Managers should strongly emphasize the need to increase the retail locations for organic goods and to widely distribute information regarding the differences, benefits, and origins of organic foods compared to processed or industrialized foods (Eberle et al., 2022). Companies and governments must implement more efficient communication strategies to enhance environmental consciousness and promote conscious consumption among consumers. This includes encouraging the purchase of organic foods and raising awareness about environmental preservation and respect for nature and life.

The organic market is one of the most flourishing industries. This study can support suppliers and retailers in establishing the prospective attitude to their reasonable concern by considering the factors influencing attitude and purchase intention. Moreover, to build user intention, marketers should consider the mediating role of attitude. Therefore, instead of using pesticides and chemicals, marketers should work to improve consumer awareness of organic processes and procedures (Ashraf, 2021).

Because consumers' intentions to purchase organic food are mostly influenced by their health, marketers and producers should use customized marketing techniques to position organic food as safe and healthful. According to COVID-19 standards, eating a healthy diet is one of the most crucial things managers should priorities (Soonsap et al., 2023).

To attract non-organic consumers, marketers can provide promotional activities to motivate and establish relationships with the brand. These promotional activities induce customers' trust and involvement in products, enhancing their attention to the retailers' offerings. Individuals who exhibit healthy behaviors and self-awareness generally possess a keen interest in and a comprehensive understanding of nutrition and physical fitness. Simultaneously, consumers' negativity towards organic labelling methods has been observed to impact their understanding of organic products. Consequently, it is necessary to implement suitable labelling practices and promotion of these in order to

instill faith in consumers regarding the health benefits of organic food items (Kamboj et al., 2023).

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