

Bridging the Intention-Behaviour Gap in Organic Product Consumption: A Sustainability Perspective

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Abstract: Sustainability has emerged as a critical determinant of responsible consumption, driving the growing preference for environmentally friendly alternatives such as organic products. This study investigates the relationship between purchase intention and actual purchasing behaviour of organic products, with a specific focus on the intention-behaviour gap from a sustainability perspective. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the research analyses the role of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in shaping consumer intentions and behaviour. The data were analysed using Spearman's rank correlation and regression techniques to examine the relationships among the variables. The results indicate that attitude and perceived behavioural control are significant predictors of purchase intention, whereas subjective norms exert a relatively weaker influence. Additionally, purchase intention was found to have a strong and positive effect on actual purchasing behaviour among young consumers. The study enriches existing literature by offering deeper insights into consumer decision-making processes and provides practical implications for marketers and policymakers aiming to encourage sustainable consumption practices.

Keywords: Attitude, Behaviour, Perception, Consumption, Youth.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, consumers have demonstrated increasing awareness regarding their dietary habits, prioritizing choices that enhance health and well-being (Flores et al., 2022). As noted by Restrepo-Santesteban et al. (2022), this shift is reflected in evolving consumption patterns, giving rise to the concept of responsible consumption. This phenomenon occurs when consumers consciously modify or replace traditional consumption habits with alternatives that contribute to environmental sustainability. One of the key approaches to reducing environmental impact, as suggested by Kumar and Pandey (2023), involves transforming both production and consumption practices.

In the Indian context, there has been a noticeable rise in demand for sustainable and organic products in recent years. Increasing health consciousness, environmental awareness, and concerns regarding food safety have significantly influenced consumer preferences. Reports indicate a substantial growth in the organic food market in India, driven by urban consumers and particularly by younger generations who exhibit a stronger inclination towards environmentally responsible consumption. This trend is especially evident among young consumers, who demonstrate heightened awareness of environmental challenges and a willingness to adopt sustainable lifestyles (Adamczyk and Adamczyk-Kowalczyk, 2022).

This study examines the purchasing behaviour of organic products through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which is widely recognized for its effectiveness in analysing human behaviour across diverse social and cultural contexts. The TPB framework has been extensively applied in environmental and consumer behaviour research. For instance, Marín et al. (2024) analysed the determinants of eco-friendly product consumption and confirmed that the components of TPB significantly predict purchase intention. Similarly, Samaniego and Usiña (2024) applied this theory to explain purchase intention towards organic products among millennials, while Cristancho (2023) explored its association with attitudes and responsible consumption at the household level. Furthermore, Costa et al. (2021) utilized this framework to examine how shopping experiences shape attitudes that influence the intention to purchase organic products.

Organic Product Consumption: An Analysis from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

This study is based on the model proposed by Ajzen (1991), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which explains that attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control influence intention and that intention is the strongest predictor of behaviour.

The dimensions addressed within the TPB are explained below.

As Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) have demonstrated, attitude is based on a person's most relevant beliefs. In a consumption context, it is the emotional and belief-based valuation that Organic Product Consumption: An Analysis from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB).

This study is grounded in the model proposed by Icek Ajzen (1991), namely the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which posits that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control collectively influence behavioural intention, with intention serving as the strongest predictor of actual behaviour.

The key dimensions of TPB are discussed below.

Attitude refers to an individual's evaluation of a behaviour based on their underlying beliefs. As established by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1975), attitude is shaped by salient beliefs held by an individual. In the context of consumption, it represents the emotional and cognitive evaluation that consumers associate with a product (Méndez-Guerrero, 2023). In the Indian market, increasing awareness regarding health, food safety, and environmental sustainability has positively influenced consumer attitudes toward organic products. Prior research indicates that attitude significantly impacts purchase intention (Zhuang et al., 2021). Furthermore, Le-Anh and Nguye-To (2020) highlight that attitude not only directly affects intention but is also linked to factors such as consumer knowledge and prior information about products. Similarly, Ayaviri et al. (2022) emphasize that motivations, emotions, and feelings are integral components shaping consumer attitudes.

Subjective norms are defined as perceived social pressures that influence an individual's decision to engage in a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). These norms comprise two components: normative beliefs and motivation to comply. Normative belief reflects an individual's perception of expectations from significant others, while motivation to comply indicates the willingness to align with those expectations (Carrión & Salinas, 2021). In the Indian socio-cultural context, family, peers, and social networks play a crucial role in shaping consumption patterns. Robles et al. (2023) assert that subjective norms represent the influence of important social groups, such as family and friends, on behavioural decisions. This influence becomes particularly significant in sustainable consumption, where social approval and environmental awareness encourage pro-environmental behaviour (Calle & Piloza, 2022; Chao & Zhang, 2024). Consequently, individuals often adjust their consumption choices to maintain social acceptance and alignment with societal values (Myers & Twenge, 2021).

Perceived behavioural control refers to an individual's perception of their ability to perform a behaviour, influenced by factors such as prior experience, resource availability, and perceived barriers (Ajzen, 1991; Ortega & Nava, 2021). In the Indian

context, factors such as price sensitivity, product availability, and accessibility significantly affect consumers' ability to purchase organic products. Carrión et al. (2024) identify availability and perceived high prices as common barriers to the adoption of environmentally friendly products. Therefore, consumers are more likely to purchase organic products when they are affordable, easily accessible, and widely available (Saxena & Vij, 2023). This is further supported by Brugarolas et al. (2024), who emphasize the critical role of pricing in promoting organic consumption.

Intention is defined as an individual's readiness or willingness to perform a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). In consumer behaviour studies, purchase intention reflects the likelihood that a consumer will buy a product in the future (Saxena & Vij, 2023). In the case of organic products, purchase intention is influenced by personal values, environmental concerns, attitudes, and knowledge levels. Gamarra et al. (2021) found that consumer purchase intention varies significantly with the level of product awareness and knowledge. This indicates that intention represents a consumer's willingness to adopt organic products (Araya-Pizarro and Rojas-Escobar, 2021). Furthermore, Sánchez-Feijoo and Bonisoli (2022) highlight that both knowledge and purchase intention are key determinants in the decision-making process for organic product consumption.

Behaviour refers to the actual action performed by an individual in response to internal and external stimuli (Ferrer et al., 2024). According to the TPB framework, behavioural intention is the most significant predictor of actual behaviour (Xu et al., 2024). In the context of organic product consumption, behaviour is the outcome of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, which collectively shape intention and ultimately influence purchasing decisions (Carrión & Salinas, 2021).

The primary objective of this study is to analyse the relationship between consumer purchase intention and actual purchasing behaviour of organic products from a sustainability perspective. Specifically, the study aims to identify the factors influencing the transformation of intention into behaviour, thereby promoting responsible consumption practices in the Indian context. The research examines how attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence purchase intention and how this intention subsequently affects purchasing behaviour. Methodologically, the study employs correlation analysis to examine relationships among variables and utilizes linear regression models to test the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** Attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control have a significant influence on purchase intention.
- **H2:** Purchase intention significantly influences purchasing behaviour.

II. METHODOLOGY

The population selected for the study consisted of young consumers aged between 18 and 29 years in India. This segment represents a significant proportion of the population and is increasingly influencing consumption trends, particularly in the context of sustainable and organic products. For the purpose of this study, a sample size of 382 respondents was determined using the formula for a finite population, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. The respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique.

The inclusion criteria comprised young individuals enrolled in higher educational institutions, while respondents above 30 years of age were excluded from the study. This focus was adopted due to the growing awareness and inclination of young consumers towards sustainable consumption practices in India.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered through an online platform (Microsoft Forms). The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale and consisted of 17 items distributed across the following dimensions: attitude (5 items), subjective norms (3 items), perceived behavioural control (5 items), purchase intention (2 items), and purchasing behaviour (2 items). Additionally, demographic variables such as age and gender were included.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument, statistical tests were conducted. The results indicated a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.88, demonstrating high internal consistency, and an Aiken's V value of 0.81, confirming acceptable content validity.

For data analysis, descriptive statistics were initially computed to summarize the data. Normality tests were subsequently conducted using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, which indicated that the data did not follow a normal distribution ($p < 0.001$). Accordingly, non-parametric tests were employed to analyse the relationships among variables.

Furthermore, regression analysis was conducted to test the proposed hypotheses. The assumptions underlying regression analysis were verified, including normality of residuals (residual histogram showing no significant deviation and P–P plot indicating approximate normal distribution), homoscedasticity (uniform distribution of residuals without extreme values), and absence of multicollinearity (tolerance values greater than 0.1 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below 5). These results confirm the statistical adequacy and robustness of the model.

III. RESULTS

This section presents the key findings of the study, which aims to examine the relationship between purchase intention and purchasing behaviour of organic products from a sustainability perspective.

Socio-demographic Characteristics

The sample comprised 56.8% female respondents, 42.9% male respondents, and 0.3% representing other gender identities. The majority of respondents (88%) were aged between 18 and 25 years, while 12% belonged to the 26–29 age group. In the Indian context, this demographic profile is particularly significant, as young consumers are increasingly recognized as key drivers of sustainable consumption and environmentally responsible purchasing behaviour.

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

The descriptive statistics indicate that the variables *attitude* and *purchase intention* recorded mean values of 3.81 and 3.76, respectively, suggesting that respondents generally hold positive perceptions towards organic products. These findings reflect a growing recognition among Indian youth of the environmental and health benefits associated with organic consumption.

However, *subjective norms* reported a comparatively lower mean value (3.42), indicating a moderate level of social influence on purchasing decisions. The mean value for *purchase behaviour* was 3.52, accompanied by a relatively high standard deviation (1.04), highlighting variability in actual purchasing practices. This variation suggests the presence of an intention-behaviour gap, where favourable intentions do not always translate into consistent purchasing behaviour.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Median	Variance	Standard Deviation
Attitude	3.8141	4.0000	0.710	0.84251
Subjective Norms	3.4250	3.6667	0.951	0.97537
Perceived Behaviour	3.5576	3.6000	0.646	0.80379
Purchase Intention	3.7683	4.0000	0.940	0.96968
Purchase Behaviour	3.5223	3.5000	1.092	1.04500

The correlation analysis using Spearman's rho revealed statistically significant relationships among all variables ($p = 0.000$). The strongest correlation was observed between *purchase intention* and *purchase behaviour* ($R_s = 0.746$), followed by the relationship between *attitude* and *purchase intention* ($R_s = 0.689$).

From a sustainability perspective, these findings suggest that fostering positive attitudes towards organic products can significantly enhance purchase intentions, which in turn translate into actual purchasing behaviour among consumers.

Table 2. Correlation of variables

Attitude		Subjective Norms	Perceived Behaviour	Purchase Intention	Purchase Behaviour	
Attitude	Rs	1.000				
	Sig.	0.000				
Subjective Norms	Rs	0.657	1.000			
	Sig.	0.000				
Perceived Behaviour	Rs	0.619	0.608	1.000		
	Sig.	0,000				
Purchase Intention	Rs	0.689	0.589	0.671	1.000	
	Sig.	0,000				
Purchase Behaviour	Rs	0.605	0.679	0.696	0.746	1.000
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	

Regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive relationships among variables and to test the proposed hypotheses.

Furthermore, the regression analysis contributes to validating the two hypotheses proposed in the study, Tables 3 and 4.

Regression Models

Model 1: Prediction of Purchase Intention

The regression model is formulated as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 \quad (1)$$

Where:

$$\text{Purchase intention} = 0.075 + 0.442(\text{Attitude}) + 0.121(\text{Subjective norm}) + 0.448(\text{Perceived behavioural control})$$

In the results, a coefficient R= 0.779 and a determinant coefficient R²=0.608 were obtained; which indicates that 60.8% of the purchase intention is explained by the variables attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.

Table 3. Model 1: Multiple Linear Regression

Model	Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	0.075	0.156	—	0.478	0.633
	Attitude	0.442	0.055	0.384	8.065	0.000
	Subjective Norm	0.121	0.045	0.122	2.713	0.007
	Perceived Control	0.448	0.055	0.372	8.130	0.000

The findings support Hypothesis H1, confirming that all three variables significantly influence purchase intention. Among them, *attitude* and *perceived behavioural control* emerged as the strongest predictors, while *subjective norms* had a comparatively weaker effect.

Model 2: Prediction of Purchase Behaviour

$$\text{Purchase Behaviour} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(Y) \quad (2)$$

The estimated value of purchase intention (Y) obtained from Model 1 is used as the single predictor variable in Model 2 to explain purchase behaviour ($\beta_1 Y$).

Where:

$$\text{Behaviour} = -0.318 + 1.019(\text{Purchase Intention})$$

In this sense, a rating coefficient $R = 0.737$ and a coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.54$ were obtained, indicating that 54% of the behaviour is explained by purchase intention. Therefore, the results allow us to accept the initial hypothesis (H2) that purchase intention influences purchase behaviour.

Table 4 presents the results of Model 2 of multiple linear regression, where the predictive capacity of purchase intention on actual purchase behaviour is analysed.

Table 4.

Model	Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-0.318	0.184	—	-1.728	0.085
	Intention	1.019	0.048	0.737	21.261	0.000

The results support Hypothesis H2, demonstrating that purchase intention is a strong and significant predictor of actual purchasing behaviour. The positive coefficient ($\beta = 1.019$) indicates a direct and substantial relationship between intention and behaviour.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the variables analysed largely behave in accordance with theoretical expectations and demonstrate acceptable levels of statistical significance. Among these, *attitude* emerges as a key determinant influencing the intention to purchase organic products. This result is consistent with prior research (Cantero et al., 2022), which emphasizes the significant role of attitude in shaping consumer purchase intention.

Similarly, *perceived behavioural control* was found to have a strong and significant impact on purchase intention. This finding aligns with Gómez et al. (2023), who identified perceived behavioural control as one of the most influential predictors of intention, second only to attitude. In the Indian context, this can be attributed to practical factors such as product availability, affordability, and accessibility, which significantly shape consumers' ability to adopt sustainable consumption practices. The use of availability and price as indicators of perceived behavioural control is further supported by Gundala and Singh (2021), who highlight their critical role in influencing purchase intention.

However, contrasting evidence exists in the literature. For instance, Istiasih et al. (2022) found that perceived behavioural control was not a strong predictor of purchase intention. Such inconsistencies may be attributed to contextual differences across markets and consumer segments, reinforcing the importance of localized studies such as the present research.

With regard to *subjective norms*, although the results indicate statistical significance, their overall influence on purchase intention remains comparatively weak. This suggests that, in the context of organic product consumption, individual beliefs and personal motivations outweigh social pressures. This finding is consistent with Cavazos and Melchor (2023), who also reported a limited role of subjective norms in influencing purchase intention.

Furthermore, the study confirms that *purchase intention significantly influences actual purchasing behaviour*, supporting the fundamental proposition of the Theory of Planned Behaviour. This result aligns with Kim and Lee (2023), who argue that a strong intention to purchase increases the likelihood of actual buying behaviour. However, the presence of variability in behavioural responses indicates the existence of an intention-behaviour gap, which remains a critical challenge in promoting sustainable consumption.

From a broader perspective, sustainability emerges as a central and integrating factor in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in the adoption of organic products. In the Indian context, this is driven by a combination of increasing health consciousness, environmental awareness, and evolving lifestyle preferences among young consumers. Sustainable consumption

extends beyond the mere purchase of eco-friendly products and involves a holistic approach encompassing consumer awareness, transparent supply chains, and responsible business practices.

Therefore, sustainability acts as a catalyst for transforming consumption patterns by aligning individual choices with environmental protection and long-term societal well-being. This transformation is essential for achieving sustainable development goals and fostering responsible consumption behaviour among future generations.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The primary objective of this study was to analyse the factors influencing the purchasing behaviour of organic products among young consumers in India, based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The findings reveal that the key determinants—attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control—significantly influence purchase intention, which in turn affects actual purchasing behaviour.

The results indicate that *attitude* and *perceived behavioural control* are the most influential predictors of purchase intention, highlighting the importance of individual perceptions, awareness, and perceived ease of access in driving sustainable consumption. In contrast, *subjective norms* were found to have a relatively weaker impact, suggesting that personal values and beliefs play a more dominant role than social pressures in shaping consumer decisions related to organic products.

This study contributes both theoretically and empirically by validating the applicability of the TPB framework in the context of sustainable consumption among young consumers in India. It also provides insights into the intention–behaviour relationship, emphasizing the need to bridge the gap between favourable intentions and actual purchasing practices.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that policymakers and marketers should focus on enhancing consumer awareness, improving product accessibility, and adopting pricing strategies that make organic products more affordable. Such measures can strengthen purchase intention and facilitate its conversion into actual behaviour.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the geographical scope of the study by including diverse regions across India. This would enable a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour patterns and improve the generalizability of the findings.

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