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Understanding Sustainable Consumption: Key Determinants Influencing Purchase Intention toward Organic Fruits & Vegetables

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the determinants of purchase intention for organic fruits & vegetables in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, using the Theory of Planned Behavior as the guiding framework with additional variables: Environmental Concern, Health Consciousness, and Product quality. A structured survey was conducted with 285 participants using probability sampling, and the data were analyzed using SPSS, including reliability, factor, correlation, and regression analyses. The results reveal that consumer attitude is the key driver behind the purchase intention, followed by health consciousness and product quality. Environmental concern exerted a minor influence, while subjective norms and perceived behavioral control had no statistically significant effect. The TPB-based model explained 19.6% of the variance in the purchase intention. Emphasizing health benefits, quality assurance, and certification clarity can enhance consumer engagement. This research adds depth to consumer behavior studies in India, highlighting the central role of personal attitudes in sustainable choice.

KEYWORDS: *Sustainable Consumption, Organic Fruits & Vegetables, Health consciousness, Environmental concern, Product quality.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable consumption has become a pivotal focus in mitigating ecological degradation, enhancing public health, and promoting ethically conscious purchasing patterns. The growing interest in organic fruits and vegetables reflects heightened consumer awareness of sustainability and environmental well-being (Willer et al., 2020; UN 2024; Nautiyal & Lal, 2025). In India, the organic food market sector has expanded rapidly; in 2024, its market size was estimated between USD 1,510.36 Million and USD 1,917.4 million, with projections indicating a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 20.13-22% for the period 2025-2033, potentially reaching USD 9,043-11,032.62 million by 2034 (IMARC Group, 2025; Expert Market Research, 2025). Since organic agriculture avoids synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, it supports biodiversity and aligns with eco-friendly consumption behaviors. However, the shift toward organic purchasing is shaped by various interconnected factors, such as consumer attitude, knowledge, social norms, quality, & accessibility (Aitken et al., 2020; Rana & Paul, 2017; Shaktawat et al., 2024).

Scholarly investigations reveal that intentions to buy organic produce are guided by both internal values and external stimuli. Health-oriented motives and environmental sensitivity are frequently cited as major incentives (Teng & Wang, 2015; Yadav & Pathak, 2016; Zidan, Hilary & Platat, 2025). Social mechanisms, including peer endorsement and cultural norms, also significantly impact purchasing behavior (Aertsens et al., 2009; LI & Shan, 2025). Nevertheless, several obstacles, such as price, restricted supply, and mistrust in organic certification systems, can deter consumer engagement (Chakrabarty et al., 2024; Aschemann-Witzel & Zielke, 2017; Willer et al., 2025). Recent insights

highlight the crucial role of consumer trust, particularly in labeling and supply chain transparency, as a key determinant of organic food choices (Nuttavuthisit & Thogersen, 2017; Tandon et al., 2020; Raszap Skorbiansky, 2025).

In light of these observations, the present study aims to identify and evaluate the major determinants that shape consumer purchase intentions toward organic fruits and vegetables, using an integrated framework that combines psychological and social dimensions. By identifying and analyzing these determinants, the research intends to enrich the discourse on sustainable consumption and deliver practical guidance to policymakers, marketers, and industry stakeholders. Ultimately, the insights generated will help cultivate consumer affinity toward organic products and advance environmentally responsible purchasing in an increasingly sustainability-oriented marketplace. This research is designed to explore the following objectives:

RO1. To examine the influence of factors on the purchase intention of consumers toward organic fruits and vegetables.

RO2. To provide practical recommendations for marketers and policymakers to enhance the sustainable consumption of organic fruits and vegetables.

Although sustainable consumption has been widely studied, there is still a clear lack of research in certain areas, specifically focusing on the Indian organic market, particularly in urban contexts like Aligarh. Existing literature often emphasizes general consumer behavior or theoretical constructs without fully capturing the nuanced interplay of psychological and product-related factors. This study aligns with the evolving landscape of health-conscious and environmentally aware consumerism, seeking to identify the key factors influencing consumers' intention to purchase organic fruits & vegetables. To explore this, we integrate the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) with additional constructs such as health consciousness, environmental concerns, and product quality-variables that are increasingly relevant in shaping consumer decisions. To the authors' knowledge, it represents one of the pioneering attempts to empirically examine the intentions of Indian consumers toward organic fruits & vegetables using a comprehensive, context-specific framework. The novelty of this study lies in its inclusion of the variables EC, HC, PQ, as well as TPB, and its conduct in the city of Aligarh, UP.

2. Literature Review

The conceptual foundation of "organic" originates from the Greek term *bios,* denoting life or a way of living, as observed by Essoussi and Zahaf (2008). The term "organic food products" gained prominence in the mid-20th century, particularly following Lord Northbourne's 1940 publication *Look to the Land,* where he introduced the concept of "organic farming" as a holistic approach to agriculture that emphasizes ecological balance and sustainability. According to Duram (2025), organic food refers to products cultivated, processed, and distributed without synthetic inputs such as chemical fertilizers, pesticides, growth hormones, or genetically modified organisms, aligning with principles of environmental stewardship and health integrity. Furthermore, GreenFacts (2025) defines organic food as the outcome of farming systems designed to promote biodiversity, conserve natural resources, and avoid practices harmful to human and animal welfare.

Padel & Foster (2005) observed that focus group participants primarily associated the concept of "organic" with fruits and vegetables, often excluding other categories, such as meat and dairy, from their consideration. However, empirical findings by Chinici, D'Amico, and Pecorino (2002) revealed that the most commonly consumed organic items encompassed not only fresh produce but also cereals, cereal-based products, milk, dairy items, and meats.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), as developed by Ajzen (1991,2015), is widely recognized as a comprehensive model for predicting consumer intentions. These intentions are shaped by three distinct sociopsychological components: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes represent an individual's overall evaluation-positive or negative, of performing a behavior, and are often considered the strongest predictor of intention (Ajzen, 2015; Savari & Gharechaee, 2020). Subjective norm captures the social expectations or perceived approval from significant others, while perceived behavioral control reflects the individual's perceptions of ease or difficulty in performing the behavior, taking into account external limitations such as time, resources, knowledge, and skills. Although these factors may lie beyond personal control, they still play a critical role in shaping intentions. TPB has been extensively validated across various domains, particularly in studies examining food-related decision-making. Empirical studies confirm TPB's predictive strength across various domains, especially in food consumption research. Syed et al. 2024), Cam, Tuna, and Bayr (2025), Fleseiru et al. (2020), Parrella et al. (2024), and Bahraseman et al. (2025) demonstrated the models' effectiveness in explaining sustainable consumption behavior.

Despite the extensive application of TPB in consumer behavior research, there remains a paucity of studies that integrate contemporary psychological variables and emotional dimensions into the model, particularly in relation to the intake of organically produced foods in developing economies. This research aims to address the identified gap by broadening the application of the TPB framework with contemporary behavioral drivers to generate deeper insights into consumer decision-making in India.

2.1. Purchase Intention toward Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Purchase intention reflects a consumer's anticipated readiness or inclination to acquire a particular product or service, and is widely recognized as a reliable indicator of future buying behavior (Azjen, 1991). However, understanding consumers' intentions to purchase organic food can be complex due to the diverse set of factors influencing their choices (Magistris and Gracia, 2008). Within the TPB, intention is considered the most immediate determinant of actual behavior, making it a crucial variable for examining organic consumption patterns (Ajzen, 1991). Similarly, Tarkianen and Sundqvist (2005) applied the TPB framework to investigate organic food consumption in Finland, highlighting the roles of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly shaped organic purchase intentions. Kalafatis et al. (1999) utilized the TPB to explore the factors influencing consumers' intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products, emphasizing the significance of environmental attitudes and perceived control in driving sustainable purchase decisions. Fu, Jin, and Omar (2024) found that among Chinese consumers, elevated levels of trust, heightened awareness of food safety, strong health orientation, and informed product understanding collectively enhance their intention to purchase organic products. Likewise, Song,vEom, and Moon (2024) utilized the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model to demonstrate that environmental cues and health motivations serve as activating factors that elicit positive consumer reactions, ultimately reinforcing their intention to buy organic food products.

2.2. Environmental Concerns and Purchase Intention of Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Growing awareness of environmental challenges-such as climate change, pollution, diminishing natural resources, and biodiversity threats-play a key role in shaping their purchasing behavior (Wang et al., 2020). Within the organic fruits and vegetables market, such environmental considerations significantly influence buying intentions, as organic farming is widely viewed as a more sustainable alternative that minimizes ecological damage when compared to conventional methods (Chu, 2018; Nafees et al., 2022). Practices associated with organic agriculture, including the avoidance of synthetic agrochemicals, enhancement of soil quality, and support for biodiversity, align closely with the values held by environmentally driven consumers (Willer et al., 2023).

Multiple studies have confirmed that environmental concern substantially boosts consumers' intent to purchase organic foods. In India, Basha and Lal (2019) highlighted this relationship, which was later reinforced by the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing that environmental motivations continued to play a crucial role despite the surge in health consciousness. Kanberger et al. (2025) observed that Chilean students increasingly opted for meals with lower environmental footprints in the post-pandemic period, reflecting a generational shift toward sustainable consumption. These studies highlight environmental concerns as a consistent and influential motivator behind consumers' intention to purchase organic food, though their intensity varies by region and context.

H1: Environmental Concern has a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention of organic fruits & vegetables.

2.3. Health Consciousness and Purchase Intention of Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Health consciousness reflects the degree to which consumers emphasize personal health and wellness when making dietary decisions, frequently opting for products considered wholesome, safe, and free from potentially harmful additives (Qi & Ploeger, 2021). Organic produce is frequently associated with lower pesticide residues, enhanced nutritional value, and the absence of artificial additives, attributes that strongly resonate with health-focused buyers (Rodriguez-Perez et al., 2020).

Health consciousness remains a key influence in developed markets, particularly in shaping consumer demand for organic foods. Wojciechowska-Solis and Barska (2022) found that post-pandemic, English consumers displayed heightened health motivations compared to their Polish counterparts, indicating that global health crises can intensify awareness and purchasing behavior. Komati et al. (2024), through a systematic review, further demonstrated that diets rich in organic produce are linked to lower pesticide exposure, an important factor for health-conscious individuals, especially among sensitive groups such as expectant mothers and young children. Collectively, these studies affirm that health

consciousness consistently emerges as a strong and dependable determinant of consumers' intention to purchase organic products. Regardless of context, consumers who view diet as a means of safeguarding health are more likely to integrate organic produce into their lifestyle choices.

H2: Health Consciousness has a significant influence on consumers' attitudes toward the purchasing of organic fruits & vegetables.

2.4. Product Quality and Purchase Intention of Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Product quality of organic fruits and vegetables, reflected in attributes such as taste, freshness, and safety, plays a decisive role in shaping consumer willingness to purchase organic produce (Suciu et al., 2019; Kahl et al., 2012). In high-income nations like the UK and Poland, consumers often equate organic produce with superior quality, which contributes to favorable attitudes and increased likelihood of purchase (Bryta, 2018; Kowalska et al., 2021). In Pakistan, sensory features such as taste, flavor, and visual appearance are important motivators for consumers who are inclined to invest in premium-priced organic vegetables (Rani et al., 2018). Nonetheless, the influence of sensory attributes remains context-dependent, as some research suggests limited impacts of factors like taste on purchase behavior (Pham et al., 2019). Recent studies reinforce and expand these findings. For instance, Zidan et al. (2025) highlight cross-cultural variations in sensory values, and their impact on purchase intention varies across regions due to cultural and economic factors. Moreover, product quality frequently interacts with broader considerations such a environmental awareness and health motivations to shape consumer attitudes toward organic options (Perera et al., 2018). In the Indian context, Ahmad et al. (2025) found that nutritional content and food safety concerns significantly enhance consumer attitudes toward organic produce.

H3: Product Quality has a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention of organic fruits & vegetables.

2.5. Consumer Attitude and Purchase Intention of Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Consumer attitude toward organic fruits & vegetables serves as a key predictor of purchase intention, with favorable perceptions of organic fruits & vegetables significantly enhancing the likelihood of buying behavior (Chen et al., 2014; Jaiswal et al., 2021). These attitudes are influenced by beliefs regarding health advantages, ecological sustainability, and product quality, alongside external factors such as prevailing social norms (Chu, 2018). In the Egyptian contexts, consumer attitudes served as a mediating factor between environmental concern and purchase intentions, while subjective norms and perceived behavioral control had limited direct influence (Zayed et al., 2023). Similarly, Kim and Lee (2023) reported that in South Korea, attitudes acted as an intermediary between social norms, ethical awareness, and purchase intentions.

H4: Consumer attitude has a significant influence on purchase intention toward organic fruits & vegetables.

2.6. Subjective Norm and Purchase Intention of Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Subjective norm refers to perceived social expectations from close contacts such as family, friends, or peers that influence an individual's decision to adopt a behavior (Ajzen, 2005; Scalco et al., 2017). In the Chinese market, these norms positively influence both consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, especially when aligned with heightened environmental consciousness (Chu, 2018). Research conducted in Iran identified subjective norms as the second most impactful factor after health awareness, exerting both direct and indirect effects on purchase intention through attitudinal pathways (Bazhan et al., 2024). However, the effect of social pressure is not universal. For instance, findings from Vietnam revealed no direct relationship between social pressure and purchase intentions, pointing to potential cultural differences in the weight of social influences (Nguyen et al., 2021). Additionally, digital platforms through mechanisms like social media campaigns, influencer marketing, and e-WOM intensify the effects of subjective norms by shaping consumer perceptions in online environments (Zayed et al., 2023).

H5: Subjective Norm has a significant influence on consumers' intention to purchase organic fruits & vegetables.

2.7. Perceived Behavioral Control and Purchase Intention of Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Perceived behavioral control (PBC), by Ajzen (1991), refers to an individual's assessment of how easy or difficult it is to perform a specific behavior, reflecting both internal capabilities and external constraints that influence action. In the case of organic food, PBC reflects practical considerations such as product availability, affordability, and convenience. Elevated levels of PBC are linked to stronger purchase intentions, as demonstrated in studies from Tanzania and Kenya, where PBC was a significant predictor of organic food buying behavior (Teng & Lu, 2019). More recently, Li and Shan (2025), using an extended TPB model, found that health consciousness and

environmental awareness were included in consumers' preference for green-packaged organic products. In the Indian context, Matharu et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of convenience, green trust, and perceived access as critical enablers of organic consumption.

H6: Perceived Behavioral Control has a significant influence on consumers' intention to purchase organic fruits & vegetables.

2.8. Underlying Theory

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), first introduced by Ajzen (1988, 1991), provides a robust framework for understanding the psychological drivers of consumers' behavior, particularly in cases where actions are not entirely under voluntary control (Magnusson et al., 2001). TPB posits that behavioral intention is determined by three core components: an individual's attitude toward the behavior, the influence of perceived social expectations (subjective norms), and the perceived ability to perform the behavior, referred to as perceived behavioral control. Each of these dimensions contributes uniquely to the formation of intentions, which are then considered the most immediate predictors of actual behavior (Kalafatis et al., 1999). According to Sparks and Shepherd (1992), the TPB has garnered extensive empirical support, affirming a consistent relationship between attitudes across various contexts. This framework has been extensively applied in consumer research to predict and explain purchasing decisions, particularly in the context involving health-related or environmentally conscious consumption or product quality.

2.9. Research Model

The conceptual framework depicted below illustrates the proposed relationship between key psychological factors- namely, environmental concern, health consciousness, product quality, consumer attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as independent variables influencing consumers' purchase intention toward organic fruits and vegetables, which serves as the dependent variable. This model reflects the assumption that psychological motivations (e.g., health consciousness and environmental concerns), product perceptions (quality attributes), and social dynamics (e.g., subjective norm and perceived control) jointly determine consumer attitudes and ultimately, purchase intentions. Figure 1 outlines the research model formulated for empirical testing in the present study.

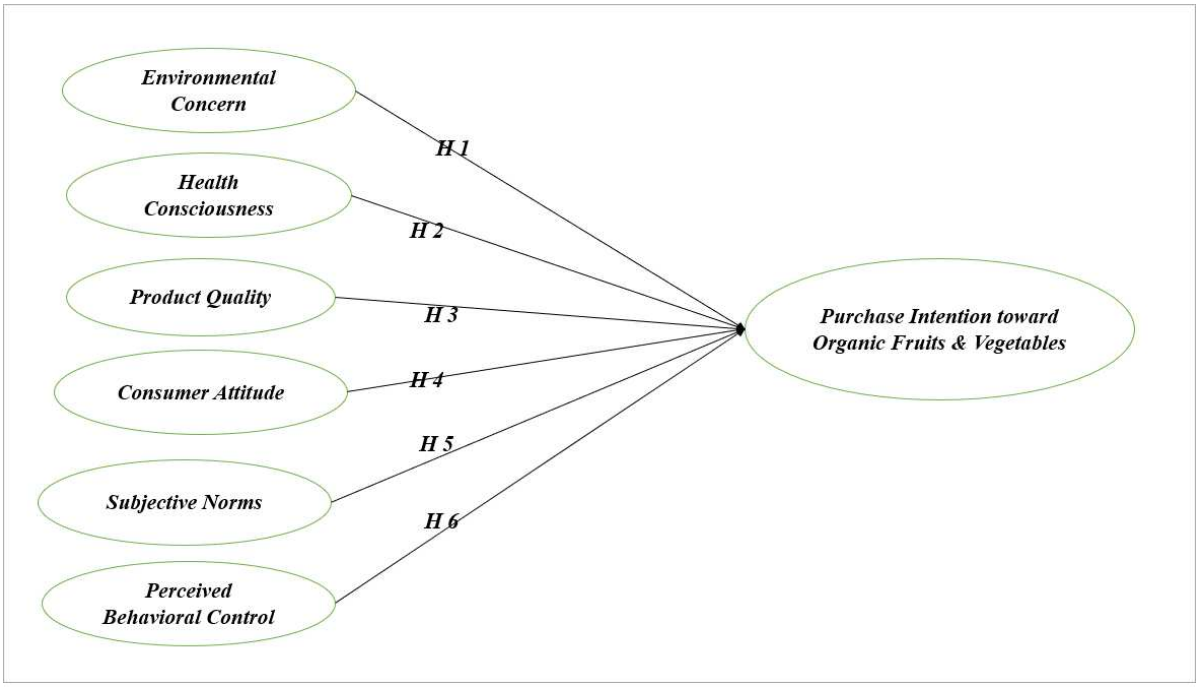

Fig:1 (Source: developed by the researcher)

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

To empirically test the hypotheses, a quantitative research methodology was employed, targeting consumers of Aligarh, district of Uttar Pradesh. The target population comprises urban consumers across different social and educational backgrounds, including working professionals, students, homemakers, graduates, and postgraduates. Probability sampling was employed to ensure representation across demographic categories such as age, income, and education. This research presents a novel, context-specific, unique adaptation of the TPB tailored to the Indian organic food market, incorporating environmental concern, health consciousness, and product quality into

a cohesive model. Data collection was conducted through structured questionnaires incorporating empirically validated psychological measurement scales, with 285 respondents from Aligarh between April 20, 2025, to June 30, 2025. Prior to the data collection, a written consent statement explaining the study's goals, the voluntary nature of participation, & the confidentiality of answers was included with the questionnaire. Respondents were made aware that their involvement was completely voluntary, that they could stop at any time without consequences & the information gathered would only be utilized for scholarly study. Analytical procedures were conducted using SPSS software, employing a range of statistical techniques such as descriptive analysis, reliability assessment (Cronbach's alpha), factor analysis, and regression to evaluate the relationship among variables.

3.2. Measures

To ensure construct validity and internal consistency, all measurement items were adapted from previously validated scales and tailored to the context of organic fruits and vegetables in the Indian market. Environmental concern was measured using items from Wang et al. (2020) and Nafees et al. (2022), emphasizing consumer awareness of ecological issues. Health consciousness was measured through scales by Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) and Qi Ploeger (2021), capturing the extent to which health considerations influence food choices. Product quality encompasses attributes such as freshness, safety, and taste-was measured using items from Suciu et al. (2019) and Wojciechowska-Solis and Barska (2022). Consumer attitude toward organic produce was evaluated using scales adapted from Chen (2010) and Jaiswal et al. (2021), reflecting favorable or unfavorable dispositions toward organic consumption. Subjective norms, representing perceived social pressure, were measured using items from Ajzen (1991) and Scalco et al. (2017). Perceived behavioral control, indicating consumers' perceived ease or difficulty in purchasing organic products, was assessed using scales from Tarkianen and Sunqvist (2005) and Teng and Lu (2019). Purchase intention, the outcome variable, was measured using items adapted from Ajzen (1991) and Yadav & Pathak (2016), capturing the likelihood of future organic purchases. Participants' responses were captured using a five-point Likert scale with values ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), as detailed in Annexure 1. Reliability analysis confirms that all constructs demonstrated Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.70 or higher, signifying satisfactory to high internal consistency, consistent with the reliability standard outlined by Streiner (2003).

4. Results

4.1. Demographic Analysis

A total of 285 respondents participated in the study. Slightly more than half were female (51.9%), while males accounted for 48.1%. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to over 45 years. Table 1 demonstrates the summary of the demographics profile.

4.2. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was performed on the independent variables- namely, environmental concern, health consciousness, product quality, consumer attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control-to identify latent constructs within the dataset. The varimax rotation method was applied to enhance interpretability by maximizing the variance of factor loadings, thereby clarifying the underlying structure of each variable.

A total of 31 items were analyzed to measure the 5 independent variables. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was recorded at 0.02, indicating a meritoriously suitable dataset for factor analysis, as it surpasses the commonly accepted minimum threshold of 0.60. Bartlett's test of sphericity yielded a statistically significant result ($p<.001$), indicating that correlations among variables were sufficiently strong to justify the application of factor analysis. The analysis confirmed the presence of distinct constructs corresponding to the study variables, thereby supporting the validity of the measurement model.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	137	48.1
Female	148	51.9
Age		
18-24 yrs	71	24.9
25-34 yrs	70	24.6
35-44 yrs	66	23.2
45 years & Above	78	27.4

Education		
High school or below	38	13.3
Undergraduate	79	27.7
Postgraduate	69	24.2
Doctorate	70	24.6
No degree or no formal education	29	10.2
Family Size		
1-2	79	27.7
3-4	67	23.5
5-6	80	28.1
More than 6	59	20.7
Income		
10,000-25,000	66	23.2
25,001-50,000	73	25.6
50,001-75,000	71	24.9
75,001 & Above	75	26.3

4.3. Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the scales is evaluated using Cronbach's alpha to evaluate their internal consistency. According to Sekaran (2002), alpha values below 0.6 are deemed poor, those around 0.7 are considered acceptable, and values exceeding 0.8 indicate good reliability. All constructs in this study surpassed the recommended threshold of 0.70 for Cronbach's alpha, confirming robust internal consistency and reliability. Environmental Concern registered a reliability coefficient of 0.757, indicating a satisfactory level of consistency. Health Consciousness attained a value of 0.730, reflecting a reliable measurement of respondents' health-related motivations. The Product Quality scale demonstrated solid reliability at 0.775, validating consistent perceptions regarding standards of organic perceptions. The reliability of Subjective norm and Perceived behavioral control were 0.27 and 0.40, respectively, signifying strong internal consistency in capturing the influence of social expectations and perceived autonomy in purchasing decisions. Remarkably, Purchase Intention recorded an alpha of 0.986, highlighting exceptional internal reliability in assessing consumers' intent to buy organic fruits and vegetables.

4.4. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed to provide an overview of responses for each construct. The mean values ranged between 3.59 to 4.16, indicating generally positive perceptions toward organic produce. Table 2 summarizes the descriptive results for the proposed model. Among the variables, health consciousness recorded the highest mean, followed by environmental concerns and product quality, whereas subjective norms exhibited the lowest mean score.

Table 2: Descriptive Overview of Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Environmental concerns	3.99	0.620
Health consciousness	4.16	0.550
Product quality	3.79	0.626
Consumer attitude	3.65	0.848
Subjective norms	3.59	0.688
Perceived behavioral control	3.75	0.684
Purchase Intention	3.72	0.823

4.5. Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis revealed a statistically positive association between Environmental Concern and Health Consciousness ($r = .184$, $p < .01$), suggesting that individuals who express greater concern for environmental issues also tend to exhibit heightened health awareness. Moreover, Consumer Attitude demonstrated a robust positive correlation with Purchase Intention ($r = .420$, $p < .01$), indicating that favorable perceptions of organic products strongly influence consumers' willingness to buy. This finding supports prior studies highlighting the pivotal role of attitude in mediating environmentally driven purchasing behaviors (Ajzen, 1991; Paul et al., 2016).

Product Quality also showed a moderate and statistically significant correlation with Purchase Intention ($r = .369$), underscoring its meaningful, though not dominant, role in shaping consumer decisions related to organic

produce. Other variable relationships presented either positive or negative trends but lacked statistical significance ($p > .05$), indicating minimal or inconsistent linear associations. Specifically, Subjective norm and perceived behavioral control exhibited weak, statistically insignificant relationships with Purchase intention, suggesting that neither social influence nor perceived control sustainability affects purchase intentions within this sample.

4.6. Regression-based Findings

Table 3 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis performed to assess the impact of the independent variables on consumers' purchase intention. The regression model proved to be statistically significant (F-value of 11.276 and a p-value < 0.001). The results suggest that the collective variables offer a meaningful prediction of consumers' purchase intentions. With the R^2 value of 0.196, approximately 19.6% of the variance in purchase intention is explained level within behavioral research, considering the complex and multidimensional nature of consumer decision-making (Ajzen, I. (2002). Consumer attitude (beta 0.405) emerged as the most prominent and statistically significant factor. The strong positive beta reflects that favorable attitudes toward organic products are closely associated with higher purchase intention. This observation aligns with Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior, which positions attitudes as a central component in shaping behavioral intent. Product quality (beta= 0.113) and Health consciousness (beta= 0.101) both showed moderate positive influences. These findings emphasize the role of product excellence and health-driven motivations as secondary but relevant drivers in the consumer decision process, reaffirming insights from previous studies (Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Environmental concern (beta 0.034) had a minor positive impact but failed to significantly predict purchase intention. This could suggest that environmental awareness does not readily convert into actual buying behavior unless mediated by deeper attitudinal or credibility-related factors. Subjective norms (beta= -0.01) and perceived behavioral control (beta= -0.043) unexpectedly yielded negative coefficients. This implies that external social pressure and perceived ease of purchasing may not support and might slightly impede consumers' buying intentions. Possible explanations include normative encouragement, low availability, or personal constraints.

Table 3: Correlation and Regression Results for Purchase Intention toward Organic Fruits & Vegetables

Predictor Constructs	Correlation with Purchase Intention (r)	Beta	p-value	Hypothesis Result
Environmental Concern	0.184**	0.034	>0.05	Not Supported
Health Consciousness	0.101**	0.101	<0.05	Supported
Product Quality	0.369**	0.113	<0.05	Supported
Consumer Attitude	0.420**	0.405	<0.001	Supported
Subjective Norms	0.078 (ns)	-0.010	>0.05	Not Supported
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.054 (ns)	-0.043	>0.05	Not Supported

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study affirm the relevance of the TPB as a comprehensive framework for understanding consumer purchase intentions toward organic fruits & vegetables within the Indian context. Consistent with earlier research (Ajzen, 1991; Sparks & Shepherd, 1992), consumer attitude emerged as the most powerful determinant of purchase intention. This suggests that when individuals hold positive perceptions of the health, safety, and environmental advantages associated with organic products significantly enhances consumers' likelihood of purchasing them. These results are consistent with prior studies conducted in both developed and developing economies, where attitude has consistently acted as the strongest predictor of sustainable food choices (Yadav & Pathak, 2016; Robinson & Smith, 2020). Recent empirical studies have similarly identified consumer attitude as a critical mediating variable linking psychological determinants to purchasing behavior (Biswas & Roy, 2023; Lee & Yun, 2015; Singh & Verma, 2023). *Health consciousness* consistently proved to be a strong predictor of consumers intention, underscoring its pivotal role in motivating organic consumption. As demonstrated by Lee and Yun (2015) and Suciu et al. (2019), individuals who prioritize their health and wellness are more likely to perceive organic products as beneficial, which apositivelt influences their intention to adopt such products. Iqbal et al. (2021) similarly highlighted that health consciousness, coupled with food safety awareness, enhances consumer involvement and strengthens purchase motivations, particularly when ecological values are present. Nguyen et al. (2025) provided evidence from Vietnam that health consciousness directly influences purchase intention, independent of attitudinal mediators. These studies underscore that health consciousness not only acts as a direct predictor but also amplifies the impact of other motivational

constructs, reinforcing sustained consumer demand for organic products.

Product quality exerts a meaningful positive influence on Consumers' purchase decisions, echoing the conclusions of Rodriguez-Perez et al. (2020) and Suciu et al. (2019), who noted that consumers are more inclined toward organic produce when they associate it with nutritional value, safety, and superior taste. Studies by Rana and Paul (2017) and Janssen (2018) emphasized that characteristics such as freshness, taste, and nutritional value are key motivators for choosing food. Dangi et al. (2024) identified a segment of consumers whose loyalty to organic products stems from their perception of superior sensory attributes and stringent safety standards. Together, these findings suggest that product quality serves as a symbolic indicator of health and reliability, reinforcing sustained consumer engagement with organic food. Although *environmental concern* showed a positive trend, its statistical insignificance suggests that ecological awareness alone may not suffice to motivate purchases unless supported by strong attitudes or credible certification mechanisms (Tandon et al., 2020; Nafees et al., 2022), underscoring the well-documented attitude-behavior gap in consumer-decision making. Kushwah et al. (2019) highlighted this disconnect, noting that while individuals may express strong ecological values, these often remain symbolic and fail to translate into actual buying behavior. Similarly, Asif et al. (2021) observed that although environmental concern shaped favorable attitudes toward organic food, it showed no substantial effect on purchase intention, suggesting that personal health and financial considerations often outweigh altruistic motives.

Conversely, *subjective norms* did not exhibit a statistically significant effect on purchase intention, thereby questioning one of the core assumptions of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) and suggesting that social approval and peer influence may have limited sway over consumers' decisions to buy organic fruits and vegetables. Studies conducted in India by Singh and Verma (2017) and Yadav and Pathak (2017) revealed that while consumers acknowledge recommendations from family and peers, these social cues are often eclipsed by individual priorities such as health benefits and product quality. Qi and Ploeger (2021) found that in China, subjective norms had only a marginal effect on organic food purchase intention, with personal motivations taking precedence. *Perceived behavioral control* also did not significantly influence purchase intention, despite its foundational role in TPB, indicating that consumers' sense of control over factors like availability, affordability, and access to organic products may not translate into actual buying behavior. Rana & Paul (2020) reported that limited affordability and accessibility diminish the effectiveness of PBC in predicting organic food purchases. Similarly, Yazdanpanah and Forouzani (2020) noted that markets with structural challenges-such as pricing issues, sparse retail options, and questionable certification, PBC had minimal impact on consumer behavior.

From a strategic perspective, the results advocate for holistic marketing approaches that highlight health advantages, assure product quality, and cultivate favorable consumer attitudes through targeted messaging and transparent certification practices. In parallel, policy interventions should aim to improve infrastructure, enhance affordability, and establish robust regulatory systems to foster consumer confidence and market inclusivity (Aertsens et al., 2009). Sadler et al. (2024) found that place-based strategies and promotional messaging significantly increased product visibility and consumer engagement, while Callin (2025) highlighted the power of authentic storytelling and AI-driven communication in building trust and emotional connection.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

This study makes several contributions to theory within the domain of sustainable consumption by extending the TPB (Ajzen, 1991) to the Indian context through the inclusion of health consciousness, environmental concerns, and product quality as salient predictors of organic food purchase intention. The findings reveal that consumer attitude –primarily shaped by health and quality perceptions-exerts the strongest influence, while subjective norm and perceived behavioral control are statistically insignificant, corroborating prior research emphasizing attitude-centric models (Paul & Rana, 2012; Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Furthermore, the limited impact of social norms and behavioral control in this context contrasts with findings from Western and East Asian markets (Scalco et al., 2017; Chu, 2018), suggesting cultural variability in TPB's predictive components (Magnusson et al., 2001). The dominance of intrinsic motivations over normative or ecological concerns supports the view that consumers in emerging economies prioritize personal utility in sustainable consumption decisions (Nuttavuthisit & Thogersen, 2017; Prasahr et al., 2023). Finally, the modest explanatory power of the model explanatory power of the TPB underscores the need for theoretical expansion through constructs such as trust, price sensitivity, and digital influence, aligning with recent calls for hybrid frameworks that integrate

psychological, contextual, and institutional factors (Li & Shan, 2025; Zayed et al., 2023).

5.2. Practical Implications

- **Integrate Health and Sustainability Messaging-** Promotional efforts should emphasize both the individual and ecological advantages of consuming organic produce. Framing organic food as a health-conscious, ethical, and forward-thinking choice can effectively strengthen consumer engagement.
- **Reinforce Product Quality and Transparency-** Given the strong role of quality perceptions in driving purchase decisions, marketers must ensure clarity around sourcing practices, emphasize verified certifications, and employ storytelling to convey authenticity. Trust in product quality encourages loyalty and repeat purchases.
- **Cultivate Favorable Consumer Attitude via Active Engagement-** Strategic use of awareness initiatives, collaborations with influencers, and grassroots campaigns can replace public perception. Sharing authentic experiences and success stories can make organic consumption feel desirable and attainable.
- **Promote Autonomy over Social Conformity-** Although social norms and perceived behavioral control had limited influence, this highlights an opportunity to frame consumers as proactive contributors to sustainability. Empowering narratives like "Your Choice Makes a Difference") can resonate more than appeals to conformity.
- **Improve Accessibility and Confidence in Organic Choices-** Despite the modest role of perceived behavioral control, enhancing affordability, availability, and convenience remains critical. Retail and policy efforts should aim to integrate organic products into routine shopping environments and digital platforms.
- **Strengthen Policy Frameworks for Certification and Education-** Policymakers should reinforce credibility through rigorous certification systems, incentivize organic agriculture, and embed sustainability awareness into social discourse to support long-term consumer behavior change.

5.3. Limitations & future research

Although this study offers meaningful insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The research was confined to the Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh, limiting the applicability of findings to broader Indian contexts with diverse cultural and socio-economic profiles. The cross-sectional design approaches consumer intentions at a specific moment, thereby failing to account for evolving behavioral patterns and perceptual changes over time. Additionally, the TPB model (19.6%) suggests that other influential variables, such as certification trust, price sensitivity, product knowledge, and digital engagement-remain unexplored. The research utilized structured questionnaires to gather self-reported data from participants. Although this approach yields insightful information, it is prone to social desirability bias, potentially leading to discrepancies between reported and actual purchasing behavior. Future studies should expand geographically, adopt longitudinal methodologies, and integrate constructs like lifestyle orientation, food safety concerns, and digital marketing exposure. Comparative research across developed and developing nations, along with experimental and qualitative approaches, could further illuminate the psychological and cultural dimensions of sustainable consumer behavior.

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Authors Contribution:

Author 1 and Author 2: Conceptualization, Methodology, Acquisition of Data, Software, Analysis and Interpretation of Data, Drafting the manuscript

Author 3, Author 2, and Author 1: Supervision

Author 1 and Author 2: Reviewing and Editing

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Informed Consent

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