



An Analysis Of Consumer Psychology In Purchasing Organic Food Products

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Abstract: This study investigates the psychological factors influencing consumer behavior towards purchasing organic food products, a sector experiencing significant growth due to heightened awareness about health and environmental sustainability. The purpose of this research is to examine the motivations, attitudes, and barriers consumers face when choosing organic products. Using a descriptive approach, including surveys and interviews, data was collected from a diverse sample of consumers to explore the key drivers such as health consciousness, environmental concern, perceived quality, scepticism, attitude and trust in product authenticity. The study's findings are highly relevant as they offer valuable insights for marketers and policymakers aiming to increase organic food adoption in emerging markets. By understanding these factors, businesses can tailor their strategies to address consumer concerns and promote the benefits of organic products. The study also underscores the importance of trust-building initiatives, such as certification and transparency, to reduce skepticism.

Index Terms - consumer behavior, organic food, psychological factors, health consciousness, environmental sustainability.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare's "Jaivik Bharat" initiative has also played a crucial role in promoting organic farming and certification, creating confidence among consumers about the authenticity of organic products. India is currently one of the largest producers of organic products globally, with over 2.8 million hectares of land under organic cultivation as per the 2022 report of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). In India, the organic food market has seen impressive growth, with the market size expected to reach \$12.4 billion by 2025, according to a report by the Indian Organic Trade Association (IOTA). This shift is particularly evident in urban areas, where consumers are becoming more discerning about food safety, chemical-free products, and sustainable agricultural practices. The psychological factors that influence the health consciousness, environmental concerns, and ethical values in decision-making process, are at the core of this growing trend. Understanding these factors is crucial for marketers and policymakers to design effective strategies that cater to this evolving consumer base.

The research into consumer psychology in purchasing organic food products seeks to explore the motivations, perceptions, and attitudes that guide these purchasing decisions. Factors such as perceived health benefits trust in organic certifications, and the influence of media and social networks play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior. Recent studies by Statista show that nearly 30% of Indian consumers are willing to pay a premium for organic products, but there are concerns regarding the availability, pricing, and authenticity of such products. This research will delve into these psychological drivers to provide insights into the preferences and barriers faced by consumers in adopting organic food. With increasing market potential, understanding the psychology behind organic food purchasing can help

businesses develop targeted marketing campaigns, enhance product offerings, and contribute to the growth of the organic food sector in India.

2. CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The significance of studying consumer psychology in purchasing organic food products lies in the growing market potential and the need for businesses to understand the deeper motivations behind consumer behavior. Organic food is increasingly being viewed as a healthier, environmentally-friendly alternative to conventional products, making it essential to grasp the psychological factors influencing consumer choices. As concerns about climate change, food safety, and personal health continue to rise, consumers are becoming more informed and selective about the food they purchase. This shift has led to a boom in the organic food sector globally and in India, where organic farming is becoming more prevalent. However, despite the increasing interest in organic products, barriers such as pricing, availability, and misconceptions regarding organic labels still persist. Understanding these psychological barriers and motivators is crucial for businesses to effectively engage with consumers and promote organic products.

Furthermore, analyzing the psychological factors that drive organic food purchases can help brands create more targeted marketing strategies and improve consumer satisfaction. Health consciousness, environmental concerns, perceived quality, scepticism, attitude and trust in product authenticity have been identified as major drivers of organic food consumption. At the same time, consumers often face dilemmas regarding the authenticity of organic claims, the higher price points, and the accessibility of organic products in mainstream retail outlets. Exploring the influence of these psychological factors allows for a better understanding of consumer's purchase intention towards organic food products and how these factors vary across different demographic groups. The findings of this research can contribute to developing effective communication strategies for organic food brands, enhance consumer trust, and promote long-term sustainable consumer behavior. With organic food becoming an integral part of mainstream diets, the stake holders can focus on the health-conscious and environmentally-aware consumers.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jerni Sari Septiani (2024) explores consumer purchase decisions of organic food in Indonesia, emphasizing health consciousness and perceived quality as key influencers, mediated by purchase intention. It found that environmental awareness had no direct or indirect impact. These findings underscore the importance of promoting health and quality attributes to drive organic food purchases. **Marokhu (2024)** highlights young consumers' critical role in sustainable behaviors, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explain purchase intentions. Key constructs like attitude and subjective norms significantly influence organic purchases. Moral norms and health values are pivotal for decision-making, guiding targeted marketing strategies. **Raja Kifaya (2024)** examines skepticism's role as a barrier in buying organic products and highlights environmental knowledge and concern as mediators. Addressing skepticism with targeted strategies can enhance trust and purchase intentions. Marketers must focus on these dynamics to encourage organic adoption. **T. K. Srinath (2024)** discusses India's organic food market, projected to grow significantly but hampered by inefficiencies. It advocates for dedicated organic food parks to streamline operations, improve pricing, and enhance global competitiveness. These strategies can unlock market potential and encourage sustainable practices.

AparajitaSanyal (2023) investigates the role of consumer expertise in preference-buying behavior and post-purchase satisfaction. Expertise positively influences preference and satisfaction, with gender differences playing a moderating role. The findings stress the importance of understanding expertise in green marketing contexts. **NallakaRushitha (2023)** the rising demand for organic food in Nellore is linked to nutritional and environmental benefits. Correlation analysis highlights age, income, and education as critical factors influencing awareness and purchase behavior. Challenges like high prices and limited access persist, necessitating strategic solutions. **Agnieszka Dudziak (2022)** this study on Poland's organic market identifies barriers such as high prices and skepticism. Despite growing demand, issues like consumer education and labeling need attention. The findings call for measures to enhance consumer confidence and market accessibility. **AnuguAmarender Reddy (2022)** Analyzing India's organic farming under PKVY, the study reveals reduced costs but lower yields. It emphasizes the potential for organic farming in specific regions to boost both producer and consumer surpluses. Strategic targeting can enhance its viability.

ArshiNaim (2022) applies the TPB to understand youth behavior in the Middle East towards organic food. Factors like personal attitude and subjective norms significantly impact purchase decisions. These insights are valuable for developing tailored strategies in the region. **Julia Wojciechowska-Solis (2022)** Consumer awareness and health benefits are primary motives for organic purchases in Poland. Environmental awareness strongly correlates with buying behavior. The findings underline the role of education in driving sustainable choices. **Mostafa FawzyZayed (2022)** Using TPB, this study explores factors like attitudes and environmental concern in Egypt. Attitudes and e-WOM significantly affect organic purchase intentions. It highlights marketing insights for emerging markets. **Nitika Thakur (2022)** emphasizes organic farming's sustainability and the challenges consumers face. Awareness and education are keys to overcoming barriers. Sustainable development goals align well with organic farming benefits.

Sujaya H (2022) Gender differences influence organic vegetable purchases, with health and environmental concerns being critical factors. The study suggests tailored strategies for targeting male and female consumers. Insights help refine marketing approaches. **Priya Shah (2022)** Entrepreneurs face challenges in promoting millet products despite rising consumer interest. Awareness and taste preferences are significant hurdles. Addressing these can foster a promising market for sustainable food products. **Amandeep Dhir (2020)** Self-Determination Theory highlights intrinsic motivation and environmental concerns as influencers in organic food purchases. Policymakers must emphasize ethical and health benefits for wider adoption. External regulations also impact consumer behavior. **AnushreeTandon (2020)** Behavioral Reasoning Theory links values and attitudes to organic purchase intentions. The study finds reasoning processes mediating values-attitudes relationships. It offers nuanced insights for consumer decision-making strategies. **Alexander Andre Feil (2020)** Demographics shape motivations and attitudes toward organic food in Brazil. The findings stress the need for unified strategies to promote sustainable consumption. Tailored interventions can enhance consumer engagement.

Luigina Canova (2020) Trust plays a pivotal role in organic food consumption, acting as a heuristic in decision-making. It positively influences attitudes and purchase intentions. Building consumer trust through certifications is crucial. **Naveed Ahmed (2019)** Expanding the TPB, this study links environmental awareness to organic food purchase intentions in young Chinese consumers. Awareness moderates TPB constructs, emphasizing its importance. Tailored marketing strategies are recommended. **Suryatapa Das (2020)** Organic foods are safer and environmentally friendly alternatives to conventional products. Rising demand is attributed to health benefits and superior nutritional content. The findings advocate for sustainable agricultural practices. **Ralph Hansmann (2020)** Financial and health-related attitudes are key predictors of organic food purchases in Switzerland. Knowledge and income play crucial roles. The findings guide interventions to promote environmentally friendly consumption. **Julia Wojciechowska-Solis (2021)** Preferences for fresh and healthy organic products differ across regions. Trusted sources and digital platforms influence choices. Insights support targeted marketing for young consumers. **FauziaJabeen (2020)** Health consciousness drives organic purchases in Japan. Facilitators like ecological welfare influence buying behavior. Moderation analysis highlights varying impacts, offering strategic insights for stakeholders. **Anwesha Chattopadhyay (2019)** Growing awareness of health and environmental concerns drives organic adoption in Bengaluru. Awareness campaigns are needed to expand its popularity. Behavioral trends indicate a shift toward eco-friendly products. **B. Suresh Reddy (2010)** Organic farming is an alternative to overcome Green Revolution challenges. It supports soil fertility and ecological balance. The study emphasizes integrating organic farming into mainstream agriculture.

4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite the growing awareness and demand for organic food products globally, consumers in regions like Tumkur District face significant barriers, including limited availability, high prices, and skepticism about quality and authenticity. The lack of targeted awareness campaigns and accessibility to organic products exacerbates the gap between consumer intentions and actual purchase behavior. Understanding the specific psychological factors influencing consumer decisions in this region is crucial to addressing these challenges and promoting sustainable consumption.

5. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To examine the influence of psychological towards organic food products in Tumkur District using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Method: The study will adopt a descriptive research design, aiming to examine the psychological factors that influence consumer decisions in purchasing organic food products in Tumkur District. Descriptive research will help in gathering detailed insights into consumer attitudes, motivations, and behaviors. The study will take a quantitative approach to explore the psychological factors affecting consumer behavior using statistical methods and models, with a focus on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze complex relationships between variables.

6.2. Sample Area

The study will focus on consumers of organic food products in Tumkur District. Tumkur District is selected because of its emerging interest in organic products and the increasing awareness of health and environmental concerns among its residents.

6.3. Sampling Method

Sampling Technique: A stratified random sampling method will be used to ensure that the sample represents various demographic groups, including age, income, education level, and family size.

Sample Size Determination: The unknown sample size was determined to be 385 respondents using a sample size formula (for a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error). However, the study considers 400 valid responses to be optimal, with a slight over-sample of 425 respondents being issued questionnaires to account for possible non-425 respondents and invalid responses. 400 completed and valid responses were considered for analysis.

6.4. Data Collection

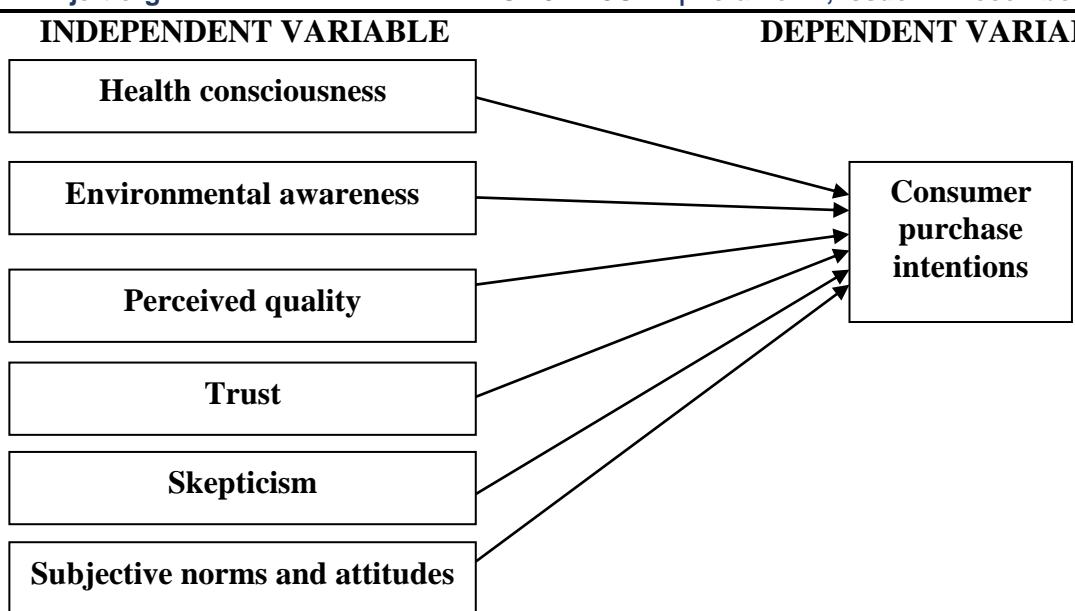
Primary Data: Data will be collected using a **structured questionnaire** administered to the respondents in Tumkur District. The questionnaire will consist of both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions to capture the psychological factors affecting organic food purchases. The Likert scale will be 5 points, ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, designed to assess factors such as health consciousness, environmental awareness, trust, perceived quality, skepticism, and attitudes.

Secondary Data: Secondary data will be gathered from: Academic journals, market reports, and government publications related to organic food consumption, behavioral patterns, and consumer psychology in India. Reports on organic farming, consumer behavior in sustainable markets, and studies in related geographic regions will be reviewed to provide background information and to support primary data analysis.

6.5. Tools of Analysis

Descriptive Statistics: it will be used to summarize and describe the characteristics of the data. Measures such as mean, standard deviation, frequency distributions, and percentages will be used to present the demographic details of respondents and to analyze the key psychological factors influencing organic food purchases.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): SEM will be used to examine the relationships between psychological factors and consumer purchase intentions. SEM will allow for testing the model of how these variables interact and influence consumer behavior. This will include path analysis to assess direct, indirect, and total effects between variables.



6.6. Hypotheses

Based on the objective to examine the psychological factors influencing the purchase of organic food in Tumkur District, the following hypotheses are framed:

- **H1:** Health consciousness positively influences consumer purchase intention towards organic food products.
- **H2:** Environmental awareness has a significant positive effect on the purchase intention of organic food products.
- **H3:** Perceived quality of organic food positively affects consumer purchase behavior.
- **H4:** Trust in organic food products significantly mediates the relationship between consumer attitudes and purchase intention.
- **H5:** Skepticism about organic food products negatively influences purchase intention.
- **H6:** Subjective norms and attitudes towards organic food significantly influence purchase intentions, with a mediation effect by personal values.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis uses **descriptive statistics** to summarize the respondents' characteristics and **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** to test the relationships among psychological factors affecting the purchase intentions of organic food products. The data is analyzed using **SPSS** (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) for descriptive statistics and **AMOS** (Analysis of Moment Structures) software for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

8. 1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the demographic data and psychological factors influencing the purchase of organic food. The key variables include age, income, education, health consciousness, environmental awareness, trust, skepticism, and attitudes towards organic food products.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Group		
18-25 years	95	23.75%
26-35 years	110	27.5%
36-45 years	85	21.25%
46-60 years	70	17.5%
Above 60 years	40	10%
Gender		
Male	180	45%
Female	220	55%
Income Group		
Below Rs.25,000	50	12.5%
Rs.25,000 - Rs.50,000	150	37.5%
Rs.50,000 - Rs.75,000	120	30%
Above Rs.75,000	80	20%
Education Level		
Primary/Secondary	40	10%
Undergraduate	120	30%
Graduate/Postgraduate	240	60%

Source: Primary Data- SPSS output

The majority of respondents are in the age groups of **26-35 years** and **18-25 years**, indicating a young consumer base for organic food. **Females** represent a larger proportion of the sample, reflecting higher involvement in health and sustainability-related decisions. **Income distribution** shows a varied income range, with the largest proportion in the **Rs.25,000 – Rs.50,000** category, signifying a middle-class consumer base with the potential to invest in organic food. A significant proportion (60%) of respondents hold **graduate or postgraduate** degrees, which may influence their awareness and preferences for organic products.

Table 2: Psychological Factors Influencing Purchase Intention

Psychological Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
Health Consciousness	4.23	0.78
Environmental Awareness	3.91	0.85
Perceived Quality	4.10	0.74
Trust in Organic Food	3.87	0.90
Skepticism about Organic Products	3.21	1.02
Attitudes towards Organic Food	4.05	0.80
Subjective Norms	3.95	0.83

Source: Primary Data- SPSS output

- **Health consciousness** (mean = 4.23) emerged as the most influential psychological factor. Consumers in Tumkur District are highly motivated by health concerns when choosing organic food.
- **Environmental awareness** (mean = 3.91) indicates moderate concern for environmental sustainability, but it is not as strong a motivator as health consciousness.
- **Perceived quality** (mean = 4.10) suggests that respondents associate organic food with higher quality, supporting its demand.
- **Trust** (mean = 3.87) is moderately high, but there is room for improvement in consumer confidence in organic products.
- **Skepticism** (mean = 3.21) indicates a moderate barrier. While skepticism exists, it does not entirely prevent purchases.
- **Attitudes** (mean = 4.05) are generally positive, suggesting that respondents hold favorable views of organic food products.
- **Subjective norms** (mean = 3.95) show that societal influences moderately shape consumer decisions regarding organic food.

7. 2. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results - Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the relationships between psychological factors (health consciousness, environmental awareness, trust, skepticism, attitudes) and the purchase intention of organic food.

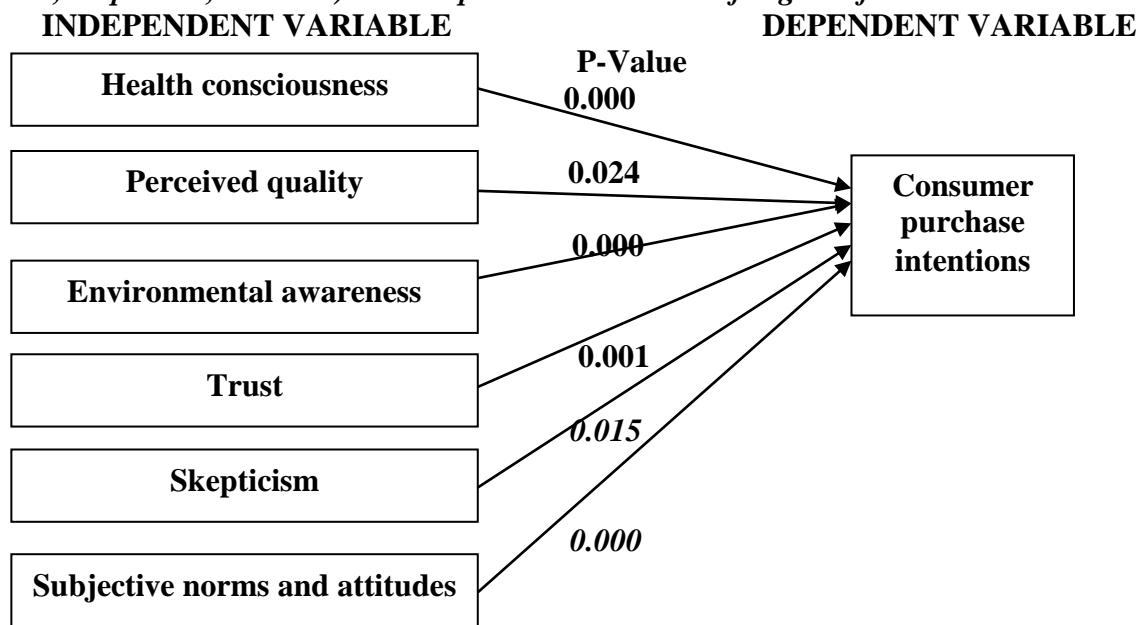


Table 3

SEM Results

Path	Estimate	Standard Error	Critical Ratio	p-Value	Hypothesis Status
Health Consciousness → Purchase Intention	0.37	0.09	4.11	0.000	Supported
Environmental Awareness → Purchase Intention	0.18	0.08	2.25	0.024	Supported
Perceived Quality → Purchase Intention	0.25	0.07	3.57	0.000	Supported
Trust → Purchase Intention	0.21	0.06	3.50	0.001	Supported
Skepticism → Purchase Intention	-0.22	0.09	-2.44	0.015	Supported
Attitudes → Purchase Intention	0.30	0.08	3.75	0.000	Supported

Source: Primary Data- SPSS output

Health consciousness has a significant positive effect on purchase intention (Estimate = 0.37, $p < 0.001$), supporting **H1**. This indicates that consumers who are more health-conscious are more likely to purchase organic food.

Environmental awareness positively influences purchase intention (Estimate = 0.18, $p < 0.05$), supporting **H2**. This shows that consumers who are aware of environmental issues are more inclined to buy organic products.

Perceived quality significantly affects purchase intention (Estimate = 0.25, $p < 0.001$), supporting **H3**. This finding indicates that when consumers perceive organic food as high-quality, they are more likely to make a purchase.

Trust in organic food products has a positive influence on purchase intention (Estimate = 0.21, $p < 0.001$), supporting **H4**. The level of trust consumers have in organic products plays a critical role in their purchasing decisions.

Skepticism has a significant negative effect on purchase intention (Estimate = -0.22, $p < 0.05$), supporting **H5**. This suggests that skepticism about the authenticity or quality of organic food can deter consumers from making a purchase.

Positive attitudes towards organic food strongly influence purchase intention (Estimate = 0.30, $p < 0.001$), supporting **H6**. Consumers with favorable attitudes towards organic food are more likely to purchase it.

8. Results and Discussions

- Health consciousness is a significant driver of organic food purchases. The SEM results show that health-conscious consumers are more likely to purchase organic food (Estimate = 0.37, $p < 0.001$), confirming that promoting health benefits can boost purchase intentions.
- Environmental awareness positively influences the purchase of organic food. The SEM analysis revealed that environmentally aware consumers are more inclined to buy organic products (Estimate = 0.18, $p < 0.05$), highlighting the importance of sustainability messaging in marketing.
- Consumers' perception of organic food as higher quality significantly impacts their purchase intentions (Estimate = 0.25, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that marketers should emphasize the superior quality of organic food products in their campaigns.
- Trust in the authenticity and quality of organic food plays a pivotal role in purchasing decisions (Estimate = 0.21, $p < 0.001$). Consumers with higher trust levels are more likely to choose organic products over conventional ones.
- Skepticism negatively affects purchase intentions (Estimate = -0.22, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that doubts about the authenticity or quality of organic food can be a significant barrier to consumer adoption.
- Consumers with favorable attitudes toward organic food are more likely to purchase it (Estimate = 0.30, $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that cultivating positive perceptions about organic food can lead to higher consumer engagement.
- Marketers should focus on the health and environmental benefits of organic food to tap into consumer health consciousness and environmental awareness, as these are key motivators for purchasing organic products.
- To address skepticism, businesses should provide clear certifications and transparent information regarding product sourcing and quality. Building trust through credibility will help overcome consumer doubts.
- To drive purchase behavior, marketing campaigns should emphasize the positive aspects of organic food, aligning messages with consumer values like health, sustainability, and quality to enhance overall consumer attitudes.

9. Conclusion

The present research on consumer psychology in purchasing organic food products in Tumkur District highlights the critical psychological factors that influence purchase intentions, such as health consciousness, environmental awareness, perceived quality, trust, skepticism, and attitudes. The study reveals that health consciousness and positive attitudes are the strongest predictors of organic food purchases, while skepticism serves as a notable barrier. These findings are highly relevant as they offer valuable insights for marketers and policymakers aiming to increase organic food adoption in emerging markets. By understanding these factors, businesses can tailor their strategies to address consumer concerns and promote the benefits of organic products. The study also underscores the importance of trust-building initiatives, such as certification and transparency, to reduce skepticism. Future research could explore the role of cultural differences in organic food consumption and investigate how evolving social trends, such as the rise of digital platforms and influencers, affect consumer behavior towards organic products. Additionally, longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into changing consumer attitudes over time.

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