



Literature Review on Marketing Strategies on Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Organic Food Products in India

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Abstract

This literature review examines the influence of marketing strategies—specifically the 7 P's (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence)—on consumer purchasing behaviour toward organic food products in India. With increasing health consciousness, environmental awareness, and concerns over food safety, the Indian organic food market has shown steady growth. However, challenges such as high prices, limited availability, and low consumer awareness persist. This review synthesises research findings from national and international sources to examine how each element of the marketing mix influences consumer decisions. Product labelling, educational promotions, convenient distribution, and knowledgeable personnel significantly enhance consumer trust and willingness to buy organic products. The study emphasises the need for an integrated marketing approach that addresses both functional and emotional drivers of consumer behaviour. A strategic application of the 7 P's tailored to Indian consumers can boost market penetration and long-term adoption of organic food products.

Keywords: Organic food products, Marketing strategies, Consumer buying behaviour, 7 P's, India, Price sensitivity, Limited Availability and Accessibility, Lack of Awareness and Knowledge

1.Introduction

The growing global knowledge of health, environmental sustainability, and food safety has had a considerable impact on consumer choices, particularly for organic food products. The marketing mix, which is often defined as the 7Ps (product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical evidence), is an important aspect in influencing purchasing decisions (Kotler & Keller, 2016). These marketing mix factors are especially important in the context of organic food products because customers are frequently more analytical and value-driven in their purchasing decisions (Yadav & Pathak, 2016).

Organic food is widely seen as healthier, more environmentally friendly, and free of hazardous chemicals. Despite increasing demand, challenges such as increased prices, restricted availability, and a lack of awareness persist (Singh & Verma, 2017). The success of marketing strategies in overcoming these challenges and communicating the benefits of organic food can have significant effects on customer attitudes and behaviours (Squires, Juric, & Cornwell, 2001).

This literature study seeks to investigate how the marketing mix elements influence consumer purchasing behaviour for food organic products. It also looks at how marketing may strategically plan their marketing campaigns to line with consumer values, improve product accessibility, and foster trust. The review lays the foundations for understanding the dynamic connection between marketing techniques and consumer behavior in the organic food sector by examining previous research.

2.Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the impact of the marketing mix (7Ps) on consumer behavior towards organic food products.
2. To identify which elements of the marketing mix most significantly influence consumers' purchase decisions.
3. To provide strategic recommendations for marketers to enhance consumer adoption of organic food through effective marketing mix practices.

Review of Related Literature

3. Consumer Behaviour Towards Organic Food Products

Consumer buying behaviour encompasses how people select, acquire, and use things, as well as their decision-making processes. Food safety concerns, environmental awareness, and health consciousness all have a huge impact on consumer behaviour when it comes to organic foods. Singh and Verma (2019) discovered that Indian customers prioritise quality and nutritional content when purchasing organic food. Furthermore, demographic characteristics, including urbanisation, income, and education, influence consumption habits. Sirieix et al. (2011) discovered that frequent organic food customers are more likely to practise ethical consumption and uphold strong sustainability principles. Food choices in India are influenced by cultural and religious values, which frequently favour organic alternatives.

4. Marketing Strategies and the 7 P's Framework

The 7 P's—Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence—provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how marketing strategies influence consumer behaviour. These components must be tailored to suit the organic food market to increase customer engagement and brand loyalty.

4.1. Product

Product characteristics that have a significant impact on consumer trust and buying decisions include quality, certification, and packaging. Chakrabarti (2010) concluded that consumers in India believe that organic products are superior in terms of nutrition, devoid of hazardous chemicals, and environmentally beneficial. Somasundaram et al., 2021 concluded that clear organic certification labels like India Organic or PGS-India boost trust and influence purchasing decisions, although this effect depends on the reliability of the product. Another important factor is product differentiation. According to Singh and Verma (2017), consumers are more inclined to select organic products with various variations, eye-catching packaging, and educational labelling.

4.2. Price

One important component of the marketing mix that significantly impacts Indian consumers' purchasing decisions for organic food products is price. (Somasundaram et al., 2021) concluded that there are higher costs of organic farming methods, certification procedures, and supply chain constraints, organic products are typically more expensive than their conventional alternatives. (Singh & Verma, 2017) stated that this is particularly noticeable in middle-class homes, where customers frequently prefer conventional products over organic ones due to financial restraints, even when the latter are thought to be healthier.

4.3. Place

The distribution channels, retail formats, and market accessibility that products use to reach customers are all included in the place part of the marketing mix (Kotler & Keller, 2016). When it comes to organic food products in India, customer purchasing behaviour is greatly influenced by availability and ease of use. (Rana & Paul, 2017) concluded that consumer access to certified organic products is frequently hampered by limited distribution networks, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

4.4. Promotion

According to Kushwah et al. (2019), the main distribution channels for organic food products in India are farmers' markets, supermarkets, speciality organic stores, and, more and more, internet platforms. Social media campaigns, in-store promotions, and advertising are examples of marketing strategies that affect consumer awareness and perception. Storytelling-based advertising that emphasises sustainability and good health is popular with Indian customers, according to Gupta and Yadav (2020). Influencers on social media are also essential in advancing organic living. Consumer awareness and purchase intent are greatly increased by health-focused promotional initiatives, according to Saxena and Khandelwal (2019). Expert professionals and celebrity endorsements increase credibility even more.

4.5. People

In organic retail establishments, consumer loyalty and happiness are influenced by staff knowledge and customer service. According to Jain and Kumar (2018), customers' purchasing decisions are positively impacted by informed employees who inform them of the advantages of purchasing organic products. Employees who are empowered and properly explained are crucial to providing high-quality services. According to Mukherjee and Roy (2021), establishing trust and encouraging repeat business requires customised service and long-term partnerships.

4.6. Process

The efficiency and transparency of supply chains have a big impact on customer trust. According to research by Srivastava et al. (2021), ethical sourcing and traceability are crucial for building customer loyalty. To improve transparency, technologies like blockchain are being used more and more. Patel and Sinha (2017) highlighted how important dependable logistics and effective delivery methods are to preserving product quality, particularly for perishable organic goods. Timely availability and constant client satisfaction are guaranteed by streamlined procedures.

4.7. Physical Evidence

The atmosphere of organic shops and how goods are displayed affect how customers view them. According to research by Bhatia and Jain (2019), customers are more likely to identify a brand with sustainability and quality when it is presented in a clean, well-organised store with eco-friendly themes. The customer experience is greatly impacted by point-of-sale displays, store layout, and visual merchandising. Branding components like eco-labels, sustainability seals, and green certifications are tangible proof that supports a company's natural positioning, according to Joshi and Deshpande (2020).

5. Challenges of Consumer Buying Behaviour Towards Organic Food Products

Organic food products are becoming more and more popular, yet a number of obstacles prevent consumers from making these purchases. These difficulties fall into the following major categories:

5.1. High Prices

In India, one of the biggest obstacles to the expansion of the organic food sector is still high costs. Because organic products have restricted economies of scale, higher production costs, and certification fees, they are often 20–60% more expensive than conventional products (Aryal et al., 2009; Somasundaram et al., 2021). Comparing organic farming to conventional agriculture, the former frequently necessitates higher labour expenses, crop rotation, and natural pest control techniques, all of which raise operating costs (Katt & Meixner, 2020).

This discrepancy between willingness to pay and actual buying patterns creates a niche market for organic products that is dominated by wealthy urban consumers and members of the upper middle class (Chakrabarti, 2010).

5.2. Limited Availability and Accessibility

Accessibility and availability issues continue to be major obstacles to the broad use of organic food products, especially in poor nations. According to Willer et al. (2023), accessibility encompasses not only the physical availability of organic food at markets but also the ease with which customers can receive these products in terms of distribution routes, supply chain efficiency, and location. (Aschemann-Witzel & Zielke, 2017) concluded that organic products are less available to customers in rural or semi-urban areas because they are typically found at urban retail outlets, speciality shops, or expensive supermarkets .

(Rana & Paul, 2017) stated that Market penetration and the existence of alternative retail formats also have an impact on accessibility. Although e-commerce has started to make organic products more accessible, practical issues including expensive delivery fees and the requirement for temperature-controlled transportation still make them unavailable in many developing areas .

5.3. Lack of Awareness and Knowledge

(Aertsens et al., 2011) concluded that many customers still don't fully comprehend the advantages of eating organic food. A common cause of reluctance is misconceptions regarding the certification procedure, health advantages, and distinctions from conventional food . The education gap directly impacts the degree to which consumers are willing to transition to organic alternatives.

The growth of the Indian market is still significantly hampered by consumers' ignorance and lack of understanding regarding organic food goods. A significant majority of Indian customers are still ignorant about what organic food is and how it varies from conventional options, despite growing interest in sustainable agriculture and healthy eating (Chakrabarti, 2010; Singh & Verma, 2017). (Yadav & Pathak, 2016) concluded that production practices, certification requirements, and the advantages of eating organic food for one's health and the environment are all included in this knowledge gap .

6. Research methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design, involving a thorough evaluation of the existing literature. This literature review is a beneficial way to identify research gaps, synthesise current knowledge, and examine how the marketing mix (7Ps) affects Indian consumers' purchasing decisions for organic food products. The relevant literature published between 2000 and 2024 was reviewed, with emphasis on the last decade to capture recent consumer trends. The study relies exclusively on secondary data. The sources include peer-reviewed journal articles from databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus. The process of identifying relevant studies involved using keywords such as “marketing mix and organic food in India”, “consumer

buying behaviour organic products”, “organic food marketing strategies”, and “7Ps and organic food consumption”.

7. Research gap of this literature

There are still significant knowledge gaps about how the marketing mix influences Indian consumers' purchasing decisions, even with the expanding literature of research on the consumption of organic food. People, process, and tangible evidence are other components of the 7Ps that are similarly important in influencing consumer trust and purchase decisions, but they have received less attention in the majority of the literature that has already been written.

Furthermore, the majority of research focuses on urban areas, ignoring semi-urban and rural markets where accessibility and awareness are still poor.

Fewer studies have looked at how Indian customers view value in relation to price and whether affordability initiatives could close the gap between intention and actual purchase, despite the fact that price has been generally recognised as a barrier. In India, there is also an absence of research on promotional tactics, namely the efficacy of social media campaigns, digital marketing, and certification labels. Furthermore, little research has been done on the attitude-behaviour gap, which occurs when customers indicate a desire to purchase organic food but are unable to do so regularly because of cost, availability, or trust issues.

These gaps point to the necessity of thorough, context-specific research that examines long-term consumer behaviour trends in the Indian organic food industry.

8. Conclusions and Suggestions

The study on how the seven Ps of marketing affect Indian consumers' purchasing decisions for organic food products offers important new information about the preferences, driving forces, and obstacles of Indian consumers. According to the research, Indian consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of the advantages of eating organic food, particularly concerning sustainability, safety, and health. However, certain elements of the marketing mix have a significant impact on their purchasing decisions. The most important factor in establishing trust and influencing purchasing decisions is the product characteristic, which includes quality, certification, labelling, and environmentally friendly packaging. Indian consumers favour goods that are genuine, clearly certified, and consistent with their values of health.

Although they still have an impact on trust and loyalty, many organic brands continue to underuse other factors, including people (staff behaviour), process (production and certification transparency), and tangible proof (store appearance, packaging).

According to the literature, although there is a growing demand for organic food in India, marketing tactics need to be improved to increase consumer adoption. In order to establish confidence, marketers should concentrate on the authenticity and certification of products, utilising reliable labels like India Organic and Jaivik Bharat. The price barrier can be lowered by using cost-effective pricing strategies like combo packs, subscription plans, and government-sponsored subsidies.

Accessibility will be increased by extending distribution channels through local shops, farmers' markets, supermarkets, and online marketplaces, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. In order to increase awareness, promotional initiatives should emphasise consumer education and make use of social media influencers, health professionals, and storytelling.

Through individualised service, staff training in organic retail establishments can also increase customer trust. Long-term loyalty can also be increased by implementing transparent procedures like eco-friendly store designs and QR-code traceability. When combined, these actions can promote a more accessible and sustainable organic food industry in India.

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