

FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD: EVIDENCE FROM MALAYSIA

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Abstract

The term organic food arose from western regions like Europe and North America. In recent decades, the consumption of organic food has become popular and gradually spread to Asian countries. Specific guidelines were established in order to produce real and authentic organic food. In Malaysia, the Department of Agriculture established MyOrganic certification to monitor the standard of organic farms and producers. However, knowledge of organic food among Malaysians is still minimal. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine what factors influence Malaysians' purchase intentions towards organic food. Even though organic food has been on the market for the past 20 years, the awareness of organic food among Malaysians is still low, which is believed to inevitably affect purchase intention. The primary goal of this paper is to investigate the relationship between Malaysians' Purchase Intention of Organic Food through the six independent variables, which are: consumer attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norm. The study employed a quantitative methodology. A questionnaire that was generated via a Google Form was used for the data collection and disseminated via various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Convenience random sampling was used and a total of 600 questionnaires were distributed, and 500 samples were returned, with a response rate of 83 percent. The target population consisted of the whole population of Malaysia. A few analyses were carried out after data collection was completed. SPSS was used as our analysis tools for the normality test where box plot analysis was analysed. Correlation, regression analysis and reliability tests were done too. The study resulted in a significant positive relationship between all the six variables: consumer attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norm with consumer purchase intention. In addition, this study aspires to support stakeholders of those involved in the organic food industry to have a better perspective on how to create value so customer intention to purchase organic food becomes favourable.

Keywords: Organic Food, Purchase Intention, Consumer Attitude, Health Conscious, Low Awareness.

Introduction

Organic food has been a distinguished topic since the late century. There was not so much organic food during our ancestor's era. After the industrial revolution, organic food consumption has become a trend especially among the developed countries. Most of the hypermarkets and supermarkets are starting to have a section mainly to sell

organic food. In the European Union (EU), organic food is defined as “*food which has been produced according to EC Regulations 834/2007 and 889/2008* (Curvelo et al., 2019).” There are sets of criteria and rules and regulations for farmers and producers to adhere to in order to produce organic food. To conclude in line with the regulations above, the production line should be free of any chemicals such as pesticides or chemical fertilisers, as well as any types of growth hormones.

In the last decades, the organic food market has been growing exponentially around the whole world. According to Willer et al., (2020), global farmland is increasing substantially with almost 1.5% of the land being used for organic agriculture. In Willer’s study, the growth of organic agriculture land has increased from 0.3% to 1.5% from 1999 to 2018. Willer et al. (2020) journals also contend that North America and European countries are the main markets for organic food. According to Willer, the largest market currently is the United States of America with a market value of 40.6 billion Euro, followed by Germany at 10.9 billion Euro and France at 9.1 billion Euro. Asian countries are the main producers of organic food; however, they have the least consumption of organic food, so far. India and China are said to be the two main countries that supply organic products to European countries.

In this research, we focus our research on a small country in Asia, known as Malaysia. Malaysia’s growth rate has been increasing steadily since independence in 1957. The population of Malaysia started with 6 million people in the 1950s to 33 million people in 2022 (based on data from the department of statistics Malaysia). Malaysia is regarded as one of the countries with the most rapid population growth in recent decades.

The research of purchase intentions of organic food in Malaysia is minimal. Most of the studies done have mainly focused on a small demographic group of people. For example, Hossain, (2016) conducted research on consumer behaviour towards organic food but focused on Penang, Malaysia consumers. Another research conducted by Ahmad & Juhdi, (2010), also focused on organic food’s purchase intention, but mainly towards residents in the urban conglomerate of Malaysia, Klang Valley. Their sample size was extremely small with only 177 respondents. Shaharudin et al., (2010) conducted research in 2010 with the title of, Purchase Intention of Organic Food in Kedah, Malaysia; A Religious Overview. His research was about the purchase intention of organic farming with incorporation of religious factors into their research in one of the northern states of Malaysia, Kedah.

Besides, there was also some research done based on the generation gap. For example, Thambiah et al., (2015) did a study on purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia among Generation Y, who are commonly known as the Millennials. Salleh et al, (2010) also conducted a similar study in 2010, but only limited it to academicians. Another similar study was done in 2012, but it was a study on the purchase intention of organic food in young women, this research was conducted by Zhen & Mansori, (2012).

On that account, this study was conducted mainly to focus on all residents in Malaysia. By conducting such a study with huge amounts of data, a precise analysis can be obtained. Due to the advancement of the internet now, our questionnaire managed to be spread through the whole of Malaysia easily via different social platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and WeChat. Key terminologies relating to this research are tabulated in Table 1. A better understanding of each terminology is important when conducting this research.

Table 1 Definitions of Key Terminologies

No	Key Terminologies	Definitions	Sources/ References
1.	Consumer attitude	An enduring organisation of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of our environment.	Ikechukwu A.F (2012)

2.	Health consciousness	Health consciousness refers to the extent to which an individual tends to undertake health action. It is divided into four dimensions: greater concerns about health, caring about health, engaging in searching for health information, and valuing healthy conditions.	Hoque et al. (2018)
3.	Perceived price	Perceived price is the price codified by the consumer. Consumers tend to interpret price through subjective perceptions, and transfer them as concepts of “expensive” or “cheap” in their memory, thus, the perceived price is not the real monetary price of a product	Kashyap & Bojanic (2000)
4.	Perceived availability	Main purchasing criteria, if consumers ‘waste’ their time and effort trying to find organic food, their purchase intentions may end up being negatively affected. Availability of the product when the consumer wishes to purchase it.	Saunders (1999)
5.	Environmental concerns	Environmental concerns have been treated as an evaluation of, or an attitude towards, facts, one’s own behaviour, or others’ behaviour with consequences for the environment.	Fransson & Gorling (1999)
6.	Subjective norm	Subjective norm refer to the belief that an important person or group of people will approve and support a particular behaviour. It is determined by the perceived social pressure from others for an individual to behave in a certain manner and their motivation to comply with those people’s views.	Ham et al. (2015)
7.	Purchase intention	Purchase intention is a kind of decision-making that studies the reason to buy a particular brand by the consumer. It is also defined as a situation where a consumer tends to buy a certain product in a certain condition.	Shah et al. (2011)

Problem Statement

Organic food has been available in Malaysia since the early 1990s (Hassan et al., 2015). However, the awareness of Malaysians towards organic food is still very low, according to Tai et al., (2019), which causes an obstacle for producers to market their organic products at higher prices. In another research by Abdul Rahman et al., (2019) done on the Kelantan population, the consumer in Kelantan (a state in the Northern region of West Malaysia) still has low awareness about organic food as the Kelantanese mentioned that the government did not promote organic products well to the public. Tan, (2020) did research recently for Kedah; he also mentioned that the awareness of organic food among Malaysians was still low.

.Even though organic food is found to have many benefits, the awareness is still low in Malaysia and when awareness is low, purchase intention will be affected too. This correlation is always directly related, in other words, when awareness is low, purchase intention will be low. This has been proven by Da Silva & Semprebón, (2021), where low awareness of the production process will also reduce purchase intention of consumers. Abu Bakar et al., (2019) also mentioned that when awareness is low, purchase intention will be low, too.

Sub-problem:

1. Multiracial Country with Diversity Affecting Consumer Attitude

Many studies have been done on consumer attitude towards the purchase intention of organic food. According to Chen et al., (2018), consumer attitudes are multifactorial from cognitive to affective stages. This research mentioned that many factors from personal, social, government, media, and culture will influence on someone's attitude and then, influence the purchase intention. Hence, for Malaysians, it is an interesting area of study as Malaysia is a multiracial country, which is formed by 3 main races, Malay, Chinese, and Indian, along with other minorities from Sabah and Sarawak. Different cultures and social values are noticeable too, due to different types of educational systems available in Malaysia. One of the main issues of the Malaysian population is diversity, where there is not a clear and distinct culture of Malaysia compared to our neighbours such as Thailand and Indonesia. Everyone in Thailand and Indonesia has the same culture, language, and name structure regardless of where their ancestors originated from. But for Malaysia, due to the diversification, different races instill their own cultures, religions, languages, and beliefs, and hence, produce varieties of attitudes.

2. Health and Environmental concerns of Malaysian

Consumers can see and hear about issues such as dirty and unsafe food, toxic chemicals used in food production and processing that cause serious health issues in a variety of media, according to previous research. According to Nguyen et al. (2019), this has resulted in an increase in health concerns among consumers when purchasing food on a daily basis. Health is a major concern, but consumers have provided little useful information about purchasing organic foods. Shrestha (2020) investigated the factors of consumer purchase intention towards organic foods, she mentioned that Malaysia's organic food industry is expanding as consumers become more aware of the benefits of eating organic food.

3. Low Acceptance of Expensive Premium Price

Despite the organic food industry's rapid growth and potential development, many people around the world are becoming interested in organic foods in response to health concerns, conventional agriculture practices, food quality and safety, environmental concerns, and awareness. (Nguyen et al., 2019). In Malaysia, consumers are becoming more aware of organic food products and health concerns, which is increasing demand for organic food products (Saleki et al., 2020). However, the knowledge and information regarding these organic products is limited where some even have misconceptions about the Malaysians are reluctant to purchase organic food as the first thing that comes to mind when they think of organic food is that it will be expensive.

According to Ahmed et al., (2020), consumers refuse to buy organic food because it is too expensive and inconvenient to buy, besides, many claim that they do not understand organic food much and the variety and brand are limited and hence it makes them difficult to compare and choose. Some consumers do not trust organic food as the taste is not better than traditional food. They believe it is not healthier than traditional food and is not good for the environment either. A variety of factors could influence purchase intent. Previous research has suggested that consumer attitude towards organic food being more expensive than conventional food may be one of the main reasons for lower consumption. On the other hand, it may have an impact on consumer attitude (Yang et al., 2014).

4. Availability of Organic Food - inadequate and limitation to supply demand

The Malaysian organic food industry, on the other hand, is facing several challenges; This is especially due to the rising demand for organic food in Malaysia where the supplier of local organic products cannot keep up with the increased demand. (Hassan et al., 2015). Until this date, Malaysia has less than 200 organic farms (Firdaus et al.,2020) that have received myOrganic certification from DOA. Hence, availability of organic food is a huge issue, especially for those who stay far from the city centre.

With the increasing demand of organic food in Malaysia, minimal certified organic farms are definitely insufficient to fulfil the demand of Malaysians, whose population is increasing steadily throughout the year. Hence, research is conducted to investigate whether perceived availability will affect Malaysian purchase intention of organic food.

5. Subjective Norm of Malaysians - is Malaysians easily influenced?

A subjective norm is a person's perception of social pressure from people important to them (e.g., family, friends, co-workers, and others) to behave (or not) in a certain way, as well as their incentive to conform to those people's opinions. According to Ham et al. (2015), subjective norms are governed by beliefs about the extent to which significant individuals want them to perform a behaviour (which is further influenced by one's motivation to follow those people's opinions).

Subjective norms (SN) are perceptions of how one would like to see others behave in the interests of others, according to Wang et al. (2019); this perception influences an individual to purchase organic products because it deals with the opinion of others who may have the power to influence the individual over a specific product. Since Malaysia is a multiracial country, influence from family, peers, and even religion, will be different based on ethnicity, culture, and race. Based on Theory of Planned Behaviour and Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen, 1991), subjective norms are affected by normative beliefs and motivation to comply. Huang et al. (2019) mentioned that cultural differences will influence subjective norm. Hence, it will be interesting to analyse the subjective norm of Malaysians as a whole.

Research Questions

The major purpose of this study is to find out what will be Malaysians' purchase intentions towards organic food. This will be done by considering the six main factors that affect purchase intentions. These six factors are consumer attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norm. The following questions are the relationships between the six components mentioned above with organic food purchase intentions among Malaysians:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between consumer attitude and consumer purchase intention towards organic food among

Malaysians?

RQ2: Is there a relationship between health consciousness and consumer purchase intention towards organic food

among Malaysians?

RQ3: Is there a relationship between perceived price and consumer purchase intention towards organic food among

Malaysians?

RQ4: Is there a relationship between perceived availability and consumer purchase intention towards organic food among Malaysians?

RQ5: Is there a relationship between environmental concerns and consumer purchase intention towards organic food

among Malaysians?

RQ6: Is there a relationship between subjective norms and consumer purchase intention towards organic food among

Malaysians?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses developed for this study based on the research objectives and research questions. Research hypotheses formulated are as follows:

H1: There is a relationship between consumer attitude and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia.

H2: There is a relationship between health consciousness and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia.

H3: There is a relationship between perceived price and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia.

H4: There is a relationship between perceived availability and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia.

H5: There is a relationship between environmental concerns and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia.

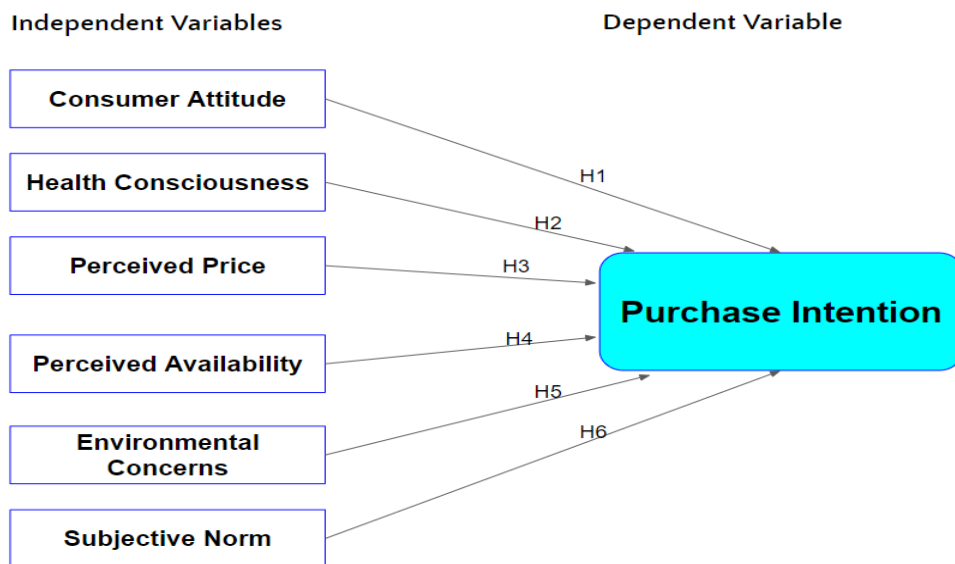
H6: There is a relationship between subjective norm and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia.

Conceptual Framework

A theoretical framework was developed from the research objectives, research questions, and literature review on the preliminary consumer purchase intention for organic food, and it was also introduced on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, TPB. Figure 1 is used to provide a structure for making quantitative decisions about a test

joining up between the study frameworks. The model hypotheses are consumer attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norm influence on consumers' intention to purchase organic food

Figure 1: The Conceptual Model of Factors Influencing Consumer Purchase Intention Towards Organic Food



Significance of Study

The main significance of research is to influence the consumers to buy organic food because it's not just about pushing the consumers to buy, it is also making consumers believe that organic food is good for their health. Malaysian consumers would become more aware of the health and environmental benefits of eating organic food. Overall, the ultimate goal of the research is to benefit the consumers. One of the main benefits is the health factor. The general health status of Malaysians will improve if organic food is able to become the primary food for Malaysians. All the stakeholders will be able to promote the good and advantages of organic food, so it is able to sustain the good health of Malaysians.

By understanding the relationship between the six factors namely consumer attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norm with consumer purchase intention, more effective sales and marketing strategies for organic food can be developed. Marketers, business owners, and policy makers would be able to understand better what are the factors influencing consumer purchase intention. Stakeholders can work on the factors to increase consumer purchase intention and will be able to promote the advantages of organic food. Therefore, the significance of the research will be to raise better awareness to consumer purchase intention based on the factors that influence consumer purchase intention. That would improve consumer purchase intention based on our variables and more people will consume organic food. The general health of Malaysians will increase, as a result.

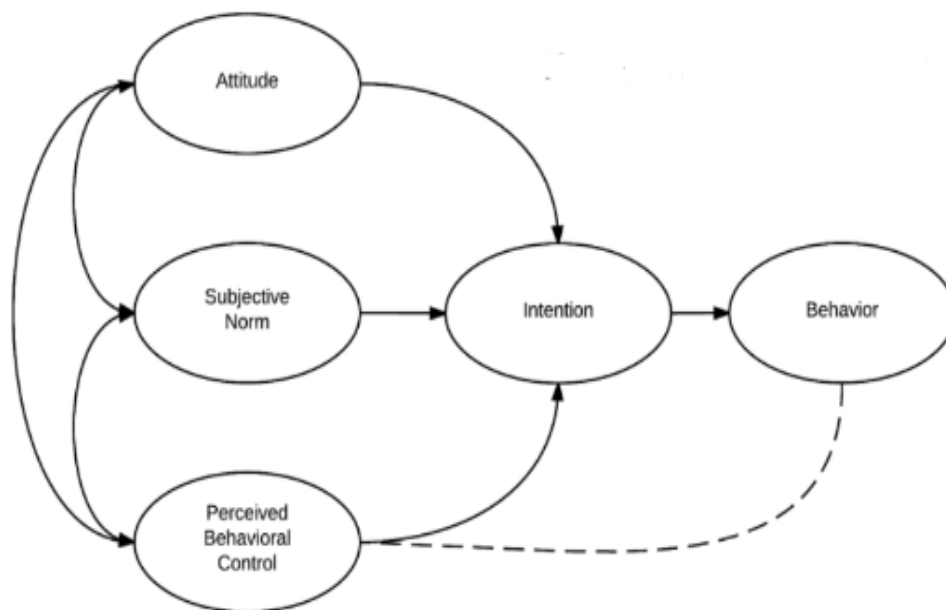
Underpinning Theory

In a marketing context, consumer behaviour can be assessed by predicting the consumer intention using the behavioural intention model developed by Ajzen, (1991). Three main variables of attitude, subjective norm, and perceptions of behavioural control form the TPB theory. All three variables have a direct and significant effect on purchase intention, and then intention later influences the actual behaviour (Sulaiman et al., 2020).

Numerous studies have utilised the TPB to explain consumer behaviour towards organic food. The TPB framework significantly shows that intention is observed and resolved by three variables of attitude, subjective norm, and Perceived behavioural control (PBC) as shown in Figure 2. This framework has been proven to be applicable in many studies and research (Sulaiman et al., 2020,). However, Arvola et al. (2008) find that PBC has no effect on intention and removed it from the model. Most of the studies find that consumer attitude is the strongest predictor for consumer intention. The current study has decided that PBC would have minimal significance to the research and is therefore omitted from the model because the current study modifies the TPB, but does not measure the real behaviour of consumers. The exclusion of PBC is also relevant in the statement of Ajzen’s (1991) “.... *PBC may not be particularly realistic when a person has relatively little information about the behaviour...*”

As stated by Smereck & Peterson (2007), “*testing a theory is not always an appropriate means to determine its value*”. As a result, a theory that stands the test of time and continues to provide valuable insights for the next generation of researchers is one that has long proven its value (Smereck & Peterson, 2007). Desirable intention, on the other hand, does not necessarily result in desired action or behaviour, but it is possible that having such intentions may result in the demonstration of the desired behaviour (Holst & Iversen, 2011). The TPB is still the greatest contribution and primary function for providing a relevant infrastructure to predict the intention for the foundation of the applicable conceptual model and hypotheses that will definitely point to how the subsequent research will be conducted (Mhlophe,2016).

Figure 2. Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991)



Materials and Methods

The purpose of the research is to find the consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia. Six independent variables which are consumer’s attitude, health consciousness, perceived price, perceived availability, environmental concerns, and subjective norm were formulated to find the dependent variable which is the consumer purchase intention. The primary method is used to collect the data and the research design is quantitative with correlational design. The survey instrument that is used to collect the data is a questionnaire that

is generated via Google Form. The unit of analysis taken for this research is Malaysian and the population is 32.37 million. Thus, 500 samples have been chosen through convenience sampling with different backgrounds of races, religions, income, and educational background with no specific framework. SPSS and Microsoft Excel are used as tools to conduct demographic analysis, descriptive analysis, normality test, box plot, reliability test, correlation analysis and also regression analysis.

Results

Table 2 shows the summary of this research's hypotheses. The P-value indicates the probability that if it is <0.05 the hypothesis will be supported and if it is >0.05 the hypothesis would not be supporting the research (Zach, 2021). In that case all the hypotheses had a P-value less than 0.05 which all hypothesis values are <0.001 . The conclusion is that all variables showed significance on consumer purchase intention therefore shall be assumed as supporting the research.

Table 2: Summary of Hypothesis

No	Hypotheses	P-Value	Pearson's Rho	Std Coeff. Beta	Remark
H1	There is relationship between consumer attitude and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia	<0.001	+0.609	+0.339	Supported
H2	There is a relationship between health consciousness and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia	<0.001	+0.528	+0.181	Supported
H3	There is a relationship between perceived price and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia	<0.001	+0.257	+0.178	Supported
H4	There is a relationship between perceived availability and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia	<0.001	+0.562	+0.155	Supported
H5	There is a relationship between environmental concerns and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia	<0.001	+0.540	+0.172	Supported
H6	There is a relationship between subjective norm and consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia	<0.001	+0.438	+0.148	Supported

The primary objective of the study is to examine the factors influencing consumer purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia. The factors have a significant positive relationship with purchase intention which is aligned to our research and the results of this study provide support for all developed hypotheses. Based on both correlation and regression analysis, we found out that all the hypotheses are significant, $p < 0.01$ and positively related to the dependent variable which is the purchase intention. When we study the association between IV and DV individually via correlation analysis, the relationship for all of the variables is found to be significantly positive related to purchase intention. The independent variable with the highest Pearson Rho is CA (+0.609), followed by PA (+0.562), EC (+0.540), HC (+0.528), SN (+0.438) and the least is PP (+0.257).

However, when we study the prediction of linkage between all the six IVs with DV using regression analysis, the ranking is slightly different, but all the relationships are still significantly positively related to DV. The ranking of beta coefficient for highest independent variable is CA (+0.339), followed by HC (+0.181), PP (+0.178), EC (+0.172), PA (+0.155), and the least is SN (+0.148). All the relationships are significantly positively related to dependant variable, PI.

From both of the results, we found out that consumer attitude (CA) has the strongest influence on the purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians. This matches with our underpinning theory, as mentioned by Ajzen that consumer attitude is one of the stronger predictors for purchase intention (Ajzen, 1991). The findings and explanation of each independent variable are briefly discussed below, arranging from strongest influencers to the weakest influencers of purchase intention of organic food.

Discussion

1. Consumer attitude (CA) is the strongest variable that influences the consumer purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians. The relationship between consumer attitude (CA) and purchase intention (PI) of organic food was the first exogenous variable studied. The TPB hypothesized that CA is important in explaining intention and human behaviour. This theory proposed that the stronger one's attitude towards a specific behaviour, the stronger one's intention to engage in that behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). As a result, it is not surprising that consumers who have more positive attitude are more likely to develop positive purchase intentions. This research revealed that respondents had favourable attitudes towards organic food. Therefore, this discovery supported the conclusion that there is a positive relationship between CA and PI in organic food. A large number of studies have also validated the positive relationship between CA and PI, where Ahmed et al. (2020); Wang et al. (2019); Hasan & Suciarto (2020) and Mahrinasari MS (2020) have verified the results.

This study also confirmed that this link was not only positive, but also significant at $p < 0.01$, Wang et al. (2019) and Hasan & Suciarto (2020) have supported the findings that CI has a significantly positive relationship with PI. Notably, the findings showed that CA was the most significant and positive variable, with a beta coefficient of +0.339. As a result, the current study found that if consumers have favourable attitudes towards organic food, they are more than willing to consider purchasing organic food.

2. Health consciousness (HC) is the second strongest variable that influences the consumer purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians. This shows that Malaysians will purchase organic food due to health concerns. In terms of the effect of health consciousness (HC) on consumer PI for organic food, the statistical results for this study revealed a positive effect. The findings revealed that respondents placed a relatively high value on HC in their intention to purchase organic produce, with a beta coefficient of +0.181. This result means that Malaysians are very much concerned about their health, and they will purchase organic food due to the health factor of organic food (Curvelo et al., 2019; Ahmad & Juhdi, 2010). A large number of studies have also validated the positive relationship between HC and PI which were aligned with Nguyen & Truong (2020); Johar et al. (2020); Sulaiman et al. (2020) and Curvelo et al. (2019).

This study also confirmed that this relationship was not only positive, but also significant at $p < 0.01$, Johar et al. (2020) and Sulaiman et al. (2020) have supported the findings that HC has a significantly positive relationship with PI. Based on the relationship between HC and PI, marketers, business owners and policy makers could then enhance and enlarge the health factor of organic food to the public so as to increase the purchase intention of organic food, and in the long run, it helps to improve the health standard of Malaysians too.

3. Perceived price (PP) is the third strongest independent variable among the six studied IV. This study hypothesized a positive relationship between these perceived prices and purchase intention with a beta coefficient of +0.178. However, on Pearson correlation analysis, PP scored the lowest with Pearson's r value of + 0.257. This shows that Malaysians do care about the price of organic food, but there are some other variables that are more important than PP, such as CA and HC. Malaysians are still willing to purchase organic food even though the price is high, with the condition that if their belief and attitude towards organic food is high, as well as if health

concerns are high. Based on a number of studies there is confirmation of a direct relationship between these variables in various ways, which is stated by Mahrinasari (2020) and Sulaiman et al. (2020).

4. Environmental concerns (EC) is the fourth strongest IV that influences the consumer purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians, with a beta coefficient of +0.172. In the last decades, environmental issues have been a topic especially for the younger generations, Millennials (Ayub et al., 2018 and Thambiah et al., 2015). Evidence suggests that the purchase intention for organic food has encouraged the development of organic products in response to consumers' growing concerns about how farming affects the environment. This may be explained by the perception that these methods are environmentally favourable Cachero-Martinez (2020). Nowadays, people frequently think about how their behaviour affects the environment before deciding whether to engage in a certain consumption-related behaviour (Wekeza & Sibanda (2019). They become more interested in environmental issues (via conservation and recycling efforts), strongly feel that environmental degradation is permanent, and eventually have favourable purchase intentions for organic food (Saleki et al., 2020).

As a result, the expanding EC has had a significant impact, especially on consumer purchasing behaviour, with intentions to buy organic food growing at an impressive rate. Environmental concerns and consumer purchase intentions for organic food have been found to have a positive relationship, with Pearson's r value of +0.540, and with great significance with p -value <0.01 . Saleki et al. (2020), Sulaiman et al. (2020) and Duangekanong (2020) find that environmental concerns to be the most influential factors in purchasing decisions. As a conclusion, Malaysians are concerned about the environment, and they will purchase organic food due to this factor.

5. Perceived availability (PA) is the second weakest IV that influences the consumer purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians, with a beta coefficient of +0.155. However, the PI relationship with dependent variables is positive. In other words, when perceived availability is high, consumer purchase intention of organic food is high, too. Availability as an effort dimension refers to the ease or difficulty that a person experiences prior to purchasing a specific product (Ahmad & Juhdi, 2010). The scarcity of organic food products may deter consumers from developing positive purchasing intentions for organic food. Duangekanong (2020) and Teixeira et al. (2021) both agree that availability of products will positively influence consumer purchase intention. The findings also confirm that the effect of PA on PI is significant at $p < 0.01$. This finding is consistent with previous research, which finds that PA has an effect on the intention to purchase organic food. As an example, Qisthina (2020) concludes that perceived availability has a significant and positive relationship with purchase intention.

6. Subjective norm (SN) is the weakest variable that influences the consumer purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians, with a beta coefficient of +0.148. This also correlates to correlation analysis, whereby SN is also one of the weakest predictors for PI, with Pearson's r value of +0.438. According to the subjective norm (SN) theory, the major referent persons or groups typically approve of or criticise a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB states that one of the most important constructs in determining people's behavioural intentions is SN (Ajzen, 1991). The significance level for this association is determined to be $p < 0.01$. This result demonstrates that support from reference groups, including peers, family members, and other relevant people, considerably enhances a person's propensity to purchase organic food. This result shows that Malaysians are more likely to be influenced by the recommendations and/or opinions of important others, primarily the people they hold in high regard. There are a few researchers who also support the significant positive relationship between SN and PI, for example, Sulaiman et al. (2020), Sumarliah (2021) and Wang et al. (2019).

To wrap this up, consumer attitude has the most positive and significant variable in determining consumer purchase intentions for organic food. Following consumer attitude is health consciousness, perceived price, environmental concerns, perceived availability and lastly, subjective norm, whereby all of them yielded significant and positive results. As a result, this confirms that six hypotheses are supported.

Best Fit Model - Purchase Intention Tree

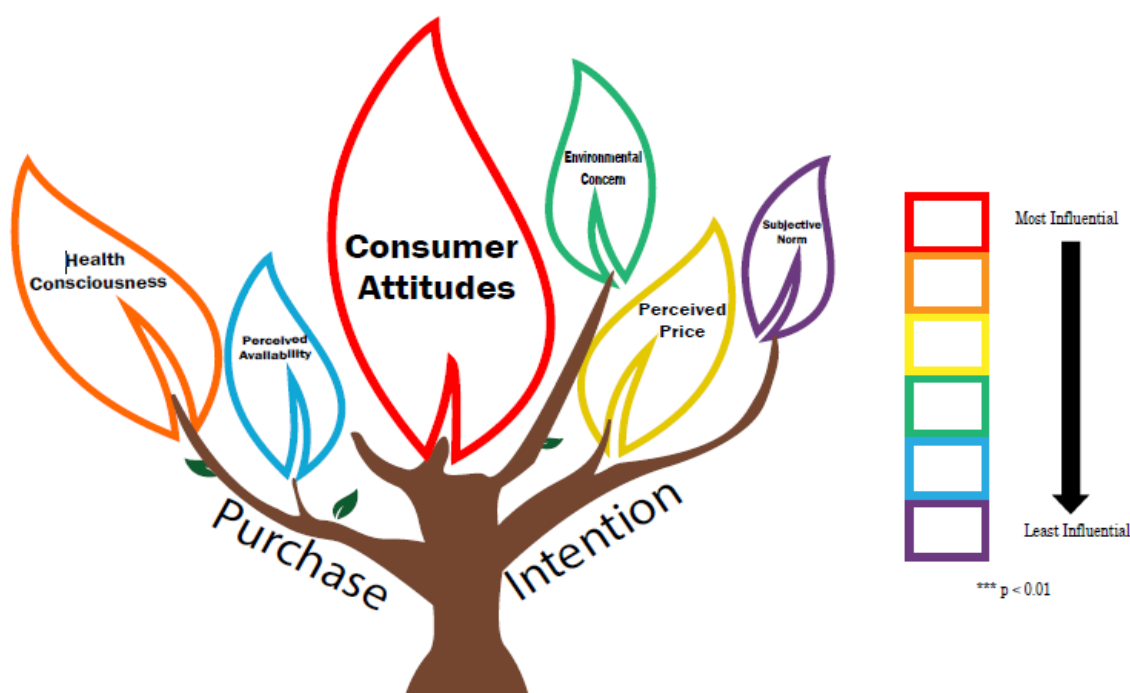
This best fit model shown in Figure 3 is named as the Purchase Intention Tree (PI Tree). It is used to determine the purchase intention influencer with practical alignment for organic food business. The purchase intention tree explained the factors that influence consumers' purchase intention towards organic food in Malaysia based on:

1. The size of the leaf: The bigger the leaf, the higher the influencing ability of the variables. As shown in Figure 3, Consumer Attitude's leaf is the biggest, hence, it has the highest influencing ability towards purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians. This applies vice versa to the subjective norm too, which has the smallest leaf. This means SN has the least influence on purchase intention of organic food among Malaysians. The leaf's size from biggest to smallest is in such order:

CA→HC→PP→EC→PA→SN

2. The colour of the leaves, the influencing ability of each variable is shown by indicators from highest to lowest: Red → Orange → Yellow → Green → Blue → Purple. Hence, CA is the red leaf, which has highest influencing ability towards consumer PI towards organic food, and SN is purple leaf with lowest influencing ability of PI towards organic food.

Figure 3: Best Fit Model - Purchase Intention Tree



The implicit meaning of this PI tree:

1. This is a tree free from pesticides and hormones, which is very organic and natural, therefore, it is a great representative for our topic about organic food.
2. A good leaf will always produce a good tree. The bigger and healthier the leaf, the better is the growth of the PI tree. Hence, by analysing the leaf (independent variables) well, all the stakeholders will be able to focus better and to produce the best result and outcome, in other words, the stakeholders are able to yield a healthy and well grown tree, which means an increment in purchase intention of organic food among the Malaysians.

Explanation of PI Tree is as below:

1. CA is the most significant and positive influencer of PI for organic food among the Malaysians.
2. HC is the second most significant and positive influencer of PI for organic food among the Malaysians.

3. PP is the third most significant and positive influencer of PI for organic food among the Malaysians.
4. EC is the third least significant and positive influencer of PI for organic food among the Malaysians.
5. PA is the second least significant and positive influencer of PI for organic food among the Malaysians.
6. SN is the least significant and positive influencer of PI for organic food among the Malaysians.

Conclusions

According to the findings in this study, all six hypotheses are supported. Consumer attitude has the highest correlation and coefficient among other variables which is consistent with Ajzen (1991); Ahmed et al. (2020); Zayed et al (2022); Saleki et al. (2020). This result indicates that consumer attitude is the most important factor that affects the consumer's purchase intention. Therefore, marketers and business owners can promote organic food via social media or advertising to increase the awareness and enhance the purchase action. All sectors of the department or organisation in the industry are able to use this research as a guideline to implement some strategies in line with the factors to promote organic food in Malaysia and bring a healthier lifestyle to consumers. Besides that, business owners or marketers can use the descriptive analysis to segment their consumer by demographic (Gundala & Anupam Singh, 2021).

The limitation of this study is lack of any prior study on the subject as the previous research was mostly on specific regions and lack of resources on data collection. The upcoming research is recommended to use specific demographics of potential consumers and types of organic food to come out with a more precise and definite result. Besides that, qualitative methods with neuromarketing techniques are recommended for future study. Lastly, the Theory Planned Behaviour model has strengthened and helped the study to delimit the scope, measuring the six hypotheses, and assesses the finding result of factors that influence the intention to purchase organic food by consumers in Malaysia. An insight into the importance of organic food and how the purchase intention towards buying organic food can be encouraged. A healthier population wellbeing lifestyle can be promoted with better awareness.

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