

Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour and Sustainable Marketing of Organic Food Products

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ABSTRACT

Growing environmental degradation, climate change, and rising health consciousness have significantly transformed consumer purchasing patterns in recent years. Consumers are increasingly adopting eco-friendly behaviours that prioritize environmental protection and sustainable consumption. Organic food products, produced without synthetic chemicals and harmful agricultural inputs, have emerged as a preferred alternative among environmentally conscious consumers. From a sustainable marketing perspective, businesses are incorporating green advertising, eco-labelling, sustainable packaging, and transparent communication strategies to promote organic products effectively.

The present study examines the influence of eco-friendly consumer behaviour on the purchase of organic food products and evaluates the effectiveness of sustainable marketing strategies in promoting these products. Grounded in behavioural and green marketing theories, the study explores the relationship between environmental concern, ethical consumption, and buying intention. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for marketers, policymakers, and producers to design effective sustainable marketing strategies that encourage responsible consumption and contribute to environmental sustainability.

Keywords: eco-friendly behaviours, green advertising, eco-labelling, sustainable packaging, sustainable marketing strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental sustainability has become one of the most pressing global concerns of the 21st century. Rapid industrialization, excessive use of chemical fertilizers, pesticide residues, and food adulteration have raised serious concerns regarding environmental degradation and public health. As a result, consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental and health implications of their consumption patterns.

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour refers to purchasing decisions that consider environmental protection, sustainability, and ethical responsibility. Such consumers actively seek products that minimize

ecological damage and promote sustainable development. Organic food products align closely with these values, as they are produced through natural farming methods that avoid synthetic chemicals and promote biodiversity.

From a sustainable marketing perspective, organizations are increasingly integrating environmental responsibility into their marketing strategies. Green advertising, eco-labelling, environmentally friendly packaging, and transparent sourcing practices are used to build trust and influence environmentally conscious consumers. However, despite increasing awareness, the adoption rate of organic food products remains inconsistent due to factors such as high prices, lack of trust in certification, and limited availability.

In this context, understanding eco-friendly consumer behaviour and its interaction with sustainable marketing strategies becomes essential for promoting organic food products and encouraging sustainable consumption.

DEFINITION

Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour refers to purchasing decisions and consumption practices that aim to reduce environmental harm and promote sustainability. It involves consumers' environmental concern, ethical responsibility, and preference for products that are safe for the environment. In the context of organic food, it includes choosing chemical-free products, supporting sustainable farming practices, and being willing to pay more for environmentally friendly alternatives.

Organic Food Products

Organic food products are agricultural and processed food items produced without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, genetically modified organisms, or artificial additives. These products are cultivated using natural farming methods that maintain soil fertility, biodiversity, and ecological balance. Organic foods are considered healthier and environmentally sustainable compared to conventional food products.

Sustainable Marketing

Sustainable marketing refers to the promotion of products and services in a way that meets consumer needs while protecting environmental and social resources for future generations. It includes strategies such as green advertising, eco-labelling, sustainable packaging, and transparent communication. In the case of organic food products, sustainable marketing helps create awareness and encourages environmentally responsible consumption.

Purchase Behaviour

Purchase behaviour refers to the decision-making process and actions involved in buying products. In this study, it represents consumers' preference, frequency, willingness to pay, and intention to purchase organic food products.

Types of Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour can be classified into the following major types:

Green Purchasing Behaviour

This refers to the preference for environmentally friendly products over conventional alternatives. Consumers intentionally choose organic food products because they are chemical-free, sustainably produced, and safer for health and the environment.

Sustainable Consumption Behaviour

This involves reducing excessive consumption and choosing products that support long-term ecological balance. In the context of organic food, consumers prioritize seasonal, locally grown, and sustainably packaged products.

Ethical Consumer Behaviour

Ethical consumers consider moral and social responsibility while purchasing. They support organic farming because it promotes fair trade, farmer welfare, and biodiversity conservation.

Environmentally Responsible Behaviour

This includes actions such as avoiding harmful products, recycling packaging, reducing food waste, and supporting brands that follow eco-friendly practices.

Willingness-to-Pay Behaviour

Eco-conscious consumers are often willing to pay a premium price for organic food products because they perceive higher environmental and health benefits.

Top Countries by Organic Agricultural Land

Rank	Country	Organic Agricultural Land	Key Features
I	Australia	The largest area of certified organic land in the world—over 53 million hectares.	NASAA (National Association for Sustainable Agriculture Australia) ACO (Australian Certified Organic)
II	India	Approx. 4.7 million hectares (as of 2023–2024)	NPOP (National Programme for Organic Production) PGS-India (Participatory Guarantee System)
III	Argentina	Large Organic Land Area (~4.1 million hectares)Export-Oriented Production (>95% Exported)	Government Certification Body – SENASA
IV	France	Ranks 4th globally by organic land area.One of the fastest-growing organic markets in Europe.	Strong government support & subsidies under France’s “Ambition Bio” plan
V	China	Ranks 5th globally in organic farmland.Significant focus on organic tea, rice, soybeans, fruits, and vegetables .	Government investments in organic zones and green food labels

S.No	TOP STATE	SCHEME NAME	KEY WORDS
1	Sikkim	third-party certification under National Programme for	- All of its 76,000 hectares of agricultural land were converted to certified organic farming. - Recognized globally by the Food

		Organic Production (NPOP).	and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and IFOAM.
2	Madhya Pradesh	Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) extensively.	over 0.6 million hectares of certified organic farmland.. Main Crops: Wheat, pulses (chickpeas, lentils), soybean, cotton, oilseeds
3	Rajasthan	Farmers use traditional and low-input practices , ideal for organic certification.	– Grains and Pulses
4	Maharashtra	State supports farmer groups and NGOs for organic cluster development.	– Cotton and Oilseeds
5	Karnataka	Millets and Plantation Crops	little millet, coffee, cardamom, pepper.

ORGANIC FARMING IN INDIA

Total Organic Agricultural Land

- **Approx. 2.6 million hectares** (as of 2023–2024)
- Ranks **5th in the world** by land area under organic farming.
- **1st in the world** in terms of the **number of organic producers** — over **1.6 million farmers**.

Major Organic Products

Category Key Organic Products

🌾 **Food grains** Rice, wheat, millets, pulses (lentils, chickpeas)

🍌 **Fruits & Vegetables** Mangoes, bananas, pomegranates, ginger, turmeric, onions

🐄 **Animal Products** Organic milk, eggs, honey, ghee

🌿 **Others** Cotton, tea, coffee, herbs, medicinal plants, spices

🌟 India is the **largest producer of organic cotton** and a major exporter of **organic spices and tea**.

Key Organic Farming States in India

State Specialization

Madhya Pradesh Leading state by organic area (grains, pulses)

Rajasthan Oilseeds, cereals

Maharashtra Cotton, pulses

Karnataka Millets, coffee

Uttarakhand & Sikkim Fully organic (Sikkim became India's 1st 100% organic state)

Sikkim is a global model for organic farming, certified 100% organic in 2016.

Certification and Promotion Schemes

India has two major certification systems:

System

Details

NPOP (National Programme for Organic Production) For exports and large-scale farming (regulated by APEDA)

PGS-India (Participatory Guarantee System) For small farmers, local sales, and domestic markets

❖ Certification is supported by the government through various programs.

Key Government Support Schemes

Scheme Name

Purpose

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

Promote cluster-based organic farming

Mission Organic Value Chain Development (MOVCDNER)

Support organic farming in North-Eastern Region

National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)

Promote eco-friendly farming practices

Organic Exports

- India exports organic products to over **180 countries**.
- Top exported items:
 - Oilseeds, cereals, millets, tea, spices, dry fruits, medicinal plants.
- Main export destinations:
 - **USA, EU, Canada, Switzerland, Australia**

🌐 India exported over **\$1 billion worth of organic products** in 2022–2023.

Role of Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour in Promoting Organic Food Products

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour plays a critical role in the growth and promotion of organic food products from a sustainable marketing perspective.

Creates Market Demand

Environmentally conscious consumers increase demand for organic food products, encouraging producers to adopt sustainable farming methods.

Influences Marketing Strategies

When consumers show preference for eco-friendly products, companies respond by adopting green advertising, eco-labelling, and sustainable packaging strategies.

Encourages Sustainable Branding

Eco-friendly behaviour builds trust in brands that communicate transparency, environmental responsibility, and ethical production.

Promotes Environmental Awareness

Consumers who practice eco-friendly behaviour often influence others through word-of-mouth, social media, and community engagement, thereby expanding the organic food market.

Supports Long-Term Sustainability

By choosing organic food, eco-conscious consumers contribute to soil conservation, reduced chemical pollution, biodiversity protection, and sustainable agriculture.

Objectives:

- To study the influence of eco-friendly consumer behaviour on the purchase of organic food products.
- To assess the effectiveness of sustainable marketing strategies in promoting organic food products.

Importance of Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour and Its Role in Promoting Organic Food Products: A Sustainable Marketing Perspective

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour has gained significant importance in the modern marketplace due to increasing environmental degradation, climate change, and growing health awareness. As consumers become more conscious of the environmental and social consequences of their consumption patterns, their purchasing decisions increasingly reflect sustainability values. In this context, eco-friendly consumer behaviour plays a crucial role in promoting organic food products and supporting sustainable marketing practices.

Environmental Importance

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour encourages the adoption of products that minimize environmental harm. By choosing organic food products, consumers support farming practices that reduce soil degradation, water pollution, and chemical usage. This contributes to biodiversity conservation, ecological balance, and long-term environmental sustainability.

Market Growth and Demand Creation

Environmentally conscious consumers create demand for organic food products, which motivates producers and retailers to expand their organic product lines. Sustainable marketing strategies further strengthen this demand by effectively communicating environmental benefits. As a result, eco-friendly consumer behaviour becomes a driving force for market growth in the organic sector.

Health and Social Importance

Organic food products are often perceived as safer and healthier because they are free from harmful chemicals and artificial additives. Eco-friendly consumer behaviour supports healthier lifestyles and promotes social responsibility by encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and farmer welfare.

Strategic Marketing Importance

From a sustainable marketing perspective, understanding eco-friendly consumer behaviour helps organizations design effective green marketing strategies. Businesses can align their branding, advertising, packaging, and communication efforts with consumer values, thereby enhancing trust, loyalty, and competitive advantage.

Bridging the Attitude–Behaviour Gap

Studying eco-friendly consumer behaviour is important to understand the gap between environmental awareness and actual purchase decisions. Identifying factors that influence this behaviour helps marketers and policymakers develop strategies to convert positive attitudes into consistent buying behaviour.

Policy and Development Importance

Insights into eco-friendly consumer behaviour assist policymakers in formulating effective policies to promote organic farming and sustainable consumption. Government support and awareness programs can further strengthen the organic food market.

Barriers and Challenges Faced in Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour and the Promotion of Organic Food Products

Despite increasing environmental awareness and positive attitudes toward organic food products, several barriers limit the effective translation of eco-friendly consumer behaviour into actual purchasing decisions. From a sustainable marketing perspective, these challenges affect both consumers and marketers.

High Price of Organic Food Products

One of the major barriers is the higher price of organic food compared to conventional products. Many consumers express environmental concern but hesitate to purchase organic products due to budget constraints. The price premium discourages regular consumption, especially in middle- and lower-income groups.

Lack of Awareness and Knowledge

Although awareness about organic food is growing, many consumers still lack proper knowledge about certification, benefits, and authenticity. Confusion between “natural” and “organic” products also creates misunderstanding, reducing purchase confidence.

Lack of Trust in Certification and Labelling

Consumers often doubt the credibility of organic labels and certifications. The absence of transparent information and fear of fake labelling weakens trust, thereby affecting eco-friendly purchase behaviour.

Limited Availability and Accessibility

Organic food products are not easily available in all markets or rural areas. Limited distribution channels restrict consumer access, which reduces the impact of eco-friendly behaviour on actual buying decisions.

Ineffective Sustainable Marketing Communication

In some cases, sustainable marketing strategies fail to clearly communicate environmental benefits. Poorly designed green advertisements or lack of educational campaigns reduce the effectiveness of marketing efforts in influencing consumer behaviour.

Attitude–Behaviour Gap

There is often a gap between positive environmental attitudes and actual purchasing behaviour. Consumers may support sustainability in theory but choose conventional products due to convenience, habit, or price sensitivity.

Habitual Buying Behaviour

Many consumers are accustomed to traditional food products and are resistant to changing established purchasing habits, even if they are environmentally aware.

Limited Government Support and Promotion

Inadequate policy support, weak monitoring systems, and insufficient promotional programs may hinder the growth of the organic food market.

Strategies for Promoting Eco-Friendly Consumer Behaviour and Organic Food Products

To strengthen eco-friendly consumer behaviour and enhance the promotion of organic food products, coordinated strategies are required from marketers, policymakers, producers, and consumers. From a sustainable marketing perspective, the following strategies are essential:

Consumer Awareness and Education Strategy

Educating consumers about the environmental and health benefits of organic food products is crucial. Awareness campaigns through social media, workshops, seminars, and community programs can improve knowledge about organic certification, eco-labels, and sustainable farming practices. Increased awareness reduces confusion and builds informed purchasing decisions.

Green Advertising and Communication Strategy

Marketers should design transparent and credible green advertisements that clearly communicate environmental benefits. Sustainable marketing messages must avoid exaggerated claims and focus on authenticity. Storytelling about farmers, organic farming methods, and environmental impact strengthens emotional connection with consumers.

Eco-Labelling and Certification Transparency

Clear and reliable eco-labelling helps consumers identify genuine organic products. Displaying recognized certification logos and providing QR codes for product traceability can enhance trust and reduce skepticism.

Sustainable Packaging Strategy

Using biodegradable, recyclable, or minimal packaging reinforces eco-friendly values. Sustainable packaging not only reduces environmental impact but also influences environmentally conscious consumers positively.

Pricing and Incentive Strategy

Since high price is a major barrier, strategies such as discounts, bundle offers, seasonal pricing, and government subsidies can make organic food products more affordable and accessible to a wider population.

Improved Distribution and Accessibility

Expanding availability through supermarkets, local markets, online platforms, and direct farm-to-consumer channels increases convenience and supports eco-friendly purchase behaviour.

Community Engagement and Word-of-Mouth Promotion

Encouraging community-based marketing, farmer markets, and social media engagement helps create peer influence. Positive word-of-mouth significantly promotes organic food adoption.

Government and Policy Support

Government initiatives such as awareness programs, certification monitoring, and support for organic farming strengthen consumer confidence and market growth.

SUGGESTIONS

- Conduct effective awareness programs and digital campaigns to educate consumers about the environmental and health benefits of organic food products.
- Provide clear and reliable eco-labelling and certification to build consumer trust in organic food products.
- Use green advertising, sustainable packaging, and affordable pricing strategies to encourage eco-friendly purchase behaviour.

CONCLUSION

Eco-friendly consumer behaviour has emerged as a significant determinant in shaping the growth and promotion of organic food products in today's environmentally conscious marketplace. As concerns regarding climate change, environmental degradation, and health risks continue to increase, consumers are gradually shifting towards sustainable consumption patterns. This behavioural shift creates new opportunities for the organic food sector and highlights the importance of sustainable marketing practices.

The study emphasizes that eco-friendly consumer behaviour, characterized by environmental concern, ethical responsibility, and willingness to support sustainable products, plays a crucial role in influencing purchase decisions related to organic food products. However, the existence of barriers such as high prices, lack of awareness, limited availability, and distrust in certification systems indicates that environmental concern alone is not sufficient to ensure consistent buying behaviour.

From a sustainable marketing perspective, effective strategies such as green advertising, transparent eco-labelling, sustainable packaging, pricing incentives, and consumer education are essential to convert

environmental awareness into actual purchase behaviour. Businesses that align their marketing practices with sustainability values can enhance consumer trust, strengthen brand loyalty, and gain competitive advantage in the organic food market. eco-friendly consumer behaviour acts as a driving force for promoting organic food products and advancing sustainable consumption. Strengthening sustainable marketing strategies and reducing existing barriers will not only expand the organic food market but also contribute to environmental protection, public health, and long-term socio-economic sustainability.

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