PREFERENCES OF FOOD CONSUMPTION - LOCAL FOOD VS ORGANIC FOOD

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this research is to understand the change in food consumption patterns of consumers of organic food especially after the pandemic.

Theoretical framework: This study draws suggestions from attitude-behavior relationship model. The internal factors are - attitudes towards local food, and attitudes towards supporting the local economy, while the external factors are - high price and trust issues related to organic food.

Method: Data from organic food consumers was quantitatively analysed using multiple regression in SPSS. A seven point Likert scale was considered to measure the responses and a Cronbach alpha score of 0.8 indicated that the constructs were reliable.

Results and conclusion: The findings suggest organic food consumers who have an attitude towards local food consumption and an attitude to support local economy have positive intention towards local food purchase. Also the high price and trust issues related to organic food positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

Implications of the research: This study uncovers the changes in food consumption pattern during and after the pandemic. COVID-19 has affected people financially too and affordability has become a key. Marketers will have to come up with affordable solutions to market healthy food.

Originality/value: The shift in consumers' preference from organic to local has implications for the environment and the society. Local food is found to be sustainable, healthy and less expensive. Local food systems cater to food traceability and high food safety.

Keywords: Local Food, Organic Food, COVID-19 Pandemic, Multiple Regression, Attitude - Behaviour Relationship Theory.

PREFERÊNCIAS DO CONSUMO DE ALIMENTOS - ALIMENTOS LOCAIS VERSUS ALIMENTOS BIOLÓGICOS

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo desta pesquisa é entender a mudança nos padrões de consumo de alimentos dos consumidores de alimentos orgânicos, especialmente após a pandemia.

Estrutura teórica: Este estudo traz sugestões do modelo de relacionamento atitude-comportamento. Os fatores internos são - atitudes em relação aos alimentos locais e atitudes em relação ao apoio à economia local, enquanto os fatores externos são - questões de alto preço e confiança relacionadas com os alimentos orgânicos.

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Método: Os dados dos consumidores de alimentos orgânicos foram analisados quantitativamente utilizando regressão múltipla em SPSS. Uma escala de Likert de sete pontos foi considerada para medir as respostas e uma pontuação alfa de Cronbach de 0,8 indicou que os construtores eram confiáveis.

Resultados e conclusão: Os resultados sugerem que os consumidores de alimentos orgânicos que têm uma atitude em relação ao consumo local de alimentos e uma atitude de apoio à economia local têm uma intenção positiva em relação à compra local de alimentos. Além disso, os elevados preços e as questões de confiança relacionadas com os alimentos biológicos influenciam positivamente a intenção de comprar alimentos locais.

Implicações da pesquisa: Este estudo revela as mudanças no padrão de consumo de alimentos durante e após a pandemia. A Covid-19 também afetou as pessoas financeiramente e a acessibilidade se tornou uma chave. Os profissionais de marketing terão de encontrar soluções acessíveis para comercializar alimentos saudáveis.

Originalidade/valor: A mudança na preferência dos consumidores de orgânicos para locais tem implicações para o meio ambiente e a sociedade. A alimentação local é considerada sustentável, saudável e mais barata. Os sistemas alimentares locais atendem à rastreabilidade dos alimentos e à alta segurança alimentar.


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1 INTRODUCTION

Organic food sector is becoming popular and is found to be growing steadily. The global organic food market is estimated to grow to around $484 billion by the year 2030. In the year 2021 the global organic food market was reported to be around $168.5 billion (ResearchDive, 2022). The reasons for this growth has been found to be rising awareness and rising public concern (Chowdhury et al., 2021; Rana & Paul, 2017; Wojciechowska-Solis & Barska, 2021). People today are aware about the hazardous chemicals causing detrimental health effects and are widely concerned about them (ResearchDive, 2022). The effect of the pandemic, and other diseases such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension etc. are leading people to think more about available food options, organic being one of them (Gupta et al., 2020; Shah et al., 2023; Singu et al., 2020; Smirmaul et al., 2021). But are people happy with organic food? Are people able to see the promises made by organic food?

Organic food is a credence good. A credence good is a type of good having characteristics and benefits that cannot be observed by the consumer. The various benefits that organic food provides are only in reports (Dulleck et al., 2011; Lee & Hwang, 2016; Nuttavuthisit & Thøgersen, 2017). The consumer cannot see them (Nagy LB, Lakner Z, 2022). For example, while buying tomatoes a consumer cannot observe and tell the differences between the normal and organic tomato, just by the look and feel of the tomato. Organic tomatoes have to be certified and labelled as organic in order to be differentiated. The consumer ends up paying a very high price sometimes more than 50 percent of the normal tomato price for an organic tomato (Martínez-Carrasco et al., 2015; Rodríguez-Bermúdez et al., 2020).

The high prices of organic food is becoming an issue (FAO, 2022b). Consumers are not sure what they are buying. Consumers are not sure about the labelling and the certifications (Murphy et al., 2022). Some certifications do mention government certification but in some others which have been certified by participative guarantee schemes, there might be no mention of a government certification (Home et al., 2017; Reddy, 2010). The label might just say that the food is organic and it is certified. Some NGO’s help farmers get appropriate certifications.
and in some cases an institution certifies the food product to be organic. Although such institutions are authentic and work along with the farmers, consumers might not recognize the institutions (Batat et al., 2017; Getz & Shreck, 2006; Iqbal, 2015; Johnstone & Tan, 2015).

Previous research has reported a gap between consumer preference and consumer purchase of organic food. Organic food is ranked high in consumer preference but the sales of organic food has not found to match the preference. Previous research has also suggested that this gap between consumer preference and consumer purchase behaviour can be attributed to trust issues related to organic food and high pricing of organic food (Britwum et al., 2021; Konuk, 2018). The high pricing and trust issues of organic food has thus led consumers to look into more food options and alternate food systems. Local food being one of them. Local food is considered to be nutritious, is direct from the farm and is not expensive. One advantage local food offers over organic food is that consumers are aware of the nearby farm the produce has come from (Bimbo et al., 2021; Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Giovannucci et al., 2010; McEachern et al., 2010). USDA defines local food as "the direct or intermediated marketing of food to consumers that is produced and distributed in a limited geographic area" (USDA, 2022).

The system of local food brings farmers and consumers together at a point of sale and helps in connecting consumers with the farmers (Brinkley, 2017; Hamilton et al., 2021). The produce is considered to be fresh as it is direct from the farm and the farmers manage to get a good price for their farm produce (Berti & Mulligan, 2016; Brinkley, 2017, 2018). Middle men are minimized or are removed from the local food system. Local food systems minimize the distance between production and consumption, reducing transportation costs and minimizing carbon footprints (Berti & Mulligan, 2016; Brinkley, 2017; Nicolosi et al., 2019; Sultan et al., 2018). Local food could either be within 400 miles from the place of its produce or can be anywhere inside the state. Under local food systems food can be directly sold to the consumer at a point of sale or can be sold directly to a food service which is nothing but direct farm to table (McDaniel et al., 2021).

Some of the many benefits offered by local food are - farm fresh produce, support to the local economy, food origin and food traceability, better quality produce due to awareness about the farm, can build good relationship with farmers and purchase speciality produce (Berti & Mulligan, 2016; Brinkley, 2017, 2018). Local food systems offer farm to table concepts, which are becoming popular these days.

Based on the literature, the objective of this study is to examine the organic food consumers purchase intention of local food. It is important to understand the concept of local food system, as the local food market is becoming popular these days. For retailers who have only promoted organic food till now, this study throws light on another food system which is growing fast and can offer benefits similar to organic food system. The COVID-19 pandemic has awakened the health consciousness of people and people are striving towards consuming better food for better health. Organic food alone is not the only food that can be considered as healthy, local food too can provide nutritious and fresh food.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Local food systems offer a fresh perspective to the whole concept of food. Organic food, certified and labelled food, functional food and food grown using better sustainable technologies (Henrichsen et al., 2023; Inacio & Cortez, 2023; Lumuindong, 2023) are all food systems that can offer benefits in different ways to the consumers. But most of these food systems offer expensive solutions and are not within reach of many (Granato et al., 2020; Rana & Paul, 2017). Local food systems on the other hand offer cost effective solutions to both the consumer and the producer and hence are economically viable option. Local food systems benefit the local economy and about 65% of the money spent goes to the development of the
local community. Every local community can earn on its own and develop which in turn leads to the development of the country as a whole (Deller et al., 2017).

Local food systems help in developing the farmers. Farmers are able to get better profits as there is no need for middlemen in the local food system. Small farms not associated with any corporate can benefit immensely as they can connect with the consumers and the markets directly (Knickel et al., 2018; Plakias et al., 2020). Local food systems can eliminate food shortages and work directly on the food security problems of a community and a country as a whole. Food wastage can be handled effectively and proper storage mechanisms can be built. It might also be possible to exchange different variety of food with other communities in case of food surplus and exotic variety food production (Coelho et al., 2018).

It is reported that large food chain stores do not support local food systems and support corporate farming. Supporting some kind of farming is a good practice but it is imperative that these large chain stores start working with smaller farms too (Dunne et al., 2011). Working with smaller farms would mean direct farm produce which is fresh, cheaper in rates and offers variety and speciality produce. It is a sure solution for happy consumers and better retail profits.

Situations like a pandemic can be handled effectively if local food systems are prevalent in the community (Bakalis et al., 2020). Local communities need not depend on the central food systems during a pandemic when transport has become difficult. Shorter food transport can always be handled better when compared to longer food travel and wider food distribution even during a difficult time like pandemic (Stein & Santini, 2022). If food during such times is available to everyone in the community, it can give courage to the community to fight the pandemic. Such small steps lead to positivity and determination even during the face of uncertainty.

Local food systems offer fresh and less processed produce. The fresh produce offers good nutrition. Less processed food would mean improved diet quality and reduced diet related diseases (Baker & Friel, 2016). People opting for healthier food choices might consider such systems. As food comes from a known farm the consumer can be assured of food safety and food grown in a nearby location can be free of any kind of contamination.

Organic food have the advantages of labelling and certifications. Local food on the other hand do not have certifications. Local food generally means food grown within a geographical area and can be more identified to the local community.

This paper looks into the attitude and personal experiences of organic food consumers leading to the behaviour of purchasing local food. India is a diverse country with vast agro-ecological diversity. India is the largest producer of milk and pulses and ranks second in producing rice, wheat, sugarcane, groundnut, vegetables and fruits. India is also internationally recognized for producing spices, fish, poultry, livestock, plantation and crops (FAO, 2022a). The country's climate is dry and humid in the south and is temperate in the north. Although India has only 2.4 percentage of the land area in total, the country is home to 45000 plant and 91000 animal species. Agriculture is the mainstay for about 70 percent of the rural population and of them 82 percent are small and marginal farmers. While the Indian agricultural system has achieved grain sufficiency but resource allocation remains a question. India is home to 190 million undernourished people and anaemia continues to haunt its people (FAO, 2022a).

The vast challenges this diverse country faces in terms of resource allocation can be handled by developing community based local food systems. The weak linkages in nutritional food disbursement can be identified and addressed by forming community based local food systems. A lot can happen when the community as a whole is responsible for the farming, storage and disbursement of food. Increased incomes of farmers, diversity of crops, women empowerment, participation in policies laid by the government, development of allied sectors like animal husbandry, forestry, and fisheries and better livelihood opportunities are some advantages. Local food systems can lead to the economic prosperity of the country.
Based on the literature, the objective of this study is to examine the organic food consumers purchase intention of local food. It is important to understand the concept of local food system, as the local food market is becoming popular these days. For retailers who have only promoted organic food till now, this study throws light on another food system which is growing fast and can offer benefits similar to organic food system. The COVID-19 pandemic has awakened the health consciousness of people and people are striving towards consuming better food for better health. Organic food alone is not the only food that can be considered as healthy, local food too can provide nutritious and fresh food.

2.1 ABC Model

This study is based within the framework of attitude behaviour relationship theory. According to the ABC model of behaviour given by Guagnano, Stern and Dietz, attitude and external factors together can influence behaviour (Guagnano et al., 1995). In this study a simple model was tested. The attitudes considered were attitude towards consumption of local food and attitude towards supporting local economy. The external factors were - the price of organic food and trust issues in organic food. The study tested if the attitudes and the external factors together could influence the purchase intention of local food.

Local Food, Attitudes and External Factors - Consumers state different reasons for purchasing local food. The main two reasons identified are societal reason or personal reason for the consumption of local food. Consumers perceive local food to be healthy, safe and fresh (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015; Jurgilevich et al., 2016; Wijaya, 2019; Yildirim et al., 2016). These reasons can be identified as personal and form attitudes towards consuming local food (Feldmann & Hamm, 2015). The societal reason for consuming local food could be to support the local agricultural economy and support the small scale farming community. These reasons form attitude towards supporting local economy (Berti & Mulligan, 2016; Busa & Garder, 2015; Feldmann & Hamm, 2015). Apart from the attitude of consumers to purchase local food, there are some external factors that can also influence consumers to purchase local food. These consumers have purchased organic food and organic food was found to be expensive compared to the local food. The local food is also said to be healthier and can be better than the organic food because it is procured from the local farms. The local farms have a shorter distributional channel and hence the local food is fresh when compared to any other produce. Consumers today are finding it difficult to pay a higher price for organic food that offers similar benefits as local food. Also consumers are not able to trust the benefits organic food claims. Organic food is a credence good and consumers do not understand if the claim about nutrition, freshness, production process etc is true. While in the case of local food, the consumer is able to interact with the local farm producer and at times the consumer also knows where the local farm is located. The distance from the consumers purchase point and the local farm is not much and the consumer can always visit the local farm to see the production practices, which is not possible when it comes to organic food.

3 METHODOLOGY

Methodology is an important part of any research and it is a systematic way of looking into a research problem. But before the research methodology, a researcher has to state the proposed relationship between the variables i.e. the researcher has to develop the hypothesis.
3.1 Hypothesis Development

The knowledge obtained in the previous sections helped in forming the below hypothesis:

H1: Attitude towards consuming local food can positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

H2: Attitude towards supporting local economy can positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

Attitude means belief, thoughts and feelings towards something and purchase intention is defined as “the possibility of the consumer's willingness to purchase any product” (Long Yi, 2011). Previous studies have studied the relationship between attitudes and purchase intention and have found that a positive attitude can influence the intention to purchase a particular product. Hence this study posits the first hypothesis as attitudes towards consuming local food can positively influence the intention to purchase local food. The second hypothesis is attitude towards supporting local economy positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

H3: External factors relating to price of organic food positively influence the purchase intention of local food.

H4: External factors relating to trust issues associated with organic food positively influence the purchase intention of local food.

Organic food consumers often end up buying expensive food products because the food products are labelled as organic. The promises of better health and better nutrition makes the prices of organic food high. The factors like import of organic food makes the price of the food product sky rocketing. It has been reported that organic food consumers have increasingly begun to question the high prices of organic food. If import of food products makes the food expensive then they have started to prefer buying local. Hence the study posits that external factors relating to price of organic food positively influence the purchase intention of local food.

Apart from the high prices of organic food, it is being reported that organic food consumers are questioning the authenticity of the claims made by organic food. The claim that organic food is more nutritious, is produced considering environmental care and animal welfare and does not contain artificial additives etc. are being questioned by consumers. An organic food consumer cannot see the benefits while buying the organic food. The consumer has to depend on the label and there is no other way of verifying the authenticity. Hence the study posits that external factors relating to trust issues associated with organic food positively influence the purchase intention of local food.

Setterhall & Mikaela (2015) in their study have suggested that attitude directly influences purchase intention. They have also looked into external factors. According to their research all variables except attitude have to be taken as external factors. Considering their argument on external factors, this study takes price of organic food and the trust issues related to the purchase of organic food as external factors (Setterhall & Mikaela, 2015). Their research also suggests that external factors can directly influence the purchase intention. Drawing suggestions from Setterhall & Mikaela (2015) this study also incorporates the argument that external factors of high price of organic food and trust issues related to the purchase of organic food can directly influence the purchase intention to buy local food (Setterhall & Mikaela, 2015).

3.2 Materials and Method

The data was collected through a survey questionnaire conducted in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. A convenience sample of 150 respondents was considered. Of these 150 respondents,
100 filled the questionnaire completely and so the data from the 100 respondents was taken for analysis. The respondents were consumers who had consumed organic food at-least once. As there is no proper data on organic food consumers in India, a convenience sample had to be taken. The questionnaire and the scales prepared for attitudes and the external factors were taken from previous studies and hence were reliable and valid. In any case the questions were mildly modified to suit Indian consumers, and a Cronbach alpha test was conducted. A score of 0.8 indicated that the constructs were reliable. A seven point Likert scale was taken to measure the responses in each item in the questionnaire. The Likert scale ranged from very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (7).

The dependent variable - purchase intention of local food - was measured using a seven point Likert scale. The independent variables Attitude towards consuming local food and Attitude towards supporting local economy too were measured using a seven point Likert scale. Finally the independent variables i.e. the external factors of price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food were measured using a seven point Likert scale.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data was analysed using multiple regression, as the independent variables taken together predicting/ not predicting the dependent variable had to be seen i.e., the attitudes and the external factors when taken together do they predict positively the intent to purchase local food, had to be seen.

Table 1: Variables Entered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Entered/Removed*</th>
<th>Variables Entered</th>
<th>Variables Removed</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trust1, ATC, Price, ATS</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>Enter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: PI
b. All requested variables entered.

Source: SPSS

The criterion variable in this study is intention to purchase local food (PI). The predictors are trust issues (TRUST1) related to organic food, Price of organic food, attitude towards consuming local food (ATC) and attitude towards supporting the local economy (ATS). Trust issues related to organic food and high price of organic food are the external factors. ATC and ATS are the Attitudes. As this is multiple regression we have one dependent variable and four independent variables. Table 1 shows the dependent and independent variables taken in the study.

Table 2: Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Summary</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.995*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Trust1, ATC, Price, ATS

Source: SPSS
Table 3: ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>3686.902</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>921.725</td>
<td>2459.074</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>35.608</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3722.510</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: PI
b. Predictors: (Constant), Trust1, ATC, Price, ATS

Source: SPSS

Table 2 and Table 3 show whether the predictors ATC, ATS, price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food when taken together as a set or a group, do they predict intention to purchase local food (PI)? Table 2 - the Model Summary Table and table 3 - the Anova Table are very closely related. Let us first take a look at the model summary table (Table2).

The most commonly reported value reported and taken for a multiple regression study is the R Square value. If R Square is converted into a percentage it become 99.5 percent.

Next taking the Anova Table (Table 3). In the Anova table we need to look at the significance written as Sig which is less than 0.05, which means that the regression is significant.

Table 4: Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficients*</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>-.891</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td></td>
<td>-4.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATC</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.259</td>
<td>4.413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.310</td>
<td>3.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATS</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.251</td>
<td>2.609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust1</td>
<td>.297</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>2.283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: PI

Source: SPSS

The Coefficient Table (Table 4) looks at each of the predictors individually. Looking at the Sig column in the table, we find that each of the predictors is less than 0.05. Each of the individual independent variables of ATC, ATS, high price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food are evaluated with an alpha value of 0.05.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Model Summary Table (Table 2): R Square value is 99.5 percent which means when taken together or when taken as a set, the predictors ATC, ATS, high price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food account for 99.5 percent variance in the PI.

ANOVA Table (Table 3): Test using alpha = 0.05. The overall regression model was significant, F(4,95) = 2459.07, p < 0.001, R^2 = 0.995

Coefficients Table (Table 4): Each of the independent variables are less than 0.05.

Hence,

ATC < 0.001, hence ATC is a significant predictor of PI, which indicates H1 is true.
Price < 0.001, hence high price of organic food is a significant predictor of PI, which indicates H3 is true.
ATS = .011, hence ATS is a significant predictor of PI, which indicates H2 is true.
Trust = 0.025, hence Trust issues related to organic food is a significant predictor of PI, which indicates H4 is true.
R Square is a measure of the amount of variance in the dependent variable that the independent variables account for when taken as a group. It doesn't measure the independent variables individually. So the overall model accounts for 99.5 percentage of variance. Also the Anova table (Table 3) indicates that the regression tested at an alpha level of 0.05, is significant. Hence the overall model with all the four predictors taken as a group is statistically significant.

Further when looked at the coefficients table (Table 4), each independent variable was found to be statistically significant. The results of this study show that attitude towards consumption of local food can positively influence the intention to purchase local food. With an alpha level of 0.011, the study finds that the attitude towards supporting the local economy can positively influence the intention to purchase local food. Attitudes are considered to be internal to human beings in decision making and this study considers those attitudes towards local food consumption and supporting the local economy. Both have been found to help positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

On the other hand this study considers high price of organic food and the trust issues related to organic food as external factors. With an alpha level of less than 0.001, this study reports that high prices of organic food can positively influence the consumer's intention to purchase local food. Organic food marketers need to understand that people have started looking for options and organic alone is not the only health food found in the market. If prices of organic food continue to be high then consumers can start shifting towards local food.

The next external factor considered in this study is trust issues related to the purchase of organic food. With an alpha of 0.025, this study reported that trust issues related to organic food purchase can positively influence the intention to purchase local food. People who are not able to trust the claims made by organic food can shift towards purchasing local food.

5 CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has made people to look for healthy food options. Organic food although considered healthy food, the prices have been reported to be high and in some cases the prices seem to be 200 percent higher than the normal conventional food. Pandemic has taken the livelihood of many people and consuming a healthy but expensive food is not a possibility for many. Affordability has become a serious issue, more so after the pandemic. Local food on the other hand seem to be healthy and are not expensive at all. They come from the nearby farm and many times can lead to the consumers knowing about the farmers or the area of the produce. Also organic food makes tall claims about nutrition, process of food production, animal welfare etc., but is the consumer really able to see and verify these claims? The consumers might get to know the country of origin, in case of organic food but in many cases the consumer is unaware of more specific details like the farm, the farmer, the environment etc. As there is not much information about the organic food, consumers are not able to believe the tall claims made by organic food and it leads to trust issues in purchase of organic food. This study highlights these two issues by considering high price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food as external factors. Both high price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food are reported to positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

Further as people are trying other types of food other than organic, especially after the pandemic, the attitudes, i.e. the internal factors of a human being that aid in decision making are also changing. People's attitude is changing from organic food consumption and moving towards local food consumption. This study thus considers attitude towards consumption of local and attitude towards supporting the local economy. Both these attitudes have been found to positively influence the intention to purchase local food.

From a theoretical point of view this study although considers the attitude behavior relationship to look into the intention to purchase local food but this study has also considered
the external factors like high price of organic food and trust issues while purchasing organic food. This study draws from the research of Setterhall & Mikaela (2015), and according to their research, attitudes can be considered as internal factors and factors other than attitudes can be considered external factors. The addition of external factors which are related to organic food and how they influence the local food purchase intention is the most noteworthy inclusion of this study. The statistically significant results of the high price of organic food and trust issues related to organic food, both leading to the intention to purchase local food, indicated the usefulness and relevance of adding these dimensions in the study.

When considered from the practical point of view, this study is quite useful to marketers and researchers of both organic food and local food. This research is a first of its kind in local food segment immediately after the pandemic. Marketers and researchers will be able to understand how the consumption pattern of consumers has been affected after the pandemic. Affordability has become a very important variable after the pandemic and this study will force organic and local food marketers to look into this aspect.

In the end to highlight the limitations of the study, this study uses convenience sampling to study the data which can be a limitation. Also, the sample size was just 100. A bigger sample size always give better and reliable results and so in future researchers can look for better data and a bigger sample size. This research considers attitudes towards local food consumption and attitudes towards supporting local economy. Future research can consider attitudes towards the environmental protection, carbon foot prints and animal welfare. Adding more dimensions of attitude can give a thorough picture of the intention of consumers to purchase local food.

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