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Understanding organic food consumer behaviour: Determinants, barriers, and emerging trends - A systematic review

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Abstract

The organic food sector has witnessed unprecedented growth globally, driven by evolving consumer consciousness regarding health, environmental sustainability, and food safety. This comprehensive review synthesizes contemporary research on consumer behaviour towards organic food, examining the multifaceted determinants that shape purchase intentions and actual consumption patterns. Drawing upon established theoretical frameworks including the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Value-Belief-Norm theory, and Stimulus-Organism-Response model, this paper critically evaluates the interplay of health consciousness, environmental concerns, perceived quality, trust in certification, and socio-demographic factors in organic food consumption decisions. The review further addresses emerging themes including the attitude-behaviour gap, generational differences, the impact of digital commerce, and cross-cultural variations in organic food adoption. By integrating findings from diverse geographical contexts, this paper provides valuable insights for marketers, policymakers, and researchers seeking to understand and promote sustainable food consumption behaviour.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, organic food, purchase intention, health consciousness, environmental concern, Theory of Planned Behaviour, sustainable consumption

1. Introduction

The global organic food market has experienced remarkable expansion over the past two decades, reflecting fundamental shifts in consumer values, dietary preferences, and environmental awareness (Rana & Paul, 2017; Madureira *et al.*, 2025; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) [35, 47, 70]. Contemporary consumers increasingly seek food products that align with their health aspirations, ethical considerations, and sustainability goals, positioning organic food as a significant component of modern dietary choices (Kushwah *et al.*, 2019; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) [32, 53]. The organic food industry, once considered a niche market catering primarily to environmentally conscious consumers, has transitioned into mainstream retail channels, commanding substantial market share across developed and emerging economies alike (Nasir & Karakaya, 2014; Janssen, 2018; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) [29, 41, 60].

Understanding consumer behaviour towards organic food consumption has become imperative for multiple stakeholders, including food producers, retailers, policymakers, and public health authorities (Aertsens *et al.*, 2009; Dangi *et al.*, 2020; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) [1, 15, 50]. The complexity inherent in organic food purchase decisions extends beyond simple utility maximization, encompassing psychological, social, cultural, and situational factors that

collectively influence consumer attitudes, intentions, and behaviours (Ajzen, 1991; Scalco *et al.*, 2017; Massey *et al.*, 2018) [3, 38, 51]. Research has demonstrated that while consumers often express favourable attitudes towards organic products, translating these positive dispositions into consistent purchase behaviour remains challenging, a phenomenon widely characterized as the attitude-behaviour gap (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) [4, 52].

The present review endeavours to provide a comprehensive examination of the determinants underlying consumer behaviour towards organic food, synthesizing empirical evidence from diverse research contexts and theoretical perspectives (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021; Liang & Lim, 2021; Yang *et al.*, 2023) [2, 33, 66, 67]. By critically evaluating the existing literature, this paper aims to identify key drivers and barriers influencing organic food consumption, assess the applicability of established theoretical frameworks, and highlight emerging research directions that merit scholarly attention (Basha *et al.*, 2015; Bryła, 2017; Rüteliöné *et al.*, 2024) [6, 8]. The review contributes to the academic discourse by offering an integrated understanding of organic food consumer behaviour while providing actionable insights for practitioners engaged in organic food marketing and policy development (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Chai *et al.*, 2022; Yu *et*

al., 2022) ^[10, 11, 69].

2. Methodology

This study adopts a systematic review method to analyse existing research on consumer behaviour toward organic food. A systematic review was selected because it enables a structured, transparent, and reproducible process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesising prior research. This approach helps to systematically identify key determinants, barriers, and emerging trends influencing organic food consumption. Relevant studies were retrieved from major academic databases to ensure the quality and credibility of sources. The primary databases used were Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. These databases were selected because they provide access to peer-reviewed research in the areas of marketing, consumer behaviour, sustainability, and organic food studies. The literature search was conducted using combinations of keywords related to organic food and consumer behaviour. Boolean operators AND and OR were applied to refine and expand the search results. The main search string structure was as follows; Product context (organic food OR organic products OR organic consumption), Consumer behaviour (consumer behaviour OR purchase intention OR purchase behaviour OR buying behaviour OR food choice) and Influencing aspects (determinants OR factors influencing OR motivation OR attitudes OR barriers OR constraints OR trends). Database filters were applied to limit results to; Peer-reviewed journal articles, English language and publication period mainly between 2010 and 2025, with emphasis on recent studies.

To ensure the relevance of the review, specific criteria were applied; (a) Inclusion criteria studies were included if they; were published in peer-reviewed journals, were written in English, focused on consumer behaviour related to organic food, examined motivations, determinants, attitudes, barriers, or trends and were published mainly between 2010 and 2025 (with emphasis on recent studies). (b) Exclusion criteria studies were excluded if they; focused only on organic farming or production methods, did not include a consumer perspective, and were reports, theses, conference papers, or news articles.

The selection process was conducted in three steps: (1) Initial search - Articles were collected from databases using the selected keywords, (2) Title and abstract Screening - Irrelevant studies were removed after reviewing titles and abstracts, and (3) Full-text review - The remaining articles were read fully to ensure they met the inclusion criteria. The final set of selected studies formed the basis of the review. Important information from each selected study was recorded, including: Authors and year, country of study, research method used, theoretical framework, key factors influencing organic food consumption, identified barriers, and main findings.

This helped in comparing results across different studies. The collected studies were analysed using a thematic approach. Similar findings were grouped into common themes. These themes were organised under three main categories; (1) Determinants of organic food consumer behaviour, (2) Barriers to organic food consumption, and (3) Emerging trends in organic food purchasing. This approach

helped to identify patterns and major conclusions from the existing literature. This review only included studies published in English and available in selected databases. Some relevant regional studies may not have been included. However, the selected sources provide a broad and reliable overview of research on organic food consumer behaviour.

3. Conceptual Background and Definitions

3.1 Understanding Organic Food

Organic food refers to agricultural products cultivated and processed without the use of synthetic fertilizers, chemical pesticides, genetically modified organisms, or artificial additives (Bryła, 2017; Naspetti and Zanolì, 2006) ^[8, 42]. The production of organic food adheres to specific agricultural standards designed to promote ecological balance, conserve biodiversity, and minimize environmental degradation (Hashemi *et al.*, 2024; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2017) ^[24, 59]. Organic farming practices emphasize sustainable methods that imitate natural ecological processes, reducing dependence on chemical inputs while maintaining soil health and water quality (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Soroka and Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019) ^[11, 55]. The organic certification process ensures compliance with national and international standards, providing consumers with assurance regarding the authenticity and quality of organic products (Murphy *et al.*, 2022; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) ^[39, 60].

The conceptualization of organic food extends beyond production methods to encompass consumer perceptions of naturalness, purity, and authenticity (Bazhan *et al.*, 2024; Malissiova *et al.*, 2022) ^[7, 37]. Consumers frequently associate organic food with attributes including chemical-free cultivation, superior nutritional content, environmental friendliness, and enhanced taste (Chen, 2007; Eyinade *et al.*, 2021) ^[12, 19]. These perceived attributes significantly influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions, underscoring the importance of understanding how consumers construct their evaluations of organic food products (Gumber and Rana, 2021; Nunes *et al.*, 2021) ^[21, 44].

3.2 Consumer Behaviour in the Organic Food Context

Consumer behaviour encompasses the processes through which individuals search for, select, purchase, use, and dispose of products to satisfy their needs and wants (Aertsens *et al.*, 2009; Rana and Paul, 2017) ^[1, 47]. In the context of organic food, consumer behaviour is shaped by a complex interplay of internal psychological factors and external environmental influences (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[2, 50]. The decision-making process involves cognitive evaluations of product attributes, affective responses to organic food associations, and behavioural manifestations in the form of purchase actions and consumption patterns (Liang and Lim, 2021; Liu and Zheng, 2019) ^[33, 34].

Research has identified multiple dimensions of consumer behaviour relevant to organic food consumption, including awareness and knowledge, attitude formation, purchase intention development, actual purchase behaviour, and post-purchase evaluation (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019) ^[30, 32]. Each dimension is influenced by distinct sets of factors, necessitating a comprehensive analytical approach that considers the multifaceted nature of organic food

consumption decisions (Dangi *et al.*, 2020; Shenoy and Aithal, 2024) ^[15, 53].

4. Theoretical Frameworks in Organic Food Consumer Behaviour Research

4.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour has emerged as the predominant theoretical framework for investigating organic food purchase intention and consumption behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Scalco *et al.*, 2017) ^[3, 51]. According to this framework, behavioural intention serves as the most proximate predictor of actual behaviour, with intention being determined by three primary antecedents: attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023) ^[10, 16]. In the organic food context, attitude reflects consumers' overall evaluation of purchasing organic products, subjective norms capture the perceived social pressure to engage in organic food consumption, and perceived behavioural control represents consumers' beliefs regarding their ability to purchase organic food (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Suryavanshi *et al.*, 2023) ^[17, 57].

Empirical investigations have consistently demonstrated the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in explaining organic food purchase intentions across diverse cultural contexts (Aschemann-Witzel and Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Eberle *et al.*, 2022) ^[4, 18]. Studies conducted in China, India, Bangladesh, and European nations have confirmed significant positive relationships between attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, and purchase intentions for organic food (Chekima *et al.*, 2017; Ham *et al.*, 2015) ^[13, 22]. Research extending the basic framework has incorporated additional constructs including health consciousness, environmental concern, and moral attitude, enhancing the explanatory power of the model in predicting organic food consumption behaviour (Aungatichart *et al.*, 2020; Köse and Aydemir, 2021) ^[5, 31].

The Theory of Planned Behaviour has proven particularly valuable in understanding the cognitive processes underlying organic food purchase decisions (Massey *et al.*, 2018; Pilelienė and Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021) ^[38, 46]. However, researchers have noted limitations in its ability to account for the attitude-behaviour gap observed in organic food consumption, suggesting that additional factors beyond those specified in the original framework may influence the translation of intentions into actual behaviour (Janssen, 2018; Schäufele and Hamm, 2021) ^[29, 52].

4.2 Value-Belief-Norm Theory

The Value-Belief-Norm theory provides an alternative theoretical lens for examining organic food consumption as a form of pro-environmental behaviour (Honkanen *et al.*, 2006; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[26, 66, 67]. This framework posits that personal values influence ecological worldviews, which in turn shape awareness of consequences and ascription of responsibility, ultimately activating personal norms that guide behavioural choices (Wei *et al.*, 2022; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[64, 67]. The theory emphasizes the role of moral obligations in motivating sustainable consumption behaviours, including organic food purchases (Rüteliönė *et al.*, 2024; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[8, 67].

Research applying the Value-Belief-Norm framework to

organic food consumption has demonstrated that health values, environmental values, and altruistic values significantly influence consumers' beliefs about the consequences of their food choices (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Wang *et al.*, 2023) ^[25, 63]. These beliefs subsequently activate personal norms regarding the moral obligation to consume organic food, which predict both purchase intentions and actual consumption behaviour (Rana and Paul, 2020; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[48, 66, 67]. The integration of health values into the traditional Value-Belief-Norm model has proven particularly relevant for understanding organic food consumption, given the prominent role of health concerns in motivating organic food purchases (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[28, 67].

4.3 Stimulus-Organism-Response Model

The Stimulus-Organism-Response model offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how external stimuli influence internal psychological states, which subsequently determine behavioural responses (Sultan *et al.*, 2021; Vergura *et al.*, 2020) ^[56, 62]. In the organic food context, stimuli include marketing communications, certification labels, price information, and product attributes, while organisms represent consumers' cognitive and affective processing of these stimuli (Liu and Zheng, 2019; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[34, 45]. The response dimension captures consumers' purchase intentions and actual buying behaviour (Liang and Lim, 2021; Sultan *et al.*, 2021) ^[33].

Studies employing the Stimulus-Organism-Response model have examined how organic food characteristics and marketing practices influence consumer attitudes and purchase decisions (Mai *et al.*, 2022; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[36, 43]. Research has demonstrated that perceived organic food values, including health benefits, environmental protection, and naturalness, serve as stimuli that positively influence consumer attitudes, which subsequently enhance purchase intentions and willingness to pay premium prices (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Yu *et al.*, 2021) ^[11, 68]. The model has proven valuable for understanding the psychological mechanisms through which organic food attributes translate into consumer behaviour (Shin *et al.*, 2019; Sultan *et al.*, 2021) ^[54, 56].

4.4 Theory of Consumption Values

The Theory of Consumption Values provides insights into the value dimensions that drive organic food consumption decisions (Köse and Aydemir, 2021) ^[31]. According to this framework, consumption choices are influenced by functional value (product utility and quality), emotional value (affective responses), social value (social image and approval), epistemic value (curiosity and novelty), and conditional value (situational factors) (Hansen *et al.*, 2018; Köse and Aydemir, 2021) ^[23]. Research has demonstrated that multiple value dimensions significantly influence organic food purchase intentions, with functional quality, emotional value, and social value emerging as particularly important determinants (Bryła, 2021; Shin *et al.*, 2019) ^[9, 54].

5. Determinants of Organic Food Consumer Behaviour

5.1 Health Consciousness and Food Safety Concerns

Health consciousness represents one of the most consistently identified drivers of organic food consumption

across research contexts (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Rana and Paul, 2020) ^[28, 48]. Health-conscious consumers demonstrate heightened awareness of the relationship between dietary choices and personal well-being, leading them to prefer organic food products perceived as healthier, more nutritious, and free from harmful chemical residues (Chen, 2007; Shin *et al.*, 2019) ^[12, 54]. Research has established that health consciousness significantly influences attitudes towards organic food, which subsequently predict purchase intentions and consumption behaviour (Basha *et al.*, 2015; Kamboj *et al.*, 2023) ^[6, 30].

The association between organic food and health benefits operates through multiple mechanisms (Eyinade *et al.*, 2021; Hasan *et al.*, 2023) ^[19, 25]. Consumers perceive organic products as containing higher nutritional value, fewer pesticide residues, and no artificial additives, making them superior alternatives to conventionally produced food (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021; Bazhan *et al.*, 2024) ^[2, 7]. Studies have demonstrated that consumers who prioritize health considerations exhibit stronger preferences for organic products and greater willingness to pay premium prices (Hu *et al.*, 2024; Yu *et al.*, 2022) ^[27, 69]. The relationship between health consciousness and organic food consumption has been observed consistently across demographic groups and geographical regions, although the strength of this relationship varies across cultural contexts (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[11, 45].

Food safety concerns constitute a related but distinct motivational factor driving organic food consumption (Liu and Zheng, 2019; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[34, 66, 67]. Growing awareness of food contamination incidents, pesticide residues, and chemical additives in conventionally produced food has heightened consumer anxiety regarding food safety (Chekima *et al.*, 2017; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[13, 43]. Organic food, with its emphasis on chemical-free production methods, offers consumers perceived assurance of safety, reducing their concerns about potential health risks associated with conventional food consumption (Mai *et al.*, 2022; Sultan *et al.*, 2021) ^[36, 56]. Research has confirmed that food safety concerns significantly influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards organic food, particularly in contexts where food safety scandals have eroded public trust in the conventional food supply chain (Wang *et al.*, 2023; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[63].

5.2 Environmental Concern and Sustainability Orientation

Environmental concern represents a significant altruistic motivation for organic food consumption, reflecting consumers' awareness of and concern about environmental problems associated with conventional agriculture (Hashemi *et al.*, 2024; Soroka and Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019) ^[24, 55]. Environmentally conscious consumers recognize the ecological benefits of organic farming practices, including reduced pollution, biodiversity conservation, soil health maintenance, and lower greenhouse gas emissions (Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2017) ^[58, 59]. Research has demonstrated that environmental concern positively influences attitudes towards organic food and strengthens purchase intentions, although the magnitude of this effect varies across studies (Aungatichart *et al.*, 2020; Kose and Aydemir, 2021) ^[5, 31].

The relationship between environmental concern and organic food consumption is mediated by consumers' beliefs about the environmental consequences of their food choices (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Rütelionè *et al.*, 2024) ^[17]. Consumers who believe that their purchasing decisions can contribute to environmental protection are more likely to choose organic products as a means of expressing their environmental values (Wei *et al.*, 2022; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[64, 66, 67]. Studies have shown that environmental self-identity, defined as the extent to which individuals perceive themselves as environmentally responsible persons, moderates the relationship between environmental concern and organic food purchase behaviour (Rutelione *et al.*, 2024; Wang *et al.*, 2023) ^[49, 63].

Sustainability orientation encompasses broader considerations beyond environmental protection, including social equity, animal welfare, and intergenerational responsibility (Dangi *et al.*, 2020; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[15, 50]. Research has indicated that consumers with strong sustainability orientations demonstrate consistent preferences for organic products across food categories, viewing organic consumption as part of a broader commitment to sustainable lifestyles (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Shenoy and Aithal, 2024) ^[11, 53]. The integration of sustainability considerations into organic food research reflects the growing recognition that consumer choices are increasingly influenced by ethical and social responsibility concerns (Madureira *et al.*, 2025; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) ^[35, 70].

5.3 Perceived Quality and Sensory Attributes

Consumer perceptions of organic food quality significantly influence purchase decisions and willingness to pay premium prices (Gil *et al.*, 2000; Gumber and Rana, 2021) ^[20, 21]. Quality perceptions encompass multiple dimensions, including nutritional content, freshness, taste, appearance, and overall product excellence (Eberle *et al.*, 2022; Malissiova *et al.*, 2022) ^[18, 37]. Research has demonstrated that consumers generally perceive organic products as superior in quality compared to conventional alternatives, with these perceptions positively influencing attitudes and purchase intentions (Bryła, 2021; Nunes *et al.*, 2021) ^[9, 44]. Sensory attributes, particularly taste and freshness, play important roles in shaping consumer evaluations of organic food (Chen, 2007; Eyinade *et al.*, 2021) ^[12, 19]. Studies have found that consumers frequently associate organic products with superior taste, describing them as more authentic, natural, and flavourful than conventionally produced counterparts (Malissiova *et al.*, 2022; Soroka and Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019) ^[37, 55]. The expectation of enhanced sensory experiences contributes to consumers' willingness to pay higher prices for organic products (Hu *et al.*, 2024; Yu *et al.*, 2021) ^[27, 68]. Research on consumer sensory experiences has revealed that organic consumers often link taste preferences to childhood memories and notions of authenticity, suggesting that sensory evaluations of organic food are influenced by both objective product characteristics and subjective associations (Hansen *et al.*, 2018; Shin *et al.*, 2019) ^[23, 54].

The appearance and presentation of organic products also influence consumer perceptions, although research has yielded mixed findings regarding consumer preferences (Aschemann-Witzel and Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Bryła,

2017)^[4, 8]. Some studies suggest that consumers accept and even prefer the less standardized appearance of organic products, viewing visual imperfections as indicators of authenticity and natural production (Naspetti and Zanolì, 2006; Soroka & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019)^[42, 55]. Other research indicates that consumers expect organic products to meet similar visual standards as conventional products while delivering superior taste and nutritional benefits (Eberle *et al.*, 2022; Gumber & Rana, 2021)^[18, 21].

5.4 Trust in Organic Certification and Labelling

Consumer trust in organic certification and labelling systems constitutes a critical determinant of organic food purchase behaviour (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Murphy *et al.*, 2022)^[10, 39]. Trust reflects consumers' confidence in the authenticity, reliability, and quality assurance provided by organic certification bodies and labels (Bryła, 2017; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019)^[8, 60]. Given that organic attributes represent credence qualities that cannot be directly verified by consumers, trust in certification systems serves as a proxy for product authenticity, reducing perceived risk and uncertainty in purchase decisions (Yu *et al.*, 2021; Yu *et al.*, 2022)^[68, 69].

Research has demonstrated that trust in organic certification significantly influences consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and willingness to pay premium prices (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Murphy *et al.*, 2022)^[10, 39]. Studies have identified multiple dimensions of trust relevant to organic food consumption, including trust in certification bodies, trust in retailers, trust in producers, and trust in the integrity of the organic supply chain (Bryła, 2021; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2017)^[8, 9, 59]. Consumer trust varies across certification systems, with nationally recognized organic labels generally commanding higher trust than private labels or unfamiliar certification marks (Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019; Murphy *et al.*, 2022)^[60].

The role of trust in organic food consumption is particularly significant in contexts characterized by information asymmetry, greenwashing concerns, and instances of fraudulent organic claims (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Liu and Zheng, 2019)^[11, 34]. Consumer scepticism regarding the authenticity of organic labels has been identified as a barrier to organic food adoption, particularly in markets with limited regulatory enforcement or widespread product mislabelling (Janssen, 2018; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021)^[29, 52]. Research has emphasized the importance of transparent labelling, clear certification standards, and consistent regulatory oversight in building and maintaining consumer trust in organic food systems (Bryła, 2017; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019)^[8, 60].

5.5 Subjective Norms and Social Influence

Subjective norms capture the perceived social pressure to engage in organic food consumption, reflecting the influence of significant others including family members, friends, colleagues, and broader social reference groups (Ajzen, 1991; Ham *et al.*, 2015)^[3, 22]. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, individuals who perceive that important people in their lives approve of organic food consumption are more likely to develop intentions to purchase organic products (Dangiso *et al.*, 2023; Suryavanshi *et al.*, 2023)^[16, 57].

Research on subjective norms in organic food consumption has distinguished between injunctive norms (perceptions of what others think one should do) and descriptive norms (perceptions of what others actually do) (Ham *et al.*, 2015; Scalco *et al.*, 2017)^[22, 51]. Studies have demonstrated that both types of norms significantly influence organic food purchase intentions, although their relative importance varies across cultural contexts (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Eberle *et al.*, 2022)^[17, 18]. In collectivist cultures, where social approval and conformity carry greater weight, subjective norms have been found to exert stronger influence on organic food consumption compared to individualistic cultural contexts (Chekima *et al.*, 2017; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015)^[13, 58].

Social influence extends beyond immediate reference groups to encompass broader social trends, media influences, and celebrity endorsements (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Nafees *et al.*, 2022)^[25, 40]. Research has documented the role of social media platforms, health influencers, and online communities in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours towards organic food (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021)^[30, 50]. Word-of-mouth communication, both online and offline, significantly influences consumer awareness, knowledge, and purchase decisions regarding organic products (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021)^[46].

5.6 Price Sensitivity and Willingness to Pay Premium

Price constitutes the most frequently cited barrier to organic food consumption, with organic products typically commanding premium prices ranging from twenty to fifty percent higher than conventional alternatives (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019)^[4, 32]. The price premium reflects higher production costs associated with organic farming practices, certification expenses, lower yields, and supply chain constraints (Hashemi *et al.*, 2024; Janssen, 2018)^[24, 29]. Consumer price sensitivity significantly influences the translation of positive attitudes into actual purchase behaviour, contributing to the attitude-behaviour gap observed in organic food research (Schäufele & Hamm, 2021; Aertsens *et al.*, 2009)^[1, 52].

Research on willingness to pay for organic food has identified factors that moderate consumer price sensitivity (Gil *et al.*, 2000; Hu *et al.*, 2024)^[20, 27]. Health-conscious consumers, environmentally concerned individuals, and those with higher incomes demonstrate greater willingness to pay premium prices for organic products (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Yu *et al.*, 2022)^[17, 69]. Studies have found that consumers' perceptions of the value derived from organic consumption relative to the price paid significantly influence their acceptance of price premiums (Hu *et al.*, 2024; Köse & Aydemir, 2021)^[31]. When consumers perceive that the health, environmental, and quality benefits of organic food justify the additional cost, they are more likely to accept premium pricing (Rana & Paul, 2020; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024)^[48, 53].

The relationship between income and organic food consumption has yielded complex findings in the literature (Janssen, 2018; Nasir & Karakaya, 2014)^[29, 41]. While higher income generally correlates with greater organic food consumption, research has indicated that income constraints do not prevent consumers from purchasing organic products

when they perceive sufficient value (Gumber & Rana, 2021; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) ^[21, 40]. Some studies have documented that lower-income consumers adjust their overall food consumption patterns, purchasing smaller quantities of higher-quality organic products rather than foregoing organic consumption entirely (Naspetti & Zanolli, 2006; Vergura *et al.*, 2020) ^[42, 62].

5.7 Availability and Accessibility

Limited availability and accessibility of organic products represent significant barriers to organic food consumption, particularly in rural areas and emerging markets (Chekima *et al.*, 2017; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019) ^[13, 32]. Consumers who experience difficulty finding organic products in their regular shopping locations are less likely to integrate these products into their consumption patterns (Janssen, 2018; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) ^[29, 52]. Research has demonstrated that product availability significantly influences both purchase intentions and actual consumption behaviour, with greater accessibility positively associated with organic food adoption (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[14, 43].

The expansion of organic product offerings in mainstream retail channels has contributed to increased consumer access and adoption (Janssen, 2018; Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021) ^[29, 46]. Studies have documented the positive relationship between organic product placement, shelf space allocation, and consumer purchase behaviour (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Eberle *et al.*, 2022) ^[4, 18]. Online retail platforms have further enhanced organic food accessibility, enabling consumers to purchase products regardless of geographical location or proximity to specialized organic stores (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[25, 45].

Convenience considerations also influence organic food consumption decisions (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022) ^[14, 61]. Consumers who perceive organic shopping as inconvenient, time-consuming, or requiring additional effort are less likely to consistently purchase organic products (Kushwah *et al.*, 2019; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) ^[32, 52]. Research has highlighted the importance of integrating organic products into convenient shopping formats and locations to facilitate adoption among mainstream consumers (Nguyen *et al.*, 2019; Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021) ^[43, 46].

6. Consumer Segmentation and Demographic Influences

6.1 Demographic Characteristics

Research has examined the relationship between demographic characteristics and organic food consumption, yielding findings that inform market segmentation strategies (Nasir & Karakaya, 2014; Gumber & Rana, 2021) ^[21, 41]. Studies have consistently demonstrated that women exhibit stronger preferences for organic products compared to men, attributable to gender differences in health consciousness, environmental concern, and household food purchasing responsibilities (Bazhan *et al.*, 2024; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) ^[7, 40]. Education level positively correlates with organic food consumption, with more educated consumers demonstrating greater awareness of organic benefits and stronger preferences for organic products (Janssen, 2018; Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021) ^[29, 46].

Age-related patterns in organic food consumption have revealed interesting generational dynamics (Pham *et al.*, 2019; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) ^[40, 45]. Younger consumers, particularly Millennials and Generation Z, demonstrate strong interest in organic products driven by health consciousness, environmental values, and ethical consumption concerns (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Kamboj *et al.*, 2023) ^[25, 30]. Research has indicated that younger generations place greater importance on food claims including organic certification, viewing organic consumption as aligned with their values regarding health and sustainability (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Suryavanshi *et al.*, 2023) ^[57]. Older consumers, while showing lower overall adoption rates, demonstrate consistent purchase patterns once they become organic consumers (Janssen, 2018; Soroka & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019) ^[29, 55].

Family composition influences organic food consumption, with households containing young children exhibiting stronger preferences for organic products (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Eberle *et al.*, 2022) ^[17, 18]. Parents motivated by concerns for their children's health and development preferentially choose organic foods perceived as safer and more nutritious (Bazhan *et al.*, 2024; Gumber & Rana, 2021) ^[7, 21]. Research has documented that the presence of children serves as a catalyst for organic food adoption, with parents willing to pay premium prices to ensure their families consume healthier food products (Hu *et al.*, 2024; Rana & Paul, 2020) ^[27, 48].

6.2 Generational Differences

Generational differences in organic food consumption reflect varying value priorities, consumption patterns, and attitudes towards sustainability across age cohorts (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) ^[40, 53]. Generation Z consumers demonstrate the highest rates of organic food adoption, driven by strong environmental consciousness, health awareness, and ethical consumption values (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Kamboj *et al.*, 2023) ^[25, 30]. Research has indicated that Generation Z consumers prioritize organic certification and closely examine food labels when making purchase decisions, seeking alignment between product attributes and personal values (Suryavanshi *et al.*, 2023; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[57, 66, 67].

Millennial consumers similarly exhibit strong organic food preferences, motivated by health benefits, environmental considerations, and lifestyle aspirations (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[40, 45]. Studies have found that Millennials are more willing to pay premium prices for organic products compared to older generations, reflecting their prioritization of health and sustainability over cost considerations (Hu *et al.*, 2024; Yu *et al.*, 2022) ^[27, 69]. The purchasing power of Millennials, combined with their influence on household consumption decisions, positions this cohort as a significant driver of organic market growth (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[30, 50].

Baby Boomers and Generation X consumers demonstrate different consumption patterns, with health concerns and food safety issues serving as primary motivators for organic food adoption among these cohorts (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Janssen, 2018) ^[28, 29]. Research has indicated that older consumers may require more explicit communication of organic food benefits and clearer differentiation from

conventional products to overcome established consumption habits (Soroka & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015) ^[55, 58].

6.3 Consumer Segmentation Approaches

Market segmentation studies have identified distinct consumer segments based on organic food consumption patterns, motivations, and attitudes (Gil *et al.*, 2000; Nasir & Karakaya, 2014) ^[20, 41]. Research has distinguished between committed organic consumers, occasional buyers, and non-purchasers, with each segment characterized by different motivational profiles and barrier perceptions (Gumber & Rana, 2021; Nunes *et al.*, 2021) ^[21, 44]. Committed organic consumers demonstrate consistent organic purchasing across food categories, motivated primarily by health and environmental values, while occasional buyers selectively purchase organic products in specific categories based on situational factors and price considerations (Janssen, 2018; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) ^[29, 52].

Motivation-based segmentation has revealed variations in the primary drivers of organic food consumption (Kushwah *et al.*, 2019; Rana & Paul, 2017) ^[32, 47]. Health-oriented consumers prioritize personal well-being and family health when choosing organic products, while environmentally-oriented consumers emphasize ecological benefits and sustainability (Dangi *et al.*, 2020; Rüteliönè *et al.*, 2024) ^[15]. Research has documented that these motivational orientations influence not only product preferences but also information processing, brand loyalty, and willingness to pay (Köse & Aydemir, 2021; Shin *et al.*, 2019) ^[31, 54]. Understanding these segment-specific motivations enables marketers to develop targeted communication strategies that resonate with distinct consumer groups (Liang & Lim, 2021; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[33, 50].

7. Barriers and Challenges in Organic Food Consumption

7.1 The Attitude-Behaviour Gap

The attitude-behaviour gap represents a central challenge in organic food consumer behaviour, describing the discrepancy between positive attitudes towards organic products and actual purchase behaviour (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) ^[4, 52]. Research has consistently documented that consumers who express favourable attitudes towards organic food do not always translate these attitudes into purchase actions, limiting the growth potential of the organic food market (Aertsens *et al.*, 2009; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019) ^[1, 32].

Multiple factors contribute to the attitude-behaviour gap in organic food consumption (Janssen, 2018; Scalco *et al.*, 2017) ^[29, 51]. Price barriers constitute the most frequently cited obstacle, with consumers citing cost concerns as reasons for not purchasing organic products despite positive attitudes (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Chekima *et al.*, 2017) ^[4, 13]. Limited availability, inconvenience, and established consumption habits further impede the translation of positive attitudes into consistent organic food purchases (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022) ^[14, 61]. Research has also identified cognitive factors including limited product knowledge, uncertainty about organic claims, and difficulty distinguishing organic from conventional products as

contributors to the attitude-behaviour gap (Bryła, 2017; Liu & Zheng, 2019) ^[8, 34].

Studies examining interventions to bridge the attitude-behaviour gap have highlighted the importance of addressing both motivational and ability factors (Schäufele & Hamm, 2021; Aungatichart *et al.*, 2020) ^[5, 52]. Strategies including price promotions, improved accessibility, consumer education, and trust-building initiatives have demonstrated potential for reducing the discrepancy between attitudes and behaviour (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[14, 43]. Research has emphasized that closing the attitude-behaviour gap requires comprehensive approaches that address multiple barriers simultaneously rather than focusing on individual factors in isolation (Kushwah *et al.*, 2019; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) ^[32, 53].

7.2 Knowledge and Awareness Deficits

Limited consumer knowledge and awareness regarding organic food constitutes a significant barrier to adoption, particularly in emerging markets (Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023; Eyinade *et al.*, 2021) ^[16, 19]. Studies have documented varying levels of organic food literacy among consumers, with many demonstrating inadequate understanding of organic production methods, certification standards, and product benefits (Bryła, 2021; Malissiova *et al.*, 2022) ^[9, 37]. Knowledge deficits impede informed decision-making and contribute to consumer uncertainty and scepticism regarding organic claims (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019) ^[30, 32].

Research has established positive relationships between organic food knowledge and consumption behaviour, indicating that more knowledgeable consumers are more likely to purchase organic products (Janssen, 2018; Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021) ^[29, 46]. Education, income, media exposure, and social participation have been identified as factors positively associated with organic food knowledge (Gumber & Rana, 2021; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[21, 50]. Studies have emphasized the importance of consumer education initiatives that improve understanding of organic food attributes, certification processes, and consumption benefits (Madureira *et al.*, 2025; Soroka & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019) ^[35, 55].

Awareness of organic food availability, brands, and purchasing options varies across consumer segments and market contexts (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[14, 45]. Research conducted in developing countries has highlighted awareness as a primary barrier to organic food adoption, with consumers often unaware of where to purchase organic products or how to identify authentic organic offerings (Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) ^[16, 40]. Marketing communications, point-of-sale information, and community education programs have been recommended as strategies for improving consumer awareness and facilitating organic food adoption (Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021; Suryavanshi *et al.*, 2023) ^[46, 57].

7.3 Trust and Authenticity Concerns

Consumer distrust regarding organic food authenticity represents a significant barrier to market growth, particularly in contexts characterized by fraudulent claims, mislabelling, and inadequate regulatory enforcement (Chai

et al., 2022; Liu & Zheng, 2019) ^[11, 34]. Studies have documented consumer scepticism regarding whether products labelled as organic genuinely meet organic standards, with this scepticism negatively influencing purchase intentions and behaviour (Janssen, 2018; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) ^[29, 52].

Research has identified factors that influence consumer trust in organic food authenticity, including certification visibility, retailer reputation, brand credibility, and country of origin (Bryła, 2017; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) ^[8, 60]. Studies have demonstrated that consumers place greater trust in nationally recognized organic labels compared to private certifications or unfamiliar marks (Murphy *et al.*, 2022; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2017) ^[39, 59]. Retailer-specific factors including perceived ethical practices, product sourcing transparency, and customer service quality also influence consumer trust in organic offerings (Yu *et al.*, 2021; Yu *et al.*, 2022) ^[68, 69].

Strategies for building consumer trust in organic food include transparent labelling, traceability systems, third-party verification, and consistent regulatory enforcement (Bryła, 2021; Canova *et al.*, 2020) ^[9, 10]. Research has emphasized the importance of establishing clear, recognizable certification marks that consumers can rely upon as indicators of organic authenticity (Murphy *et al.*, 2022; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) ^[39, 60]. Building trust requires coordinated efforts among producers, retailers, certification bodies, and regulatory authorities to ensure the integrity of organic supply chains and prevent fraudulent claims (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) ^[11, 53].

8. Emerging Themes in Organic Food Consumer Behaviour Research

8.1 Digital Commerce and Online Organic Food Purchasing

The growth of e-commerce has significantly transformed organic food distribution and consumer purchasing patterns (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Kamboj *et al.*, 2023) ^[25, 30]. Online platforms have enhanced organic food accessibility, enabling consumers to purchase products regardless of geographical location or proximity to physical organic stores (Pham *et al.*, 2019; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[43, 45]. Research has documented increasing consumer willingness to purchase organic food through digital channels, with well-educated, high-income consumers demonstrating particularly strong adoption of online organic food shopping (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[50].

Studies examining factors influencing online organic food purchases have identified platform trustworthiness, convenience, product variety, price competitiveness, and delivery reliability as significant determinants (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Yu *et al.*, 2021) ^[30, 68]. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of online organic food purchasing, with consumers increasingly relying on digital channels to obtain organic products during lockdown periods (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022) ^[14, 61]. Research has indicated that pandemic-induced changes in online purchasing behaviour have persisted beyond the acute crisis period, suggesting lasting transformation of organic food shopping patterns (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Madureira *et al.*, 2025) ^[35].

Social commerce platforms, including social media

marketplaces and influencer-driven purchasing, have emerged as significant channels for organic food distribution (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) ^[25, 40]. Research has examined how social commerce characteristics influence consumer perceptions and purchase intentions, finding that community interaction, information sharing, and social recommendations positively influence organic food purchases through digital platforms (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[30, 50].

8.2 Impact of COVID-19 on Organic Food Consumption

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly influenced consumer behaviour towards organic food, accelerating trends towards health-conscious consumption and sustainable food choices (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022) ^[14, 61]. Research has documented substantial increases in organic food purchases during the pandemic period, driven by heightened health awareness, food safety concerns, and desire for immunity-boosting nutrition (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[11, 45]. Studies conducted across multiple countries have confirmed shifts in consumer preferences towards organic and natural food products as responses to pandemic-related health concerns (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Madureira *et al.*, 2025) ^[35].

The pandemic catalyzed broader changes in food consumption patterns beyond increased organic adoption (Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) ^[61, 70]. Research has documented greater attention to food sourcing, ingredient quality, and nutritional content among pandemic-era consumers (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[11, 43]. Studies have indicated that these behavioural changes reflect fundamental shifts in consumer values rather than temporary responses to crisis conditions, suggesting lasting impacts on organic food demand (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Madureira *et al.*, 2025) ^[14, 35].

Post-pandemic research has examined the persistence of pandemic-induced behavioural changes, finding that heightened interest in organic food consumption has continued beyond the acute crisis period (Madureira *et al.*, 2025; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) ^[35, 70]. Consumer awareness of health-diet relationships, increased through pandemic experiences, has sustained demand for organic products perceived as healthier and safer (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022) ^[11, 61]. Research has emphasized that the pandemic represented a transformative moment for organic food markets, accelerating mainstream adoption and normalizing organic consumption among broader consumer segments (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) ^[14, 53].

8.3 Cross-Cultural Variations

Cross-cultural research has revealed significant variations in organic food consumer behaviour across national and regional contexts (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015) ^[40, 58]. Studies comparing developed and emerging market consumers have documented differences in primary motivations, barrier perceptions, and behavioural patterns (Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) ^[60, 70]. In developed Western markets, environmental concern and ethical consumption values play relatively greater roles in driving organic food adoption, while health and safety concerns predominate in emerging market contexts (Ahmed

et al., 2021; Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023) ^[2, 16].

Country-of-origin effects influence consumer evaluations of organic food products, with consumers generally preferring organic products from economically developed countries perceived as having stringent regulatory standards (Bryła, 2021; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2017) ^[8, 9, 59]. Research conducted across European and Asian markets has demonstrated that consumers in less developed economies may place greater trust in imported organic products bearing recognized international certifications compared to domestic organic offerings (Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) ^[58, 60]. These findings underscore the importance of understanding cultural context when developing organic food marketing strategies (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Wei *et al.*, 2022) ^[40, 64].

Cultural values, including individualism-collectivism orientations and power distance, influence the relative importance of different factors driving organic food consumption (Chekima *et al.*, 2017; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015) ^[13, 58]. Research has indicated that subjective norms exert stronger influence on organic food purchase intentions in collectivist cultures, where social approval and conformity carry greater significance (Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) ^[16, 40]. Understanding these cultural variations enables marketers to develop culturally appropriate communication strategies and positioning approaches (Rüteliönė *et al.*, 2024; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) ^[70].

9. Implications and Future Research Directions

9.1 Theoretical Implications

The review of consumer behaviour towards organic food consumption reveals several theoretical implications that merit scholarly attention (Ajzen, 1991; Scalco *et al.*, 2017) ^[3, 51]. The consistent applicability of the Theory of Planned Behaviour across research contexts confirms its utility as a foundational framework for organic food consumer research (Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023; Massey *et al.*, 2018) ^[16, 38]. However, the persistent attitude-behaviour gap observed in organic food consumption suggests the need for theoretical extensions that better capture the translation of intentions into behaviour (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) ^[4, 52]. Integration of constructs including habit, past behaviour, and implementation intentions into extended theoretical models offers promising directions for addressing this limitation (Janssen, 2018; Mai *et al.*, 2022) ^[29, 36].

The Value-Belief-Norm theory provides valuable insights into the moral dimensions of organic food consumption, highlighting the role of personal norms and ethical obligations in motivating sustainable food choices (Honkanen *et al.*, 2006; Yang *et al.*, 2023) ^[26, 66, 67]. Research integrating health values into this framework has demonstrated the importance of considering both egoistic and altruistic motivations in understanding organic food consumption (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Wei *et al.*, 2022) ^[25, 64]. Future theoretical development should explore the interplay between self-interested health motivations and altruistic environmental concerns in shaping organic food behaviour (Rana & Paul, 2020; Rüteliönė *et al.*, 2024) ^[48].

The application of consumption value theory to organic food has revealed the multidimensional nature of value perceptions driving consumer choices (Köse & Aydemir,

2021; Hansen *et al.*, 2018) ^[23, 31]. Research has demonstrated that consumers derive functional, emotional, social, and epistemic value from organic food consumption, with the relative importance of these dimensions varying across consumer segments and contexts (Bryła, 2021; Shin *et al.*, 2019) ^[9, 54]. Further theoretical work should examine how these value dimensions interact to influence consumption decisions and how value perceptions evolve over the course of consumer engagement with organic products (Liang & Lim, 2021; Sultan *et al.*, 2021) ^[33, 56].

9.2 Practical Implications

The findings synthesized in this review carry significant practical implications for marketers, retailers, and policymakers engaged in organic food promotion (Rana & Paul, 2017; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) ^[47, 53]. Marketing communications should emphasize health benefits given the predominance of health consciousness as a purchase motivation, while also addressing environmental and ethical dimensions to appeal to diverse consumer segments (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019) ^[28, 32]. Transparent communication of organic certification, sourcing practices, and quality assurance processes is essential for building consumer trust and overcoming authenticity concerns (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Murphy *et al.*, 2022) ^[10, 39].

Pricing strategies should consider the documented price sensitivity of organic food consumers while recognizing that committed organic buyers demonstrate willingness to pay premiums for perceived value (Hu *et al.*, 2024; Yu *et al.*, 2022) ^[27, 69]. Promotional strategies including temporary price reductions, loyalty programs, and value communication may effectively expand the organic consumer base by reducing price barriers for price-sensitive segments (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Gil *et al.*, 2000) ^[17, 20]. Research has indicated that demonstrating value-for-money rather than simply lowering prices represents a more sustainable approach to addressing price concerns (Köse & Aydemir, 2021; Rana & Paul, 2020) ^[31, 48].

Retailers should prioritize organic food accessibility through expanded product assortments, convenient store locations, and effective online distribution channels (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Janssen, 2018) ^[25, 29]. Research has demonstrated that improved availability positively influences both purchase intentions and actual behaviour, suggesting that distribution strategy represents a critical lever for organic market growth (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019) ^[14, 43]. Integration of organic products into mainstream retail formats reduces the effort required for organic purchasing, facilitating adoption among convenience-oriented consumers (Pilelienė & Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021; Pham *et al.*, 2019) ^[45, 46].

9.3 Policy Implications

Policymakers seeking to promote organic food consumption should consider interventions addressing multiple barriers simultaneously (Dangi *et al.*, 2020; Sadiq *et al.*, 2021) ^[15, 50]. Consumer education initiatives that improve organic food knowledge and awareness can facilitate informed decision-making while reducing scepticism regarding organic claims (Eyinade *et al.*, 2021; Kamboj *et al.*, 2023) ^[19, 30]. Research has emphasized the importance of clear, consistent labelling standards that enable consumers to easily identify authentic

organic products (Bryła, 2017; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) [8, 60]. Regulatory frameworks ensuring the integrity of organic certification systems are essential for maintaining consumer trust and preventing fraudulent claims (Chai *et al.*, 2022; Murphy *et al.*, 2022) [11, 39]. Studies have documented that trust in certification significantly influences purchase behaviour, underscoring the importance of effective regulatory oversight (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2017) [10, 59]. Policy measures supporting organic farmers through certification subsidies, technical assistance, and market access initiatives can enhance organic product availability while reducing price premiums (Hashemi *et al.*, 2024; Soroka & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019) [24, 55]. Public procurement policies favouring organic food in institutional settings including schools, hospitals, and government facilities can expand organic market demand while promoting public health objectives (Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) [61, 70]. Research has indicated that exposure to organic food in institutional contexts increases consumer familiarity and may facilitate subsequent adoption in household purchasing decisions (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Madureira *et al.*, 2025) [14, 35].

9.4 Directions for Future Research

Future research should address several gaps identified through this review (Kushwah *et al.*, 2019; Rana & Paul, 2017) [32, 47]. Longitudinal studies examining the evolution of consumer behaviour over time would provide insights into how attitudes, motivations, and consumption patterns develop and change throughout the consumer lifecycle (Janssen, 2018; Schäufele & Hamm, 2021) [29, 52]. Research tracking individual consumers from initial awareness through established consumption would enhance understanding of the organic food adoption process (Aungatichart *et al.*, 2020; Eberle *et al.*, 2022) [5, 18].

Cross-cultural comparative research should be expanded to include underrepresented geographical regions, particularly Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, where organic food markets are emerging but consumer behaviour research remains limited (Dangaiso *et al.*, 2023; Nafees *et al.*, 2022) [16, 40]. Such research would enhance the generalizability of existing findings while identifying culturally specific factors influencing organic food consumption (Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) [58, 70].

The role of digital technologies in shaping organic food consumer behaviour merits continued investigation (Hasan *et al.*, 2023; Kamboj *et al.*, 2023) [25, 30]. Research should examine how social media influences, online reviews, and digital marketing communications affect consumer attitudes and purchase decisions (Sadiq *et al.*, 2021; Yu *et al.*, 2021) [50, 68]. The growing importance of online purchasing channels suggests the need for research specifically examining the digital organic food shopping experience and factors distinguishing online from offline purchase behaviour (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Pham *et al.*, 2019) [14, 45].

Finally, research should explore the post-consumption phase of organic food behaviour, including satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy (Yu *et al.*, 2022; Yu *et al.*, 2021) [68, 69]. Understanding how consumption experiences shape repeat purchase behaviour and word-of-mouth recommendations would provide insights valuable for customer retention and organic market expansion (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Pilelienė &

Šontaitė-Petkevičienė, 2021) [40, 46].

10. Conclusion

This comprehensive review has synthesized contemporary research on consumer behaviour towards organic food, examining the multifaceted determinants that shape purchase intentions and consumption patterns (Aertsens *et al.*, 2009; Ahmed *et al.*, 2021) [1, 2]. The analysis reveals that organic food consumption is driven by a complex interplay of health consciousness, environmental concern, quality perceptions, trust in certification, and socio-demographic factors, operating within established theoretical frameworks including the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Value-Belief-Norm theory, and Stimulus-Organism-Response model (Ajzen, 1991; Scalco *et al.*, 2017; Sultan *et al.*, 2021) [3, 51, 56].

Health consciousness emerges consistently as the predominant motivation for organic food consumption across research contexts, reflecting consumer perceptions of organic products as healthier, safer, and more nutritious than conventional alternatives (Basha *et al.*, 2015; Rana & Paul, 2020) [6, 48]. Environmental concern provides an important secondary motivation, particularly among consumers with strong sustainability orientations and ecological values (Dorce *et al.*, 2021; Hashemi *et al.*, 2024) [17, 24]. Trust in organic certification systems critically influences purchase decisions, with consumer confidence in label authenticity serving as a prerequisite for organic food adoption (Canova *et al.*, 2020; Murphy *et al.*, 2022) [10, 39].

The persistence of the attitude-behaviour gap represents a central challenge for organic food markets, with price sensitivity, limited availability, and knowledge deficits identified as primary barriers preventing the translation of positive attitudes into consistent purchase behaviour (Aschemann-Witzel & Niebuhr Aagaard, 2014; Kushwah *et al.*, 2019) [4, 32]. Addressing these barriers requires coordinated efforts among producers, retailers, certification bodies, and policymakers to enhance organic food accessibility, reduce price premiums, and build consumer trust through transparent communication and rigorous regulatory oversight (Janssen, 2018; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2019) [29, 60].

Emerging themes including digital commerce, pandemic-induced behavioural changes, and cross-cultural variations add complexity to the understanding of organic food consumer behaviour while opening new avenues for research and practice (Cramarenco *et al.*, 2023; Hasan *et al.*, 2023) [14, 25]. The growth of online organic food purchasing, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has transformed distribution channels and expanded consumer access (Kamboj *et al.*, 2023; Timpanaro *et al.*, 2022) [30, 61]. Cross-cultural research has revealed significant variations in motivational profiles and barrier perceptions, underscoring the importance of culturally contextualized approaches to organic food marketing and policy (Nafees *et al.*, 2022; Thøgersen *et al.*, 2015) [40, 58].

The synthesis of research findings presented in this review provides a foundation for continued scholarly inquiry while offering actionable insights for practitioners engaged in organic food production, marketing, and policy development (Rana & Paul, 2017; Shenoy & Aithal, 2024) [47, 53]. As consumer awareness of health, environmental, and

ethical considerations continues to grow, understanding and responding to the determinants of organic food consumer behaviour becomes increasingly imperative for realizing the potential of organic food systems to contribute to sustainable food futures (Madureira *et al.*, 2025; Zidan *et al.*, 2025) ^[35, 70].

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