

## Psychographic and behavioral analysis of Gen Z consumers of organic food in Indian subcontinent

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### ABSTRACT

The increasing concern of being healthy, sustainable of the environment, as well as ethical consumption, has greatly expanded the demand of organic food all over the world. The new consumer, the generation Z (Gen Z) in the Indian subcontinent has a significant role in influencing the future food consumption behavior. The purpose of the study is to investigate psychographic and behavioral traits of the Gen Z consumers regarding the consumption of organic food in the Indian subcontinent. The study takes the quantitative and descriptive research design based on primary data collected as a structured questionnaire survey to 200 Gen Z participants. Secondary data came through the research journals and published academic literature. The research examines some psychographic variables vital to the study which include health conscience, environmental conscientiousness, lifestyle orientation and values of ethics and the behavioral forces like the number of times one will purchase the product, their commitment to pay high prices, and the purchasing channels preferred. In the findings, it can be noted that health conscience is the key driver in consumption of organic food among Gen Z consumers, then the environmental awareness, and then perceptions about the product. The level of awareness and positive attitudes toward organic food is rather high, but the prevalence of purchase is rather average because of such factors as a greater price and a decrease in availability. The paper concludes that Gen Z consumers are an attractive segment of consumers of organic food products and a set of specific marketing strategies, increased access, and awareness campaigns will help stimulate the consumption of organic foods in the area to a high extent...

**Keywords:** Organic Food, Generation Z, Consumer Behavior, Psychographic Factors, Sustainable Consumption, Indian Subcontinent.

### INTRODUCTION:

Global food consumption environment has experienced a significant change in the past decades because of an increase in health awareness, environmental awareness and ethical concerns of the consumers. As a healthy and more sustainable alternative to conventional food products, organic food, which can be defined as food that is grown without various types of synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, or genetically modified organisms, has become the topic of increasing attention. The increase in food safety issues, environmental degradation and lifestyle diseases have led to the growth of the organic food market in the world. With the rise in consumer awareness, organic foods have been then closely related with the sustainable consumption patterns and the environmentally friendly lifestyles. Sustainable consumer behaviour deals with the ways in which people incorporate the environmental issues in their consumption behaviour such as the products they choose to consume, the ways they use them and the ways they dispose them (Belz and Peattie, 2009).

The impact of the emerging consumer group (Generation Z (Gen Z) or individuals who were born around the period between 1997 and 2012) is a major consumer base that affects the modern food markets in the society, including other demographic groups. Instead, this generation is defined as digital, increasingly conscious of the environment, and very interested in ethical consumption. Gen Z consumers tend to be more sustainability-conscious, wellness, and authenticity-focused than the past generations. Their consumption behaviour is not just influenced by economic factors alone but also by the lifestyle choice, social influences and value systems. These issues ensure the psychographic and behavioral analyses are the key to comprehending their consumption choices.

There has been significant growth in the organic food market both in the Indian subcontinent as well as the countries of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The growth in the consumption of organic foods in this area has been occasioned by air pollution in cities, rising disposable income, availability of more information and heightened health awareness. Consumers in the city setting, especially young people and students, are more demanding natural and chemical-free alternatives of food.

Accordingly, it would be important that marketers, policymakers, and producers in the organic food industry understand the psychological motivations and behavioral patterns behind Gen Z consumers.

The psychographic analysis is based on the attitudes, values, lifestyles, beliefs, and motivational aspects of consumers that impact on their purchasing decisions. Psychographic segmentation studies more profound psychological attributes and ways of life in contrast to the demographic segmentation where consumers are grouped according to their age, sex, or income. According to studies, health consciousness, environmental concern, ethical beliefs, and lifestyle orientation are psychographic factors that contribute to a great extent in the behavior of consumption of organic food. Such aspects usually have a higher influence on the buying intention of organic products than demographic features (Kushwah, Dhir, & Sagar, 2019).

On the other hand, behavioral analysis deals with the observable consumer behaviors such as how often they purchase or how loyal they are with a certain brand, and what products they buy and the frequency of consumption. Behavioral variables in the context of organic food consumption are purchasing channels, product awareness, perceived quality and readiness to pay high-prices. It was found that the organic food consumers are more likely to focus on the health benefits, environmental sustainability and authenticity of products as the core of their purchasing behavior (Nasir and Karakaya, 2014; Torjusen et al., 2001).

Although organic food is gaining widespread popularity, little research paying much attention to the Indian subcontinent consumers, in particular, to Gen Z cohorts has been conducted. The majority of the current research is focused on the general consumer behavior or on the developed economies. With the cultural diversity, economic differences and the degree of market development across the Indian subcontinent, it is imperative that the researchers should be able to learn the particular psychographic and behavioral characteristics of Gen Z consumers of the region. This knowledge may guide organic food marketers to come up with focused strategies and improve their prices to young people in the market.

Consequently, the study is expected to investigate the psychographic attributes and behavioral trends of Gen Z consumers in relation to consumption of organic food in the Indian subcontinent. The research aims at determining the dominant psychological factors of motivation, lifestyle aspects and consumption habits that can determine the consumption of organic foods among this generation. These dimensions in the analysis of the study can be used as far as they help in improving the existing body of literature in sustainable consumption and offer a guide to organic food producers, retailers, and policymakers in developing effective marketing and awareness strategies.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The available literature on consumption of organic food has underscored the increasing role of psychological,

environmental and lifestyle factors in influencing consumer behavior. Some researchers have underscored that consumer values, beliefs and attitudes also determine organic food purchasing decisions besides product attributes.

One of the earlier researches carried out on the topic of consumer perception of organic food was conducted by Torjusen, Lieblein, Wandel, and Francis (2001) who identified that health consciousness and environmental concern were the main factors in motivation to eat organic food. Their study found out that ecologically-sustainable consumers with a high value on personal health would more likely prefer organic food products as opposed to conventional products. The paper has highlighted that consumption of organic food has direct relationships with the lifestyle orientation and environmental awareness of consumers.

On the same note, in their study, Nasir and Karakaya (2014) segmented organic food consumers based on psychographics variables and found that two large consumer segments were: the excitement-oriented consumers and those with well-being-oriented ones. The well-being segment was composed of the consumers who focused on the health benefits, safety, and environmental sustainability, whereas the excitement segment regarded organic food consumption to be the part of the innovation and lifestyle experience. The research came to the conclusion that psychographic variables can be used to segment the organic food customers and forecast the purchase habits of the target group.

Kushwah, Dhir, and Sagar (2019) came up with a conceptual framework to research consumer buying behavior and purchase intention towards organic food. Their results showed that the psychographic variables which have a significant impact on the purchase intention of organic foods are health consciousness, environmental concern, product awareness, trust in organic labeling and price perception. The authors came to a conclusion that the influence of psychographic factors on the consumption of organic food is higher in comparison with the deserves of supply-related variables which provides an understanding of the significance of the influence of the psychological factor on consumer preferences.

The consumption habits of younger consumers, specifically Gen z, have also been studied recently, according to research on socially conscious consumption, the ecological values, healthy eating, and moral values have a major impact on food buying behaviors of younger consumers. Consumers in the gen Z are more likely to have a higher level of sustainability and are more likely to patronize products and brands that are environmentally friendly than earlier generations (Fennell et al., 2024).

Kakkar (2025) conducted another empirical study to establish psychographic determinants of organic tea consumption in India and found that some of the key factors that affect consumer behavior include health benefits, environmental concerns, lifestyle preferences, social influence and cultural values. The research indicated that urban consumers are moving towards a situation where they relate organic food with wellness,

authenticity and environmental responsibility which are affecting their buying intent.

The studies held on sustainable consumption behavior also suggest that consumers who highly consider environmental sustainability and production practices that do not violate ethical considerations tend to buy organically produced goods and services more. These consumers tend to be more environmentally conscious, more convinced in the power of organic certification, and ready to pay high prices on healthier food choices. Such behavioral tendencies are especially apparent with younger consumers who have more exposure to digital information sources and campaigns about sustainability.

Although the number of researches on the question of the consumption of organic foods grows, there are still substantial gaps in terms of comprehension of the psychographic and behavioral patterns of Gen Z customers in the Indian subcontinent. The majority of research is dedicated to the developed economy or is based on the general population of consumers, not dwelling upon the emergent Gen Z. Also, there are cultural, social and economic differences over the Indian subcontinent that might have different impacts on the consumer perceptions and behaviors than in the Western market.

Thus, paradigmatic studies need to be done that can investigate the impact of psychological factors, lifestyle choice, and tendencies on the consumption of organic food by Gen Z customers within this area. The insights of such research would be useful to marketers, policymakers, and researchers who are interested in the development of sustainable food consumption and development of the organic food market in the Indian subcontinent.

### Objectives:

This research is aimed at examining the behavioral patterns and psychographic features of the consumers of

organic food of the Indian subcontinent, which belongs to Generation Z. The proximal objective of the study is to investigate how health consciousness, environmental awareness, lifestyle orientation, and purchasing behavior are critical to consumption and preference of the organic food products.

### Methodology

The current research will take a quantitative and descriptive research design because it will help to analyze psychographic and behavioral trends of Gen Z consumers of organic food in the Indian subcontinent. The research is carried on both primary and secondary data. Primary data is gathered based on the structured questionnaire that is given to Gen Z consumers both online and offline survey and secondary data gathering is performed based on published research article, journals, and reports on the practice of organic food consumption. The article uses a sample of 200 participants who fall in Gen Z age category (18-27 years). The respondents will be sampled through the convenience sampling method because it will be easy to access young consumers, who are active on digital platforms and are frequent patrons of urban markets of food.

### Results and Discussion

The obtained data were processed with the help of descriptive statistic methods including frequency distribution and percentage analysis in order to comprehend the psychographic and behavioral traits of Gen Z customers of the Indian subcontinent regarding organic food. In total, 200 participants of the age category of Gen Z were included in the survey. The findings are summarized in the succeeding tables and are explained.

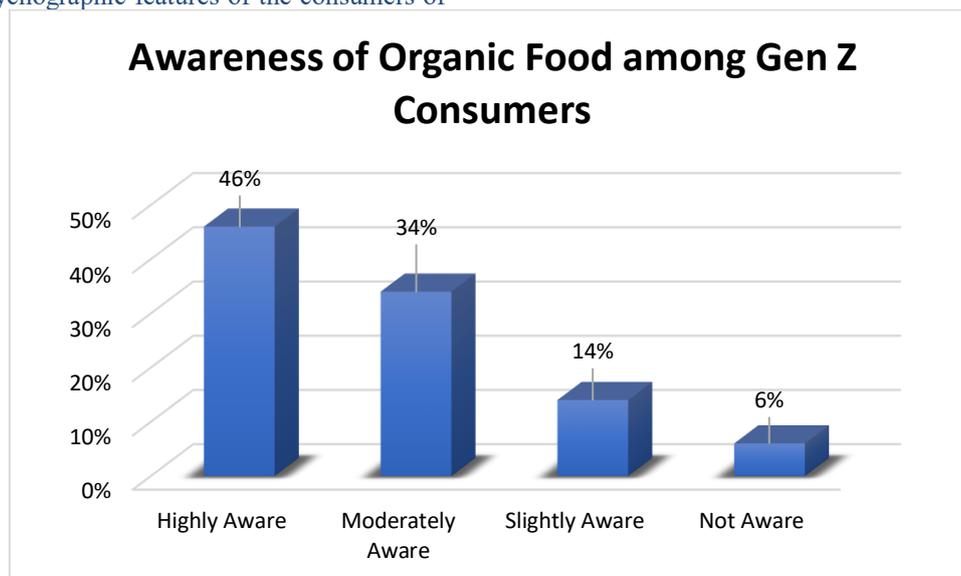
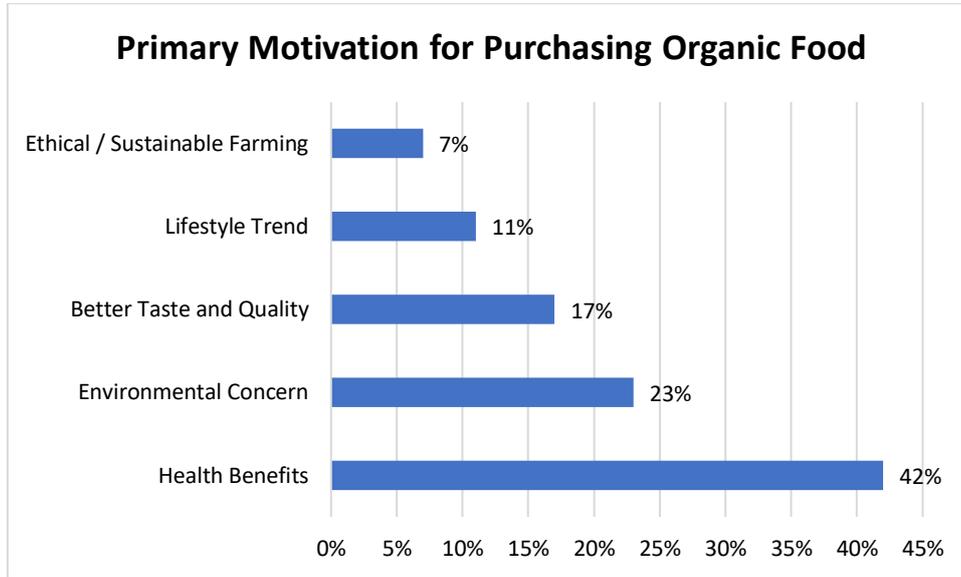


Fig. 1 Awareness level of Gen Z Consumers

The Fig. 1 shows that 46 percent of the respondents are very familiar with organic food and 34 percent generally

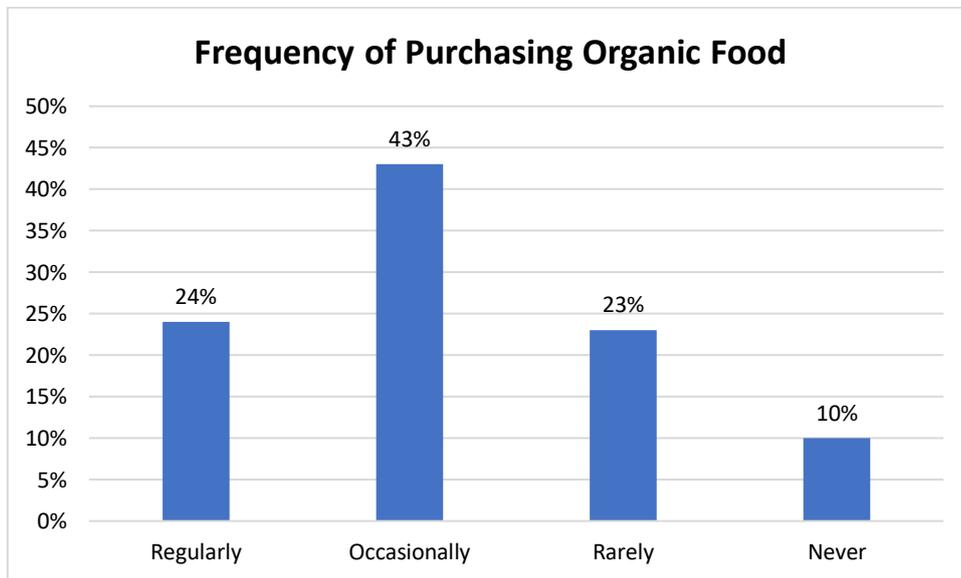
familiar with the same. Only a small percentage 14% is slightly aware, and 6% have no known of organic food products. This implies that most Gen Z consumers have quite high awareness in terms of organic food, which can

affect their purchasing intentions and consumption behavior.



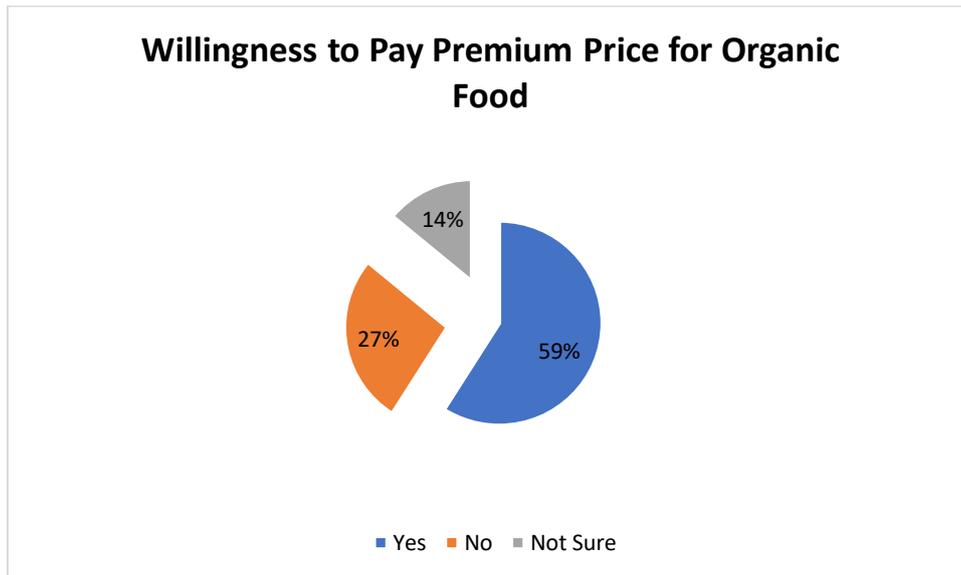
**Fig. 2 Motivation for Purchasing Organic Food**

The findings reveal that health benefits become the message of buying organic food and 42% of the respondents said that the health benefits were the most important factor. The next and the most environmental concern attains 23 and the next is better taste and quality (17). The percentage contribution of lifestyle trends and ethical farming is 11 and 7 respectively. It means that health consciousness is still the most prevalent psychographic force in the consumption of organic food among Gen Z consumers.



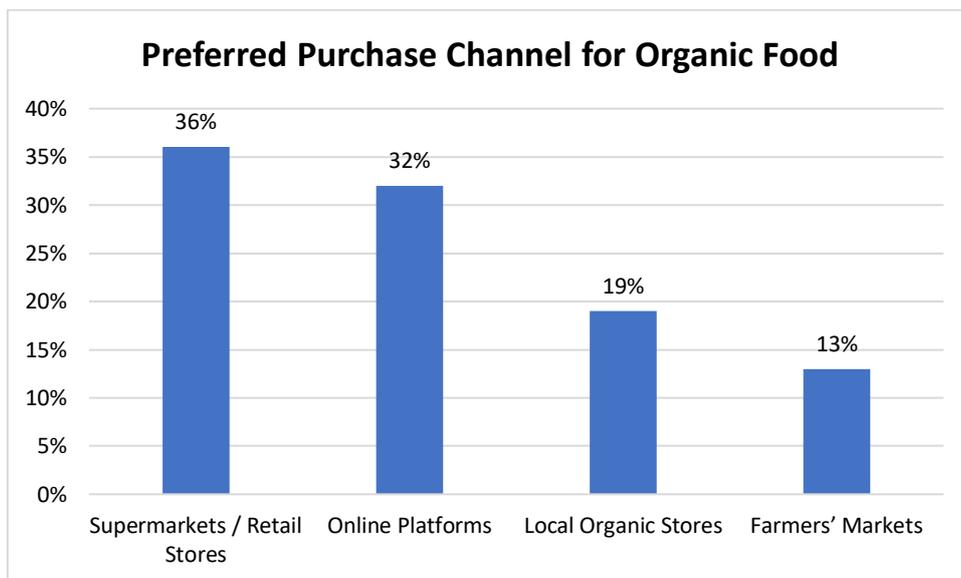
**Fig. 3 Frequency of Purchasing Organic Food**

According to the table, 43 percent of the respondents buy organic food at occasional but 24 percent of the respondents buy it on regular occasions. Approximately, 23 per cent is a rare buyer, and 10 per cent never buys organic food material. The findings show that despite the comparatively elevated awareness rates, the prevalence of consistent behavior in purchasing is yet to be high with Gen Z consumers, which could be attributed to the price sensitivity and the lack of availability.



**Fig. 4 Willingness to Pay Premium Price for Organic Food**

The results show that 59 percent of consumers of the Gen Z generation are ready to pay more money to use organic food products, and 27 percent are not ready to pay additional money. About 14% remain uncertain. It implies that a large fraction of Gen Z consumers are concerned with the perceived advantages of organic food to the extent of willing to pay more.



**Fig. 5 Preferred Purchase Channel**

The findings indicate that 36 percent of the participants tend to buy organic food in supermarkets whereas 32 percent tend to use online shopping. Approximately 19 percent make purchases in local organic shops, and 13 percent in farmers markets. This means that the Gen Z consumers use well-structured retail and online solutions to buy organic food.

The analysis shows that the Gen Z consumers in the subcontinent of India are very aware and positively inclined towards the consumption of organic foods. The psychological aspects that are the most influential determinants of their purchase choices are health

awareness and the environmental concern. The rate of purchase, however, is moderate which means that rate of buying can be affected by such factors as price sensitivity and product availability. Moreover, the readiness of most of the respondents in the study to pay a premium price is a strong indication of the possibility of an organic food industry to improve among Gen Z consumers.

#### DISCUSSION

The study results can inform important details of the psychographic and behavioral attitudes of the Gen Z consumers toward the consumption of the organic food in the Indian subcontinent. The analysis shows that the

overall awareness of Gen Z respondents on organic food is relatively high as many respondents pointed out that they are highly or moderately aware of organic food products. Such a tendency indicates the growing presence of young consumers with information about the health, sustainability, and environmentally friendly consumption via online media, schools, and social networks. The awareness of sustainable consumers in Gen Z is also high, which can be explained by the previous study that proposed that younger people are more aware of sustainable consumption practices than older generations.

The greatest determinant that influenced the organic food consumption among the respondents was health consciousness. The significant percentage of Gen Z customers who have already consumed organic food product is associated with improved health, higher levels of nutritional value, and the lack of harmful chemicals. The conclusion upholds the assertion put forward by a number of earlier studies that health benefits are the major motivator behind the purchase behavior of organic foods. Consumers are growing to view organic products as safer and healthier as compared to conventionally produced food especially in those areas where there is an issue of pesticide residues and food adulteration have been brought up widely. Hence health related perception still remains at the center of consumer perception for organic food.

The other cause that was found to be influential in purchasing decisions is environmental concern. An interesting share of respondents showed the interest in organic food due to its assumed positive environmental results, such as sustainable production, the minimized use of chemicals and the protection of nature. This observation shows that Gen Z consumers have become increasingly environmentally conscious and may tend to apply ethical and eco-friendly principles in their consumption. The findings go with the general notion of sustainable consumption, which includes the consumer preference towards the products that are relevant to environmental preservation and sustainable development.

The very results of the behavior analysis indicate that despite the awareness of many respondents about organic food and a positive attitude towards this specific type of food, the purchase frequency is moderate. Many of the respondents admitted that they only buy organic food few times but not regularly. This is an indication that there are some obstacles to continuous consumption. One of the main limitations that can modulate the purchasing behavior seems to be the price sensitivity. Costly organic farming methods, certification procedures, and inefficient supply chains are normally being attributed to the premium value of the organic food products over the conventional food. Even though most of the respondents were willing to pay a premium price, a large percentage of the respondents were uncertain because of the constraint presented by their budget.

The other valuable discovery is associated with the channels that Gen Z consumers like to purchase. According to the study, most people use the supermarkets and online platforms as the most common channels of getting the organic food. This is in line with the digital

nature of the Gen Z consumers who are very well-acclimatized to online shopping and online market. This trend has greatly enhanced accessibility and convenience especially among younger consumers since the supply of organic food products is being made easier and more convenient by virtue of the growing number of online stores. Concurrently, the availability of organic food in these planned retail stores improves consumer confidence due to improved visibility of the products, labelling and certification details.

All in all, it is noted during the discussion that there is a high level of psychographic congruency amongst Gen Z consumers with the values that are linked to organic food consumption such as health consciousness, environmental accountability, and ethical consumption. Nevertheless, there are still some behavior limitations including price sensitivity and purchase rates that affect their real buying behavior. The results indicate that the existing affordability, greater availability of the products, and a better education of the consumers about organic certification may solidify the adoption of organic food within Gen Z consumers in the Indian subcontinent.

## CONCLUSION

The current paper has investigated the psychographed and behavioral approach of Gen Z consumers towards the consumption of organic food in the Indian subcontinent. The results show that the level of Gen Z consumers awareness on the topic of organic food is rather high and they usually have positive attitudes to the consumption of organic food. Health consciousness became the most important consideration affecting purchasing decisions, environmental concern, and perceived quality of the product. The research also shows that despite a high number of the respondents displaying interest in organic food products, their level of frequent purchase is moderate, which implies the existence of some barriers like the increase in price levels and inaccessibility. Altogether, the study indicates that Gen Z shoppers are an attractive demographic of consumers of organic food stuffs because consumers have been shifting to conscious lifestyles and responsible consumption behaviours.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the research findings, the recommendation is that the producers and marketers of organic foods should put more emphasis on promoting awareness and availability of organic products among the Gen Z. Price barriers should be minimized by enhancing efficiency of supply chains, promotion and government-sponsored organic agriculture. The retailers are recommended to increase the presence of organic products in supermarkets, local markets, and online platforms to increase the convenience of the customers. Besides this, the health and environmental benefits of organic food can be promoted through educational campaigns that help empower the trust of the consumers, and foster frequent food intake. Another way that policymakers can assist the organic food industry is by ensuring that the certification is transparent and sustainable agriculture is promoted in the Indian subcontinent

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