

**Article**

# A Conceptual Study on The Role of Social Media Platforms in Influencing Consumer Attitude and Behaviour on The Consumption of Organic Foods

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**Abstract:** With the rising use of social media, the customer-find-information-and-decision-making approach has been transformed dramatically. At the same time, the growing health consciousness, environmental issues, and food safety have raised the awareness of the consumption of organic food especially in urban areas. The proposed conceptual study is an attempt to explore how social media platforms affect consumer attitude and behaviour concerning the consumption of organic foods. Based on the developed and well-known theoretical constructs, including the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, and the ABC model of attitude, the paper will present a detailed conceptual framework between social media-related factors and consumer attitude and behaviours results. The research finds the information quality, electronic word-of-mouth, credibility of the influencer, and consumer engagement as some of the most important dimensions of social media that contribute to the formation of attitudes, which subsequently has an impact on the consumption behaviour of organic food. The proposed framework adds to the existing literature by incorporating the social media marketing and consumer behaviour perspectives and offers a basis upon which further empirical research on the Indian urban context can be performed.

**Keywords:** Organic food, Consumer Attitude, Social Media, Consumer Behaviour, Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model.

## INTRODUCTION

The faster innovation in the digital technologies has basically transformed the way the consumers seek information, comparison among the alternatives and purchase decisions. One of these technological changes has been the social media sites which have been a powerful communication and marketing tool that influence consumer perception and behaviour in a significant way. Social media like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp allow real-time communication, sharing of contents, communicating with peers, and messaging by influencers and redefine the traditional consumer-brand

relationships. Consequently, social media has been adopted as a part of the everyday life of consumers and a vital source of information affecting consumption choices in different types of products. Meanwhile, there has been a shift in the direction towards consumption of organic foods in the world depending on the choice of the consumers. The growing demand of organic food products is linked to growing concerns associated with health, food safety, environmental sustainability and ethical agricultural farming practices. Organic foods are believed to be healthier due to the absence of synthetic chemicals, pesticides and GM organisms, environmental

conservation and sustainable agricultural practices. This increasing consciousness has contributed to a slow shift in the consumption of food by the consumers, especially with the urban people who are exposed more to information by the digital and social media.

Social media platforms have become important in the past few years, promoting the intake of organic food through the spread of information associated with health benefits, environmental impact, certification standards, and ethical production processes. People are progressively using social media, online reviews, influencer posts, or discussion about the products with their peers as a source of forming an opinion about organic food items. It is not in the traditional media where two-way communication cannot be attained and the consumer cannot interact with the content and get to express experiences and want social network validation. It is this interactive quality that increases the believability and persuasive strength of social media messages and thus, they are effective in influencing consumer attitudes and behavioural intentions.

One of the most important psychological concepts is the consumer attitude that is expressed as either positive or negative rate of an individual towards a behaviour or product. Attitude in this case of eating organic food is dependent on cognitive beliefs of the health and environmental benefits and affective responses like trust and emotional appeal as well as behavioural willingness to buy. The effect that social media platforms have on all these elements of attitude is through informational content, emotional stories and social validation. As a result, the attitudes that are created by exposure to social media are likely to be transformed into a greater purchase intention and consumption behaviour.

The behaviour of the consumer towards organic food is complex and is influenced by a various factors like personal values, social values, sense of risk, and availability of information. Despite the increasing trend in the benefits of organic foods, the consumption rate has been skewed, due to sensitivity to price, access issues and skepticism towards the authenticity. In this respect, social media becomes a very important external factor that alleviates information asymmetry, creates trust, and strengthens social norms that favour consumption of organic foods. Through social media, it is possible to close the gap between positive attitudes and real purchasing behaviour by facilitating peer-to-peer communication, and influencer-led advocacy.

Although there is an increased amount of empirical research on social media marketing and eating organic food, the available research tends to look into these two areas separately or consider behavioural outcomes significantly and not the underlying attitudinal processes. In addition, missing conceptual frameworks on the consistent explanation of the

impact of social media platforms on consumer attitude and behaviour in the consumption of organic foods are also lacking. It is necessary to fill this gap to promote theoretical knowledge and offer a ground on which empirical research can be performed.

The current conceptual study, investigate the importance of social media platforms in shaping consumer attitude and behaviour towards consumption of organic food. The Stimulus-Organism-Response model, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour are some of the established behaviour theories that the study will use to propose a detailed conceptual framework that would connect the factors in social media platforms with the consumer attitude and behavioural consequences. The research aims to add value to the current literature by providing a theoretical-based view on how social media can be used to market organic food and making useful recommendations to marketers, policymakers, and researchers who have been interested in sustainable consumer behaviour.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM

Consumer attitudes and behaviour towards organic food consumption has been transformed by the increasing power of social media platforms. Although empirical research has been done on this relationship, many are not well theoretically based, leading to disjointed research and variable choices. The lack of an overall knowledge of the applicable behavioural and communication theories restrains the thoroughness and rigour of interpretation of empirical analysis. In the absence of a well-defined theoretical background, it is hard to find proper constructs, describe attitudinal processes, and argue out a causal association. Thus, it requires a conceptual analysis based on a theory that will demystify the theoretical perspectives in place and will result in more robust empirical studies and informed choice of variables in researching consumption of organic food.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

- Which theories describe the relationship between social media platforms and consumer attitude and behaviour with regard to the consumption of organic food?
- What is a conceptual framework that can be established in order to explain the association between factors on social media platforms, consumer attitude, and organic food consumption behaviour?
- Which theory-driven variables can be differentiated in order to reinforce the empirical studies about the use of organic food in the future?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine theories which explain the effects of social media platforms on consumer attitude and behaviour with regard to the consumption of organic foods.
- To determine and establish a theoretical framework between the determinants of social media platforms and consumer attitude and organic food consumption behaviour.
- To establish theory-based variables that may help in future empirical research on the consumption of organic food.

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

### THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) relates behaviour to the behavioural intention, which in turn is affected by attitude to the behaviour, subjective norms and subjective control over behaviour. Attitude is the reviewing of performing a behaviour by an individual, subjective norms is the perceived social pressure and perceived behavioural control is the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour. TPB has also been widely used in the research on the food choice and sustainable consumption.

Within the scope of organic food consumption, TPB offers a systematic analysis of how the perceived health and environmental benefits, the social approval of reference groups and the perceived accessibility affect the intentions of consumers to purchase these foods. The social media platforms support these elements by way of sharing of information, social interaction and exposure to normative cues and reinforcing behavioural intentions and actual consumption behaviour.

### SOCIAL INFLUENCE THEORY

The Social Influence Theory holds that social interactions and reference groups influence the attitudes and behaviours of people. The influence takes place by means of normative, where people follow the social expectations, and informational, when others are seen as reliable sources of information.

In social media spaces, the social influence is amplified with the help of electronic word-of-mouth, peer communication, and influencer endorsement. Consumers in the market of organic food tend to use online review, social comparison, and credibility of influence in assessing product assertions. These social cues promote levels of trust and perceived risk, thus affecting attitudes and intentions to behaviour.

### STIMULUS-ORGANISM-RESPONSE (S-O-R) FRAMEWORK

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework is a consumer behaviour model, where external stimuli influence internal psychological conditions resulting

in behavioural responses. Stimuli: Environmental stimuli are the cues of the environment, the organism is the processes of thought and feeling and response is behavioural consequences.

Social media information about organic food is the stimulus in this research and affects the cognitive beliefs and emotional responses of consumers. These thoughts influence attitudes and intentions which in turn, translate into organic food consumption behaviour. The S-O-R model is a powerful way in which the effectiveness of social media exposure on consumer decision making is captured.

### Relevance of Theoretical Models to the Present Study

Combination of TPB with Social Influence Theory and S-O-R framework is a multifaceted theoretical foundation in analyzing the influence of social media platforms on consumer attitude and behaviour towards eating organic foods. TPB describes the formation of intentions, Social Influence Theory demonstrates the influence of peers and influencers, and the S-O-R framework shows how this process takes place psychologically.

This collective theoretical method provides the opportunity to create a logical conceptual framework that connects the stimuli of social media with attitudinal and behavioural results. It also upgrades theoretical rigour of the study and provides a basis to empirical research on sustainability in consumption in digital environment in the future.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

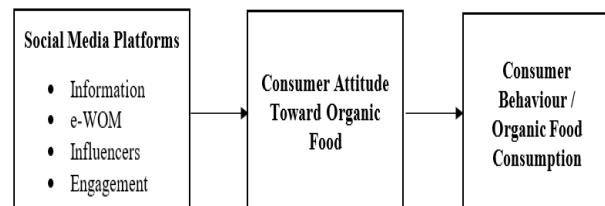


Figure 1 presents the proposed conceptual framework developed based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), and prior empirical studies on social media marketing and organic food consumption (Kapoor et al., 2018; Paul et al., 2016; García-Roldán et al., 2025).

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK TABLE

| Variable                                                                            | Reference                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Social Media Platforms<br>• Information<br>• e-WOM<br>• Influencers<br>• Engagement | Kapoor et al. (2018); Hajli (2015); Lou & Yuan (2019); García-Roldán et al. (2025); Ari & Yilmaz (2024) |
| Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)                                                    | Cheung & Thadani (2012); Hajli (2015);                                                                  |

|                                               |                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                               | Kapoor et al. (2018); Aitken et al. (2020); Ari & Yilmaz (2024)                                                     |
| Influencer Marketing / Social Influence       | Lou & Yuan (2019); Kapoor et al. (2018); García-Roldán et al. (2025); Ari & Yilmaz (2024); De Veirman et al. (2017) |
| Consumer Attitude toward Organic Food         | Ajzen (1991); Rana & Paul (2017); Paul et al. (2016); Aitken et al. (2020); García-Roldán et al. (2025)             |
| Consumer Behaviour / Organic Food Consumption | Rana & Paul (2017); Paul et al. (2016); Aitken et al. (2020); Ari & Yilmaz (2024); García-Roldán et al. (2025)      |

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research applies a conceptual research design due to the development of theoretical knowledge of the role of social media platforms in forming consumer attitudes and behaviour towards organic food consumption. Since the paper is about conceptual clarity and theoretical development, it will be based completely on secondary data. The sources of the data collection were a thorough analysis of peer-reviewed journals, books, book chapters, conference papers, theses, dissertations, and official websites. It was pointed out that any publication of literature would be considered as a priority since 2015 to ensure that the literature is relevant and current, but seminal older literature would be also included in the event that the literature provided critical theoretical backgrounds. The thematic analysis was systematically used to analyze the literature in order to extract patterns and various important concepts and conceptual synthesis was used to combine the results of various sources. It has resulted in the development of a consistent conceptual picture, the focus on the relations between social media platforms, consumer attitudes, and eating organic food behaviour. The method offers a strong theoretical background and defines the possible variables in the future empirical study.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The rising health concern, environmental sustainability and food safety have brought an augmented request in organic food products. In that regard, social media is a new media that has turned out to be a powerful tool in influencing consumer attitudes towards consumption of organic food. The use of social media systems like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and X (Twitter) is essential in sharing information, engaging with peers as well as value-

based communication that are vital in shaping beliefs and assessment of consumers regarding organic food products (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

The quality of information and creation of awareness about organic food in social media influence consumer attitude towards organic food to a great extent. Ethical farming, nutritional value, environmental sustainability, pesticide-free production, and organic food are some of the attributes that are commonly posted, videotaped, and educated through posts and videos. Recent findings point out that informative and credible social media information can considerably boost the positive beliefs and attitudes of the consumers toward the organic food products (Nguyen et al., 2023; Rana and Paul, 2024).

Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) is another significant mechanism. Reviews, testimonials, and shared consumption experiences will be instrumental in enabling consumers to rate organic food products since such products are usually linked to trust and credence qualities that are sometimes difficult to establish legitimacy prior to the purchase. Evidence-based research indicates that positive e-WOM in the social media context enhances trust, favorable attitudes towards organic food, and the reverse might also hold (Cheung et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2024).

The influence marketing is especially relevant to the organic food. Opinion leaders, who will influence consumer perceptions and attitudes towards organic food include health influencers, nutritionists, environmental activists and lifestyle bloggers. The perceived credibility, knowledge, and appropriateness of influencers to sustainability ideals positively influence the emotional and cognitive assessment of the consumers towards organic food brands (Ilieva et al., 2024; Jain and Singla, 2025).

Emotional involvement and value congruence are also encouraged through social media platforms and played a vital role in the formation of attitudes towards organic food. The emotional appeals to healthy living, ethics in consumption, animal welfare, and environmental protection content appeal to the consumers, support positive attitudes. Research notes that emotional appeal and value-based storytelling on social media are considered to greatly increase positive attitudes towards organic food consumption by consumers (Sadiq et al., 2023).

Moreover, the attitude is formed under social identity and peer influence. Consumption of organic food is usually linked to socially responsible and health conscious lifestyle. The social media social groups and online communities form normative pressure and social validation, which prompts consumers to hold favorable attitudes towards organic food products (Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Paul et al., 2023). According to the theory, the effect of social media on

consumer attitude towards organic food may be elaborated as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) since, under the impact of the exposure to information and peer influence, social media modulates attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). Also, the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework is used to conceptualize social media content as a stimulus that produces cognitive and emotional reactions and results in positive attitudes towards organic food (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974).

## DISCUSSION

The proposed conceptual framework discusses the social media platforms affect consumer attitude and behaviour towards the consumption of organic food in a systematic chain of relationships. Factors like informational content, electronic word-of-mouth and influence by a person, are social media-related factors that serve as external stimuli in influencing cognitive beliefs and emotional reactions of consumers. These psychological processes help in development of positive perceptions of organic food which subsequently boosts the intentions to purchase and consumption behaviour.

The framework also brings out the importance of trust and social validation as two important mechanisms that diminish uncertainty and the gap between the positive attitudes and the real purchasing behaviour. Social media platforms enhance attitudinal and deliberate channels to organic food consumption through peer interaction and sharing of their experiences.

The theoretical associations that have been put forward in this paper co-exist with the well-known theories of behaviour and communication. Attitude, subjective norms and perceived control as factors affecting behavioural intention have been found to corroborate with the Theory of Planned Behaviour. The assumptions of the Social Influence Theory with its normative and informational pressures on decision-making are backed by the power of peer opinions, online reviews, and influencer endorsements.

Moreover, the stimulus-based essence of social media information and the influence on internal psychological conditions and behavioural reaction are congruent with the Stimulus-Organism-Response model. The positive association between digital engagement, attitude formation, and pro-environmental purchasing behaviour is also supported by previous empirical research of social media marketing and sustainable consumption. The current research paper brings all these disjointed results together in a single theoretical framework.

This research is relevant to the current consumer behaviour literature since it provides a conceptual explanation based on the theory behind consumer attitudes and behaviour concerning the consumption

of organic food through social media platforms. The combination of several theoretical views helps the study to contribute to the knowledge of attitudinal processes of sustainable consumption in digital settings.

In terms of digital marketing, the research provides the strategic value of social media as an interactive influence resource against a promotional tool. The suggested model will guide the marketers to create content and engagement strategies to achieve a feeling of trust, social confirmation and positive perceptions towards organic food. Also, the research provides a base to further empirical research since pertinent constructs and theoretically supported connections have been identified.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research has a number of theoretical, managerial and social implications as it provides a complex conceptual framework elucidating the consumption of organic food. The combination of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Social Influence Theory, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response framework makes the study explain attitudinal and psychological processes by which social media affects consumer behaviour. The choice of consumer attitude and trust as the mediating constructs fills manufacturing gaps in the previous studies, which primarily examined the behavioural results and offered a solid theoretical basis of subsequent empirical research. The results have implications on the managerial front in that the social media should be seen as a strategically important means of setting credibility, trust and long-term consumer relationships as opposed to being a promotion tool. Marketers of organic foods can improve their interactions by credible content, authenticity of the influencer, and interactions that are user generated. Socially and in policy context, the research highlights the importance of social media in facilitating healthy and sustainable consumption. Digital platforms can be used by policymakers to spread certified information, mitigate misinformation, and enhance pro-sustainability social norms in favour of eating organic food.

## LIMITATIONS

- It is theoretical research based on secondary literature, which restricts its empirical validation.
- Social media can have causal relationships between social media influence, attitude and behaviour, which cannot be statistically proved.
- The model fails to take into account consumer behaviour differences based on demographic, cultural, or regional differences.

## FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

- Empirically test the conceptual frame work with either quantitative, qualitative or mixed-method design.
- Test mediating and moderating variables of trust, perceived risk, and environmental concern.
- Conduct cross-cultural and demographic research to determine the difference in context with regards to consumer behaviour.
- Research platform-specific influences of social media platforms on consumer attitudes and behaviour.
- Adopt longitudinal or experimental research to determine attitude change and determine the cause effect of social media content on the consumption of organic foods.

## CONCLUSIONS

The growing use of social media in daily lives has changed the way consumers process information and make decisions. This is a theoretical investigation aimed at explaining the impact of social media sites in shaping consumer attitude and behaviour regarding eating of organic food stuffs. The study combines the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the Social Influence Theory, and the Stimulus-Organism-Response conceptual framework to come up with a holistic conceptual model of the psychological and social processes underpinning the consumption of organic food in digital settings. The framework fills the theoretical inconsistency gaps related to consumer behaviour literature and provides a base to address the future empirical research. Also, the paper offers recommendations to marketers and policy makers on how the social media can be strategically utilized in marketing sustainable and health conscious consumption.

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