


**Investigating the Relationship between
Attitude - Behavioural Intention : A case
of Organic Food Consumption in
Sri Lanka**

By

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partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
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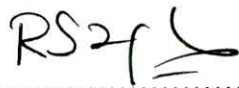
I declare that this research was carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. (Mrs.) D.S.Rohini Samarasinghe, the Department of Marketing Management, University of Sri Jayewardenepura and this has not been submitted in whole or part to any University or any other institute for another Degree/ Diploma.



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I certify that the above statement made by the candidate is true and this research is suitable for submission to the University for the purpose of evaluation.



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Prof. (Mrs.) D.S.Rohini Samarasinghe

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List of Abbreviations

AGRA	- Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
ANOVA	- Analysis of Variance
BSE	- Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
BI	- Behavioural Intention
FRS	- Family Resources Survey
GDP	- Gross Domestic Products
GMO	- Genetically Modified Organisms
IFOAM	- International Federation of Agriculture Movement
IMO	- International Organic Movement
IUCN	- International Union for Conservation of Nature
KOM	- Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LOAM	- Lanka Organic Agriculture Movement
MSG	- Mono Sodium Glutamate
NASAA	- National Association for Sustainable Agriculture- Australia
NGO	- Non Government Organization
PBC	- Perceived Behavioural Control
SKAL	- Control Authority of Organic Food
SPSS	- Statistical Package for Social Science
SN	- Subjective Norms
SSR	- Regression sum of squares
SST	- Total sum of squares
TPB	- Theory of Plan Behaviour
TRA	- Theory of Reasoned Action

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to determine key determinants which affect on the buying intention of organic food according to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and, hypotheses for attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control for the study were next developed in accordance with it.

The questionnaire was finalized on the validity and reliability of the pilot study carried out at the Sri Jayewardenepura hospital using forty five nurses. After that, data were collected from 385 health professionals attached to four major government hospitals in main cities in line with the finalized questionnaire. For data analysis, SPSS-16 version was used. Data thus analyzed was distributed for TPB model analysis in normal. As a result of that, parametric methods were used for statistical analysis. It revealed that there is a relationship between dependent and independent variables. Hence, the multiple regression was conducted for this study. The analysis indicated that perceived behavioral control has greater effect to the behavioral intention, and subjective norms and attitude has lower level effects in contrast. It suggested that there are some theoretical and managerial implications to be implemented to improve organic sector in Sri Lanka.

There is a possibility for the future researchers to further extend this research with a mixed crowd despite being limited to a group of the same professional category. In such a context, it is encouraged to do a qualitative study to investigate the actual reasons behind the lower interest shown by majority of consumers in the purchase of organic food in Sri Lanka.

Key words: Organic food, Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control, Behavioural Intention, Health Professionals

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The process of organic food production in food production is identified with best environmental practices, maintenance high level of bio-diversity, preservation of natural resources, and also with the application of high level of animal welfare standards (Lea & Worsley, 2005). In contrast to general food consumers, the consumers of organic food items are highly concerned with health, food safety and the preservation and the conservation of the natural environment in their purchase of organic products. In definition, the term 'organic' refers to food items with no chemicals such as the preservatives, pesticides, fungicides, artificial fertilizers, coloring, additives etc. or food items produced out of genetically modified plants or animals under the application of antibiotics or growth hormones (Eisenbach, 2002).

The history reveals that organic farming activities have emerged around in 1940s as a result of industrialization of agriculture which is known as the Green Revolution. In that period organic food has been produced using methods of organic farming activities which involve farming without modern synthetic inputs such as synthetic pesticide, weed side and chemical fertilizers (Beharrell & MacFie, 1991). Since organic foods are also not produced using artificial solvents or chemical food additives, the demand for organically produced food in Europe has showed a significant growth in recent years (Aertsens *et al.*, 2009). The market for organic food has increased significantly during the last decade in Europe due to consumers' awareness of the negative impacts of agro-chemicals on human health and also the environment.

Demand for organic food depends on a number of factors of which Aertsens *et al.* (2009) has highlighted three factors namely; price, knowledge regarding organic food and availability. It adds that the price of organic food is relatively higher for organic food than conventional food. Secondly it notes that the consumers are not much aware of the differentiation between the organic food products from in-organic as one of the key issues. Under the final factor is the availability of organic food as it is available at specialized retail outlets but not in conventional stalls. Therefore, the free availability of organic food at convenient places is of greater importance to improve the demand for organic food. In addition to these, Aertsens *et al.* (2009) emphasizes that many studies regarding the future demand for organic food depend on price of organic food.

According to Sri Lanka Export Development Board (2013), the global demand for organic foods has reached more than \$63 billion in the year 2011. There is a rapidly growing organic food market in United State of America (USA) and Canada and, during last decade as the statistics of the SEDB (2013), it has reached 20% per year and 7.8% per year in Europe. Yet, the existence of certified organic farming lands in global context is less than 2% of total farming lands, relatively a very low value. At the same time, there is increasing demand for organic food mainly in EU countries and it continuously remains at 35% for within the period. In relation to the price, it is evident that the price of organic products is higher by 10 to 40% than similar food products conventionally produced, Sri Lanka Export Development Board (2013) reveals.

Wahundeniya (2013) identifies a preliminary set of standards for organic food production in Sri Lanka initiated in 1996. It brings out that 3300 farmers have utilized

15,215 hectares for organic agriculture in 2006 which is 0.65% from total cultivating lands in Sri Lanka. This reveals that Sri Lanka is in higher position among major organic food producers and mainly organic tea cited in Wahundeniya (2013).

IFOAM (2006) confirms that, “total land occupied under the organic agriculture is 25,335.03ha. It is 1.08% of total cultivated lands by 2008. Certified organic agriculture lands are 16,161.28ha which 0.81% of total cultivated area. There are 6,741.25 ha of organic agriculture lands are occupied which is 0.28% and among them 0.23% are home gardens. Private Sector Companies handle 18,492.18ha on organic agriculture which is 0.79% of total cultivated area. Out of them, there are 10,554 ha belongs to farmers groups which is 57.07% of company’s managed organic agricultural lands” cited in Wahundeniya (2013).

According to Sri Lankan Export Development Board(2013), it is estimated that 31,585ha or 1.33% of overall agricultural lands have been committed to organic agriculture practices in the year 2010 and it has recorded 41,129Mt of organic production in the same year. Statistics also further highlights the significant increase of organic production from 4216Mt in 2007 to 41,128.3Mt in 2010.

It further reveals Tea, Coconut based-products, spices (Pepper, Cardamom, Cloves, Nutmeg, Cinnamon, Ginger) Vanilla and their extracts, Medicinal Herbs, Essential Oils and extracts, Tubers and Vegetables, Coffee, Cocoa, Fruits (Pineapple, Papaya, Banana, Lime and Mango and their juices), Rice, Cashew, processed products, wild harvests (Kithul Treacle, Jaggery and Bee Products) as the main organic export