

# An Extension of the Theory of Planned Behavior to Predict the Purchase Intention of Millet

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## Abstract:

The demand and consumption of Millets are increasing across the globe, in particular during the International Year of Millets 2023. Unlike any other food product, Millet is considered unique in terms of nutrition, health benefits and taste. There is a growing need among the producers and marketers of Millets to understand how customers purchase millets. In this context, the purpose of the present study was to develop a comprehensive model to understand Millet's purchase intention using focus group discussion and literature review. Based on the proposed methodology, a model integrating critical variables influencing the purchase intention of millets was developed. The study used the theory of planned behaviour as the base model. The nine variables, such as environmentally friendly, information on millets, trust in millets, millet quality, millet safety, health consciousness, Knowledge of millets, health benefits of millets and environmental concerns, were identified as new variables influencing the attitude towards purchasing millets. The study contributes to developing a theory that predicts the purchase intention of millets. The model can be used in any geographical context to predict the purchase intention of millets and develop marketing strategies that will enhance the purchase and consumption of millets.

**Keywords:** Millets, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Environmental friendly, Information on millets, Trust in millets, Millet quality, Millet safety, Health Consciousness, Knowledge of millets, Health benefits of millets and Environmental Concerns

## 1. Introduction

The word millet is trending across the globe. Diverse stakeholders including consumers, producers, farmers, suppliers, government, and policymakers from private and public institutions are actively involved in promoting millet due to its health, economic and environmental benefits. This involvement became a movement in the year 2023 when the United Nations declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets. One of the important factors that is crucial for the success of the Millet Movement is the purchase intention of the consumers. If the consumers possess positive intentions, the likelihood of the consumer to purchase and consume millet will be higher. Information about millet production and policies is widely available in the literature, whereas the information related to the purchase and consumption of millet in particular in the Indian context is very limited. Hence, the present study is aimed to develop a conceptual model that can be used to predict the purchase intention of millets.

## 2. Objectives of the study

1. To conduct the focus group discussion and identify the factors that influence the purchase intention of

millet

2. To extend the theory of planned behaviour model to predict the purchase intention of millet

### 3. Methodology

The methodology adopted to achieve objective one of the present study was the focus group discussion. The focus group discussion was conducted with the millet consumers, millet experts, millet marketers, millet manufacturers, millet retailers, millet farmers, millet researchers and millet policymakers to understand the factors that influence the intention to purchase.

The methodology to achieve objective two was a literature review. This was done to develop the conceptual model as proposed in objective two of the study using the theoretical foundations. The literature review is based on the evidence reported in the research papers published in various national and international research journals.

### 4. Review of Literature

#### Theory of Planned Behaviour

Ajzen, I. (1985, 1991) developed the theory of planned behaviour. The theory is based on predicting the intention of an individual towards performing a particular behaviour. The main independent variables in the theory of planned behaviour are attitude, subjective norm and perceived behaviour control and the dependent variable is intention. As per the theory, if an individual holds a positive attitude towards performing a particular behaviour, then the intention to perform the behaviour also tends to be positive. The second variable in the theory of planned behaviour is the subjective norm, this variable deals with how an individual perceives the approval or disapproval from the immediate referents such as friends, family members and relatives about performing a particular behaviour. If the individual perceives approval and values such approval from the immediate referents to engage in a particular behaviour, then the intention of the individual to perform the behaviour will be positive. The final important variable in the theory of planned behaviour model is perceived behavioural control. This variable deals with the availability of time, money and energy for an individual to perform a particular behaviour. If the individual feels time, money and energy are available to perform a particular behaviour then the intention to perform that behaviour will be positive.

Since the development of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), many studies across the globe have applied theory to predict the individual's intention towards performing a particular behaviour in diverse contexts. Bosnjak, M et al., (2020) reported that TPB was one of the popular theories in the social and behavioural sciences based on the evidence of 4,200 papers that used TPB. Considering the theory's applicability in predicting the intention to purchase millets and widely proven statistics in the previous research, the current study intends to expand the theory of planned behaviour to predict the intention to purchase millets in the Indian context.

#### 4.1. Influence of environmentally friendly on attitude towards purchasing millets

The meaning of Environmentally friendly as per the Cambridge Dictionary is “not harmful to the environment, or trying to help the environment” Millets are considered to be environmentally friendly due to factors such as consuming less water for the entire plantation, growth and harvesting, millets can grow without any pesticides and insecticides. In addition, millets can grow in the dry region and it sustains in the arid conditions.

Cheah, I. and Phau, I. (2011) reported that consumers with positive attitudes towards environmentally frie-

ndly products were highly inclined to purchase the same. Consumers also consider environmental friendliness as an important attribute of a product in addition to other dimensions of the product Kianpour, K., et al., (2014). Even the environmental attitude had a positive impact on purchase intention Xu, L., et al., (2019). Considering the environmentally friendly attributes of millets and evidence from the literature, it is hypothesised that,

**Environmentally friendly has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets**

#### **4.2. Influence of information on millets on attitude towards purchasing millets**

The meaning of Information as per Merriam Webster is "knowledge obtained from investigation, study or instruction, intelligence, news, facts, data" Information plays an important role in creating awareness among the consumers to make purchase decisions. Information about millets in terms of types of millets, the nutritional content of millets, the health benefits of millets and its cooking procedure is very unique and it differs from one millet to the another. Several studies in the past have reported evidence of how the information influenced attitudes towards purchasing.

Information from nonfactual news videos has influenced public perception of organic foods Koswatta et al., (2023). Tariq et al., (2019) reported that social media forums, ratings and reviews influenced Chinese consumer's attitudes towards organic food and it had a significant influence on their online impulse purchase. With regards to information, website attributes played an important role in communicating information on organic food. In particular, the study highlighted that information related to product quality and certification had a moderating effect on purchase. The study also highlighted that information such as nutritional content, production, processing methods and eco-friendliness influenced consumers' attitudes that led to impulse buying decisions.

A study by Cavite et al., (2022) highlighted that detailed product information via traceability was vital for consumers who have a high propensity to purchase organic rice. Cui, L et al., (2019) reported that friend recommendation and perceived risk directly affected consumer purchase intentions. In addition, opinion leader recommendations, quality of information, credibility of information and demand for information indirectly affected consumers' purchase intention via food safety information in social media in China. Based on the above literature evidence, it is hypothesised that,

**Information on Millets has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.3. Influence on trust on attitude towards purchasing millet**

The meaning of Trust as per Merriam Webster is "assured reliance on the character, ability, strength or truth of someone or something, one in which confidence is placed "Millets are considered to be good for the farmers, for the people and the planet. This understanding has evolved as trust about millets among various stakeholders including the producers, sellers and the consumers.

Teng, C.-C. and Wang, Y.M. (2015) reported that trust was an important antecedent of attitude and it mediated the relationship between revealing information, perceived knowledge and purchase intention of organic products.

Firoozzare, A. et al., (2024) reported that trust in healthy food had a significant positive impact on the purchase. Teng, C.C. and Wang, Y.M. (2015) identified the role of trust and its positive impact on the purchase intention of the customers in the context of the organic food. The authors mentioned that trust had reduced the consumer's perceived risk in organic food purchase and consumption. Al-Nasser et al., (2014) found a positive relationship between trust and attitude towards online shopping. Daugbjerg, C et al., (2014) established a relationship between trust and purchase intention in the eco- context. Konuk, F.A. (2018) reported that trust played an important role towards the purchase of organic private label food.

Based on the above justification, it is hypothesised that,

**Trust has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.4. Influence of millet quality on attitude towards purchasing millets**

The meaning of Quality as per Merriam Webster is "peculiar and essential character, an inherent feature". The quality of the millet includes the colour, texture and taste etc. Like any product, the quality of the millet is likely to influence the attitude towards purchasing the millet. Hoang et al., (2024) reported that food quality was an important variable that influenced the restaurant choice intention. Other variables that influenced were authenticity and nostalgia marketing. Hsu, S (2016) highlighted that the natural content of organic food had a positive impact on attitudes towards organic food. Xin, L. and Seo, S.S. (2020) reported that the image of Korean functional foods had a significant role towards the purchase of Korean functional foods. Ali et al., (2021) reported that quality and health benefits were extremely important for 75% of the respondents while purchasing health and wellness food products.

Based on the above justification, it is hypothesised that,

**Millets Quality has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.5. Influence on millets safety on attitude towards purchasing millets**

The meaning of Safety as per the Cambridge Dictionary is "a state in which or a place where you are safe and not in danger or at risk". Millets are very unique and, in the meantime, it is complex right from the way they are planted, harvested, processed and packed.

Hsu, S (2016) reported that concern for food safety had a significant effect on attitudes towards both organic food and its purchase intentions. Hsu S.Y (2019) reported that food safety concerns had an indirect effect on purchase intentions in the context of Organic food. Mohana Priya B & Simmi Jain (2021) reported that consumers with awareness of the food safety standards displayed more consciousness and responsibility in checking the food labelling components.

Hence, the safety of the millets is of prime importance for the consumer to purchase millets and it is likely to influence attitude towards purchasing millets.

Based on the above justification, it is hypothesised that,

**Millets Safety has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.6. Influence on health consciousness on attitude towards purchasing Millet**

The meaning of Health Consciousness as per the Collins Dictionary is "having an active interest in one's health" Due to the nutritional and health benefits of millets, consumers intending to lose weight, to manage diabetes and blood pressure consume millets. Research evidence reported by Hsu et al., (2016), Gineikiene et al., (2017), and Konuk, (2018) consumers' interest towards the health influenced purchase of organic foods in developing countries context. Yadav and Pathak (2016) reported that the health consciousness variable influenced the consumer's attitude towards purchasing organic food. Cavite et al., (2022) found that health consciousness had a positive influence on the intention to purchase organic rice among the consumers. Hsu, S (2016) found that health consciousness had a positive relationship with the purchase intention of organic food. Xin, L. and Seo, S.S. (2020) highlighted that health consciousness had an impact on the purchase of Korean Functional Foods. In this context, the health consciousness of the consumer is likely to influence attitude towards purchasing millet. It is hypothesised that,

**Health consciousness has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millet.**

#### **4.7. Influence on knowledge of millets on attitude towards purchasing millets**

The meaning of knowledge as per the Cambridge Dictionary is "understanding of or information about a subject that you get by experience or study, either known by one person or by people generally" Millets

are very complex in terms of different choices of millets, cooking methods and other aspects related to consumption of millets. Hsu, S (2016) reported that subjective knowledge had a significant effect on attitudes towards both organic food and its purchase intentions.

Hanifasari, D et al (2024) reported that halal supply chain knowledge, halal certification, logo and religious beliefs were the influential factors that impacted the purchase intention of halal products among the millennial generations. Lin, L. and Chen, C. (2006) reported that product knowledge had a significant positive impact on purchase decisions. Sun, Y and Wang, S (2020) reported that product knowledge had an impact on consumers attitude and purchase intentions. Cavite et al., (2022) product traceability knowledge had a positive influence on intention to purchase organic rice among the consumers. Based on the above literature evidence, it is hypothesised that,

**Knowledge of millets has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.8. Influence of health benefits of millets on attitude towards purchasing millets**

The meaning of health benefits as per the Oxford Dictionary is "a positive effect on a person's health gained from food, treatment, or an activity". Besides being rich in fibre, millets are low in glycaemic levels and rich in protein.

Shirisha, S.D.S.N (2018) study reported enhancement in the health due to consumption of millets. Kane-Potaka et al., (2021) & Kaur, J et al., (2024) highlighted that millets were selected by consumers with health problems. Padmalini, S et al., (2023) reported the reason for the consumption of millet was to maintain overall health. Lakshmy Priya et al., (2024) found the main reasons for consumption of millets were nutritional and health benefits of millets. The top reason for the consumption of millet as per Adithya Girijavallabhan et al., (2022) was for health benefits and the same phenomenon was reported in Changmei Shadang's (2017) study. Rizwana et al., (2023) reported that millets were consumed for their ability to preserve health.

Based on the above literature evidence, it is hypothesised that,

**Health benefits of Millets has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.9. Influence of environmental concerns on attitude towards purchasing millet**

The meaning of Environmental Concern as per the Collins Dictionary is "concerned with the protection of the natural world of land, sea, air, plants, and animals. The food we consume today contributes to the increase in carbon footprint. In the case of millets, it helps to tackle environmental concerns by conserving and protecting the environment by consuming less water for cultivation and eliminating pollution in any form in the entire supply chain till it reaches the consumer. Research evidence in the past found that environmental concern did influence the attitude towards purchase. For example, Hsu S.Y (2019) found that environmental concern had indirect impact on purchase intentions in the context of the Organic food. In the green purchase context, Zameer, H. and Yasmeen, H. (2022) reported that environmental awareness had an impact on green purchase intentions. A study by Laheri V.K (2024) reported that environmental consciousness positively influenced purchasing green products/ green purchase intention. Hence, the environmental concerns of the consumers are likely to influence their attitude towards purchasing millet. Based on the above literature evidence, it is hypothesised that,

**Environmental concern has a positive influence on attitude towards purchasing millets.**

#### **4.10 Influence of Attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control towards purchasing Millet**

Several studies in the past found evidence of the influence of attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control on purchase intentions. Teng, C.-C. and Wang, Y.-M. (2015) highlighted that attitudes



towards organic foods and subjective norms influenced the organic food choices of consumers. A similar context study by Hsu, S (2016) reported that attitude towards organic food had a positive impact on purchase intention. In the organic rice purchase context, Cavite et al., (2022) study revealed that subjective norms had a positive influence on intention to purchase organic rice among the consumers. In the international functional food context, Xin, L. and Seo, S.(S). (2020) reported that attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control had influenced the purchase of Korean functional foods. In the green purchase intention context, Laheri V.K. (2024) & Chanda, R.C (2023) highlighted that subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and attitude predicted green purchase intention. Similar to the above studies, Sun, Y. and Wang, S. (2020) also reported that attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control positively influenced purchase intention. Based on the above evidence, it is hypothesised that,

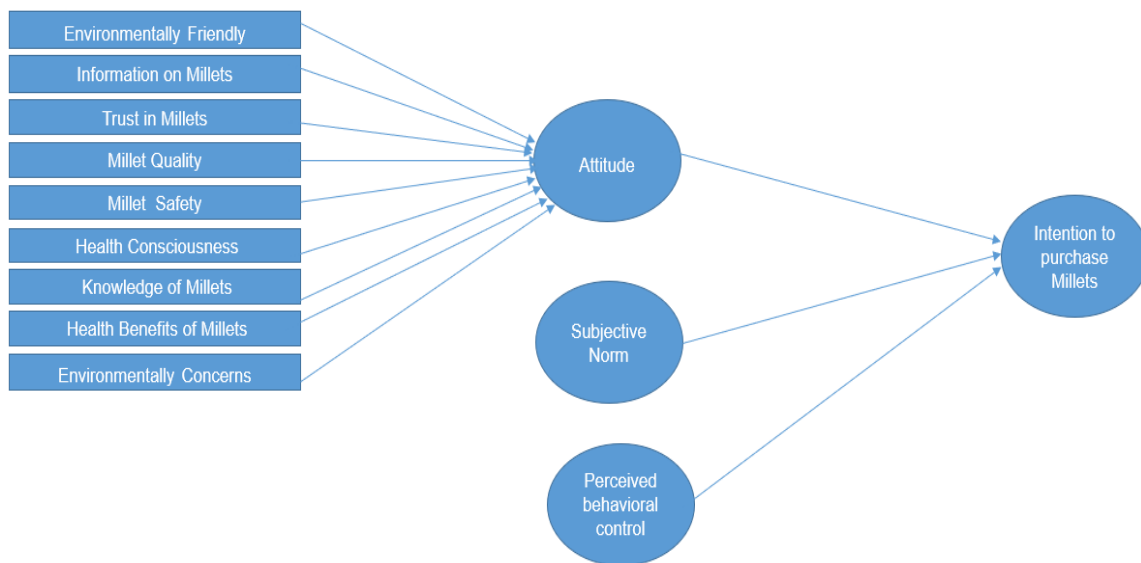
**Attitude has a positive influence on the purchase intention of millet**

**Subjective norm has a positive influence on the purchase intention of millet**

**Perceived behavioural control has a positive influence on the purchase intention of millet**

**5. Conceptual model**

**6. Proposed Conceptual Model- Extended TPB model**



**Figure:1: Proposed Conceptual Model- Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour model**

**7. Results:**

The results of the focus group discussion indicate that nine factors are expected to influence the purchase intention of millets. The factors are environmentally friendly, information on millets, trust in millets, millet quality, millet safety, health consciousness, knowledge of millets, health benefits of millets and environmental concerns. Based on the general literature review, theoretical support for all nine factors identified in the focus group discussion was identified and integrated into the expanded TPB model.

**8. Discussion:**

Unlike previous studies, the present study applied both primary data collection via focus group discussion and secondary data collection via literature review. The results of the focus group discussion identified

nine factors that influence the purchase intention of millets. While grouping the nine factors, two main factors are evident. One factor is related to millet quality. The millet quality includes millet quality, millet safety, health benefits and information on millets and the Second factor is related to psychological attributes. The psychological attributes include being environmentally friendly, environmental concerns, knowledge of millets, trust in millets and health consciousness. This indicates that stakeholders involved in the millet supply chain shall focus on the overall quality of the millet and develop strategies that will positively influence the psychological factors of the consumer. With regard to objective two, the present study found literature evidence for all nine factors identified via focus group discussion and successfully created an expanded TPB model.

### **8.1.Expected Implications for the Industry**

The farmers, the retailers, and the marketers involved in the manufacturing and distribution of millets will be able to understand the factors that influence the attitude of the consumers to purchase millets and the role of the attitude, subjective norm and perceived behaviour control in predicting the intention to purchase millets. Based on this information, a comprehensive marketing strategic model can be developed to educate, attract and influence consumers to purchase millet regularly. This endeavour will not only help to achieve economic benefits for the business but will create more healthy customers and indirectly help the farmers and protect the planet.

### **8.2.Expected Implications for Research**

The majority of the previous research was focused on understanding the types of millets, cultivation and harvesting of millets, turnover and consumption statistics of millets and nutritional and health benefits of millets. Literature examining the purchase intention of millets using a comprehensive model is limited. In this context, the proposed study will help to fill up the gaps in the literature and advance the knowledge in this important area that determines the overall success of the millets.

### **8.3.Expected Implications for Society**

The members of society will be able to get better informed choices from the millet marketers that match their needs and expectations in purchasing and consuming millet.

### **8.4.Expected Implications for Policy Makers**

Several private and public institutions are involved in promoting millet in India. This includes ITC Mission Millets (IMM), SAFIN Network (SN), Akshaya Patra Foundation (APF), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), Ministry of Food and Public Distribution, Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) etc. Policymakers from these institutions will greatly benefit from the insights in the proposed study by creating new policies or amending the existing policies that will enhance the efficiency in promoting the millets among the manufacturers and consumers.

### **8.5.Research Originality and Value**

The proposed model is unique and comprehensive and will provide insights based on the most influential factors and their significance in predicting the purchase intention of millets in the South Indian context. In terms of value, the framework developed in the present study indicates a significant value for the industry, professionals, farmers, research, society and policymakers who are directly or indirectly involved

in the Millet eco-system.

## 9. Limitations

The present study has satisfactorily achieved the objective. Although efforts were made to include exhaustive variables to predict the purchase intention of millets, there may be additional variables that may be influencing the purchase intention of millets. This is the limitation of the present study.

## 10. Future Research Directions

Future research should empirically test and evaluate the effectiveness of the conceptual model predicting the purchase intention of millets. In addition, other variables that may be influencing the purchase intention of millets shall be included in the proposed conceptual mode to enhance the predictive power of the model.

## 11. Conclusion:

Millet has been known to humankind since ancient times. Unfortunately, in the process of evolution, the popularity of millets disappeared and slowly the popularity of millets is gaining momentum across the globe. The present study has successfully developed a conceptual model that will be able to predict the purchase intention of millets. This endeavour is likely to elevate the acceptance, purchase and consumption of millets among the consumers in the market.

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