

**EXPLORING CONSUMPTION COMMUNITIES:
A STUDY OF PURCHASE INTENTION AND CHOICE
BEHAVIOR**

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**Exploring Consumption Communities:
A Study of Purchase Intention and Choice Behavior**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled “**Exploring Consumption Communities: A Study of Purchase Intention and Choice Behavior**”, which is being submitted by **Ms. Shiksha Kushwah** to the Department of Management Studies, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** (Ph.D.) is a bonafide record of research work carried out by her. She has worked under my supervision and guidance in conformity with rules and regulations of the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. The research reports and results discussed in this thesis have not been submitted in part or full for the award of any diploma or degree in any other Institute or University.

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“All things are difficult before they are easy.”

Dr. Thomas Fuller

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(Shiksha Kushwah)

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ABSTRACT

Consumption and community are intertwined. The role of consumption as a connecting thread among community members has been widely recognized in the literature. This resulted in the development of several concepts around consumption communities including traditional communities, a subculture of consumption, brand communities, consumer tribes and more recently, the concept of new consumption communities has been introduced. These new consumption communities emerged due to growing consumerism movements such as ethical, green or sustainable consumerism. These consumerism movements display the active and engaging role of the consumer in the marketplace which in turn resulted in the conscious and demanding group of consumers who may not be connected geographically but connected through an idea, brand or consumption activity. The scope of these new consumption communities are widespread ranging from ethical communities encompasses a wider range of issues to more specific communities such as organic food highlighting a specific issue.

Based on the grounding of the new consumption communities, organic food community has been selected as the context of the present study. This is further supported by the growing demand for organic food. The reasoning is attributed to the growing evidence of pesticides and chemicals in fresh as well as processed food products, rising health and environment concerns, increased spending on food production, and food quality issues. The consumers of this community are highly motivated, informed, and demanding with respect to the product's biological quality. Consequently, the practice of organic farming and consumption of organic food product has gained increased attention to fulfill the needs and demand of this growing community. This is further evident from the increased academic contribution to this topic. Nevertheless, although researchers have made several contributions regarding the

understanding of the organic food community and most importantly consumer perspective still there are few gaps that need to be addressed.

The extensive review of literature on three main areas including consumption communities, context of the study (organic food community in India) and systematic review of literature on the factors influencing purchase decision making in the organic food context leads to, among others, three main research gap: 1) there is a lack of studies on New Consumption Communities around organic food in Indian context, 2) there is a lack of comprehensive framework explaining factors influencing purchase intention and choice behavior in the emerging new consumption communities' context, 3) several focused on the individual organic food consumption behaviour. However, there is a lack of studies on such behavior in communal context (community-based organic food buyers). Hence, the objective of the present study is to contribute to the body of knowledge covering the major research gaps that have been identified. Thus, this research aims to study the purchase intention and choice behavior in the context of community based organic food buyers in India. The research study has been conducted in six phases. After conducting a literature review in phase one, phase two includes identifying research gaps, defining research objectives and proposing a conceptual framework. This research study adopted the theory of consumption values and innovation resistance theory to draw an integrated framework for understanding factors influencing consumer intention and choice behavior in a selected community context. As discussed, this study examined factors influencing purchase intention and choice behavior of community- based organic food buyers using multi-method research approaches ranging from phenomenological interviews to survey method, thus bringing the methodological rigor to the current study.

Phase three is exploratory based on the phenomenological principal. This aim to understand the consumption phenomenon in the selected community through the lived experiences of the community based organic food buyers. This qualitative study also provides

inputs for the quantitative phase of the study. Through a systematic review of the literature and qualitative study, two types of factors influencing purchase intention and choice behavior have become evident. These are motivating and impeding factors which are positively and negatively influences the purchase decisions respectively. This leads to phase four and phase five of the study.

Phase four focuses on empirical study 1, wherein the influence of motivating factors on purchase intention and choice behavior has been empirically tested. Phase five describes empirical study 2, wherein the influence of impeding factors on purchase intention and choice behavior has been empirically tested. Lastly, phase six synthesizes the findings of the studies and draws the final conclusions and implication of the study. Some of the key findings of the current study are: First, the meanings consumers ascribed around organic food was found to be varied and they range from negative attribute (free from chemical) of conventional food to more positive attribute (pure, environment-friendly) of organic food. Second, buying from organic farmers markets founds to provide the sense of community to community-based buyers. Third, it showcases the essential factors (motivating and impeding) influencing purchase intention and choice behavior. Among the studied motives, social, emotional, and epistemic values have a significant association with intentions. Conditional and epistemic values have a significant association with choice behaviour. Next, among the studied barriers, value barriers came out as the most significant barrier negatively influencing purchase intention. Lastly, environmental concern has significant moderation effect on certain associations. The findings of the study provide insight into public policymakers, marketers, suppliers, and consumer associations by enhancing their current understanding of buying behavior of the growing organic food community.

Keywords: Consumption Communities; New Consumption Communities; Organic Food Community; Purchase Intention; Choice Behavior; Motives; Barriers

सार

उपभोग और समुदाय आपस में जुड़े हुए हैं। समुदाय के सदस्यों के बीच एक जोड़ने वाले सूत्र के रूप में उपभोग की भूमिका को साहित्य में व्यापक रूप से मान्यता दी गई है। इसने पारंपरिक समुदायों सहित उपभोग समुदायों के आसपास कई अवधारणाओं का विकास किया, उपभोग का एक उपसंस्कृति, ब्रांड समुदाय, उपभोक्ता जनजातियां और हाल ही में, नए उपभोग समुदायों की अवधारणा को पेश किया गया है। ये नए उपभोग वाले समुदाय बढ़ते उपभोक्तावाद जैसे नैतिक, हरे या स्थायी उपभोक्तावाद के कारण उभरे। ये उपभोक्तावाद आंदोलन बाजार में उपभोक्ता की सक्रिय और आकर्षक भूमिका को प्रदर्शित करते हैं, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप उपभोक्ताओं के जागरूक और मांग वाले समूह का जन्म हुआ, जो भौगोलिक दृष्टि से नहीं बल्कि एक विचार, ब्रांड या उपभोग गतिविधि के माध्यम से जुड़ा हो सकता है। इन नए उपभोग समुदायों का दायरा व्यापक रूप से नैतिक समुदायों से लेकर अधिक विशिष्ट समुदायों जैसे मुद्दों की एक विस्तृत श्रृंखला को शामिल करता है जैसे कि जैविक भोजन एक विशिष्ट मुद्दे को उजागर करता है।

नए उपभोग समुदायों के आधार पर, जैविक खाद्य समुदाय को वर्तमान अध्ययन के संदर्भ के रूप में चुना गया है। जैविक खाद्य की बढ़ती मांग के कारण इसे और समर्थन मिला है। इस तर्क को ताजा और साथ ही प्रसंस्कृत खाद्य उत्पादों, बढ़ते स्वास्थ्य और पर्यावरण की चिंताओं, खाद्य उत्पादन पर बढ़ते खर्च और खाद्य गुणवत्ता के मुद्दों में कीटनाशकों और रसायनों के बढ़ते सबूतों के लिए जिम्मेदार ठहराया जाता है। इस समुदाय के उपभोक्ता उत्पाद की जैविक गुणवत्ता के संबंध में अत्यधिक प्रेरित, सूचित और मांग करते हैं। नतीजतन, जैविक खेती और जैविक खाद्य उत्पाद की खपत के अभ्यास ने इस बढ़ते समुदाय की जरूरतों और मांग को पूरा करने के लिए ध्यान आकर्षित किया है। यह इस विषय में बढ़े हुए अकादमिक योगदान से स्पष्ट है। फिर भी, हालांकि शोधकर्ताओं ने जैविक खाद्य समुदाय की समझ के बारे में कई योगदान दिए हैं और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण रूप से उपभोक्ता परिप्रेक्ष्य अभी भी कुछ अंतराल हैं जिन्हें संबोधित करने की आवश्यकता है।

खपत समुदायों सहित तीन मुख्य क्षेत्रों पर साहित्य की व्यापक समीक्षा, अध्ययन के संदर्भ (भारत में जैविक खाद्य समुदाय) और जैविक खाद्य संदर्भ में खरीद निर्णय लेने को प्रभावित करने वाले कारकों पर साहित्य की व्यवस्थित समीक्षा, दूसरों के बीच में, तीन मुख्य शोध गैप: 1) भारतीय संदर्भ में जैविक भोजन के आसपास नई खपत समुदायों पर अध्ययन की कमी है, 2) व्यापक रूपरेखा की कमी है जो उभरते नए उपभोग समुदायों के संदर्भ में खरीद के इरादे और पसंद के व्यवहार को प्रभावित करने वाले कारकों की व्याख्या करती है, 3) कई व्यक्तिगत जैविक खाद्य खपत व्यवहार पर केंद्रित है। हालांकि, सांप्रदायिक संदर्भ (समुदाय-आधारित जैविक खाद्य खरीदारों) में इस तरह के व्यवहार पर अध्ययन की कमी है। इसलिए, वर्तमान अध्ययन का उद्देश्य पहचान किए गए प्रमुख अनुसंधान अंतराल को कवर करने वाले ज्ञान के शरीर में योगदान करना है। इस प्रकार, इस शोध का उद्देश्य भारत में समुदाय आधारित जैविक खाद्य खरीदारों के संदर्भ में खरीद के इरादे और पसंद के व्यवहार का अध्ययन करना है। शोध अध्ययन छह चरणों में आयोजित किया गया है। चरण एक में साहित्य की समीक्षा करने के बाद, चरण दो में अनुसंधान अंतराल की पहचान करना, अनुसंधान उद्देश्यों को परिभाषित करना और एक वैचारिक ढांचे का प्रस्ताव शामिल है। इस शोध अध्ययन ने उपभोक्ता मूल्यों और पसंद के व्यवहार को प्रभावित करने वाले कारकों को समझने के लिए एक एकीकृत रूपरेखा तैयार करने के लिए उपभोग मूल्यों और नवाचार प्रतिरोध सिद्धांत के सिद्धांत को चुना। जैसा कि चर्चा की गई है, इस अध्ययन ने समुदाय-आधारित जैविक खाद्य खरीदारों की खरीद के इरादे और पसंद के व्यवहार को प्रभावित करने वाले कारकों की जांच की, जिसमें बहु-विधि अनुसंधान दृष्टिकोण से लेकर सर्वेक्षण पद्धति तक शामिल हैं, इस प्रकार वर्तमान अध्ययन के लिए पद्धतिगत कठोरता को लाया गया।

चरण तीन घटना प्रधान के आधार पर खोजपूर्ण है। इसका उद्देश्य समुदाय आधारित जैविक खाद्य खरीदारों के जीवित अनुभवों के माध्यम से चयनित समुदाय में खपत की घटना को समझना है। यह गुणात्मक अध्ययन अध्ययन के मात्रात्मक चरण के लिए इनपुट भी प्रदान करता है। साहित्य और गुणात्मक अध्ययन की एक व्यवस्थित समीक्षा के माध्यम से, खरीद के इरादे और पसंद के व्यवहार को

प्रभावित करने वाले दो प्रकार के कारक स्पष्ट हो गए हैं। ये प्रेरक और थोपने वाले कारक हैं जो क्रमशः खरीद निर्णयों को सकारात्मक और नकारात्मक रूप से प्रभावित करते हैं। यह अध्ययन के चरण चार और चरण पांच की ओर जाता है।

चरण चार अनुभवजन्य अध्ययन 1 पर केंद्रित है, जिसमें खरीद के इरादे और चयन व्यवहार पर प्रेरक कारकों के प्रभाव का अनुभवजन्य परीक्षण किया गया है। चरण पांच अनुभवजन्य अध्ययन 2 का वर्णन करता है, जिसमें खरीद के इरादे और पसंद के व्यवहार पर दोषपूर्ण कारकों के प्रभाव का अनुभवजन्य परीक्षण किया गया है। अंत में, चरण छह अध्ययनों के निष्कर्षों का संश्लेषण करता है और अध्ययन के अंतिम निष्कर्ष और निहितार्थ को आकर्षित करता है। वर्तमान अध्ययन के कुछ मुख्य निष्कर्ष इस प्रकार हैं: सबसे पहले, जैविक खाद्य पदार्थों के आस-पास के उपभोक्ताओं को अलग-अलग पाया गया और वे पारंपरिक भोजन के नकारात्मक गुण (रसायन से मुक्त) से लेकर अधिक सकारात्मक गुण (शुद्ध, पर्यावरण के अनुकूल) तक थे। जैविक भोजन की। दूसरा, जैविक किसान बाजारों से खरीद समुदाय आधारित खरीदारों के लिए समुदाय की भावना प्रदान करने के लिए। तीसरा, यह खरीद के इरादे और पसंद के व्यवहार को प्रभावित करने वाले आवश्यक कारकों (प्रेरित करने और लगाने) को प्रदर्शित करता है। अध्ययन किए गए उद्देश्यों में, सामाजिक, भावनात्मक और महामारी संबंधी मूल्यों के इरादों के साथ एक महत्वपूर्ण संबंध है। सशर्त और महामारी संबंधी मूल्यों का चुनाव व्यवहार के साथ एक महत्वपूर्ण संबंध है। इसके बाद, अध्ययन किए गए अवरोधों के बीच, मूल्य अवरोध सबसे महत्वपूर्ण बाधा के रूप में सामने आए, जो खरीद के इरादे को नकारात्मक रूप से प्रभावित करते हैं। अंत में, पर्यावरण संबंधी चिंताओं का कुछ संघों पर महत्वपूर्ण मॉडरेशन प्रभाव है। अध्ययन के निष्कर्ष सार्वजनिक नीति निर्माताओं, विपणक, आपूर्तिकर्ता, और उपभोक्ता संघों में अंतर्दृष्टि प्रदान करते हैं ताकि बढ़ते जैविक खाद्य समुदाय के व्यवहार को खरीदने की उनकी वर्तमान समझ को बढ़ाया जा सके।

कीवर्ड: उपभोग समुदाय; नई खपत समुदाय; जैविक खाद्य समुदाय; खरीद इरादा; पसंद व्यवहार; इरादों; बाधाओं

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