

# Gender Differences and Perceived Quality Influence on Organic Food Consumption in Indonesia

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**Abstract.** This study aimed to investigate consumer behavior concerning organic food consumption in Indonesia in the context of sustainable development goals (SDGs). Using a questionnaire survey, we collected data from 296 respondents and employed descriptive research alongside Spearman Rank Correlation analysis for assessment. The results revealed that female consumers exhibited a stronger intention to consume organic food consistently compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, Indonesian organic food consumers hold a favorable perception of the quality of organic products, especially emphasizing the perceived health benefits. A moderate correlation was identified between the perceived quality of organic food and ongoing buying interest. These findings underscore the importance of understanding consumer demographics and perception in promoting sustainable consumption patterns in developing nations.

**Keywords:** Organic Food Consumption, Consumer Behavior, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Gender Differences, Perceived Quality

## 1 Introduction

Sustainable development has become a global agenda in the last three decades, in which the discourse on sustainable consumption behavior is the root of changes in dealing with the effects of environmental degradation. Through the number 12 sustainable development goals (SDG) (ensuring sustainable production and consumption patterns), purchasing decisions are the main pillars in the continuation of a sustainable agricultural production system. Previous literature has shown that the growing awareness of the need to protect the environment has been implemented in changes in consumer behavior [1]. Furthermore, today's food shoppers are becoming more selective. The emergence of negative impacts from traditional farming systems has reduced consumer confidence in the quality of food produced.

Information asymmetry creates an unequal relationship, to wit consumers do not have as much information as sellers. In this situation, even though the seller provides a better alternative to the food product, the consumer does not really know the benefits and

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perceived value. Therefore, certification claims such as on organic food and information regarding the attributes attached to the product need to be a major concern. In this case, organic food is often associated as a product of sustainable farming systems. Consumer concern about food quality, environmental crisis, food health and safety issues has become a strong motivator for consumers to switch to organic food. The organic farming system is considered a better system than conventional farming because it is more natural and minimizes the use of synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides. Researcher [2] revealed that 80% of the literature identified the main motivators of organic food consumption as offering health benefits and helping the environment.

Responsibility for sustainable consumption does not only focus on developed countries (such as countries in America, Europe and Australia), but also all elements of society, including those in developing countries. Even though the market for organic food in developing countries lags far behind consumption in western countries, the growth in demand for organic food cannot be ignored. Regional differences, demographic, political, economic, and social characteristics may lead to the need for different strategies for marketing organic food. On the other hand, the literature regarding organic food consumers in developing countries still needs to be explored. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the literature regarding the characteristics of organic food consumers in developing countries, especially Indonesian consumers.

In the consumer behavior literature, the concept of purchase intention is used as the main predictive indicator of behavior [3]. This research aims to explore consumer intentions to continue consuming organic food which leads to sustainability aspects. Refer to the researcher [4], perceptions of quality are referred to as antecedents of satisfaction intentions and behavior and have the potential to lead to purchase decisions. Although some literature has confirmed the effect of perceived quality on organic consumer behavior, research gaps regarding the role of “perceived quality” still need to be addressed. Furthermore, perceived quality refers not only to the subjective perception of consumers but also involves the inherent quality of organic food. Therefore, the relationship between consumer intentions and perceptions of the quality of organic food is involved in this study.

## **2 Methods**

The study was conducted using a quantitative research design and survey methods for consumers who met two categories of requirements, namely at least 17 years of age and had consumed organic food such as rice, vegetables, fruit and animal protein (e.g. chicken, beef, eggs). The research was managed through an online survey platform to obtain responses from 300 respondents. The questionnaire is divided into two parts, which consist of: (1) the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents; and (2) items to measure the intention to continue consuming organic food and perceived quality. The intention to continue consuming organic food and the consumer's perceived quality were collected using a 5-point Likert scale.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to answer the objectives of this study. The descriptive method in this study is used to identify the socio-economic conditions of consumers and to analyze the behavior of organic food consumers in Indonesia. Categorization of consumer intentions and perceived quality of consumers is carried out based on the Likert score obtained. Furthermore, the association between consumer perceived quality and intention was analyzed using Spearman Rank analysis.



**Fig.1.** Theoretical Frame Work

### 3 Results and discussion

#### 3.1 The sample characteristics

**Table 1.** Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

Characteristics	Quantity	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	83	
Female	213	
<b>Education</b>		
High school	34	
Graduate	195	
Postgraduate	65	
Any other	2	
<b>Occupation status</b>		
Employed	159	
Unemployed	7	
Retired	2	
Housewife	33	
Student	95	
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
High (Y>3.500.000)	138	
Middle High (Y=Rp2.500.000 – Rp3.500.000)	42	
Middle Low (Rp1.500.000 – Rp2.500.000)	62	
Low (Y<1.500.000)	54	
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	176	
Married	118	

The sample consisted of 296 respondents and consisted of 213 women and 83 men (Table 1). Based on the educational background, 65.87% of the respondents had a higher education background (the highest was a bachelor's degree). Educational background is one of the aspects that influence consumer intentions and attitudes towards organic food ingredients. The higher the education, the easier it is to receive information and innovation from the environment so that acceptance of organic food products tends to be more easily accepted by respondents with a high educational background; 53.71% of respondents stated that they had a job. Most of the respondents' income is at a high-income level, which is more than IDR 3,500,000 per month. This income category is included in the high-income category which is in accordance with the results of research conducted by [5] which states that

higher income will also increase demand for better environmental quality improvement, including in this case, by consuming organic food. Because of with a higher income, it will increase the opportunity to be willing to pay a higher price for services to produce organic products with the majority of them being married, namely 59.45%.

### 3.2 Consumer Intention to Continue Consuming Organic Food

The test results using the independent sample test as shown in the Table 2 show that there are differences in the mean and standard deviation values for each question item for male and female respondents. The mean value of organic product consumers who intend to buy organic products again for male respondents has a lower value (mean = 4.3614, sd = 0.53141) compared to the value of female respondents (mean = 4.4131, sd = 0.58133) shows that female respondents have a greater intention to buy more than male respondents. This is in line with the results of a study [6] which explains that in terms of the relationship between attitude and intention to buy organic products, female samples have a higher relationship than male.

Respondents had the intention to consume products that were organically processed again. In fact, the value generated by male respondents (mean = 4.3976, sd = .53964) was higher than the value of female respondents (mean = 4.3944, sd = .59429 ). Respondents for organic products chose organic food products because the best choice for male respondents had a higher value (mean = 4.3253, sd = .60704) compared to the value of female respondents (mean = 4.3005, sd = .66860). It can be concluded that male respondents have a higher awareness in choosing to consume organic food, the product is one of the best product choices.

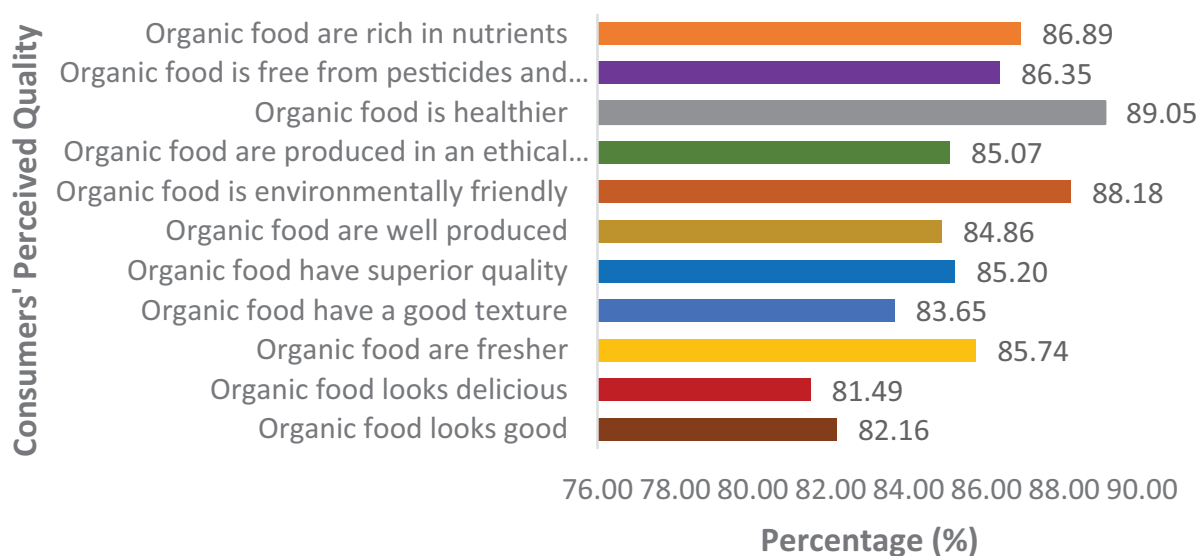
**Table 2.** Consumer Intention to Continue Consuming Organic Food

Constructs/Item	Male		Female	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
<b>I intend to buy organic groceries again</b>				
<b>I intend to eat organically processed food again</b>				
<b>I want to buy organic groceries again because this is the best option</b>				
<b>I want to eat organic food again, to wit products that are healthy and nutritious</b>				
<b>I want to consume organic food again for the welfare of farmers</b>				

Respondents want to consume more organic food, namely because these products are healthy and nutritious for male respondents to have a lower value (mean = 4.3614, sd = .55388) compared to female respondents (mean = 4.3991, sd = .57083) indicating. The intention of female consumers is higher to consume organic products again due to the desire to consume healthy and nutritious products compared to non-organic products. When connected with the results of testing the attitude of respondents towards organic products, it can be seen that consumers choose organic products the most because organic products are healthier than non-organic products. And most of the respondents collected in this study were female respondents (71.95%).

Consumer motives to consume more organic food because it supports the welfare of farmers for male consumers has a lower value (mean = 4.4217, sd = .52080) compared to the value of male respondents (mean = 4.4319, sd = .57570) this shows that there is a higher social concern for female respondents towards the welfare of organic farmers. So that their motive for consuming organic products is not only to get personal benefits but also to contribute to the benefits of others.

### 3.3 Consumer Perceived Quality of Organic Food



**Fig.2.** Consumer Perceived Quality of Organic Food

Based on Figure 2, it can be seen that the majority of consumers' perceptions of organic products are that organic products are healthier (89.05%). This is in accordance with research conducted by [7] which explains that most consumers think that organic food products are healthy and quality products for consumption. In addition, there are consumer perceptions related to the environment which shows that by consuming organic products they will participate in protecting the environment because organic products are environmentally friendly products (88.18%).

**Table 3.** Correlation Between Consumer's Perceived Quality and Intention to Continue Consumption

Correlations				
			Intention	Percieved Quality
Spearman's rho	Intention	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.553**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	296	296
	Percieved Quality	Correlation Coefficient	.553**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	296	296

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The perceived quality that has the smallest percentage value is from the respondent's opinion that organic food looks delicious. This is in accordance with the results of research

from [8] which showed that respondents still could not taste the difference between organic rice and inorganic rice.

Based on the Table 3, the results of the correlation test show that there is a relationship between the intention to continue consuming organic products and consumers' perceived quality of organic products as shown from the results of the Spearman correlation test where the significance value is  $0.000 < 0.05$  so it can be concluded that there is a correlation between the connected variables. Consumer perceptions of organic products also have a relationship with the intention to continue consuming organic products as indicated by a significance value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . The correlation level between the intention variable and the perception variable is 0.553 which is included in the moderate correlation category. The relationship between perception and intention to continue consuming organic food is in accordance with the results of research on other products as well as research results [9] which shows a positive relationship between consumer's perceived quality and the intention to make a purchase product. This shows that consumers of organic products already have an awareness of the quality of organic food products and they prioritize the quality of organic food products based on durability, reliability and sustainability both in the context of health, the environment or the welfare of organic product farmers.

## 4 Conclusion

The findings show that female consumers have a higher intention to continue consuming organic food compared to male consumers. Other findings were reported that organic consumers in Indonesia have a good perceived quality of organic food, especially the perception of organic food in terms of healthy products. There is a correlation with a moderate level of correlation between consumer perceptions of the quality of organic food and consumer buying interest in these products on an ongoing basis.

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