



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Impact of food- related personality traits and behavioural determinants on buying intent of tourist towards local food of Uttarakhand

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ABSTRACT

There is a greater focus on comprehending the buyer's motivation for choosing different foods. The consumer food-related personality traits are believed to be of great importance in influencing individual buying intention. The study is aimed at researching the tourist buying intention towards local food in the state of Uttarakhand, by applying multiple regression techniques as methodology. The findings facilitate the application of Ajzen's, Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to clarify the behavior patterns of the tourists' intent towards local food. Besides, the results indicate that Attitude, Subjective Norm, and Food-Related Personality Traits of food Neophobia/ Neophilia have a strong impact on the tourist buying intention towards local food. However, the impact of Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) was insignificant after the evaluation of the results. Based on statistical findings and results, a few recommendations have been proposed to the establishments involved in facilitating the expansion plans of the local food sector of Uttarakhand.

Keywords: Local food, perceived behavioral control (PBC), food neophobia, theory of planned behavior

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INTRODUCTION

Local has become progressively relevant in the choice of customers to buy food. The expected advantages of local foods are very close to those of organic foods, particularly flavor, food protection, animal health, and decreased effects on the environment (Jensen et al., 2019). It can be classified in terms of the geographic location of food buyers and processors. Even so, as per the latest Oxford American dictionary, a native resident who loves to eat locally grown food within a radius of 100 miles is considered a locavore (New Oxford American Dictionary, 2008) Whereas it is further said that the person does not intend to find locally produced inside 100 miles, but as per the core specialty of topography where it is grown. So, the range criterion is under an argument if local produce is specified as per the distance or as per the ethnicity of a particular region (Durham et al., 2009). Local food has now been regarded as an essential feature in the choice of tourist locations and a major contributor to the level of contentment, specifically when it comes to international visitors (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen,

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2017). The primary objective of this study was to empirically examine the relationship between buying intention and determinants of Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) along with food-related personality traits towards local food buying intention of tourist visiting the state of Uttarakhand.

RESEARCH ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Various research processes have been conducted to evaluate consumer behavior and understanding of different market segments. The increasing prevalence of customer buying preferences, the ethnicity on the purchase of food products has reached an emerging sociological level, and thus the study of consumer behavior has become a significant technique in almost every psychological study (Qi and Ploeger, 2019). The current study gathers motivation by reviewing studies from the relevant field of research, for instance, a consumer behavioral analysis on organic food offers an analysis of how factors and attitudes affect consumers' buying decisions for organic food products (Singh and Verma, 2017; Rana and Paul 2017). Consumer behavior studies have been successfully employed in health and dietary studies (Liu et al., 2013). As a result, acknowledging consumer behavior becomes an important prerequisite not just for the current research, but also explicitly for consumers to consider their intention to purchase local food and bizarre ingredients.

Therefore among various available theories in consumer behavior segments such as Pilgrim (1957) and Steenkamp (1997), which could be utilized for the existing research, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TBP) holds an upper edge in terms of its universal application in almost all food-related behavior studies as TPB includes behavioral control as an additional determinant of intentions and behavior, making it most cited theory for measuring consumer behavior.

APPLICATION OF THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

The application of TPB in the tourism sector (Ajzen and Driver, 1992) was among the early researchers that came across the concept of studying college students' impression of five distinct recreational activities under the antigenic idea of TPB variables, where it has been observed that attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control had a significant effect on consumer choices when it came to choosing between the different offered leisure pursuits. In the field of socioeconomic behavior, various theories are suggested, the most frequently acknowledged and used of which are the theory of planned behavior and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), and TPB (Armitage and Conner, 2001). With the time-lapse, there have been various studies where TPB has been successfully employed and constructive results have been employed. One of the most successful and formidable early research in the food sector was (Dennison and Shepherd, 1995) in which the analysis centered on adolescent food selections and the theory of expected behavior was adopted to determine the particular dietary habits of adolescents across age groups (10-19). Numerous studies reflect the association of determinants of TPB with the variables influencing the tourist local food consumption such as Attitude (Allport 1935; Aikman et al., 2006; Kumar 2014; Skallerud and Wien, 2019), Subjective Norm (Al-Swidi et al. 2014; Ham et al., 2015; Utami 2017), and Perceived behavior control (Cheung and Chan, 2000; Hsu, 2014b; Ajzen, 1991) from there, comprehensive research on related factors have been performed with certain valuable findings. In the context of the current research food-related personality traits of food Neophobia and food Neophilia have been addressed and their influence on tourist buying behavior towards local food, however there has been sufficient literary work that clearly show influence of personality traits with the determinants of theory of planned behavior theory (Wang et al. 2021). Evaluating the personality traits becomes a necessity to draw out concrete results from one's behavior specially when it is about analysing buying intent towards a product like local food which has a

novelty factor associated with it (Ji et al., 2016a). Hence it becomes very vital to understand these personality traits and their overall influence on determinants of planned behaviour.

FOOD-RELATED PERSONALITY TRAITS (Food Neophobia vs. Food Neophilia)

Nevertheless, the current study used the Theory of Planned Behavior to examine the Local Food Purchasing Intent of Tourists, there still lies a range of variables that could influence consumer food choices behavior. Considering all the significant factors in mind, one of the most vital factors is the food-related personality characteristics of an individual (Eertmans et al., 2005). Correspondingly, the current research explores the personality traits of food Neophobia and food Neophilia as two significant food-related personality traits (FRPT) linked to the perception of novelty food items.

Food Neophobia is a term that has gained significant traction as a tool for recognizing eating disorders and eating disorders. This concerns the extreme fear of new or unknown foods; 'Neophobia' refers specifically to the fear of foreign foods (What Is Food Neophobia? | Newbridge 2020). It is derived from judgmental feeding since the lack of familiarity of the items is the concern of anyone with Neophobia in food. Anybody who is a picky eater also avoids the staple foods that they know a lot about. Previous research has shown that this theory affects people's food preferences and suggests that individuals with certain personality characteristics are less likely to try new foods (Siegrist et al., 2013). It is also very clear from the literature review that local and conventional foods in the area fall within the category of novel foods (Tuorila et al., 2001). Thus among the different personality traits, there are two food-related personality traits of food Neophobia and food-seekers, which have a major effect on food-choice motivation and consumer perception associations (Chen, 2007). Where food Neophobia tends to be more of a personality trait, where people usually claim and maintain a pattern of unwillingness to try novel foods and maintain a low nutritional diet (Capiola and Raudenbush, 2012).

Neophilia on the other hand relates to a person's affection or enthusiasm for new or novel products. Food neophilic proclivity is therefore a food character trait that depicts the level to which a person does not dread novel or exotic ingredients and is eager to taste them. Although the majority of tourists feel the desire to patronize the meals they eat they're not accustomed to their native nations (Ji et al., 2016b) Some researchers have confirmed that food has an effect on neophobia individuals meal activity including preference of food in such a way that consumers with this attribute are far less open to trying new food (Hsu and Scott, 2020).

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

Analyzing aspects of intention was a primary objective for numerous researchers, especially in the field of social sciences. As discussed earlier in this article, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) implemented by Ajzen (1991) describes best the food preference behavior for buyers in a convincing manner. The TPB framework in this research is hence adopted to determine tourist purchasing intentions with local food.

Getting back to behavioral reasons, personality traits perform an influential part in human behavior prediction and interpretation. Thus, preferences or characteristics of a person play a role in the personal development of food choice based on values held by that individual based on the above review of literature the following hypothesis is therefore offered.

Hypothesis 1: Attitude (ATT) influences tourist local food buying intention(BI).

Hypothesis 2: Subjective norms (SN) influence tourist local food buying intention(BI).

Hypothesis 3: Perceived Behavior Control (PBC)influences tourist local food buying intention (BI).

Hypothesis 4:Food-Related Personality Traits (FRPT) influence tourist local food buying intention(BI).

METHODOLOGY

To meet the desired result a self-administered five-point Likert scale questionnaire was developed. The scale was adopted from pre-defined studies (Iwaya et al., 2020; Hsu 2014a). The conceptual framework of the study has attitude, subjective norm PBC, and FRTP as the independent variable and buying intention as a dependent variable. Scales for attitude, subjective norm, PBC, and buying intentions comprised of six questions each as a set measured scale. Whereas the FRTP scale is the adoption of the neophobic scale with ten questions defining personality. The current study forwarded the questionnaire to 400 tourists visiting Uttarakhand from different parts of the country out of which 329 respondents filled and submitted the form.

The current study employs multiple regression methodology for evaluating the relationship between the constructs of TPB and buying intentions of tourists towards local food along with conceptualizing the moderating effect of Food-Related Personality Traits. Multiple regression is aimed at selecting a concept step - by - step, incorporating or removing a determinant purely premised on quantitative relevance (Wang, 2016). A singular regression framework is the outcome of this method. To evaluate the multiple regressions among the variables, SPSS 23 by IBM was used for the analysis.

RESULTS

Multiple regression techniques are used for detecting the relationship statistics between attitude, SN, PBC, and FRTP to accomplish the aim of this research work. The reliability of the questionnaire was appropriate (Cronbach's alpha = 0.941). Table 1.1 summarizes the findings of the main proposed model where the percentage of the variance in the dependent variable is expressed by R². The result shows that 71.5 %(R²) variance in BI is explained by PBC, FRTP, ATT, and SN. With a significance value of (P-value < .001). As the value of Durbin Watson is 1.913 (closed to 2). which means there is no autocorrelation in the residuals.

Table 1.1 Variance analysis of the model

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F
1	.846 ^a	.715	.712	3.76505	.715	209.886	4	334	.000	1.913

a. Predictors: (Constant), PBC, FRTP, ATTITUDE, SN

b. Dependent Variable: BI

Additionally, from the table 1.2 table, we can say that the regression line obtained through the analysis is the best fit (p-value < .001)

Table 1.2 Best fit analysis

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11901.053	4	2975.263	209.886	.000 ^b
	Residual	4734.652	334	14.176		
	Total	16635.705	338			

a. Dependent Variable: BI

b. Predictors: (Constant), PBC, FRTP, ATTITUDE, SN

Table 1.3 Regression analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.603	.812		-.742	.458		
	ATTITUDE	.450	.057	.451	7.904	.000	.262	3.823
	SN	.269	.071	.245	3.805	.000	.206	4.865
	FRTP	.131	.042	.157	3.123	.002	.337	2.968
	PBC	.069	.074	.057	.941	.347	.231	4.329

a. Dependent Variable: BI

Table 1.3 illustrates the regression equation from the coefficient test which is.

$$BI = -.603 + .450 \times ATT + .269 \times SN + .131 \times FRTP$$

As the three β coefficients of attitude, subjective norm, and FRTP are significant (P-value < .05) but the β coefficient of PBC is not significant (P-value = .347 > .05) so we have not put its value in the final regression equation.

The statistical analysis indicates the following results :

- The significant value of the T-test of coefficient of attitude is .000 which is less than .05, hence attitude significantly impacts the buying intention.
- The significant value of the T-test of coefficient of the subjective norm is .000 which is less than .05, hence SN significantly impacts the buying intention.
- The significant value of the T-test of coefficient of FRPT is .002 which is less again than .05, hence FRPT significantly impacts the buying intention.
- The significant value of the T-test of coefficient of PBC is .347 which is more than .05, hence it portrays the insignificance of PBC on buying intention.

As all the values of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) in Collinearity statistics are less than 5 indicating that there is no problem of multi-Collinearity among the independent variables.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The empirical outcomes and analysis of this research are useful for the ongoing expansion of the local food market in the food business arena and to contribute to more investigation to facilitate the global advancement of the food sector. The main limitation and scope for the future study is the exclusion of demographic variables, which could portray some interesting and fruitful results among the gender, age, income, and education groups.

CONCLUSION

The study investigates the relationship between buying intention and determinants of TPB alongside Food-Related Personality Traits towards local food consumption of tourists visiting the state of Uttarakhand. The potential findings of the study reflect the dominating aspect of attitude on buying intention which leads the other determinants by the margin, followed by subjective norm and FRTP. The notable finding after the evaluation of the data was the insignificant impact of PBC on buying intention which is negligible in context to the current findings of this study.

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