

# **Beyond individual choice: how price sensitivity, locavorism, and convenience shape socially responsible food consumption in developing markets**

**Celso Augusto de Matos<sup>1\*</sup>**

[0000-0002-2538-9089] celso.matos@tecnico.ulisboa.pt

**Marcia Dutra de Barcellos<sup>2,3</sup>**

[0000-0002-4311-2921]

**Marlon Dalmoro<sup>3</sup>**

[0000-0002-6211-0905]

<sup>1</sup> Centre for Management Studies (CEGIST), Instituto Superior Técnico (IST), University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal

<sup>2</sup> NOVA Information Management School (NOVA IMS), Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Campus de Campolide, 1070-312 Lisboa, Portugal

<sup>3</sup> Management School, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil

\*Corresponding author

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3 **Beyond individual choice: how price sensitivity, locavorism, and convenience shape socially**  
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5 **responsible food consumption in developing markets**  
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12 **Abstract**

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14 **Purpose** – This study frames sustainable consumption as a dimension of social responsibility  
15 and investigates how economic constraints, infrastructural asymmetries, consumer values  
16 (environmental and egoistic), and the informal market influence both individual choices and  
17 access to sustainable food systems. Focusing on a developing-country context, the study  
18 examines the contextual determinants shaping the intention–behavior relationship in sustainable  
19 food consumption. In doing so, it addresses a research gap by extending insights beyond the  
20 predominance of studies conducted in developed economies.  
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31 **Design/methodology/approach** – Data were collected from 645 consumers of organic food in  
32 southern Brazil using a mixed sampling strategy comprising in-person surveys at an organic fair  
33 and an online questionnaire distributed via social media. To test the conceptual model, data were  
34 analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) with SPSS and  
35 SmartPLS software.  
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44 **Findings** – Environmental values positively affect attitudes, whereas egoistic values negatively  
45 influence them. Attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control significantly predict  
46 intention. Locavorism strengthens, while price sensitivity and convenience orientation weaken  
47 the intention–behavior relationship. These results indicate that sustainable food behavior in  
48 developing economies is shaped not only by personal attitudes but also by structural conditions  
49 limiting equitable participation in sustainable consumption.  
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3 **Practical implications** – Strengthening local food networks through institutional support and  
4 policy interventions can enhance equitable access to sustainable options. Reducing certification  
5 costs, improving short supply chains, and investing in logistical infrastructure are essential  
6 measures to remove systemic barriers and promote inclusive sustainable consumption.  
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13 **Social implications** – This study positions sustainable food practices as a social responsibility  
14 issue, showing how consumer behavior intersects with broader equity concerns. Addressing  
15 affordability and convenience constraints is essential to ensure that sustainable options are  
16 accessible to all socio-economic groups, rather than remaining exclusive privileges.  
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23 **Originality** – By examining the intention–behavior gap in a developing-market context and  
24 situating it within systemic constraints such as affordability, infrastructure, and informal retail  
25 channels, this research contributes to a more inclusive and socially responsible understanding of  
26 sustainable consumption. The findings provide context-specific insights that extend existing  
27 models of consumer behavior and inform policy and managerial strategies in emerging  
28 economies. Future research could extend the egoistic value construct by incorporating food-  
29 specific self-oriented motives, such as health consciousness or status-driven consumption.  
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40 **Keywords:** sustainable food, intention–behavior gap, developing markets, locavorism, price  
41 sensitivity, convenience orientation  
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46 **Paper type** – Research paper  
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## 1. Introduction

Sustainable food consumption—including the intake of organic products and foods sourced directly from farmers who follow socially responsible practices—has attracted increasing attention from scholars and practitioners. This growing focus reflects the recognition that consumer behavior can contribute to environmental protection, social justice, and healthier lifestyles (Konalingam *et al.*, 2024; White *et al.*, 2019). Yet, sustainable food consumption often depends on factors beyond individual preferences, including affordability, accessibility, and institutional conditions within local markets (Park *et al.*, 2023; Zhang *et al.*, 2023).

While the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991) has been widely applied in sustainability-related domains (e.g., Zhang *et al.*, 2025), many studies emphasize the attitude–intention or attitude–behavior link without fully accounting for the influence of consumer values. This gap limits the explanatory power of TPB, as it overlooks motivational factors that precede attitudes. Prior research has attempted to combine value-based frameworks with TPB to address this limitation (Ahn & Shamim, 2023; Dong & Gao, 2024; Jebarajakirthy *et al.*, 2024; Lee *et al.*, 2023), yet such integration remains underexplored, particularly in developing economies.

To address this gap, the present study develops a hybrid Value–Attitude–Behavior–Theory of Planned Behavior (VAB–TPB) framework, in which environmental and egoistic values are modeled as antecedents of attitudes, while the traditional TPB constructs—attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—predict behavioral intention. In addition, contextual moderators (price sensitivity, convenience orientation, and locavorism) are incorporated to examine factors influencing the translation of intentions into behavior. This integration enhances TPB by adding motivational depth through values and testing its

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3 applicability in a developing market context characterized by affordability constraints and  
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6 infrastructural asymmetries.

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8 Much of the existing literature focuses on purchase intention or self-reported behaviors  
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10 without directly assessing the extent to which intentions translate into action (e.g., Dong & Gao,  
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12 2024; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2024; White *et al.*, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2023). This issue is particularly  
13  
14 relevant in food consumption, where favorable intentions often fail to materialize into consistent  
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16 behaviors due to financial, infrastructural, and cultural barriers. Moreover, most studies on  
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18 sustainable consumption have been conducted in developed economies, while research in  
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20 developing markets remains limited. In these contexts, systemic obstacles—such as price  
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22 differentials, weaker distribution channels, and the prevalence of informal markets—often  
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24 restrict consumers' ability to act on their intentions (Annor *et al.*, 2023; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). This  
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26 imbalance in the literature highlights the need to examine how structural conditions interact with  
27  
28 values and intentions to shape socially responsible food consumption. Additionally, any  
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30 discussion of sustainable consumption in developing markets must account for structural  
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32 inequities related to food access, certification systems, and production inputs—key dimensions  
33  
34 of distributive and procedural justice. These concerns align with broader debates in the social  
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36 responsibility literature on fairness and accountability within food systems (Ambikapathi *et al.*,  
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38 2022; Pillai, 2025).  
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44 The present research explicitly considers the context of developing markets, where  
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46 locavorism often reflects both ecological concerns and economic adaptation to fragmented food  
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48 systems; food-related lifestyles are increasingly shaped by urbanization and the demand for  
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50 convenience; and price sensitivity is heightened by lower disposable income and limited  
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52 institutional support for sustainable alternatives (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Hunjra *et al.*, 2024). By  
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3 extending current models of sustainable food consumption to include these structural and socio-  
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5 economic dimensions, this study contributes to a more inclusive understanding of consumer  
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7 behavior. Consistent with the social responsibility literature, it emphasizes issues of equity,  
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9 institutional trust, and access—core components of distributive and procedural justice  
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11 (Ambikapathi *et al.*, 2022; Pillai, 2025).  
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15 Accordingly, this study investigates the intention–behavior gap in sustainable food  
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17 consumption, using organic food as a proxy given its alignment with environmental and ethical  
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19 principles. The proposed conceptual model examines (i) environmental and egoistic values as  
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21 antecedents of attitudes, (ii) attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as  
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23 predictors of intention, and (iii) the moderating roles of locavorism, food-related lifestyle, and  
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25 price sensitivity. The empirical focus is on southern Brazil, a context where structural and socio-  
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27 economic constraints such as affordability, distribution inefficiencies, and informal markets are  
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29 particularly evident. By adopting a hybrid VAB–TPB framework, the study extends existing  
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31 models of consumer behavior to reflect systemic barriers in developing markets and highlights  
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33 sustainable consumption as a matter of social responsibility and equity.  
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## 40 **2. Theoretical Background**

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42 This study draws on a hybrid framework that integrates the Value–Attitude–Behavior  
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44 (VAB) approach (Dong & Gao, 2024) with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991).  
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46 The VAB framework emphasizes the role of core values in shaping attitudes, while TPB  
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48 highlights how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control jointly predict  
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50 behavioral intention and, ultimately, behavior. Building on these complementary perspectives,  
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52 the proposed model examines (1) environmental and egoistic values as antecedents of attitude,  
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3 (2) attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as predictors of sustainable food  
4 purchase intention, and (3) the effect of intention on behavior, moderated by locavorism, food-  
5 related lifestyle, and price sensitivity (Figure 1).  
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10 Previous research has incorporated values into TPB frameworks to enhance the  
11 explanatory capacity of behavioral models in sustainability contexts (Dong & Gao, 2024;  
12 Jebarajakirthy *et al.*, 2024; Lee *et al.*, 2023; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2024). These studies show that  
13 value orientations—such as biospheric and egoistic—inform attitudes that shape pro-  
14 environmental intentions. Building on this approach, the present study extends the integration of  
15 values into TPB by examining environmental and egoistic values as antecedents of attitudes and  
16 testing this mechanism in a developing-market context. This setting allows the assessment of  
17 whether the value–attitude–intention pathway proposed by the hybrid VAB–TPB framework  
18 holds under affordability constraints and infrastructural asymmetries, thereby addressing the  
19 scarcity of empirical studies linking values and TPB in such contexts.  
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35 –Figure 1 about here–  
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## 40 ***2.1 Consumer Values and Food Choices***

41 Values are guiding principles that influence individuals' preferences and choices, often  
42 serving as distal antecedents of attitudes and behavior (Schwartz, 1992). The Value–Attitude–  
43 Behavior (VAB) framework suggests that values shape attitudes, which in turn guide behavior.  
44 Within this framework, two value orientations are particularly relevant to socially responsible  
45 consumption: environmental and egoistic values, which represent opposing motivational  
46 dimensions within Schwartz's (1992) universal value structure.  
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3 Environmental values emphasize ecological preservation, collective welfare, and  
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5 intergenerational responsibility, reflecting a self-transcendent orientation consistent with  
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7 biospheric or altruistic value dimensions (Ahn & Shamim, 2023; De Groot & Steg, 2008;  
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9 Jebarajakirthy *et al.*, 2024; Schwartz, 1992). Their inclusion in this study is grounded in prior  
10  
11 research showing that consumers who prioritize environmental values are more likely to express  
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13 favorable attitudes toward sustainable consumption (Ahn & Shamim, 2023; Jebarajakirthy *et al.*,  
14  
15 2024). Egoistic values, by contrast, reflect self-enhancing motives such as wealth, social power,  
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17 and influence (De Groot & Steg, 2008). Consumers with stronger egoistic values often prioritize  
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19 self-interest and are less likely to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors (Hurst *et al.*,  
20  
21 2013; Jacobs *et al.*, 2018; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Lee *et al.*, 2023).  
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26 The selection of these two value orientations—environmental and egoistic—reflects their  
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28 role as opposing motivational orientations (self-transcendent vs. self-enhancing) within the VAB  
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30 framework, allowing the examination of how conflicting values influence sustainable  
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32 consumption attitudes. Taken together, this theoretical framing positions environmental and  
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34 egoistic values as key antecedents of attitudes within the VAB–TPB hybrid model.  
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### 40 ***Environmental Values***

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42 Environmental values reflect a consumer's belief in environmental preservation—  
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44 specifically, the extent to which individuals support measures to address ecological concerns  
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46 (Ahn & Shamim, 2023; Bazhan *et al.*, 2024; Garg *et al.*, 2024). In developing markets, these  
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48 values are shaped by socio-economic and cultural factors, including resource constraints, market  
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50 heterogeneity, and informal economies. Unlike in developed economies, where environmental  
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52 awareness is often influenced by post-materialist and value-driven motivations (Ahn & Shamim,  
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2023; Jebarajakirthy *et al.*, 2024; Lee *et al.*, 2023), consumers in developing markets tend to emphasize context-specific concerns such as local ecological issues, food safety, and traditional consumption practices shaped by socio-economic and cultural conditions (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Hunjra *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). These preferences are further reinforced by community-based sustainability initiatives and localized food systems (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Hunjra *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023).

Studies indicate that environmental values strongly predict consumers' attitudes toward sustainable food choices (Ahn & Shamim, 2023; Bazhan *et al.*, 2024), as environmentally conscious consumers prefer sustainable food options that align with their values and reduce their ecological footprint. Accordingly, the study proposes:

*H1: Environmental values positively influence consumers' attitudes toward sustainable food choices.*

Although this relationship has been tested in prior research (e.g., Jebarajakirthy *et al.*, 2024), most studies were conducted in developed economies, where structural conditions facilitate sustainable consumption. By examining this relationship in a developing market context, the study provides evidence on whether the value–attitude link holds under conditions of affordability constraints, fragmented distribution channels, and informal markets. Furthermore, H1 is tested within a VAB–TPB hybrid framework, which extends previous work by embedding values into TPB and considering contextual moderators that influence the translation of intentions into behavior.

### *Egoistic Values*

Egoistic values emphasize self-interest within society, including the pursuit of wealth, authority, and influence, or the acquisition of personal resources and status (De Groot & Steg, 2008; Sun *et al.*, 2022). In developing markets, these values are reinforced by economic volatility, aspirations for social mobility, and market heterogeneity arising from structural and institutional constraints (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Hunjra *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). The pursuit of material success often stems from financial insecurity and limited economic stability, reinforcing status-driven consumption and short-term market behaviors (Annor *et al.*, 2023; Furchheim *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, informal economies and weaker regulatory systems tend to prioritize short-term financial gains over sustainability (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023).

In this study, egoistic values are operationalized using the short version of the Material Values Scale (Richins, 2004). Although originally designed to measure materialism, this scale reflects the wealth dimension of egoistic value orientation, as conceptualized by De Groot and Steg (2008), who identify wealth, social power, authority, and influence as its four core facets. We therefore adopt egoistic values as the construct label, situating materialism within this broader theoretical orientation. Previous sustainability studies have employed materialism similarly, using it as a proxy for egoistic values in contrast to altruistic or biospheric values (e.g., Hurst *et al.*, 2023; Kilbourne & Pickett, 2008; Tan *et al.*, 2022).

Studies suggest that a green value orientation often conflicts with materialism, which prioritizes financial success, image-conscious consumption, and social status (Furchheim *et al.*, 2020). Previous research has consistently associated egoistic values with lower engagement in sustainable behaviors, such as reduced adoption of sustainable clothing purchases (Jacobs *et al.*,

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2  
3 2018). Evidence from other consumption domains supports this pattern; for example, Lee *et al.*  
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5 (2023) show that egoistic orientations are negatively associated with the adoption of electric  
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7 vehicles. Although the specific context differs from food, the underlying mechanism is similar,  
8  
9 as both involve consumer choices where long-term environmental or social benefits may be  
10  
11 deprioritized in favor of cost, convenience, or status considerations. This cross-domain evidence  
12  
13 strengthens the expectation that egoistic values, when salient, diminish favorable attitudes  
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15 toward sustainable food choices. Accordingly, the study proposes:

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19 *H2: Egoistic values negatively influence consumers' attitudes toward sustainable food*  
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21 *choices.*

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24 Building on the VAB framework, this study incorporates the Theory of Planned Behavior  
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26 (Ajzen, 1991), positioning values as antecedents of attitudes and combining them with subjective  
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28 norms and perceived behavioral control as predictors of intention.

## 29 30 31 32 33 **2.2 Attitudes, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control**

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35 The relationship between attitudes and intentions is well established in the literature. The  
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37 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) posits that attitudes—an individual's favorable or  
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39 unfavorable evaluation of a behavior—are key predictors of behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991).  
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41 In the context of pro-environmental behaviors, consumer attitudes toward sustainable choices  
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43 strongly predict both purchasing intentions (Bazhan, 2024; Konalingam *et al.*, 2024; Park *et al.*,  
44  
45 2023; Zhang *et al.*, 2025) and actual consumption (Liang, 2014). This relationship is particularly  
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47 relevant in developing economies, where sustainability perceptions, economic conditions, and  
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49 cultural food preferences influence consumer behavior (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023).  
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3 Understanding how attitudes shape purchase intentions in these markets is essential to promoting  
4 sustainable consumption. Accordingly, we propose:

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8 *H3: Attitude towards sustainable food positively influences consumers' intention to*  
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10 *purchase sustainable food choices.*

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12 Subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or avoid certain  
13 behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Individuals may be influenced by anticipated reactions from family,  
14 neighbors, or peers when adopting pro-environmental behaviors such as waste management,  
15 energy and water conservation, or green purchasing (Zaremohzzabieh *et al.*, 2021; Konalingam  
16 *et al.*, 2024). In developing markets, strong communal ties, cultural traditions, and informal  
17 social structures amplify the role of subjective norms in shaping sustainable consumption choices  
18 (Fromell *et al.*, 2021). [Social approval and collective identity often influence purchasing](#)  
19 [behaviors, particularly when sustainability aligns with locally embedded practices and economic](#)  
20 [goals \(Fromell \*et al.\*, 2021; Kumar \*et al.\*, 2023; Hunjra \*et al.\*, 2024\).](#) Therefore, we propose:

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33 *H4: Subjective norms positively influence consumers' intention to purchase sustainable*  
34 *food choices.*

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37 Perceived behavioral control (PBC) refers to an individual's assessment of the ease or  
38 difficulty of performing a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Research identifies PBC as a strong predictor  
39 of pro-environmental behaviors, including plastic reduction (Wang *et al.*, 2024), electric vehicle  
40 adoption (Lee *et al.*, 2023), and green purchasing (Konalingam *et al.*, 2024). In developing  
41 economies, infrastructural constraints, financial limitations, and limited availability of  
42 sustainable products shape individuals' perceived control over their consumption choices  
43 (Hunjra *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). [Informal market structures and inconsistent supply](#)  
44 [chains further restrict access, making PBC particularly relevant for understanding sustainable](#)  
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3 consumption behaviors (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023; Hunjra *et al.*, 2024). Both  
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5 internal factors (knowledge, skills, planning) and external factors (time, resources, social  
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7 support) can facilitate or hinder intended actions (Zaremohzzabieh *et al.*, 2021). In line with the  
8  
9 TPB, PBC is conceptualized as a direct antecedent of purchase intention, reflecting the extent to  
10  
11 which consumers feel capable of purchasing organic products given available resources and  
12  
13 opportunities (Ajzen, 1991; Paul *et al.*, 2016). Hence, we propose:

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17 *H5: Perceived behavioral control positively influences consumers' intention to purchase*  
18  
19 *sustainable food choices.*

### 20 21 22 23 **2.3 Intention - Behavior Relationship**

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25  
26 The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) posits that behavioral intentions  
27  
28 arise from attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, which collectively  
29  
30 determine commitment to action (Lee *et al.*, 2023; Konalingam *et al.*, 2024; Zaremohzzabieh *et*  
31  
32 *al.*, 2021). Nevertheless, the literature recognizes that intentions do not always translate into  
33  
34 actual behavior—a phenomenon referred to as the “intention–behavior gap” (Dong & Gao, 2024;  
35  
36 Konalingam *et al.*, 2024; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2024). Research on pro-environmental behaviors  
37  
38 indicates that such intentions—including those related to organic food purchasing and waste  
39  
40 recycling—often predict actual behavior (Jebarajakirthy *et al.*, 2024; Zhang *et al.*, 2023).  
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42 Understanding this link is crucial to advancing sustainable food consumption. Accordingly, we  
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44 propose:  
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49 *H6: Consumers' intention to purchase sustainable food choices positively influence their*  
50  
51 *purchase behavior.*

## 2.4 Moderators

The decision to focus on locavorism, convenience orientation, and price sensitivity as moderators reflects their key role in shaping sustainable food choices in developing economies (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Konalingam *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). While other moderators, such as health consciousness, trust in certification, and environmental knowledge, have been examined in prior studies (e.g., Garg *et al.*, 2024; Rahnama & Popkowski, 2022; Singh & Verma, 2017), this study emphasizes variables that capture systemic and contextual barriers to sustainable consumption.

Locavorism connects consumers with shorter supply chains and strengthens trust in local production, which is particularly relevant in contexts characterized by fragmented food distribution systems (Odou *et al.*, 2023; Reich *et al.*, 2018). Convenience orientation reflects urbanization trends and time constraints, which often limit consumers' ability to adopt time-intensive sustainable practices (Alvi *et al.*, 2024; Rahnama & Popkowski, 2022). Price sensitivity, in turn, represents affordability limitations and distributive justice concerns in markets where sustainable foods command significant price premiums (Balcioglu *et al.*, 2024; Bhutto *et al.*, 2020).

By prioritizing these constructs, the study highlights moderators that reflect the structural and socio-economic conditions of developing markets, aligning with the paper's broader focus on social responsibility and equity within food systems (Ambikapathi *et al.*, 2022; Pillai, 2025).

### 2.4.1 Locavorism

The expansion of modern food supply chains has intensified information asymmetry, whereas short food supply chains, such as farmers' markets, promote transparency and local trust

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2  
3 through locavorism (Casteran & Plotkina, 2023; Odou *et al.*, 2023; Reich *et al.*, 2018).

4  
5 Locavorism is identified as a determinant of sustainable food consumption, enhancing the  
6  
7 connection between consumers and food origins (Huo *et al.*, 2023; Kumar & Smith, 2018; Odou  
8  
9 *et al.*, 2023). It also serves as a mechanism for community empowerment and the recognition of  
10  
11 local food sovereignty. Consumers who practice locavorism are typically better informed about  
12  
13 production practices, which may facilitate the transition from intention to behavior. Supporting  
14  
15 this, Huo *et al.* (2023) found that a preference for short food supply chains strengthens the  
16  
17 relationship between purchase intention and organic food consumption.  
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20  
21 The role of locavorism differs across economic and structural contexts (Zhang *et al.*,  
22  
23 2020). In developed markets, it reflects sustainability concerns, whereas in developing markets,  
24  
25 it often stems from economic constraints and limited retail access (Hunjra *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et*  
26  
27 *al.*, 2023). Informal markets and inadequate infrastructure hinder sustainable food distribution;  
28  
29 however, locavorism may still enhance the intention–behavior relationship by reinforcing trust in  
30  
31 local sources (Nikraftar *et al.*, 2024). Hence, we propose:  
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35 *H7a: Locavorism will strengthen the intention–behavior link; that is, consumers with*  
36  
37 *higher (lower) levels of locavorism will exhibit a stronger (weaker) influence of purchase*  
38  
39 *intention on purchase behavior.*  
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#### 44 **2.4.2 Food-related Lifestyle (FRL): convenience orientation**

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47 Consumer lifestyle refers to the activities, attitudes, values, and preferences that shape  
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49 individual or group behavior (Habib *et al.*, 2023; Tang *et al.*, 2020). Food-related lifestyle (FRL)  
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51 specifically concerns how food choices reflect underlying values, with perceived value linked to  
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53 personally relevant outcomes (Wycherley *et al.*, 2008). Within this framework, Grunert *et al.*  
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3 (1997) introduced convenience orientation, defined as a preference for minimizing the time and  
4  
5 effort required to acquire, prepare, and consume food.  
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8 Empirical studies confirm that convenience orientation constitutes a distinct segment  
9  
10 within FRL. For instance, Wycherley *et al.* (2008) identified consumers who prioritized  
11  
12 convenience when purchasing specialty foods in the UK. Subsequent research has shown that,  
13  
14 alongside moral and environmental concerns, convenience orientation strongly influences  
15  
16 sustainable food choices (Alvi *et al.*, 2024; Rahnama & Popkowski, 2022). This orientation  
17  
18 involves seeking products that reduce preparation time and simplify daily routines (Alvi *et al.*,  
19  
20 2024).  
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24 The salience of convenience orientation is particularly evident in developing economies,  
25  
26 where structural and socio-economic factors magnify its impact. Rapid urbanization has  
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28 accelerated the shift toward processed and ready-to-eat meals, reflecting a broader reliance on  
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30 convenience-driven consumption (Hunjra *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). Cross-national  
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32 studies provide similar evidence: Iranian consumers often prioritize availability and ease of  
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34 preparation when selecting sustainable foods (Rahnama & Popkowski, 2022), while limited  
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36 cooking habits further reinforce these preferences (Contini *et al.*, 2020).  
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39  
40 Convenience orientation in these contexts is not merely a matter of lifestyle preference  
41  
42 but frequently arises from structural constraints. Time poverty and informal labor conditions  
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44 restrict opportunities to adopt time-intensive practices, creating procedural barriers to sustainable  
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46 consumption (Contini *et al.*, 2020; Hunjra *et al.*, 2024). These pressures increase dependence on  
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48 convenience foods, which, in turn, reduces access to sustainable alternatives (Hunjra *et al.*, 2024;  
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50 Kumar *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, we propose:  
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3 *H7b: Convenience orientation will moderate the intention–behavior relationship, such that*  
4 *consumers exhibiting higher (lower) convenience orientation will display a weaker (stronger)*  
5 *influence of purchase intention on purchase behavior (attenuation effect).*  
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10 Although the FRL model encompasses multiple dimensions, this study focuses on  
11 convenience orientation because it most directly reflects the systemic and socio-economic  
12 realities of developing markets. Urbanization, time poverty, and informal labor patterns make  
13 convenience orientation a decisive factor in determining whether pro-environmental intentions  
14 translate into behavior, whereas other FRL dimensions (e.g., involvement or innovation) are less  
15 directly linked to these contextual barriers. Thus, convenience orientation represents one  
16 dimension of the broader food-related lifestyle (FRL) framework. It captures the extent to which  
17 consumers prioritize time and effort savings in their food purchasing and consumption practices.  
18 While rooted in the FRL framework, we consistently use the term ‘convenience orientation’ to  
19 denote this specific dimension and to avoid confusion with the broader construct.  
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### 35 **2.4.3 Price Sensitivity**

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37 In pro-environmental behavior research, economic factors often constrain the adoption of  
38 green products (Bhutto *et al.*, 2020; Zhang *et al.*, 2025). High price sensitivity indicates that even  
39 small cost variations can significantly influence consumer decisions (Sun *et al.*, 2022). Balcioglu  
40 *et al.* (2024) identified “Value-Focused Pragmatists” in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and  
41 Turkey—consumers who are highly cost-conscious yet open to electric or hybrid vehicles when  
42 long-term savings are evident.  
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51 In developing economies, price sensitivity plays a greater role due to income disparities  
52 and economic vulnerability (Annor *et al.*, 2023; Sun *et al.*, 2022). In contrast to developed  
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3 markets, where sustainable goods may justify a price premium, affordability often takes  
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5 precedence over environmental concerns (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). Market  
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7 inefficiencies—including fragmented supply chains, limited economies of scale, and high  
8  
9 certification costs—further increase the prices of sustainable food (Hunjra *et al.*, 2024). Thus,  
10  
11 heightened price sensitivity may reflect not only unwillingness to pay but also structural  
12  
13 exclusion from premium-priced markets, raising concerns about distributive justice. Similarly,  
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15 reliance on convenience often stems from labor demands and time poverty, indicating procedural  
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17 barriers to sustainable participation.  
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21 Wang *et al.* (2020) found that price sensitivity weakens the relationship between  
22  
23 perceived food quality and organic purchase intention. Xing *et al.* (2022) reported that it also  
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25 impedes behavioral conversion. Consequently, affordability continues to constrain sustainable  
26  
27 consumption (Kumar *et al.*, 2023; Zhang *et al.*, 2025). Therefore, we propose:  
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31 *H7c: Consumers' price sensitivity will moderate the intention–behavior relationship, such*  
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33 *that consumers with higher (lower) price sensitivity will exhibit a weaker (stronger) influence of*  
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35 *purchase intention on purchase behavior (attenuation effect).*  
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### 38 39 40 **3. Methods**

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42 A survey was conducted among 1,053 individuals in southern Brazil, of whom 651 (62%)  
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44 were identified as organic food consumers. To ensure a diverse respondent profile across key  
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46 variables in the proposed model, data were collected from two sources. First, in-person data  
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48 collection was conducted at an organic fair in southern Brazil, where producers sell directly to  
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50 consumers. A total of 398 consumers were randomly selected and completed the questionnaire.  
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52 Second, an online survey was distributed via a questionnaire link randomly shared on LinkedIn  
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3 and Facebook. Among the 429 respondents, 253 (59%) were organic food consumers. Following  
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5 initial screening of the 651 valid cases, six were identified as outliers using the Mahalanobis  
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7 distance criterion ( $D^2/df > 3.0$ ; Hair *et al.*, 2019). Consequently, a final sample of 645 consumers  
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9 was retained for analysis.  
10

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12 The dual data collection strategy was designed to enhance demographic diversity within  
13  
14 the sample. The in-person survey at the organic fair provided access to consumers across  
15  
16 different age groups and household structures, including families and older individuals who  
17  
18 frequently rely on local markets. The online survey, distributed through social media, extended  
19  
20 participation to younger and higher-educated consumers, as well as those from varied income  
21  
22 levels. During data collection, demographic screening questions (age, gender, education, income)  
23  
24 were monitored to ensure representation across these categories. This combined approach  
25  
26 facilitated a heterogeneous sample, which was critical for testing the proposed model across  
27  
28 distinct sociodemographic profiles.  
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33 Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was pre-tested with ten organic food consumers  
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35 to assess item clarity, contextual suitability, and response flow. Minor adjustments were made to  
36  
37 improve wording precision. Following Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1998) procedure, the  
38  
39 original scales were translated from English into Portuguese by three bilingual researchers and  
40  
41 then back-translated independently by another bilingual academic. Discrepancies were resolved  
42  
43 through discussion, ensuring semantic equivalence and cultural appropriateness.  
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47 To assess potential biases from the two sampling methods, a measurement invariance test  
48  
49 was conducted. The results indicated no significant differences between the two subsamples,  
50  
51 supporting data pooling. Specifically, differences in key fit indices between the constrained (C)  
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53 and unconstrained (U) measurement models were non-significant:  $CFI_u = 0.916$  vs.  $CFI_c =$   
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3 0.902;  $GFI_u = 0.879$  vs.  $GFI_c = 0.866$ ;  $NCP_u = 497.6$  vs.  $NCP_c = 584.0$ ;  $\chi^2/df_u = 1.79$  vs.  $\chi^2/df_c =$   
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5 1.90 (Garson, 2015).  
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8 The questionnaire incorporated validated scales from previous studies. Scale items and  
9  
10 their sources are presented in Table I. Before answering the filter question on organic food  
11  
12 consumption, respondents completed items addressing environmental values, egoistic values,  
13  
14 locavorism, and price sensitivity. They also answered two questions:  
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17 a) “What is your participation in food purchases for your home?” (1 = I am primarily  
18  
19 responsible; 6 = I do not have this responsibility and never participate in the decisions). This  
20  
21 item was reverse-coded to measure individual responsibility for household food purchases;  
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24 b) “How often do you prepare meals (lunch or dinner) at home?” (1 = once every fifteen  
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26 days or less; 6 = every day).  
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30 —Table I about here —  
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36 Next, respondents answered a filter question regarding organic food purchases (yes or  
37  
38 no). Those who responded affirmatively proceeded to a set of follow-up questions. After the  
39  
40 filter, organic food consumption (OFC) was measured using four items, detailed in Table I. This  
41  
42 study employed the reported behavior approach, consistent with prior research (Nam, 2020). To  
43  
44 standardize the scale, each item was converted to a z-score (Hair *et al.*, 2019).  
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47 Following the section on reported purchase behavior, participants responded to items  
48  
49 measuring attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, purchase intention, and  
50  
51 food-related lifestyle—specifically, cooking methods (convenience orientation)—using scales  
52  
53 adapted from the literature (see Table I). Finally, respondents provided demographic information  
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3 and answered questions related to contextual variables, including meal preparation frequency  
4 (“How often do you prepare meals [lunch or dinner] at home?”; 1 = once every fifteen days or  
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6 less; 6 = every day) and organic certification preference (“I prefer organic foods that have a seal  
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8 or certification.”; 1 = completely disagree; 7 = completely agree).  
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12 In addition to the main constructs, control variables were incorporated into the model to  
13  
14 account for demographic and contextual influences that may affect sustainable food  
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16 consumption. These included: frequency of cooking at home, preferred purchase channel (e.g.,  
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18 organic fair vs. supermarket), age, marital status, presence of children in the household,  
19  
20 education level, income, gender, and preference for certified organic foods. These variables were  
21  
22 selected based on prior evidence that socio-demographic and contextual factors shape organic  
23  
24 food consumption patterns (e.g., Singh & Verma, 2017; Azzurra *et al.*, 2019). Including them in  
25  
26 the analysis allowed for assessing the proposed relationships while controlling for potential  
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28 confounding effects.  
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33 To minimize potential social desirability bias, several measures were taken during survey  
34  
35 administration, following Podsakoff *et al.* (2024). Respondents were informed that participation  
36  
37 was anonymous and voluntary and that there were no right or wrong answers. The questionnaire  
38  
39 was carefully worded to avoid moralistic framing of sustainable food consumption, maintaining  
40  
41 neutral phrasing throughout. These procedures reduced the likelihood that participants overstated  
42  
43 their engagement with organic food consumption due to perceived social expectations.  
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47 Data were analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS software to evaluate the proposed model  
48  
49 through the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, following  
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51 established guidelines (Hair *et al.*, 2019), as detailed next.  
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3 When testing for moderation, the direct effects of both the predictor and the moderator  
4 were also estimated (Hair *et al.*, 2022). For example, when assessing whether price sensitivity  
5 moderates the relationship between intention and behavior, the regression model was specified  
6 as: Behavior =  $\beta_0 + \beta_1$ Intention +  $\beta_2$ Price Sensitivity +  $\beta_3$ (Intention  $\times$  Price Sensitivity). In this  
7 specification,  $\beta_3$  represents the moderation effect, while  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  capture the main effects. Thus,  
8 moderators appear in the models both as individual predictors and as interaction terms, but they  
9 are not included as general control variables in other paths.  
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#### 22 **4. Results**

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24 Of the participants, 61.6% were women, 46.2% were single, and the predominant age  
25 group was 21–30 years (37.0%), followed by 31–40 years (20.0%). The highest education levels  
26 were undergraduate (26.9%) and graduate (28.0%). Monthly income data showed that 41.3%  
27 earned up to US\$540, and 25.5% up to US\$1,081. Local fairs were the preferred shopping venue  
28 (66.6%), followed by supermarkets (21.5%). Additionally, 69.3% did not have children at home.  
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33 A total of 48.7% began purchasing organic food within the past three years, and 76.8%  
34 bought it at least four times per month. More than half (53.3%) reported frequent purchases of  
35 six or more out of seventeen items, most commonly bananas (70.4%), tomatoes (61.6%), lettuce  
36 (60.5%), carrots (54.7%), eggs (50.7%), broccoli (47.9%), and apples (40.2%). Regarding  
37 household roles, 51% were primary decision-makers, 33% shared responsibility, and 13.6%  
38 participated without full responsibility. Concerning meal preparation, 31% cooked daily, 19.4%  
39 three to four times per week, and 16.6% at least twice per week ( $M = 4.2$ ,  $SD = 1.62$ ).  
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#### 4.1 Measurement properties

The measurement model was evaluated for internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.60 (locavorism, reported behavior) to 0.90 (environmental values). Composite reliability was acceptable, with rho\_a between 0.60–0.91 and rho\_c between 0.77–0.94. All AVE values exceeded 0.50, ranging from 0.54 to 0.84 (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Discriminant validity was confirmed using two methods: (1) all construct correlations were lower than the square root of their AVE, and (2) HTMT values remained below 0.85, with the highest at 0.74 (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Henseler *et al.*, 2015), as presented in Table II.

–Table II about here–

#### 4.2 Structural Model

After confirming the measurement model's validity, the structural model was assessed to test the hypothesized relationships (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Bootstrapping with 5,000 samples was used to estimate confidence intervals. The model showed an acceptable fit (SRMR = 0.071). Collinearity was not a concern, as all VIF values were below 3 (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The R<sup>2</sup> values were: attitudes (12%), intention (48%), and behavior (41%). Key results are presented in Table III.

–Table III about here–

The first hypothesis proposed a positive influence of environmental values on attitudes, which was supported ( $\lambda = 0.31$ ;  $p < 0.004$ ), as shown in Table III. Consumers with stronger

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3 environmental orientations exhibited more favorable attitudes toward organic foods. Conversely,  
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5 egoistic values negatively influenced attitudes ( $\lambda = -0.13$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H2. These  
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7 findings align with Zaremohzzabieh *et al.* (2021) and Rashid and Lone (2024), who identified  
8  
9 environmental awareness, consciousness, and concern as key predictors of consumer attitudes  
10  
11 toward green purchasing. This study extends that discussion by showing that the positive  
12  
13 influence of environmental values (0.31) was stronger than the negative influence of egoistic  
14  
15 values (-0.13).  
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19 The third hypothesis proposed a positive influence of attitudes on the intention to  
20  
21 purchase organic food. The findings supported H3 ( $\lambda = 0.51$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), confirming previous  
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23 studies that identify attitudes as a key predictor of behavioral intentions (e.g., Bazhan, 2024).  
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25 Similarly, subjective norms were a significant predictor of intentions ( $\lambda = 0.16$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ),  
26  
27 supporting H4 and highlighting the influence of peers in shaping intentions toward organic food.  
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29 This result aligns with previous research showing that important referent groups significantly  
30  
31 affect consumers' intentions to adopt sustainable food choices (Konalingam *et al.*, 2024;  
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33 Rahnama and Popkowski, 2022).  
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37 Perceived behavioral control (PBC) was also a significant predictor, supporting H5 ( $\lambda =$   
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39  $0.23$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding identifies PBC as the second most influential antecedent of  
40  
41 intention, following attitudes. These results are consistent with prior studies indicating that  
42  
43 consumers' perceptions of ease or difficulty in making sustainable food choices significantly  
44  
45 affect their attitudes and purchase intentions (Zaremohzzabieh *et al.*, 2021).  
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49 Finally, H6 examined the relationship between purchase intention and purchase behavior.  
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51 The findings confirmed a significant association ( $\lambda = 0.17$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), reinforcing this  
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53 established link. Similarly, a meta-analytic review by Jebarajakirthy *et al.* (2024), based on 41  
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3 studies, reported a significant effect of intention on behavior, with a path coefficient of 0.395 ( $p$   
4 < 0.001).  
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7 Control variables were included in the model, with seven of the nine found to be  
8 significant. Higher organic food consumption was observed among: (i) consumers who cooked at  
9 home more frequently ( $\lambda = 0.08$ ;  $p < 0.011$ ); (ii) those purchasing from organic fairs ( $\lambda = 0.35$ ;  $p$   
10 < 0.001); (iii) older consumers ( $\lambda = 0.35$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ); (iv) single individuals ( $\lambda = 0.15$ ;  $p <$   
11 0.021); (v) those with children at home ( $\lambda = 0.15$ ;  $p < 0.033$ ); (vi) individuals with higher  
12 education levels ( $\lambda = 0.08$ ;  $p < 0.009$ ); and (vii) those preferring certified organic foods ( $\lambda =$   
13 0.06;  $p < 0.024$ ). No significant differences were found with respect to gender or income level.  
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### 26 **4.3 Moderators**

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28 H7a proposed that locavorism acts as a moderating factor in the purchase intention–  
29 purchase behavior relationship. The findings supported this hypothesis, revealing a significant  
30 interaction between locavorism and intention on behavior ( $\lambda = 0.05$ ;  $p < 0.025$ ), as shown in  
31 Table III. The positive coefficient indicates that intention positively influenced behavior, with a  
32 stronger effect among consumers who strongly support locally produced food (Figure 2). These  
33 results reinforce the role of locavorism in sustainable food choices (Huo *et al.*, 2023; Odou *et al.*,  
34 2023). Given that locavore consumers are more attentive to food origins and production,  
35 locavorism is expected to moderate the intention–behavior relationship.  
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3 In contrast, certain factors weaken the intention–behavior relationship in sustainable food  
4 choices. H7b proposed that convenience orientation moderates this link, specifically that  
5 consumers with a stronger convenience orientation exhibit a weaker relationship between  
6 purchase intention and purchase behavior. The findings supported this hypothesis ( $\lambda = 0.10$ ;  $p <$   
7  $0.002$ ). As illustrated in Figure 3, consumers with higher convenience orientation displayed a  
8 reduced influence of intention on behavior. This orientation reflects viewing cooking as a task to  
9 be completed quickly, frequent reliance on ready meals, consumption of processed foods, and  
10 limited meal planning. Prior research confirms that convenience orientation significantly affects  
11 sustainable food choices (Alvi *et al.*, 2024; Rahnama and Popkowski, 2022).  
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26 –Figure 3 about here–  
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31 Similarly, H7c proposed that price sensitivity moderates the purchase intention–purchase  
32 behavior relationship, with higher price sensitivity reducing the impact of intention on behavior.  
33 The findings supported this attenuation effect ( $\lambda = -0.06$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). As shown in Figure 3, the  
34 influence of intention on behavior was stronger among consumers with lower price sensitivity.  
35 These results align with previous studies (Xing *et al.*, 2022; Wang *et al.*, 2020), indicating that  
36 highly price-sensitive consumers may be less likely or less able to translate purchase intention  
37 into actual sustainable food behavior.  
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## 49 **5. Discussion**

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51 This study investigated the intention–behavior gap in sustainable food consumption,  
52 using organic food as an empirical focus due to its alignment with environmental and ethical  
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3 values. Drawing on the Value–Attitude–Behavior (VAB) framework (Dong and Gao, 2024), the  
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5 analysis examined how environmental and egoistic values influence consumer attitudes, and how  
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7 these, in turn, shape intentions and behavior when considered alongside subjective norms and  
8  
9 perceived behavioral control. By explicitly combining the VAB framework with the Theory of  
10  
11 Planned Behavior (TPB), the study advances a hybrid perspective that integrates value-based  
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13 motivations with structural predictors of intention, offering a more integrated explanation of  
14  
15 sustainable food consumption in developing markets. The model also incorporated locavorism,  
16  
17 food-related lifestyle, and price sensitivity as moderating variables to capture factors particularly  
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19 relevant in developing contexts. By situating sustainable food choices within broader socio-  
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21 economic and structural conditions—such as fragmented supply chains, affordability barriers,  
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23 and evolving lifestyle patterns—this research extends existing behavioral models and addresses  
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25 gaps in the literature on sustainable consumption. The findings reveal differentiated effects  
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27 among the studied variables and reinforce the importance of context-sensitive models that  
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29 account for sustainable food consumption in developing economies, as discussed next.  
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### 38 ***5.1 Synthesis of Main Findings***

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40 The findings indicate that consumer values significantly shape attitudes toward  
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42 sustainable food. Environmental values positively influence attitudes, as individuals driven by  
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44 environmental concerns prefer sustainable options to reduce their ecological footprint (Bazhan *et*  
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46 *al.*, 2024). Conversely, egoistic values negatively affect attitudes, suggesting that self-oriented  
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48 motives conflict with sustainable choices. These results align with the hypotheses and existing  
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50 literature (e.g., Lee *et al.*, 2023), highlighting the role of values in sustainable consumption.  
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3 This study reinforces the TPB, confirming that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived  
4 behavioral control influence intentions. Perceived behavioral control was particularly impactful,  
5 emphasizing that consumer confidence in obtaining and using organic foods is crucial for  
6 purchase intentions. This aligns with Lee *et al.* (2023) and Wang *et al.* (2024), who found it can  
7 outweigh attitudes in shaping intentions, especially in constrained contexts. As hypothesized,  
8 intentions were positively linked to reported consumption behavior, further validating TPB's  
9 predictive power in pro-environmental behavior (Zaremohzzabieh *et al.*, 2021).

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12 In addition, the moderating factors highlight the complexity of the intention–behavior  
13 relationship. Locavorism strengthened this link, indicating that consumers prioritizing local  
14 sourcing are more likely to act on their intentions. This finding aligns with research showing that  
15 sustainable consumers prefer locally produced foods for environmental and economic benefits  
16 (Huo *et al.*, 2023; Odou *et al.*, 2023; Reich *et al.*, 2018). Conversely, high price sensitivity and a  
17 convenience-oriented food lifestyle weakened the intention–behavior relationship, highlighting  
18 the role of external barriers in shaping sustainable food choices.

## 37 **5.2 Theoretical Implications**

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40 This study extends previous research applying the VAB framework to sustainable food  
41 consumption (e.g., Nguyen and Nguyen, 2024) and examining the intention–behavior gap in pro-  
42 environmental contexts (Wang *et al.*, 2024; Zulkepli *et al.*, 2024) by including three key  
43 moderators. The positive moderating effect of locavorism highlights the role of supporting local  
44 producers in strengthening the intention–behavior link and fostering long-term loyalty to  
45 sustainable food purchases (Casteran and Plotkina, 2023; Kumar and Smith, 2018). Consumers  
46 who trust short-chain suppliers are more confident in food integrity. By situating these findings  
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3 within the distinct economic, infrastructural, and cultural conditions of developing economies,  
4 this study advances the understanding of how contextual barriers and enablers shape sustainable  
5 food consumption. These results extend prior studies analyzing the intention–behavior link in  
6 pro-environmental research (e.g., Liu *et al.*, 2024; Wang *et al.*, 2024).  
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12 The findings suggest that the VAB framework can be strengthened by incorporating  
13 contingent variables, particularly in pro-environmental studies where locality and resource use  
14 intersect. Locavorism, by aligning personal choices with community and environmental  
15 sustainability, may serve as a key motivator for eco-friendly food behaviors (Huo *et al.*, 2023;  
16 Odou *et al.*, 2023). In developing markets, where local production is both an economic necessity  
17 and a cultural norm, locavorism significantly shapes sustainable consumption by bridging the  
18 gap between intention and behavior. It fosters trust in local supply chains and reduces reliance on  
19 costly imported alternatives. This perspective encourages future research to broaden the scope of  
20 contingent factors in sustainable consumption studies, particularly those examining how drivers  
21 and barriers interact to influence behavior.  
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35 Moreover, the attenuating effects of a convenience-oriented food-related lifestyle  
36 highlight the challenges consumers face in adopting sustainable practices within societies that  
37 prioritize convenience (Furchheim *et al.*, 2020). The findings confirm that a strong preference for  
38 convenience and practicality may conflict with sustainable food choices (Alvi *et al.*, 2024).  
39 Urbanization and time scarcity significantly influence consumption habits in developing markets,  
40 often reinforcing reliance on processed foods and informal vendors, thereby limiting access to  
41 sustainable alternatives (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*, 2023). Understanding how structural  
42 constraints shape convenience-driven choices is essential for developing interventions that  
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3 integrate sustainability within these economic contexts. Future research should explore ways to  
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5 enhance the perceived convenience of sustainable food options.  
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8 The attenuating effects of price sensitivity highlight economic and informational barriers  
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10 to pro-environmental behavior. This study supports prior research (e.g., Annor *et al.*, 2023;  
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12 Balcioglu *et al.*, 2024; Bhutto *et al.*, 2020), showing that price-sensitive consumers often struggle  
13  
14 to act on sustainable intentions despite favorable attitudes. Financial constraints and economic  
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16 vulnerability strongly influence purchasing decisions in developing economies, often making  
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18 price sensitivity more influential than environmental concerns (Ahmed *et al.*, 2024; Kumar *et al.*,  
19  
20 2023). Understanding these trade-offs is essential for designing interventions that improve the  
21  
22 affordability and accessibility of sustainable food choices. Future research should examine how  
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24 external, modifiable factors—such as subsidies for certified organic products or educational  
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26 campaigns on certification benefits—might mitigate these barriers.  
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31 The prioritization of locavorism, convenience orientation, and price sensitivity as  
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33 moderators is supported by the empirical results. These constructs not only revealed significant  
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35 moderating effects but also reflect the constraints and enablers characteristics of developing  
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37 markets. By emphasizing these factors over alternatives such as health consciousness or trust in  
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39 certification—commonly studied in developed contexts—this research draws attention to  
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41 systemic conditions restricting equitable participation in sustainable consumption. The  
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43 confirmation of these moderating effects strengthens the argument that sustainable food behavior  
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45 in developing economies must be understood through constructs that capture affordability,  
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47 accessibility, and lifestyle-driven trade-offs, rather than relying solely on individual-level  
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49 psychological variables.  
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### 5.3 Practical Implications

The findings offer actionable guidance for policymakers, marketers, and certification agencies aiming to promote sustainable food behaviors in emerging markets. First, the analysis showed that price sensitivity weakens the conversion of intention into behavior, indicating that affordability is a central barrier to sustainable food consumption. Addressing this constraint requires measures that reduce structural price disparities. Possible strategies include lowering certification costs for small producers, implementing targeted subsidies for organic products, and designing financial mechanisms (e.g., microcredit or tax incentives) that reduce exclusion from sustainable food markets.

Second, convenience orientation was found to attenuate the intention–behavior relationship. Consumers who prioritize time and effort savings are less likely to act on favorable intentions. To address this challenge, sustainable food must be offered in formats compatible with convenience-driven lifestyles. Examples include pre-washed, pre-cut, or ready-to-cook organic products, as well as improved distribution systems that increase urban availability. These measures directly address the practical barriers revealed by the findings.

Third, the results confirmed that locavorism strengthens the link between intention and behavior. Consumers who value local sourcing are more likely to act on their intentions to purchase sustainable food. Policymakers and marketers can build on this by reinforcing the cultural and economic value of local production. Supporting short supply chains, promoting farmers' markets, and developing communication strategies that highlight the connection between organic food and community well-being may amplify this positive effect.

In parallel with structural interventions, initiatives aimed at strengthening environmental values can complement policy and market-based efforts. Social marketing campaigns

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3 emphasizing collective benefits, community well-being, and intergenerational responsibility may  
4 help internalize pro-environmental values and increase the salience of sustainability in daily food  
5 decisions. Educational programs and communication strategies that highlight the social  
6 responsibility dimension of food choices can further cultivate value alignment, fostering more  
7 enduring behavioral change.  
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12 Taken together, these implications reflect the study's central contribution: structural  
13 conditions—affordability, convenience, and local trust—play a decisive role in shaping  
14 sustainable food behaviors. Policy and managerial interventions that directly address these  
15 moderators can reduce the intention–behavior gap and advance more inclusive forms of  
16 sustainable consumption in developing economies.  
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#### 28 ***5.4 Limitations and Directions for Future Research***

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31 Although this study offers valuable insights, it has limitations that indicate directions for  
32 future research. Its cross-sectional design restricts causal inference. Longitudinal studies could  
33 examine whether intentions toward organic food translate into sustained behaviors over time,  
34 particularly as moderating factors like price sensitivity may fluctuate. The regional focus on  
35 southern Brazil may also limit generalizability; future studies should replicate the model in other  
36 regions to assess variations in locavorism and related values across cultural and economic  
37 contexts. Further research should explore values not assessed here, such as health consciousness  
38 and altruism, which may influence sustainable food attitudes (Garg *et al.*, 2024). In developing  
39 markets, values such as economic pragmatism and resourcefulness may shape choices amid  
40 financial and infrastructural constraints (Hunjra *et al.*, 2024). Additionally, while egoistic values  
41 were operationalized using the materialism dimension of the Material Values Scale (Richins,  
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3 2004), future research could adopt food-specific self-oriented constructs—such as health  
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5 consciousness, hedonic motivation, or status-driven consumption—to capture more nuanced  
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7 motivations behind sustainable food choices. Furthermore, as the online survey component relied  
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9 on self-selection through social media, the sampling strategy was non-probabilistic, which may  
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11 introduce bias and limit representativeness despite efforts to enhance heterogeneity through dual  
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13 data collection sources.  
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17 Another limitation concerns the reliance on self-reported measures of organic food  
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19 consumption, which may be affected by social desirability bias given the positive connotations of  
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21 sustainable behaviors. While anonymity and neutral item wording were used to reduce this  
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23 effect, future studies could employ complementary methods such as combining survey data with  
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25 observational evidence, loyalty card records, or purchase receipts. These approaches would allow  
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27 more objective assessments of behavior and provide additional insights into the intention–  
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29 behavior relationship.  
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33 Finally, future research could investigate multi-level influences, including family norms  
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35 and community interventions. Given that locavorism may arise from necessity rather than ethical  
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37 commitment (Kumar *et al.*, 2023), the role of informal food markets and the effects of pro-  
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39 environmental messaging warrant further examination.  
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## 44 **6. Conclusion**

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47 This study contributes to understanding the intention–behavior gap in sustainable food  
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49 consumption by examining how consumer values, attitudes, and contextual conditions shape  
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51 behavior. Applying the VAB framework with key moderators, the findings reveal persistent  
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53 challenges in translating pro-environmental intentions into action. Locavorism facilitates  
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3 behavioral follow-through, while convenience orientation and price sensitivity inhibit this  
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5 process. Structural conditions—including limited infrastructure, economic instability, and  
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7 informal market dynamics—also influence consumption outcomes in developing economies  
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9 (Konalingam *et al.*, 2024; Pillai, 2025). The results emphasize the need to address both  
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11 individual-level and systemic constraints when examining sustainable food practices. Advancing  
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13 sustainable consumption in these settings requires confronting disparities in food access, market  
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15 inclusion, and institutional structures. These challenges are not solely behavioral but reflect  
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17 broader social responsibilities, calling for structural changes that support fairness, accessibility,  
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19 and accountability across food systems.  
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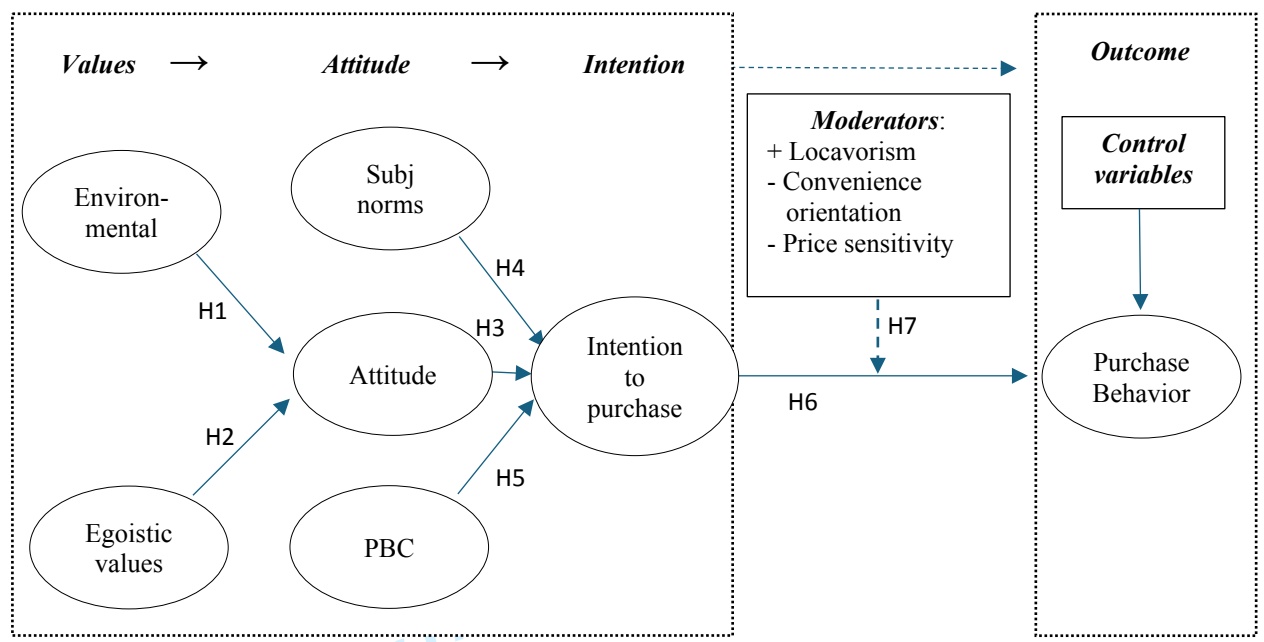
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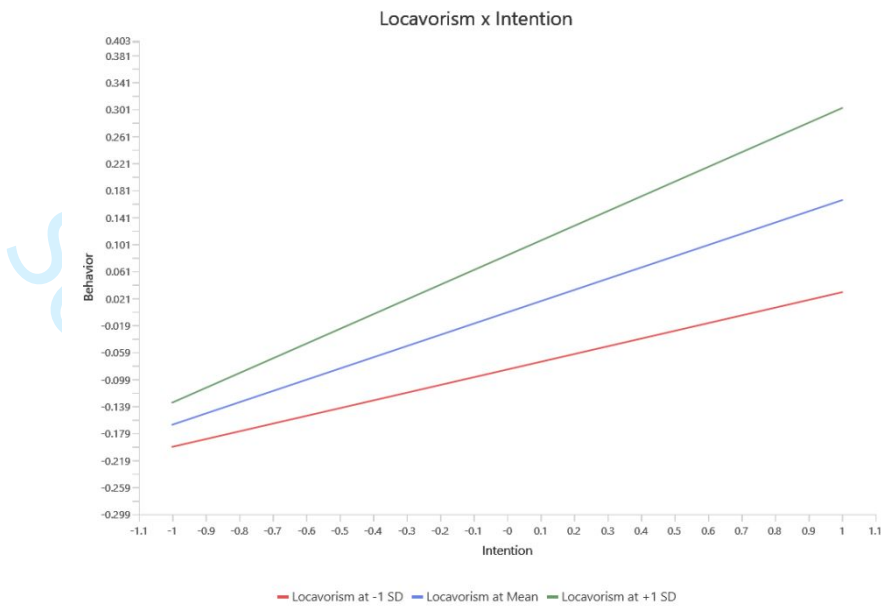
Figure 1. Conceptual Model



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Figure 2. Amplification effect of locavorism in the intention–behavior relationship

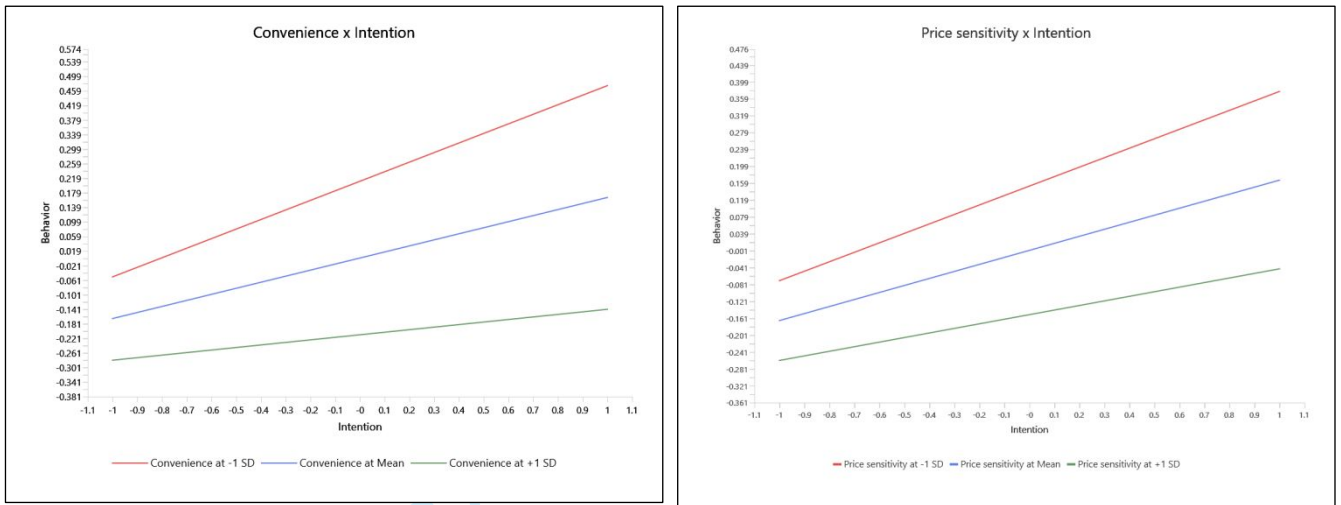


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Figure 3. Attenuation effects of convenience and price sensitivity



Source(s): Authors' own work

Responsibility Journal

Table I. Measurement Properties

<i>Constructs, Items and Sources</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i><math>\lambda</math></i>
<b><i>Environmental values</i></b> ( $\alpha = .90$ ; $\rho_a = .91$ ; $\rho_c = .94$ ; AVE= .84) Chen (2007), Rahnama and Popkowski (2022)			
It is important to me that the food I eat daily has been ...			
a) ...prepared in a way that does not harm the environment.	5.6	1.5	0.93
b) ... produced in a way that has not shaken the balance of nature.	5.8	1.4	0.92
c) ... packaged in an environmentally friendly way.	5.6	1.5	0.89
<b><i>Egoistic values</i></b> ( $\alpha = .82$ ; $\rho_a = .85$ ; $\rho_c = .92$ ; AVE= .84) Richins (2004)			
a) I admire people who have luxury goods (houses, cars, clothes, etc.).	3.2	1.9	0.90
b) I like a lot of luxury in my life.	3.0	1.8	0.94
c) I would be happier if I had more money to buy more things.	4.0	2.0	(a)
<b><i>Attitude</i></b> ( $\alpha = .86$ ; $\rho_a = .86$ ; $\rho_c = .91$ ; AVE= .78) Peštek (2018)			
a) ... buying organic products is a good idea.	6.5	0.9	0.85
b) ... buying organic products is important.	6.6	0.8	0.89
c) ... buying organic products is beneficial.	6.6	0.8	0.90
<b><i>Subjective Norm</i></b> ( $\alpha = .73$ ; $\rho_a = .74$ ; $\rho_c = .85$ ; AVE= .65) Peštek (2018)			
a) My family approves of my decision to buy organic food.	6.0	1.3	0.80
b) My closest friends think I should buy organic food.	5.6	1.6	0.79
c) Generally speaking, the people who are important to me think I should buy organic.	5.5	1.6	0.83
<b><i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i></b> ( $\alpha = .63$ ; $\rho_a = .67$ ; $\rho_c = .84$ ; AVE= .73) Liang (2014)			
a) I can easily find organic foods to buy.	5.2	1.6	0.81
b) I can spend a little more money and buy organic food.	5.1	1.6	(a)
c) I can overcome the difficulties that arise and buy organic food when I want.	5.0	1.5	0.90
<b><i>Intention to purchase</i></b> ( $\alpha = .82$ ; $\rho_a = .82$ ; $\rho_c = .89$ ; AVE= .73) Liang (2014); Singh and Verma (2017)			
What are the chances that you... (1= not at all likely; 7 = very likely)			
a) ... choose an organic food next time you go shopping.	6.1	1.2	0.83
b) ... continue buying organic foods in the future.	6.5	0.9	0.89
c) ... increase the consumption of organic foods in the future.	6.5	0.9	0.85
<b><i>Purchase Behavior</i></b> ( $\alpha = .60$ ; $\rho_a = .60$ ; $\rho_c = .78$ ; AVE= .55) Azzurra <i>et al.</i> (2019)			
a) How many times a month do you usually buy organic food? (open-ended)	4.2	3.4	(a)
b) On average, how much money do you spend monthly on organic food? (open-ended) (observed min= 1; max = 500 US\$)	51.4	56.2	0.79
c) How long have you been thinking about organic food as an option? (years; open-ended)	6.8	8.4	0.72
d) Which of these organic foods do you buy most often? (min=1; max=17 options)	6.7	3.4	0.66
<b><i>Locavorism</i></b> ( $\alpha = .60$ ; $\rho_a = .71$ ; $\rho_c = .77$ ; AVE= .54) Reich <i>et al.</i> (2018)			
a) Food produced locally (e.g. your city) is more nutritious than those that arrive from other regions or outside the country.	5.5	1.6	0.63
b) I do not trust foods that were produced by large companies (e.g. multinationals).	4.8	1.9	0.68
c) I like to support local farmers whenever possible.	6.3	1.2	0.87
<b><i>Convenience orientation</i></b> ( $\alpha = .69$ ; $\rho_a = .82$ ; $\rho_c = .81$ ; AVE= .53), Wycherley <i>et al.</i> (2008)			
a) I like trying new recipes.	5.6	1.6	(a)
b) I see the act of cooking as just another task and, therefore, the quicker I finish it, the better.	3.8	2.0	0.51
c) I use a lot of mixes, for instance baking mixes and powder soups.	2.7	1.3	0.87
d) We use a lot of ready-to-eat food in our household.	2.9	1.8	0.90
e) What we are going to have for dinner is often a last minute decision.	4.5	1.9	0.52
<b><i>Price sensitivity</i></b> ( $\alpha = .69$ ; $\rho_a = .78$ ; $\rho_c = .83$ ; AVE= .61) Ailawadi <i>et al.</i> (2001)			
a) It's important to me to get the best price for the things I buy.	5.7	1.4	0.70
b) Generally, I compare the prices of a few brands before choosing one.	5.7	1.6	0.87
c) I usually check prices even for low-value purchases.	5.0	1.9	0.78

Notes.  $\lambda$  = outer loadings;  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted; (a) Item excluded in the purification process.

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table II. Discriminant Validity

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Attitude	<b>0.88</b>	0.32	0.20	0.36	0.34	0.74	0.49	0.31	0.07	0.50
2. Purchase Behavior	0.23	<b>0.74</b>	0.25	0.51	0.49	0.43	0.51	0.55	0.28	0.31
3. Egoistic values	-0.17	-0.17	<b>0.92</b>	0.15	0.43	0.14	0.23	0.05	0.31	0.13
4. Environmental values	0.32	0.37	-0.14	<b>0.91</b>	0.22	0.51	0.72	0.37	0.19	0.33
5. Convenience orientation	-0.26	-0.34	0.35	-0.20	<b>0.73</b>	0.25	0.30	0.12	0.14	0.20
6. Intention to purchase	0.62	0.29	-0.11	0.44	-0.20	<b>0.86</b>	0.62	0.55	0.11	0.57
7. Locavorism	0.37	0.31	-0.09	0.56	-0.24	0.45	<b>0.74</b>	0.46	0.12	0.58
8. Perc Behavioral Control	0.23	0.33	-0.04	0.28	-0.08	0.40	0.28	<b>0.85</b>	0.06	0.49
9. Price sensitivity	0.05	-0.14	0.22	0.14	0.11	0.08	0.06	0.00	<b>0.78</b>	0.03
10. Subjective norm	0.40	0.20	-0.10	0.27	-0.14	0.44	0.39	0.33	-0.01	<b>0.81</b>

Notes: values in the diagonal are the square root of AVE; values below the diagonal are the correlations and above the diagonal are the HTMT values.

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table III. Main findings of the Structural Model

<i>Relationships</i>	<i>Path</i> <sup>a</sup>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>VIF</i>
H1: Environmental values→ attitude	0.31	0.04	7.35	0.001	1.02
H2: Egoistic values→ attitude	-0.13	0.04	3.66	0.001	1.02
H3: Attitude→ intention to purchase	0.51	0.04	12.12	0.001	1.21
H4: Subjective norm→ intention to purchase	0.16	0.04	3.91	0.001	1.29
H5: PBC→ intention to purchase	0.23	0.04	6.00	0.001	1.14
H6: Intention → purchase behavior	0.17	0.04	4.15	0.001	1.63
<b><i>Moderators</i></b>					
H7a: Locavorism × intention→ behavior	0.05	0.03	1.96	0.025	1.42
H7b: Convenience × intention→ behavior	-0.10	0.03	2.84	0.002	1.07
H7c: Price sensitivity × intention→ behavior	-0.06	0.04	1.62	0.05	1.02
<b><i>Control variables</i></b>					
Convenience→ purchase behavior	-0.21	0.03	6.68	0.001	1.27
Cook → purchase behavior	0.08	0.03	2.31	0.011	1.18
Locavorism → purchase behavior	0.08	0.04	2.25	0.012	1.47
Price sensitivity → purchase behavior	-0.15	0.04	3.97	0.001	1.08
Organic certification → purchase behavior	0.06	0.03	1.98	0.024	1.11
Education → purchase behavior	0.08	0.03	2.35	0.009	1.37
Children at home → purchase behavior	0.15	0.08	1.83	0.033	1.29
Single (dummy) → purchase behavior	0.15	0.08	2.03	0.021	1.49
Age → purchase behavior	0.35	0.05	7.39	0.001	1.54
Female (dummy) → purchase behavior	-0.05	0.06	0.72	0.235	1.09
Income → purchase behavior	0.01	0.04	0.30	0.381	1.73
Fair (dummy) → purchase behavior	0.35	0.07	4.67	0.001	1.38

Notes – (a) path = coefficient for the direct effects; SE = standard-error; PBC = perceived behavioral control; VIF = variance inflation factor.

Source(s): Authors' own work