

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**BARRIERS TO ORGANIC FOOD PURCHASES IN PIETERMARITZBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **Abstract**

Concern about food quality has been increasing. The change from conventional to organic foods has been found to have benefits for the environment and for consumers. Although a market for organic fresh produce has been found to exist in South Africa, there is incomplete understanding on South African organic consumers as research that relates to organic consumption is limited. Most research on organic consumption is conducted in international markets. Despite there being a market for organic produce, consumption levels in South Africa are low. The purpose of this research is therefore to explore organic consumption barriers in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

A review of literature discusses the profile of organic consumers, reasons for organic consumption and barriers to organic consumption found in other research. The study adopted the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Theory of Planned Behaviour and particularly the extended Theory of Planned Behaviour as the theoretical lens. A Conceptual Framework was developed to better unpack barriers to organic purchases. After Ethical Clearance was granted, data was collected using the Interview Guide. The researcher conducted interviews with participants who were aware of organic products but were not regular consumers of organic products. Snowball sampling was used to recruit participants to the study to better understand barriers to organic purchases in South Africa.

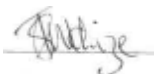
Generally, participants appear to be concerned about the environment, however, their concern for the environment is not leading to organic consumption (they were recruited for their non-consumption of organic products). Furthermore, participants have positive attitudes toward organic products, are not influenced by friends and family but are deterred by issues such as price, availability and labelling of organic products.

The recommendations include initiatives that will assist marketers with communicating organic benefits to consumers thereby explaining the reasons for higher prices and leading to consumer trust.

## Declaration

I Sandile Simphiwe Mkhize declare that

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation/thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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Date: 30 November 2017

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Background**

The chapter introduces the current research. The need for this research is explained in the Background and Motivation section which leads into the articulation of the research problem being addressed in this study. The research question and objectives are presented. The chapter briefly outlines the methodology adopted to achieve the research objectives. The contribution the research hopes to make is explained and lastly an overview of the rest of the dissertation is outlined.

### **1.1 Background and Motivation for the Study**

Concern about food quality such as health qualities of food, quality in agriculture patterns and nutritional value of food have been increasing (Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1067). In many European Union countries there is an increase in alarm about food making issues such as environment and animal welfare, food safety, food quality and health of consumers (Bryła, 2016, p. 737) However, little is known about South African consumers' organic purchases.

The change from conventional to organic foods has benefits of caring for the environment (Chen, 2007, p. 1009) leading to long-term value for people and the environment (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). These benefits include increased soil productiveness, eliminating diseases without harming the environment, not damaging the environment, eradicating pests and ensuring safe quality of water resources while generating healthy food to sell at a good price to green consumers (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 342). The existing research on organic food tends to focus on western countries and much less on emerging countries like South Africa (Engel, 2008, p. 12; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 2). Thus, a need arises to investigate barriers to organic purchases in South Africa.

Studies in consumer behaviour suggest that purchase behaviour does not always result from purchase intentions (Carrington, Neville, & Whitwell, 2010, p. 142; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). Research by Carrington et al. (2010, p. 142) revealed that while there is an increase in the number of consumers who have been captivated and inspired by the principles of green behaviour, change in purchase behaviour is less apparent.

Therefore, the current study aims to discover barriers to organic purchase and how these barriers can be overcome in South Africa.

There have been few South African studies that highlight the existence of the domestic organic market. A study by Kelly and Metelerkamp (2015, p. 12) found that amongst African countries, South Africa has a significant domestic market for its organic produce. A study by Engel (2008, p. 4) conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, found that consumers trust that organic produce is tastier and more nutritious than conventional alternatives. However, a study by Tshuma, Makhathini, Siketile, Mushunje, and Taruvinga (2010, p. 433) conducted in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, found that consumers are not aware of organic products, leading to non-consumption of organic products. There have been quite a few South African studies on organic food purchases; however, there has been limited research on barriers to organic food purchases in South Africa.

A study by Heyns, Herbst, and Bruwer (2014, p. 243) conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, provided insights on consumers' decision-making with regards to green wine purchasing and market perceptions regarding green wines in terms of price, trendiness and acceptance. A study by Mhlophe (2016, p. 1) determined the antecedents of consumer purchase intentions for organic food in Johannesburg, South Africa and a study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016) investigated determinants of intention to purchase organic food. Tshuma et al. (2010, p. 458) explored consumer insights with regards to organic produce with the aim of exploring the potential perception of strength in the organic market in the Eastern Cape.

There have been various studies on organic purchases in South Africa (Engel, 2008, p. 5; Heyns et al., 2014, p. 243; Kelly & Metelerkamp, 2015, p. 2; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 1; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81; Tshuma et al., 2010, p. 458; Vermeulen & Bienabe, 2007, p. 1). These South African studies have unpacked the organic purchasing phenomenon, have explored green products consumption, organic wine purchasing behaviour and intention to purchasing organic in urban towns. However, none of these studies have explored barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This is the gap in knowledge the current study aims to fill.



## **1.2 Research Problem**

The existence of a gap between positive attitudes of consumers and unpredictable purchasing behaviour remains a concern for policymakers and social marketers (Johnstone & Tan, 2015, p. 312). Literature reveals that trust, price and perceived performance are some of the reasons for purchase and non-purchase of green products, however, an incomplete understanding of this gap persists (Johnstone & Tan, 2015, p. 312), particularly with regards to organic produce in South Africa. The current research aims to explore barriers to organic purchases in South Africa.

The knowledge gap this study aims to fill is understanding of the barriers to organic food purchases in South Africa, and the effect of these barriers on the actual purchase behaviour. This gap in the current body of knowledge forms the point of departure of the study. Thus, a conceptual framework will be presented to explain how the researcher understood the research problem.

There has been development and projections of development in the organic food market, however, actual sales remains relatively low in the South African food markets, compared to countries in the developed world (Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81). This research therefore aims to better understand barriers to organic purchases in South Africa. The following are the research questions for the study:

## **1.3 Research Question**

The overall research question for this study was: What are the barriers to organic produce purchasing amongst South African consumers in Pietermaritzburg?

Research objectives were formulated to unpack the barriers to organic purchases question further. These objectives are derived from the extended Theory of Planned Behaviour which proposes that purchase intention is affected by attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, moral attitudes, environmental concern and health consciousness (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122).

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

To explore barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, the following research objectives were set:

1. To ascertain organic buying behaviour and reasons for organic consumption.
2. To determine the role of attitude as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods
3. To establish the role of subjective norms as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods
4. To ascertain the role of Perceived Behavioural Control as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods
5. To establish the role of moral attitude as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.
6. To determine the role of environmental concern as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.
7. To ascertain the role of health consciousness as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.
8. To determine role of intention as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.
9. To investigate if demographic variables are barriers to organic purchasing

## **1.5 Overview of the Research Methodology**

As this research sought to determine reasons for non-consumption of organic products, the study adopted a qualitative design. A qualitative research approach was chosen to assist the researcher to obtain detailed information (Venter, Merwe, Beer, Kempen, & Bosman, 2010, p. 274). The explanations for non-consumption of organic food products is an under explored topic in South Africa. Thus, conducting a qualitative study would reveal insight into reasons for non-consumption of organic food products. The study draws on the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the review of literature to form a conceptual framework which guided the investigation.

The participants were recruited using snowball sampling, a non-probabilistic, non-random sampling technique. As this research focussed on participants who believed there were benefits to organic product consumption but do not purchase organic products, identifying participants who met the criteria was difficult. Therefore, snowball sampling was used as it is valuable for gathering information where members of the population are difficult to locate (Venter et al., 2010, p. 276). In-depth interviews were conducted with those who met the screening criteria (being participants who believed there were benefits to organic product consumption but do not purchase organic products) and agreed to participate.

The sample size for this study was planned to be 30, however at 25 participants data saturation was reached, as there was no new information that was extracted from participants.

An interview guide was developed and researcher-administered with semi-structured questions which aimed to achieve the research objectives. The interview guide was designed to cover all aspects of the conceptual framework. As recommended by Garrett (2012, p. 392) Qualitative data obtained from interviews was recorded manually. Thereafter, interview notes were transcribed and thematic analysis done. Data quality issues are discussed in Chapter 3.

## **1.6 Contribution of the Study**

There is limited South African research that describes organic consumers, their perceptions and behaviour, as most research is conducted in international markets (Kraft, Rise, Sutton, & Roysamb, 2005, p. 479; Liu, Pieniak, & Verbeke, 2013, p. 93; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 2). This research adds to the body of knowledge on green consumption by paying attention to barriers to organic consumption of adult consumers of Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. The research provides knowledge on attitudes, perceived behavioural control, subjective norms, moral attitudes, health consciousness and environmental awareness of consumers and how these factors may be barriers to organic purchases. The research also sought to ascertain consumers' awareness of organic products in Pietermaritzburg, as well as their organic purchasing behaviour. Finally, the research explained what residents of Pietermaritzburg discern as their barriers to organic consumption.

The current research adds to the research body of knowledge and supports organic food stakeholders and other marketers of green products in gaining information on barriers to organic purchasing from this population, and thus allows them to better develop strategies to overcome these barriers and persuade consumers to purchase more organic products.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

The limitation of the study comprises the usage of convenience and snowball sampling that does not allow generalisation over the whole population: however, this matches the research design that sought to discover barriers to organic consumption in South Africa through in-depth discussions with consumers who understand the value of organic but who do not purchase organic products. The sample size for the current study was 25 participants which can also be viewed as a limitation: however, data saturation was reached and there was no new information gathered from additional interviews.

### **1.8 Chapter Outline**

This study comprises five more chapters, which are outlined as follows:

Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical framework which includes the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). Thereafter, a review of both current and past literature on organic consumers and the organic market is presented. Finally, theory as well as past research related to organic consumption was used to develop a conceptual framework of possible barriers to organic consumption.

Chapter 3 details the methodology undertaken to complete this study. It discusses the objectives to be met and their pertinence to the study. The research instrument is discussed and justified. The sample design, data collection and data analysis methods are explained and justified. Quality control issues such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are discussed ensuring the research uses relevant controls to achieve the research objectives.

Chapter 4 describes the findings extracted from the content analysis of the in-depth interview transcripts. It further analyses the results and relates them to past literature through comparing and contrasting.

Chapter 5 deliberates on the findings and provides conclusions as per the objectives.

In Chapter 6 recommendations are given about overcoming barriers to organic produce purchases. Furthermore, recommendations are provided for producers and marketers of organic fresh produce on how to communicate the organic message. Recommendations are also given for policy makers on setting policies that enable purchase of organic produce. Lastly, recommendations are given about how the organic industry can enable organic purchases.

The research further outlines the limitations that were faced in the current study and concludes the report by drawing final conclusions.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter served as an introduction to the study and outlined sections which are covered in this dissertation.

A theoretical foundation needs to be laid; therefore, the next chapter deals with the theoretical foundations and a review of literature on organic consumption in order to develop a conceptual framework of the possible barriers to organic consumption.

## **Chapter 2: Organic Fresh Produce Purchasing Behaviour**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter discusses the environmental crisis, the organic consumer profile and factors influencing purchase decisions. Factors that lead to organic consumption are discussed in detail: these are Attitude, Subjective Norms, Perceived Behavioural Control, Moral Attitude, Environmental Concern and Health Consciousness based on the modified Theory of Planned Behaviour (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). Other barriers to organic consumption are also discussed such as price, availability and labelling of organic food products. The South African organic market is explored with an intention of understanding more about barriers to organic consumption. Lastly a conceptual framework is developed to explain how the researcher understood the research problem.

### **2.2 The Environmental Crisis**

The decline of environmental conditions is an apprehension that has led to deliberations on the effect of human activities on the environment (Aschemann-Witzel & Aagaard, 2014, p. 558). Environmental complications like pollution, global warming and climate changes are triggered by the increase in population leading to an increase in human consumption (Macovei, 2014, p. 15) and deterioration of the environment (Moser, 2015, p. 347). Thus, the environment has been constrained by the increase in populations leading to excessive consumption of natural resources.

The constraint on the environment has led to deliberations about conserving the environment. These deliberations have an impact of leading many consumers to choose green products which have environmental benefits and lead to environmental sustainability (Heyns et al., 2014, p. 243). It also leads to consumers becoming aware of environmental crisis and how their individual conduct can save earth and then being persuaded to change behaviour leading to an increase in intention to save the environment (Lee and Yun, 2015 p.259). Therefore, awareness of environmental crisis leads to consumers becoming aware of environmental damage, leading consumers to choose green products.

The last few years have seen several global food supply hardships such as foot-and-mouth disease, mad cow disease and others which have caused prevalent concern among consumers regarding the quality of food (Chen, 2007, p. 1008; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). This concern has led to consumption patterns rapidly changing, especially in developed countries (Gakobo & Jere, 2016, p. 1268). As a result of growing environmental consciousness combined with worries about safer foods, consumers are led to question modern agricultural practices (Chen, 2007, p. 1008). However, organic agriculture practice has been recognised as a route to ecological growth and improved food security (Kisaka-Lwayo, 2014, p. 5). Thus, organic purchasing is perceived to be one of the solutions to the environmental crisis.

### **2.3 Organic Consumption**

The intensification of environmental consciousness, awareness and concern has led to a rise in intention to purchase organic foods (Lee & Yun, 2015, p. 259). Consumption is the purpose of producing anything and farming organically is motivated by consumption patterns (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 342). Consumers' concern for their health, alertness of effects of chemical deposits in conventional food products, environmental safekeeping effects of nutritional concerns, pesticides, as well as improved taste and flavour in organic products are some of the factors identified as benefits of consuming organic products (Gakobo & Jere, 2016, p. 1270; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 2). However, most of the research on organic consumer attitudes, behaviours and purchase barriers of organic foods are from the perspective of developed countries (Mhlophe, 2016, p. 1). Thus, a need arises to study consumer attitudes, behaviours and barriers regarding buying and consumption of organic foods in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

There has also been considerable increase in organic farming in South Africa and demand for organic produce has increased (Kelly & Metelerkamp, 2015, p. 5; Tshuma et al., 2010, p. 459). Contrary to the increase in demand however, actual purchase of organic food remains low (Pearson, Henryks, Sultan, & Anisimova, 2013, p. 54). A South African study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) revealed that in spite of growth and prospects of development in the organic food industry, sales of organic food in the South African food markets are relatively low compared to developed

counterparts. Thus, the current study aims to ascertain barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

There have been several international studies on organic foods (Bryła, 2016, p. 737; Maloney, Lee, Jackson, & Miller-Spillman, 2014, p. 308; Papaoikonomou, Ryan, & Ginieis, 2010, p. 77; Paul, Modia, & Patel, 2015, p. 123; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). A quantitative study by Bryła (2016, p. 737) in Poland found that barriers to organic food purchases in Poland were low availability, short expiry dates, price, insufficient consumer awareness, and low visibility of organic products in shops. Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) investigated TPB, and consumer intention to purchase organic food in India. Another study was by Maloney et al. (2014, p. 308) in the United States of America, on consumer willingness to purchase organic products. Thus, these studies explore organic consumer behaviour, also unpacking motives for non-purchase of organic foods.

There have also been several South African studies on organic foods (Heyns et al., 2014, p. 243; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 2; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81; Tshuma et al., 2010, p. 458). A study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) found evidence of fast growth and the prospects of expansion in the organic food market: however, purchase of organic foods by South African consumers was comparatively low compared to developed countries. However, various South African research studies (Engel, 2008, p. 5; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 3) reveal there is not much known about South African consumers' attitude and perception toward organic food products and their associated purchase intentions. This lack of information is as a result of small, yet growing amount of literature on the topic of consumer purchase intentions for organic food in developing countries like South Africa. Thus, the current study aims to explore the gap in knowledge by unpacking barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Another South African study by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 260) asserts that explanations for non-consumption of organic food products is an under-explored topic in South Africa. However, there has not been a South African study that explores barriers to organic purchases. Thus, the current study aims to explore the phenomenon of barriers to organic purchases.



To explore reasons that may be causing this low purchasing of organic products, theories of behaviour are now explored.

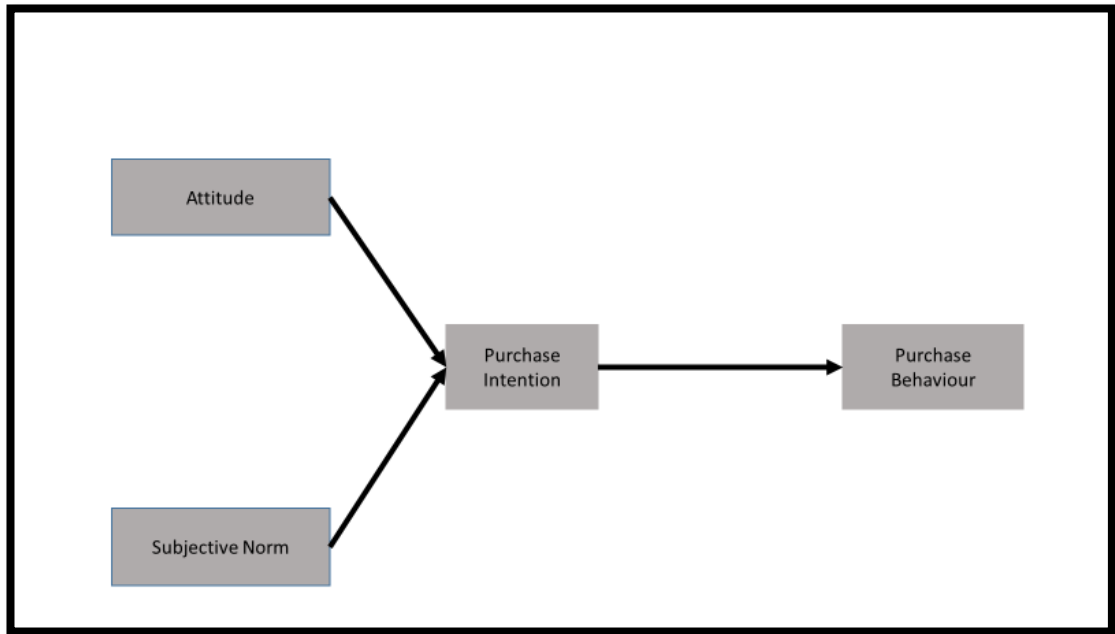
## **2.4 Theoretical Framework**

This section explores existing frameworks in relation to the research purpose. The aim of discussing the theoretical framework is to understand research done in this field by aligning this research with developed theories. This section discusses the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), uses and limitations of TPB and how this research used TPB to develop a conceptual framework to better understand the barriers to organic food purchases.

The complex phenomenon of human behaviour has led social psychologists to develop models of predicting and understanding behaviour (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 343). These models are labelled as Expectancy Value Models which deal with predicting and understanding of human behaviour (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 343). Examples of Expectancy Value Models include: Protection Motivation Theory, Social Cognitive Model, Norm Activation Model, Health Belief Model, TRA and later TPB. The Theory of Planned Behaviour is the most commonly applied of these models which was successful in predicting behaviour in general and also investigating the relationship between attitudes and action (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015). The TRA lies behind the development of the TPB (Macovei, 2014, p. 17) and thus below is a discussion on TRA and TPB.

### **2.4.1 Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)**

The purpose of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is to elaborate on human behaviour as the foundation of intention to behaviour (Macovei, 2014, p. 15). It is based on the assumption that people behave in a comprehensible manner to attain favourable results (Macovei, 2014, p. 17). According to the TRA, intention to behave is a predecessor variable of actual behaviour and has been used in green products research (Paul et al., 2015, p. 124). Table 2.1 below depicts TRA. It shows attitude and subjective norms as predecessors of purchase intention, leading to purchase behaviour. Thus, TRA aims to elaborate on purchase intention as the basis of behaviour and according to TRA intention leads to behaviour.



*Figure 2.1: Theory of Reasoned Action* (Macovei, 2014, p. 17; Yadav & Pathak, 2016)

TRA has been used in several studies (Macovei, 2014, p. 15; Paul et al., 2015, p. 123), such as a study conducted in the USA on the relationship between beliefs and attitudes toward paying additional for renewable energy (Bang, Ellinger, Hadjimarcou, & Traichal, 2000, p. 463). However, the TRA has been found to have some limitations which are discussed below.

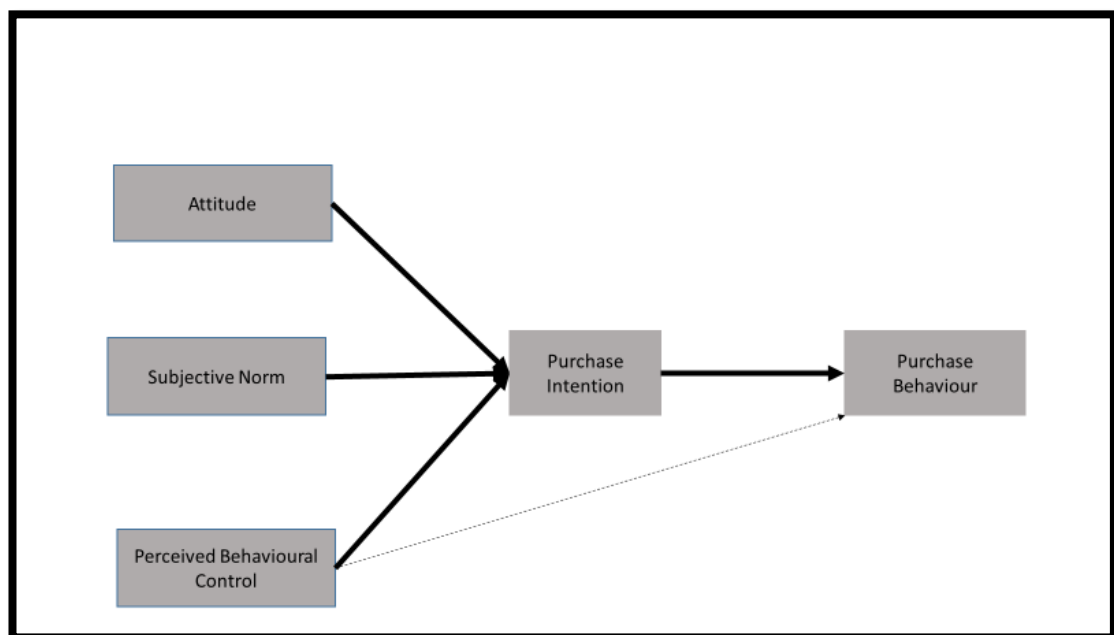
#### **2.4.2 Limitations of the Theory of Reasoned Action**

The limitations of the TRA are that it assumes that when intention to act is formed, participants will act even without limitation and it also disregards restraints such as time, unconscious habits, limited ability and environmental or organisational restrictions that will limit the freedom to act (Macovei, 2014, p. 15). Practically, consumers may have a positive intention towards green products, but may not be able to purchase green due to various reasons such as low income or product unavailability (Paul et al., 2015, p. 125). The current research attempts to identify such barriers to organic purchases.

TRA was developed further into TPB, discussed below, which is a more comprehensive theory for explaining consumer behaviour.

### 2.4.3 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

TPB is a behavioural model in social psychology and is based on the assumption that individuals perform the way they intend to perform (Papaoikonomou et al., 2010, p. 78). However, in contrast to the TRA, Macovei (2014, p. 15) states that the “TPB framework assumes that behavioural intentions are a function of an individual’s Attitudes, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control of the respective behaviour”. As shown in Figure 2.2 below, is an illustration that TPB depicts variables (Attitude, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behavioural Control) that lead to purchase intention which proceeds to purchase behaviour. Thus, TPB is an important theory to understand in order to unpack barriers to organic purchases.

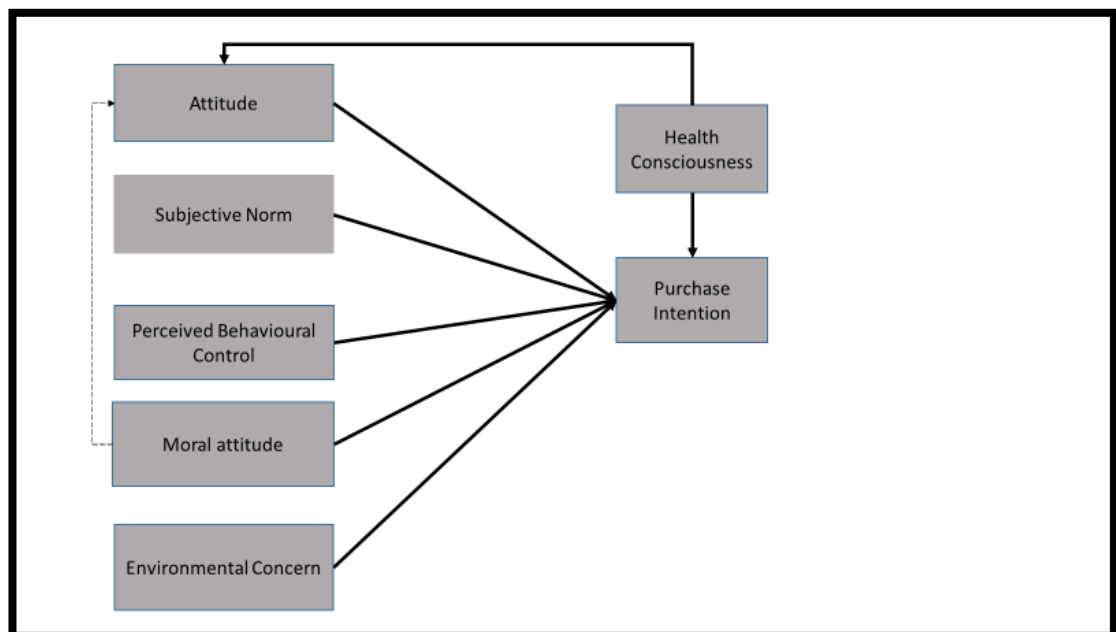


**Figure 2.2:** Theory of Planned Behaviour (Macovei, 2014, p. 17; Papaoikonomou et al., 2010, p. 77; Yadav & Pathak, 2016)

Food choice has been the focus of TPB studies and has been positively applied as a framework for understanding consumer decision process, such as organic purchase decision (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 343). The TPB framework has been found to be appropriate in predicting organic food purchase intention across different countries (Bryła, 2016, p. 737; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 2; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123).

Arvola et al. (2008) conducted a study on the TPB's applicability in organic food purchase intention across three different countries (UK, Italy and Finland); this study resulted in TPB being found to be suitable in predicting organic food purchase intention across these countries. Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) studied organic food purchase intention in India and used TPB, thereafter, used extended TPB to better explain organic purchase intention. Mhlophe (2016, p. 22) studied consumer purchase intentions in South Africa and concluded that TPB is a valuable model to understand consumer purchase intentions for organic food. Thus, TPB has been found to be useful in many studies, although, the relative influence of variables varies from country to country. Hence this study aims to use TPB to investigate the possible barriers to organic consumption in South Africa.

The model of TPB used in this study addresses some limitations to TRA and TPB in its original form as it measures the elements as shown in diagram below. Thus, the amended TPB was used to ascertain barriers to organic consumption in South Africa.



**Figure 2.3:** Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (Yadav & Pathak, 2016)

- Attitude toward a behaviour indicates a level of agreement or disagreement with behaviour and whether behaviour is regarded as being good or bad (Macovei, 2014, p. 18). It is also about the notch of a person's appraisal of

behaviour whether favourable or unfavourable (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 342). It is thus a positive or negative evaluation of behaviour (Krömker & Matthies, 2014, p. 1915). It is thus a positive or negative evaluation of behaviour (Krömker & Matthies, 2014, p. 1915).

- Subjective Norm (SN) is the perceived social influence to perform or not to perform organic behaviour (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 342) and the expectation that relevant others will approve of intended behaviour (Macovei, 2014, p. 18)
- Health consciousness is concerned with health worries that are shared and impact a person's daily activities (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123).
- Environmental concern measures the point of awareness of problems concerning the environment and provision of efforts to resolve those concerns (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123).
- Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC) measures the perception of difficulty or ease in purchasing organic foods (Tsakiridou, Boutsouki, Zotos, & Mattas, 2008, p. 4). PBC is perception of difficulty or ease in performing organic behaviour. It also refers to perceptions of personal control over what to purchase and consume (Chen, 2007, p. 1012). PBC considers if consumer perceives being able to complete the intended behaviour (Krömker & Matthies, 2014, p. 1915).
- Moral attitude measures the favourable and unfavourable self-evaluations which arises from expected compliance with one's own moral principles (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123).
- Intention measures a person's plan, decision and commitment to carry out an action and achieve a purchase goal (Gakobo & Jere, 2016, p. 1270).

The aim of understanding the various elements mentioned above is to better understand the possible barriers to organic purchases. The limitations and uses of TPB are discussed below.

### **2.4.5 Limitations of the Theory of Planned Behaviour**

According to Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123), TPB assumes that behavioural intention is a function of subjective norm, PBC and attitude, but a limitation of TPB is that there are organic domain-specific factors which are not included in this model. This study has included additional constructs as per Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123); these are environmental concern, moral attitude and health consciousness. The aim of the current study in using the extended TPB model is to better understand the possible barriers to organic food purchases.

The following section discusses extant literature on the effects of the above factors on behaviour as well other factors that may act as barriers to organic food consumption, in order to develop the conceptual framework for the study.

## **2.5 Factors Affecting Organic Consumption, and Potential Barriers to Organic Consumption**

This section discusses the effects of demographic factors on organic consumption. Thereafter the TPB elements (Attitude, Perceived Behavioural Control, Intention, Subjective Norm, Health Consciousness, Moral Attitude and Environmental Concern) are discussed to better understand their possible effects on organic consumption or lack thereof. Extant literature on the intention-behaviour gap and attitude-behaviour gaps are also discussed to determine other possible barriers to organic consumption decisions. Lastly, price, convenience and availability are discussed with the aim of better understanding barriers to organic consumption for South African consumers.

### **2.5.1 The Effect of Demographic Factors on Organic Consumption**

#### **2.5.1.1 Gender**

The global profile of organic consumers includes females and young people (Vittersø & Tangeland, 2014, p. 409). The organic consumer is more often a woman than a man and they are more frequent buyers than men (Tsakiridou et al., 2008, p. 160). The female gender shows more positive attitudes towards organic food as opposed to men (Heyns et al., 2014, p. 247). However, in a study conducted in Egypt by Mohamed, Chymis, and Shelaby (2012, p. 186) it was found that men were buying organic foods more than women but approximately 50% of women in the research sample were

housewives and students, so men managed the home's needs in households. A South African study by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) on consumption of green wines found that both age and gender affect the importance of green credentials as a purchasing factor, an organic consumer more often is a woman than a man and they are more frequent buyers than men. The current study aims to ascertain if gender is a barrier to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

### **2.5.1.2 Age**

There are opposing views as to which age group values green credentials more between the young and old generations. In a study conducted in Australia by Pearson et al. (2013, p. 50) on purchase frequency of organic products it was found that younger consumers are more dedicated to purchasing organic food with over 60% of 20 to 29 year olds purchasing regularly; this reduces dramatically (to around 30%) for 70+ year olds. However, Gakobo and Jere (2016, p. 1268) found young people to be more environmentally aware but less willing to pay for high priced organic products due to their lower purchasing power, whereas the older generation with power to purchase are relatively health conscious and willing to consume organic foods. In a study conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, it was found that consumers aged 35 years and older value green credentials of green wines as a purchasing factor (Heyns et al., 2014, p. 243) Thus, there seem to be mixed findings on which age group purchase organic products more.

### **2.5.1.3 Income**

There are opposing views on income and its relationship to organic purchases. Some studies that found that the high price of organic products results in low income households being unlikely to purchase organic products but other studies did not concur with this finding (Kraft et al., 2005, p. 479; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81; Pearson et al., 2013, p. 57). According to the study in Egypt by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 183) of respondents who purchase organic food, there is substantial effect of income on the organic purchasing decision. However, a study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) conducted in Pretoria found that respondent's gross monthly income and purchase intention are not significantly associated. This study aims to explore a

relationship between organic produce purchases and income, and to conclude if income is a barrier to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

#### **2.5.1.4 Education**

There is a positive relationship between level of education and organic purchase decisions, as consumers with higher levels of education show high levels of purchasing organic food (Pearson et al., 2013, p. 57). However, according to a study conducted in Egypt by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 187), there is no significant effect of education level on purchasing decision, yet, as the education level increases, organic choice increases too. Another study conducted in Cape Town by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) found that higher level of education was not related to green preference. Another conducted in Pretoria, South Africa by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016) found that intention to purchase organic food is associated with the level of education. Thus, there seem to be mixed opinions on education, as some studies state higher levels of education are associated with organic purchase and other studies state there is no significant effect of education level on purchasing decision. This research aims to explore relationship between of education and non-purchase of organic foods in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

#### **2.5.1.5 Age of Children**

The presence of young children in the household has been observed to be linked to organic food purchase (Aschemann-Witzel & Aagaard, 2014, p. 551). In a study by Gakobo and Jere (2016, p. 1268) in Nairobi, Kenya, the presence of children in a household had a positive effect on consumers' attitudes towards organic produce; the older the children, the lower the inclination to buy organic food. The study done by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 183) in Egypt found that families with children show higher curiosity for organic consumption as a result of health concerns. Thus, households with younger children may be more inclined to purchase organic foods. The current research aims to ascertain if age of children, or a lack of children in a household, contributes as a barrier to organic consumption.

Literature shows that traditional demographic variables such as gender, age, income and education can classify as key factors of an organic market segment. However,



these variable cannot provide complete characteristics of submarkets, because groups consist of very different psychological makeups (Heyns et al., 2014, p. 246). This study aims to ascertain any key factors from demographic variables that can affect the barriers to organic food consumption.

### **2.5.2 The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) Elements**

There is a view that buyers of organic products have positive attitudes that results in solid belief that organics are healthier, of better quality and taste, these consumers of organic foods also believe that organic consumption is an important element in environmental protection (Gakobo & Jere, 2016, p. 1270). However, attitudes in relation to concern for the environment have not been analysed and relationships between green attitudes, values and behaviour are still ambiguous (Paço, Alves, Shiel, & Filho, 2013, p. 414). Thus, there does not seem to be widespread agreement on what affects organic consumption nor what might act as a barrier. The following section discuss the various variables that have been found to affect organic consumption.

#### **2.5.2.1 Attitude**

The study of consumer attitudes aims to understand a rational framework for explanations of consumer purchase decisions (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 6). Attitude toward a behaviour indicates a level of agreement or disagreement with behaviour; it also indicates whether behaviour is regarded as being good or bad (Macovei, 2014, p. 18) and whether an individual wants to perform the behaviour (Paul et al., 2015, p. 125). A favourable attitude to organic foods is a trigger and motivator for organic food purchases (Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1068). The more a consumer has concern about their health and environmental protection, the more probable it is that they have a positive attitude to organic foods (Chen, 2007, p. 1010). Consumers seem to favour organic foods for various reasons: these include environmental concerns and health. However, even when attitudes are favourable, consumers' actual purchases of organic food may remain low (Pearson et al., 2013, p. 54). This study aims to understand attitude and how it affects the purchase decision.

There have been several studies that have found attitude to have a strong impact on consumers' purchasing behaviour and this increases willingness to purchase organic products (Macovei, 2014, p. 18; Maloney et al., 2014, p. 308; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 16; Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1066). In a study conducted by Chen (2007, p. 1008) on consumers' attitude toward organic foods in Taiwan, the study found attitude to significantly enhance intention to purchase organic food. Also in the study by Yadav and Pathak (2016) in India on intention to purchase organic produce by young consumers, attitude was found to be significant in determining purchase intention. Research by Macovei (2014, p. 15) on predicting pro-environmental behaviour in Romania found that consumers' attitude towards behaving in a pro-environment manner has a positive influence on their intention to behave in a pro-environmental manner.

Also in a study conducted by Yazdanpanah and Forouzani (2015, p. 342) on TPB's application to predict Iranian students' intention to purchase organic food, attitude was found to be a main determinant of students' willingness to purchase organic foods. A South African study by Mhlophe (2016, p. 16) also found that attitude toward purchase intention for organic food was fairly high. The results showed that attitude towards the organic food along with perceived behavioural control, significantly influenced consumers intention to purchase organic food.

However, TPB has been applied in various research cases and findings revealed that even when consumers have a positive attitude towards behaviour (e.g. towards buying organic products), behaviour does not always occur, so, attitude does not always lead to behaviour (Pearson et al., 2013, p. 4). This phenomenon is known as the attitude-behaviour gap.

**The attitude-behaviour gap** defines a condition where consumers express positive attitudes towards a product and sometimes buying intentions, but actual behaviour is not favourable (Aschemann-Witzel & Aagaard, 2014, p. 550). According to Sheeran (2002, p. 22) there is uncertainty as to whether or not attitudes can be considered valid forecasters of an individual's behaviour, as there are instances where attitudes are not translated into action. Thus, the current research aims to ascertain barriers of organic food purchases with analysis of the attitude-behaviour gap.

According to a study conducted in Spain by Papaoikonomou et al. (2010), the main reason for the existence of the attitude behaviour gap was not the lack of demand for green products, but the green market in Spain was still in an early phase of development. However, the study by Johnstone and Tan (2015, p. 317) found that some consumers exhibit no relationship between green attitudes and behaviour, which in part is driven by the perception that it is too hard to be green, there is a sense of helplessness. This study aims to ascertain barriers to organic purchases and in the process, verify if there is an attitude-behaviour gap with Pietermaritzburg, South African consumers.

In other studies (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 6; Kraft et al., 2005, p. 479), the main reasons consumers give for the attitude-behaviour gap are availability, price and convenience as barriers to purchasing organic foods (Hughner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz, & Stanton, 2007, p. 103). While consumers have engaged with, and are inspired by, the principles of ethical consumer behaviour, a change in consumption behaviour is much less apparent (Carrington et al., 2010, p. 139). This study aims to explore these and other factors as possible barriers to organic food purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

### **2.5.2.2 Intention**

An intention has been defined as a person's pledge to carry out an act (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). Behavioural intention shows how consumers are willing to apply energy in order to accomplish the behaviour and as intention becomes stronger, individuals are more likely to perform the behaviour (Moghavvemi, Salleh, Sulaiman, & Abessi, 2015, p. 1171) Intention is an important element of measuring future behaviour; it starts with a motivational process, followed by the act of choice or decision and finally the consumer's intentional action itself, which is the ultimate purchase of a product (Gakobo & Jere, 2016, p. 1268). The concept of intention is central to the TPB, as it is intended to pull together all motivational influences of attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control (Mhlophe, 2016).

There is a positive relationship between intention and attitude, as consumers who have positive attitudes towards organic foods also have strong intentions to purchase organic foods (Moghavvemi et al., 2015, p. 1171). The TPB proposes that once one

has a positive intention, behaviour becomes easy to predict (Mhlophe, 2016). According to Nedra, Sharma, and Dakhli (2015, p. 72), intention is the best predictor of behaviour, is a precursor of purchasing behaviour and can predict actual behaviour with substantial accuracy. Thus, to unpack barriers to organic consumption, research needs to find out if a lack of intention to purchase organic food products in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa is a reason for non-purchase.

The **intention-behaviour gap** is defined as a gap between consumer intentions to purchase and their actual purchase behaviour, where consumers have intention to purchase but at the point of purchase choose not to purchase (Carrington et al., 2010, p. 139; Grimmer & Miles, 2017, p. 2). Thus, this study will ascertain if there is an intention-behaviour gap amongst Pietermaritzburg consumers.

The core cognitive progression that states that intention leads to behaviour has revealed that this is not always true (Carrington et al., 2010, p. 141). The complex nature of consumer decision-making proposes that the connection between intent and action requires attention (Moghavvemi et al., 2015, p. 1175). Research also shows that consumer intentions are important but cannot fully tell us about behaviour patterns (Bhattacharjee & Sanford, 2009, p. 390). According to Moghavvemi et al. (2015, p. 1180), behavioural intention is conditional; it can be affected by external and internal stimuli radically in the time leading to actual behaviour, thus intention becomes less predictive, erroneous and unstable in predicting behaviour. Thus, this study aims to ascertain elements of intention to purchase organic products.

This study aims to unpack barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg and to ascertain if an intention-behaviour gap contributes to barriers of organic food purchasing.

### **2.5.2.3 Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC)**

Perceived behavioural control refers to the consumer's perceptions of personal control over what to buy and eat, which he or she believes to influence the judgment of risks and benefits of organic foods in a purchase situation (Chen, 2007, p. 1011). PBC measures the perception of the ease or difficulty in purchasing organic foods; it involves people's perception of control over behaviour (Mohamed et al., 2012, p. 183;

Tsakiridou et al., 2008, p. 158). Research on TPB, conducted on consumer food choices, indicates that perceived behavioural control may actually be composed of two separate constructs, perceived difficulty and perceived control (Chen, 2007, p. 1009). Thus, the current study aims to unpack PBC and how it affects consumer purchase decision.

A study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India, using the TPB, found that perceived behavioural control significantly influenced the consumer's intention to purchase organic food (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 126). The study conducted by Macovei (2014, p. 15) in Romania, on predicting pro-environmental behaviour, found that PBC has a weak influence on behaviour: however one of the reasons for this weak influence was due to the relatively small sample of 133 respondents. The current study aims to ascertain the role of PBC as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa but using a qualitative research design.

A study by Mhlophe (2016, p. 5) excluded PBC, citing that organic food production and marketing was a fairly new phenomenon in South Africa. Mhlophe (2016, p. 1) also stated that respondents were less informed about organic food purchasing compared to consumers in the developed countries hence, South African consumers would perceive themselves as less self-confident and not in control of the situation as compared to overseas consumers, making the construct less relevant for their study. The current study has included PBC and will ascertain participant's perception of PBC elements. The overall research question for this study was: What are the barriers to organic produce purchasing amongst South African consumers in Pietermaritzburg? Thus, PBC elements might be relevant in answering the research question.

#### **2.5.2.4 Subjective Norms**

Subjective norms represent perception about a connection between a behaviour and what reference groups are thinking about this behaviour (Macovei, 2014, p. 19). They are a function of normative beliefs made up of the expectations of individuals' reference group formed by their immediate social network, such as friends, family, colleagues or neighbours (Macovei, 2014, p. 19). Thus, support for organic choices or

disapproval by individuals' immediate social network places an amount of pressure on intention.

A study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India, found that Subjective Norms failed to show any significant influence on purchase intention implying that buying organic food is yet to become a social norm in a developing of India. Also in a study by Macovei (2014, p. 28) in Romania, on applying the TPB in predicting pro-environmental behaviour, subjective norms had an insignificant effect on intention. Due to the inclusion of this variable in the theoretical framework, it was investigated in this study. Thus, the aim was to ascertain whether South Africa, as a developing nation, has an organic food subjective norm and how this relates to the lack of organic purchases.

#### **2.5.2.5 Moral Attitude**

Moral attitude shows anticipated positive feelings of self-satisfaction about acting in a way that confirms one's own moral standards (Arvola et al., 2008, p. 445). In a study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 125) moral attitude had a profound impact as the study findings suggesting importance of moral attitude in the consumer's organic food purchase intention in the Indian setting is similar to that of developed nations. This was also found by an earlier study conducted in Italy, Finland and United Kingdom, where moral attitude had substantial effect on intentions to purchase organic apples and pizza (Arvola et al., 2008, p. 449). Therefore, South African consumers' moral attitude is included in the current study to determine whether it is a barrier to organic food purchase in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

#### **2.5.2.6 Health Consciousness**

Health consciousness is defined as the degree to which health decisions are incorporated into the person's daily actions (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). Literature reveals that consumers who were more concerned about their health had favourable attitudes toward purchasing organic products while organic products were generally perceived as a healthier option as compared to the conventionally grown foods (Yazdanpanah & Forouzani, 2015, p. 343). However, according to Bryła (2016, p.

737), there is lack of evidence that food from organic production is significantly different to that from non-organic production, in relation to product criteria such as nutrition or health impact.

A study by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 125) also found that health consciousness among consumers positively influenced their intention to purchase organic foods. Indian consumers were found to be conscious about health-related issues and consider health as an important parameter while taking the decision to buy food products, like their developed counterparts (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 125). A South African study by Mhlophe (2016, p. 16) found that respondents were in agreement with the health consciousness construct, signifying that respondents felt that purchase intentions for organic food are influenced by their health consciousness. Therefore, SA consumers' health consciousness is included in the current study to ascertain its role as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.

#### **2.5.2.7 Environmental Concern**

Environmental concern indicates the degree to which consumers are aware of environmental problems and their willingness to support and solve them; it is the consumers' willingness to contribute personally to solve environmental concerns (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). Thus, to unpack barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, environmental concern was also explored in the current study.

In the study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 122), environmental concern did not show noteworthy influence on purchase intention of organic food. This shows that respondents in India were less altruistic in behaviour in comparison to their counterparts of developed nations (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 126). However, findings of a study done in Johannesburg, South Africa, by Mhlophe (2016, p. 22), to explore consumer purchase intentions towards organic foods established that there is a positive relationship between environmental concerns and purchase intention for organic food. This study explored the SA participants' environmental concern further to determine whether a lack of concern for the environment could be a barrier to organic consumption.

## **2.6 Possible Additional Barriers to Organic Food Purchases**

As seen in the discussions of the attitude-behaviour and intention-behaviour gaps literature discussed above, several barriers to organic food purchases are mentioned; these include price, availability and awareness. These are now discussed in more depth.

### **2.6.1 Price**

Price denotes the value of a product and is not only a total barrier but also a factor in the intricate decision-making process that underlies purchasing decisions (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 6). Literature reveals that a common barrier is the consumers reluctance to pay higher costs, in terms of money, time and effort (Gakobo & Jere, 2016, p. 1270). Furthermore, some consumers who may be really interested in purchasing organic food, but do not have the financial means to do so, often opt for the cheaper alternative (Paterson, 2015 p. 15). Thus, to explore if price is a barrier to organic purchases, it was included in the current study.

A study conducted in India found high prices to be major barrier to organic food consumption, as Indian customers are price sensitive compared to developed nations (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). This was also true for a study conducted in Egypt by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 191) where it was found that the high price of organic food is still the major barrier for consumers. However, a need arises to explore the perception of Pietermaritzburg, South African consumers in relation to the price of organic foods.

A study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) recommends that the increased farming and thus availability, of organic foods to the markets would help to increase the PBC by reducing some barriers like limited accessibility and availability in the market, which are also factors leading to high price of organic foods. Thus, availability will assist reduce high price of organic products.

In South Africa, a study conducted by Tshuma et al. (2010, p. 465) found that the more expensive organic products are, the less attractive they become to consumers, for synthetic products provide perfect substitutes at much cheaper prices. Another study conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) found that



purchasing factors such as price, rewards, brand and ratings are more significant purchasing considerations than green credentials. This study aims to evaluate the impact of price as a barrier to the purchase of organic foods in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

### **2.6.2 Availability and Convenience**

The lack of availability of organic food also results in it being less convenient to purchase; however, ‘unavailable’ can mean “not easily available from the supermarkets where I shop” (Paterson, 2015 p. 16). In another South African study (quantitative) by Mhlophe (2016, p. 17) respondents somewhat agreed that organic food availability affected their purchase intention. This study aims to ascertain how availability and convenience affect purchase or non-purchase of organic products ten years later. Another study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 82) found that consumers indicated that if organic food was accessible, they would purchase it as obtainability of organic food was a barrier to organic purchase decision in the food markets. Thus, availability of organic products is an area to be explored to ascertain if availability of organic products is a barrier to organic purchases.

Mhlophe (2016, p. 18) recommends that it is important for marketing practitioners to consistently expand their efforts in creating positive consumer attitudes (e.g. through advertisements), ensuring availability of organic food (e.g. through Just-In-Time delivery systems), utilising other individuals that are likely to positively influence purchase intentions for organic food (e.g. through the use of celebrity endorsers) and ultimately pledging support for a sustainable environment in order to attract environmentally conscious customers. Another study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) recommends that an increase in the farming and supply of organic food to the markets would help to raise the ‘perceived behavioural control’ by reducing some barriers like limited availability and accessibility on the market.

### **2.6.3 Awareness/ Knowledge of Organic Food**

Consumer awareness of products leads to enquiry about a product which may eventually lead to purchase of the product. Macovei (2014, p.18) states that PBC is related to the consumer’s knowledge. The level of awareness amongst consumers

about organic food would appear high in many countries (Pearson et al., 2013, p. 52); however, in South Africa there is research that indicates that awareness levels are low, particularly in rural areas (Tshuma et al., 2010, p. 466). Thus, a need arises to ascertain awareness of South African consumers about organic foods and to check if awareness is a barrier to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Good knowledge of organic foods tends to be associated with high behavioural intentions (Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1070). Magistris and Gracia (2008, p. 929) claimed that increasing organic knowledge is crucial to enhancing organic food consumption, since knowledge of organic foods strongly influences consumer attitudes that directly determine decisions or intentions to buy organic foods. Thus, level of awareness or knowledge of organic foods is included in this study.

A study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) recommends that “it is important to increase an awareness of the health and environmental benefits of organically produced food to develop a positive attitude among consumers”. According to Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 122) proper communication about the benefit of organic products among the consumers should be the main concern for the marketers, as communication is considered as a very important tool for the success of any eco-friendly product. Communication tools to achieve product awareness include:

- Placing advertisements on websites (Mhlophe, 2016, p. 22; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81).
- Social media presence through sites such as Facebook and Twitter, because they serve as forums where consumers discuss their lives, including their purchases and the items they like (Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81).
- Advertising using traditional methods such as print media (newspapers and magazines). Since organic food is perceived as healthy and environmentally friendly, advertising should also be included in health and environmental sustainability publications (Hugner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz, & Stanton, 2007, p. 12; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81).

Thus, awareness of organic products can be achieved by various elements including sales promotion of organic benefits on online and traditional advertising platforms.

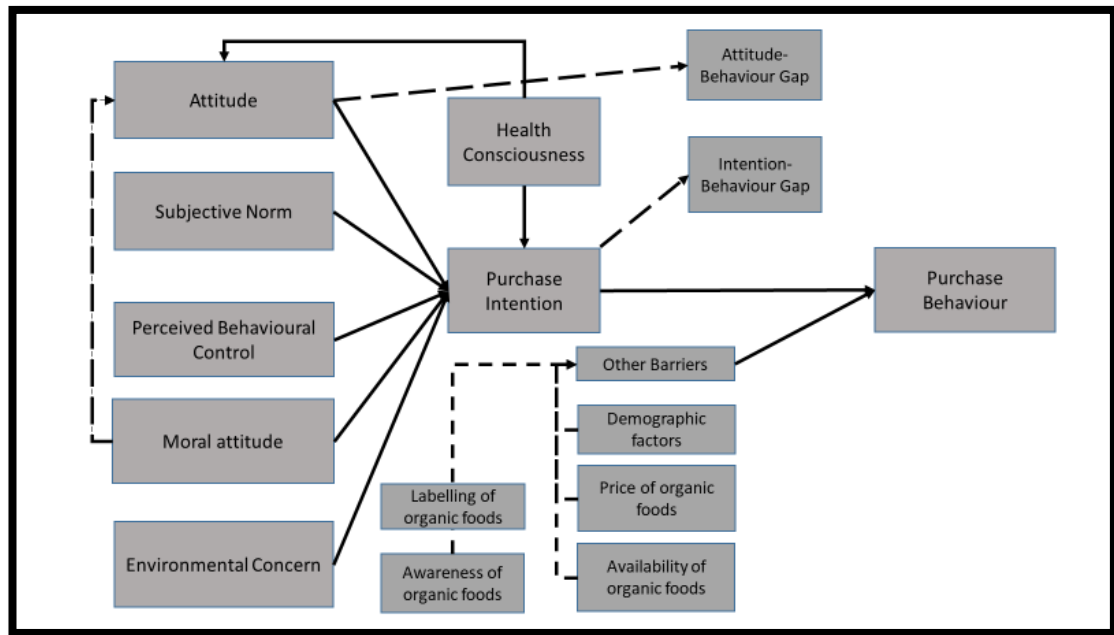
#### **2.6.4 Labelling of Produce as Organic**

Organic food is a credence good, which are those goods where information asymmetry exists in the market (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 25). Although organic food producers will have knowledge of the organic nature of the product, as they have been involved in the production process, consumers are unable to detect organic characteristics even after purchase and consumption of organic products (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 25). Consumers therefore rely on third-party information, such as product labelling, packaging and point-of-purchase information for cues as to the organic nature of a product (Chen, 2007). Thus, a need arises to ascertain if labelling is a barrier to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

A study by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) suggested a strong emphasis on certification and labelling certification credentials as a means of promoting or differentiating organic products. According to Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 82), consumers distinguish food labelled as organic to be environmentally friendly, healthier and of superior quality to conventional food. It is thus important to provide sufficient and credible information on organic food labels to enhance consumer trust and attitudes towards organic foods (Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1070). A study in Poland by Bryła (2016, p. 737) states that insufficient consumer knowledge as one of the principal barriers to organic food consumption. This study aims to ascertain barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa and to also ascertain if awareness is a barrier to organic purchases.

#### **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework was developed to reflect the proposed associations between the study constructs. Figure 2.4 illustrates the conceptual framework proposed for the present study. The conceptual framework, based on the extended TPB model as well as extant additional literature on organic consumption, is presented below with the aim of providing a framework for studying barriers to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.



**Figure 2.4:** Conceptual Framework of the Study

In developing a conceptual framework depicted in Figure 2.4 above, the researcher drew from preceding literature and from theories such as TPB, TRA and the modified TPB by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 122). The framework also includes barriers to purchases such as demographic factors, price, availability, labelling and awareness of organic foods. Lastly the framework depicts the attitude-behaviour gap and the intention-behaviour gap. Thus, the conceptual framework depicts the researcher’s understanding of the theory regarding the research problem.

## 2.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the environmental crisis, organic consumers’ profile and factors influencing purchase decisions. Factors that lead to organic consumption, according to the TPB model, were discussed in detail: these are Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioural Control, Moral Attitude, Environmental Concern and Health Consciousness.

There have been various studies on organic purchases in South Africa (Engel, 2008, p. 5; Heyns et al., 2014, p. 243; Kelly & Metelerkamp, 2015, p. 2; Mhlophe, 2016, p. 1; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81; Tshuma et al., 2010, p. 458; Vermeulen & Bienabe, 2007, p. 1). These South African studies have unpacked the organic

purchasing phenomenon, have explored green products consumption, organic wine purchasing behaviour and the intention to purchasing organic in urban towns. However, none of these studies have explored barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. This is the gap in knowledge the current study aims to fill.

Conclusively, the knowledge gap for this study is described as an incomplete understanding of the barriers to organic food purchases in South Africa, and the effect of these barriers on the actual purchase behaviour. This gap in the current body of knowledge forms the point of departure of the study. Thus, a conceptual framework was presented to explain how the researcher understood the research problem.

Lastly, additional possible barriers to organic consumption were discussed such as price, availability and labelling of organic food products.

The following chapter discusses the methodology applied in this study and shows how the researcher went about fulfilling the research purpose and objectives to investigate barriers to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter reviewed literature that relates to organic purchases and presented a conceptual framework. A gap in the current body of knowledge was identified. The current chapter focuses on a brief reminder of the research problem, purpose and objectives of the study. Thereafter, the type of research conducted and the methods used to collect and analyse data are described and justified. Furthermore, research trustworthiness issues are discussed. Lastly, the procedure followed to achieve ethical clearance is also explained.

### **3.2 Problem Statement and Research Objectives**

The current research sought to determine the reasons for non-consumption of organic products. Qualitative research aims to widen and extend insight of our social world and why things are the way they are (Hancock, Ockleford, & Windridge, 2009, p. 4). As this research was exploring barriers of organic consumption, qualitative research was best suited to answer the research question.

The majority of research in this area tends to be quantitative in methodology (Mhlophe, 2016, p. 2; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). These include a study by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 122) in India, on intention to purchase organic products by young consumers, the study by Macovei (2014, p. 15) on predicting pro-environmental behaviour in Romania and the research by Yazdanpanah and Forouzani (2015, p. 342) in Iran on TPB's application to predict consumers intention to purchase organic food. These quantitative studies have provided useful data on the market as a whole but lack insight to explain participants' views on barriers to organic consumption in South Africa.

#### **3.2.1 Research Objectives**

This section is an extension of Chapter 1, Section 1.4 discussed earlier which outlined the research objectives, however this section provides the rationale for the research objectives.

1. To ascertain organic buying behaviour and reasons for organic consumption.

This objective intends to determine participant's organic buying behaviour and reasons for organic consumption. The objective was necessary to verify that the extent of organic buying was minimal. Respondents had been chosen as meeting the selection criteria that they saw value in buying organic produce but did not purchase organic produce on a regular basis.

2. To determine the role of attitude as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods

Attitude toward a behaviour indicates a level of agreement or disagreement with behaviour; it also indicates whether behaviour is regarded as being good or bad (Macovei, 2014, p. 18) and whether an individual wants to perform the behaviour (Paul et al., 2015, p. 125). This objective aimed to ascertain participants' attitude towards organic foods and also to ascertain if a negative or even neutral attitude was a reason for their non-purchase of organic foods.

3. To establish the role of subjective norms as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods

Research conducted in India by (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123) found that "Subjective norms did not show any significant impact on the organic food purchase intention which implies that buying organic food is yet to become a social norm in a developing nation such as India". This objective sought to disprove or confirm this finding in a South African study.

4. To ascertain the role of Perceived Behavioural Control as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods

PBC measures the perception of the ease or difficulty in purchasing organic foods and performance or non-performance and consumers control over such behaviour it involves people's perception of control over behaviour (Mohamed et al., 2012, p. 481; Tsakiridou et al., 2008, p. 4). This objective aimed to understand participants'

perceived behavioural control towards organic foods and also to ascertain if perceived behavioural control was reason for non-purchase of organic foods.

5. To establish the role of moral attitude as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.

According to a study conducted in Italy, Finland and United Kingdom, moral attitude has considerable influence on intentions to purchase organic apples and pizza (Arvola et al., 2008, p. 449). This objective sought to disprove or confirm this finding on a South African study on barriers of organic food products.

6. To determine the role of environmental concern as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods

In a study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India, environmental concern did not show any significant influence on purchase intention of organic food. This objective sought to disprove or confirm this finding on a South African study on barriers of organic food products.

7. To ascertain the role of health consciousness as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.

In a study conducted by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 86) to assess the consumer purchase intentions of organic food at the Hazel food market in South Africa, the consumer values of being health conscious and environmentally conscious have a significant influence. This objective aimed to understand participants' health consciousness towards organic foods and to ascertain if health consciousness was the reason for non-purchase of organic foods.

8. To determine role of intention as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods.

According to Nedra et al. (2015, p. 72), "intention is the best predictive factor for behaviour and it constitutes the direct antecedent of purchasing behaviour". This



objective aimed to understand participants' intention to purchase organic foods and also to ascertain if intention was the reason for non-purchase of organic foods.

9. To investigate if demographic variables are barriers to organic purchasing

This objective intended to investigate if age, gender, ethnicity, education, employment and income were barriers to organic purchasing.

Now that the research objectives have been discussed and rational for each objective tabled, the research philosophy is deliberated on below.

### **3.3 Research Philosophy**

A research philosophy is about how knowledge is established and specifies the nature of knowledge with regards to research (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009, p. 107). The acceptance of a research viewpoint for any study is grounded on assumptions about how the researcher understands the world; the assumptions assist to determine the research strategy together with research method (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 7). No research viewpoint or philosophy is better than the other; it hinges on the research questions that the researcher is looking to answer (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 109). The most important issue is the research viewpoint be appropriate for specific research problem and the current study is on barriers to organic consumption, thus a research philosophy considered for this study should help to solve research problem.

There are four main research paradigms: positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 119).

**Table 3.1:** The four research philosophies

Positivism	This is the philosophical stance of the natural scientist and it entails working with an visible social reality and the end product can be law-like generalisations similar to those in the natural sciences (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 113).
Realism	This epistemological position relates to scientific enquiry with the essence of realism being that, what the senses show us as reality, is the truth and that objects have an existence independent of the human mind (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 114).
Interpretivism	This research philosophy supports a viewpoint that it is necessary for a researcher to comprehend variances between humans in their role as social performers (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 115). Interpretivists believe reality is created by social performers (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 71).
Pragmatism	This is a subdivision of philosophy that is concerned with variation and action also the interaction between action and knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 116).

Among the four research philosophies identified by Saunders et al. (2009, p. 119), interpretivism has been adopted for this study. One of the reasons for choosing the interpretivist paradigm is its ability to solve the research question in this study. According to Wahyuni (2012, p. 71), interpretivists carry the belief that reality is created by individuals and people's interpretations of what reality means to them personally. This takes cognisance of the fact that individuals each have their own histories, expectations and experiences which contribute to the ongoing creation of reality that exists in the broader social context through their social interactions with each other (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 119). This research philosophy seeks to emphasise the importance of understanding participants and how they interpret the world. Thus, to explore barriers to organic consumption, the interpretivism approach was preferred as a research philosophy that assists to better understand participants' reasons for non-purchase behaviour.

Interpretivism on the other hand, supports that it is necessary for the researcher to understand variances between humans in their role as social artists (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 115). As social actors, individuals understand their performance roles and others' performance roles according to the denotation given to those characters. However, the challenge in the interpretivist viewpoint is to come in to the social world

of research focus and to comprehend their world from their opinion (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 137). Thus, to better explain the research question on barriers to organic purchases, an interpretivist approach was preferred to enable better understanding of participants as social actors in organic consumer decision making.

The interpretivism model was believed to be the most suitable approach for the current study as this study aims to unearth information on barriers to organic consumption. The reason for choosing an interpretivism philosophy was informed by the research question: to ascertain barriers to organic food consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa and, since this research is exploratory in nature, interpretivism can best assist in answering the research question.

### **3.3.1 Research Strategy: Qualitative Research**

The qualitative approach was adopted as the main strategy for this research because it permits the researcher to discover important questions and processes, and also understand relationships in the data (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 150). Qualitative research attempts to broaden and deepen understanding of how things came to be the way they are in the social world (Hancock et al., 2009, p. 4). Another benefit to qualitative research is that it is designed primarily for exploratory purposes; it is descriptive and usually tends to obtain in-depth insights into a relatively small number of participants (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 150). Thus, for this study qualitative research strategy was preferred.

### **3.4 Research Design**

Research design is the proposal for satisfying research objectives in order to reasonably respond to the research question identified in the exploration phase (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 21), and the overall strategy to gather and analyse data (Hair, Bush, & Ortinau, 2009, p. 51). Thus, this section will outline research design used to unpack barriers to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

This research was exploratory in nature as the research aimed at determining barriers to organic food consumption in South Africa. According to Blumberg, Cooper, and Schindler (2005, p. 132), the exploratory research method is best for new fields of

investigation to scope out the scale of a specific behaviour or research problem, and hereafter produce initial ideas about a research problem, or to also examine the viability of undertaking that phenomenon. Thus, our research aims at better understand barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa and exploratory research design is preferred.

### **3.4 Sample Design**

Sampling denotes the process of selecting a sample or unit of analysis such as people, objects or organisations from a total population in order to obtain information on the research problem being investigated in a way that represents the population of interest (Hair et al., 2009). The reason for sampling is that it is not possible to study whole populations because of cost constraints and feasibility, hence, a demonstrative sample from the population must be selected for observation and analysis (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 65). This section outlines the sampling technique used in the current study.

The sample for this study comprised participants who complied with the set criteria (inclusion) of the study. The criteria included being a non-user or infrequent user of organic food but someone who believes there are benefits to consuming organic foods. The reason for these inclusion criteria was that the research sought to find out why people who know and believe that there are benefits to organic consumption, still do not buy organic products. These research inclusion criteria enabled the researcher to get information from participants who represent the population of interest.

Secondly, participants had to be the main food purchaser for the household. People who fit this profile were the ones who can best contribute to the current study on the exploration of the barriers to organic purchases. The reason for this inclusion criteria was to gain insight from main food purchasers on their produce purchase behaviour and personal barriers to organic food purchases. The inclusion criteria also enabled researcher to get information from information-rich participants, as these main food purchasers knew and believed that there were benefits to organic consumption, but still do not buy organic products.

A non-probability sampling design was utilised. This sampling method does not positively enable generalisation of findings across the entire population (Venter et al.,

2010, p. 273). Since the nature of this study was exploratory, non-probability sampling was a preferred method to provide insight on the subject of barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Generalisation was not the purpose.

Participants were selected so as to include a variety of demographic and lifestyle variables were represented in the sample. Thus, included in the sample were at least one couple with young children (at least one preschool child); a couple with no children living at home; a household shopper with older children and a single person with no children living at home. This spread of participants was chosen in order to examine the relationship that these demographic factors may (or may not) have with organic purchaser perspectives (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 9). As this research was focussed on participants who believe there are benefits of organic product consumption but do not purchase organic products, identifying participants who met the criteria was difficult. In-depth interviews were conducted with participants who met the selection criteria.

#### **3.4.1 The Sample Size**

Sample size in qualitative research is relatively smaller than quantitative research sample size, because qualitative research methods seeks to gather in-depth understanding of a complex phenomenon, which are mostly centred on the why and how of research project condition, procedure, subculture, section and social interactions (Dworkin, 2012, p. 1319). Researchers shy away from suggesting what is adequate sample size (Mason, 2010, p. 1). The guidance in relation to sample size for qualitative research suggest anywhere from 5 to 50 participants in a study as satisfactory (Dworkin, 2012, p. 1119). While many experts are of the opinion that saturation is ideal, some give numerical direction for graduate students to sample between 12 and 60, with 30 being the mean (Baker & Edwards, 2013, p. 5). Thus, the planned sample size for the current study was 30 participants or when data saturation was reached.

Data saturation is when participants responses start recurring and there is no ability to obtain new information, and further coding is no longer possible (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p. 1408; Venter et al., 2010, p. 273). This point was reached after 25 semi-

structured interviews were conducted. Thus, the current study was guided by data saturation in determining sample size.

### **3.4.2 Sampling Method**

Sampling is defined as a process of selecting the subjects of analysis such as people, objects or organisations from a population in order to attain meaningful information on the phenomenon being investigated by the researcher in a way that represents the population's interest (Hancock et al., 2009, p. 22). The sampling method used for the current study was convenience sampling for initial participants and snowball sampling for the rest of the study. The sample for this study comprised participants who complied with the inclusion criteria of the study.

Snowball sampling was valuable to gain information concerning a relatively under-explored topic such as barriers to organic purchases, where population members are difficult to locate (Venter et al., 2010, p. 275). Participants for the current study were difficult to locate as the research topic needed participants who knew about benefits of organic purchases but were not purchasers of organic products, so without being engaged according to compliance with the inclusion criteria it was not possible to recruit participants, therefore, referrals were received from initial participants (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015; Venter et al., 2010, p. 276). The participants were selected regardless of their income, education, nationality and other demographic characteristics. First participants to the current study were conveniently identified by the researcher from his network, these potential participants met the inclusion criteria. Thus selection of participants relied on convenience sampling for initial participants and snowball sampling techniques thereafter.

The selection of respondents was carried out in two stages. The initial participants (seed informants) were identified within researchers personal, family and professional networks and this initial stage can be seen as using convenient sampling (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015, p. 335). The initial participants were from the researchers' network who met the inclusion criteria i.e. they indicated knowledge of benefits of organic food consumption, also were grocery shoppers for their households but were not regular buyers of organic foods. The initial participants were from different ages, gender, income and background.

The second stage of participant recruiting used the snowball sampling technique to recruit the rest of participants. Once data was collected from the seed informants, they were asked to provide names of individuals who may be eager to partake in the current study (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015, p. 335; Venter et al., 2010, p. 276). These initial participants provided contact details of possible contributors, thus ensuring a continuous referral chain of possible participants. The second stage participants were recruited using snowball sampling, a non-probabilistic, non-random sampling technique which relies on the interviewer making initial contact with informants (Henryks & Pearson, 2013, p. 9; Palys, 2008, p. 697; Robinson, 2014, p. 32). Thus, snowball sampling was used for the current study after convenience sampling was used for initial participants.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

As this study was exploratory in nature, in-depth interviews were conducted to gain insight on consumer behaviour and thinking (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 73). Through interviews, an explanation of the participants' understandings of organic foods and how these experiences and understanding shape their views (Garrett, 2012, p. 99) for non-purchase of organic food products was established.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to be an appropriate technique, as they allowed two-way communication. The interviews were based on 29 questions and were directed face-to-face interviews to permit a flow of communication between the participants and the interviewer, which is appropriate for a small number of participants and is perfect for the acquisition of understandings and perspectives (Venter et al., 2010, p. 275). The semi-structured interview, according to Hancock et al. (2009, p. 17), is an in-depth interview that is a discussion between the researcher and the participant instead of a closed-ended question and answer session. The research questions in the Interview Guide (Appendix 1) were raised based on the research aims and objectives to better understand barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

The process of data collection included manual recording of interviews with the permission of the participants. Thereafter, field notes of interviews and the development of interviews were noted. These notes assist to refresh the researcher's

memory during transcription (Venter et al., 2010). Thus, all relevant information was recorded and noted by the researcher during data collection.

### **3.5.1 Interview Guide**

For data to be collected, a semi-structured interview guide (**Appendix 1**) was used to allow all participants to answer the same questions and consisted of prearranged open-ended questions; this gives participants the opportunity to answer freely whilst allowing the researcher to probe participants within the area of interest to elaborate on their responses (Venter et al., 2010, p. 275).

The interviews were conducted from November 2016 to February 2017 and participants were interviewed in the comfort of their homes and offices. The average time for an interview was 30 minutes.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The process of analysing qualitative data involves pulling apart, segmenting and reuniting data to formulate meaningful findings in order to draw implications (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 75). The qualitative data obtained from interviews were recorded manually from participants (Garrett, 2012, p. 392; Klerk & Greeff, 2010, p. 270).

Thereafter, transcribed scripts were sent to participants to check and confirm captured information and to ensure credibility of data. The transcripts were used to analyse data by means of inductive content analysis, stressing key words in each line (Venter et al., 2010, p. 276). Similar statements are grouped by key words used by respondents into concepts and themes and categorised according to relevant questions asked from interview guide (Venter et al., 2010, p. 276).

The research data analysis sought to specifically understand barriers to organic food consumption. The use of thematic and content analysis enabled themes to be identified from the data (Venter et al., 2010, p. 276). The importance of this process was to ensure consistency with the underlying theoretical framework of the study, emergent similar themes were grouped together in accordance with their relatedness which was determined on the basis of similar responses whose messages were of the same



meaning (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 75). Thus, data analysis was conducted to assist the researcher unpack barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

### **3.7 Research Trustworthiness**

There are four measures of research trustworthiness for qualitative data which have been generally mentioned in the social science research method literature, and used to assess the quality of qualitative research: credibility, which parallels internal validity; transferability, which resembles external validity; dependability, which equates to reliability; and confirmability, which parallels objectivity (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 76). More discussion on these constructs follows below.

#### **3.7.1 Credibility**

Credibility parallels internal validity in quantitative studies and measures whether the study actually measures or tests what is intended (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 77). To ensure credibility of data in qualitative research informants were asked to read transcripts of dialogues in which they have participated after it was transcribed. The aim was to test whether informants consider that their words match what they actually intended, since a cell-phone recorder has been used, the articulations themselves should at least have been accurately captured (Shenton, 2004, p. 68). The double checking of participants responses was done to achieve credibility.

#### **3.7.2 Transferability**

Transferability refers to the level of applicability to other settings or situations. However, data from a qualitative study is not reproducible, and so, it is not possible to apply a qualitative study in a different setting without making provisions in your data (Shenton, 2004, p. 73; Wahyuni, 2012, p. 77). In order to evaluate the extent of transferability for a study, similar projects employing the same methods but conducted in different environments could well be of great value (Shenton, 2004, p. 70). The current study aimed to achieve transferability of research findings.

However, to achieve transferability of data for the current research contextual data was provided to establish background of study. Also detailed description of the research problem was provided to allow comparisons to be made (Shenton, 2004, p. 73). An

adequate explanation of research characteristics and participants descriptors was provided to enhance transferability (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 77)). Thus, the researcher aimed at achieving transferability by providing details of the research setup.

### **3.7.3 Dependability**

This corresponds to the notion of reliability which promotes replicability or repeatability. Dependability concerns taking into account all the changes that occur in a setting and how these affect the way research is being conducted (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 77). To achieve dependability for the current study a detailed explanation of the research design was given and research process outlined to enable future researchers to follow a similar research framework.

### **3.7.4 Confirmability**

This refers to the extent to which others can confirm the findings in order to ensure that the results reflect the understandings and experiences from observed participants, rather than the researcher's own preferences (Wahyuni, 2012, p. 77). To achieve confirmability for the current study documentation on data and progress of research therefore was carefully kept in the form of research emails and interim summaries as parts of the research working book and audit trail was ensured to enable an examination of both the research process and research outputs by tracing out the step-by-step course of the research.

## **3.8 Ethical consideration**

The University of KwaZulu-Natal research procedure was followed, which ensured that before any data was collected, the researcher obtained Ethical Clearance (attached in **Appendix 3**) for the study from the Research Office of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher used an informed consent form (**Appendix 2**) and informed every individual that participated in the study that their identity and views were protected. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants was guaranteed. Participating in this research was voluntary and all participants were made aware of this.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

The research problem was discussed as the barriers to organic food purchases in South Africa. Research objectives were tabled and discussion on how each objective enabled the researcher to answer the research problem, was provided. The type of research conducted was qualitative and the methods used to collect data were in-depth interviews while data was analysed using thematic analysis.

The process outlined in this chapter provided the data that fulfilled the objectives of the study and provided the findings described and discussed in the following chapters.

## Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study achieved through administration of the interview guide. It also describes briefly how the data was organised for analysis. The interview questions are then presented with the discussion of the results.

The data collection took place in the Pietermaritzburg area. The aim was to target consumers that purchase groceries for their households and were aware of benefits of consuming organic fresh products. The aim of targeting consumers that purchase groceries was that they represent the target sample of interest whose understanding and perception of organic products is relevant to the research problem.

Literature was used to formulate themes for the study and this chapter covers eight sections: the demographic profile of participants, purchase intention, attitude, the influence of subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, moral attitude, health consciousness and environmental concern.

### 4.2 Sample Description

The following presents a demographic description of the sample:

#### 4.2.1 Age

**Table 4.1:** Age of Participants

Age	Number	Percentage (%)
20-29 years	6	24%
30-39 years	12	48%
40-49 years	4	16%
50- 59 years	3	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

The participants included the young and the old. Most of participants were between age 30 and 39 followed by 20 to 29 year olds. The age group of participants ranged from 20 to 59 years.

#### 4.2.2 Gender

**Table 4.2:** Gender of Participants

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	22	88%
Male	3	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

There were twenty-five interviews conducted and twenty-two were conducted with women. This was done because literature informs that women have more opinions on organic products than men (Bryła, 2016, p. 737; Heyns et al., 2014, p. 243; Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). The current research used a screening question for participant inclusion which asked if participants did household shopping and this also led to a predominantly female sample.

#### 4.2.3 Ethnicity

**Table 4.3:** Ethnicity of Participants

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Black	14	56 %
Coloured	1	4 %
Indian	5	20 %
White	5	20 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

There was representation of the major race groups in the study with blacks representing the majority of participants. This was due to the type of sampling method used namely, snowballing, where participants referred the interviewer to someone in their network.

#### 4.2.4 Education, Employment and Income

**Table 4.4:** Education, Employment and Income of Participants

<b>Education, Employment and Income of Participants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Matric	6	24 %
Degree/Diploma	15	60 %
Post-Graduate	4	16 %
<b>Employment</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Student	2	8 %
Employed	21	84 %
Self-Employed	2	8 %
<b>Income</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0 – 120 000	11	44 %
121 000 – 250 000	10	40 %
>250 000	4	16 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

All participants had a minimum of a matric with most participants having a diploma/degree (15 of 25 participants).

There were participants who were students, employed and self-employed with most of participants earning some kind of income (23 of 25 of participants), and 21 of the participants earning in excess of R250000 per annum. The aim of this study was to unpack barriers of organic consumption and adults who are employed, represent the right profile for organic consumption thus would assist in unpacking barriers to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

#### 4.2.5 Are There Children in the Household, How Old are your Children?

**Table 4.5:** Age of Children Living with Participants

<b>Age of Children</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0 – 18 years	16	64%
Over 18 years	1	4%
None	8	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

There were mainly participants with children under the age of 18 years with 64 % of participants having children under 18 yrs. in the household, however, 32 % of participants had no children living in their household.

The sections that follow include a discussion of the responses to each question in the interviews. The main themes extracted from the data, through content analysis of the transcripts, are presented in bold in the discussion. They are also listed in the table with an indication of the extent of their mention in the data corpus.

### 4.3 Organic Fresh Produce Buying Behaviour

The following questions aid in addressing Objective 1 of the study which is: to ascertain buying behaviour and reasons for organic consumption. Questions 1 to 3 were asked to address this objective.

#### 4.3.1 Question 1: *Do you buy organic food products? If so how often?*

The most common response was that participants do not regularly buy organic fresh produce, with some participants stating they buy organic occasionally. It should be noted that participants were asked a screening question i.e. *if they buy organic products regularly and were aware of organic consumption benefits*. The screening for participants was asked to break ice and settle the participants, and mostly to confirm their eligibility to participate in the study. The objective was to interview participants who were aware of benefits to organic consumption but were not regular purchasers of organic food products. The organic produce buying frequencies are as follows:

**Table 4.6:** Organic Products Buying Frequencies

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Occasionally buy organic	9	36%
Never buy organic	16	64%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Thus, the study comprised participants who were not regular buyers of organic foods.

4.3.2 Question 2: *What kinds of organic produce do you buy, if any?*

After participants had mentioned that they do not buy organic products regularly, they stated that the type of organic products they do purchased occasionally varied and included the following types;

**Table 4.7:** Purchase Frequencies and Kinds of Organic Products Participants Purchase

Type	Frequency	Percentage
I don't purchase organic	9	31 %
Not sure if I buy organic or not as no there is no label	7	24 %
Fruits and Vegetables	10	34 %
Clothes	3	11 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100 %</b>

There were varying kinds of organic products mentioned by participants, some stated that they **don't purchase organic**, yet they know about the benefits of consuming organic food products. However, there were participants who were not sure if products they bought were organic or not; these participants were regarded as non-purchasers of organic products. Others indicated that they sometimes bought organic **fruits and vegetables** while others mentioned clothes as organic products they purchase. The frequencies do not necessarily add to 25 as multiple themes may have surfaced in participants' responses to this question.



Thus, there were varying themes that emerged with 24 % of participants not sure if they bought organic products while 36% of participants did not purchase organic foods. The majority (24% and 36%) of participants were not buyers' organic foods and 40% of participants occasionally bought fruits and vegetables.

4.3.3 Question 3: *Where do you buy from? Name the grocery shops.*

The most common shops where participants did their fresh produce buying were:

**Table 4.8:** Shops Where Participants Bought

<b>Name of Shop</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Pick 'n Pay	14	45 %
Woolworths	7	23 %
Checkers	4	13%
Spar	4	13 %
Fruit and Veg City (now known as Food Lover's Market)	2	6 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The responses show that participants buy fresh produce products from mostly retail outlets where they do their monthly shop for groceries. Participants did not buy all their monthly groceries in one outlet hence the total frequency is greater than 25. They mentioned that they buy in outlets with the lowest price, so at the end of month they check for bargains and purchase their groceries from outlets that give them the lowest prices.

Therefore, it can be concluded that participants were not regular consumers of organic products though they knew about benefits of consuming organic products. The types of organic products mentioned by participants were fruits and vegetables. Retail outlets where participants said that they bought their fresh produce were Woolworths, Pick n Pay, Fruit and Veg City (now known as Food Lover's Market), Checkers and Spar.

#### 4.4 Purchase Intention

The following questions unpack Objective 8 of the current study which is: to determine the role of intention as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. Questions 4 to 6 were asked to address this objective.

##### 4.4.1 Question 4: *What are benefits to purchasing organic foods?*

To better understand participants' intentions, they were probed about what they regard as benefits of organic foods. The key themes to emerge from the responses to this question were:

**Table 4.9:** Perceptions to Purchasing Organic Foods

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<i>Positive Perceptions Total</i>	<b>20</b>	<b>80%</b>
Healthy	14	56%
Better for the environment	6	24%
<i>Negative perceptions Total</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>20%</b>
No better than conventional products	5	20%

The most frequent theme related to benefits to purchasing organic was **healthy**; it focuses on consumers' positive perceptions of health benefits associated with consuming organic products. For example, Participants 15 stated that,

*“Organic foods are healthy as they are grown with less harmful chemicals”.*

There was a common perception that absence of chemicals while growing produce was a health element. This perception was shared by six of 14 participants who mentioned health as a benefit to organic consumption. Thus, participants value the absence of pesticides and other chemicals on organic products and perceive absence of chemicals to be a benefit to consuming organic produce.

There was a perception from participants that chemicals used in growing conventionally farmed produce may cause diseases. Participant 21 stated that,

*“Healthy and free of pesticides that cause cancer in the long run.”*

The perception of chemicals causing diseases in the long run was emphasised mostly by participants who had mentioned health as a benefit of organic consumption. These participants viewed the presence of chemicals in produce as a health risk that can cause disease in the long run.

Participants also mentioned that organic products are natural and contain nutrients without chemicals. Participant 5 stated that,

*“organic products are healthy as they are natural products that contains nutrients and no pesticides or any other dangerous chemicals”.*

While ‘natural’ was a perception that some participants viewed as an element of organic produce being healthier, ‘natural’ also meant absence of pesticides and other dangerous chemicals.

The second theme that emerged was **better for the environment** and focussed on consumers’ perception of environmental safety of farming organically. Participant 6, for example, stated that organic products provide

*“better care for the environment since using less chemicals. Chemicals can damage the eco-system leading to death of fish and other insects”.*

The better care for environment perception is related to health perception as one of the reasons given for the health benefit was the absence of chemicals. However, chemicals mentioned by participants also related to the damage to the ecosystem caused by use of pesticides. Thus, the chemicals mentioned related to damage to the environment and not damage to participants’ health. Participant 5 states that organic products are

*“better for environment as they are farmed God's way without distracting top soil and rigorously changing the soil structure while using no pesticides or any other chemicals”.*

On better caring for the environment, participants perceive less chemicals and farming without distracting soil structure as important elements to better caring for the environment that is achieved by farming the organic way. Thus, a benefit of

purchasing organic products was perceived to be that they are farmed in a method that takes better care of the environment.

The theme **no better than conventional products** focuses on consumers' negative or unfavourable perceptions about organic products being no better than conventional products. Although participants said they understood the benefits of organic in response to the screening question, when they started to discuss these, they seemed to change their mind. It appeared that while participants were aware of the stated benefits of organic, they did not believe that these benefits were real. Participant 4 stated that,

*"I don't buy organic because they are expensive and are no better than conventional products".*

The participant was asked about benefits of organic consumption and had no benefits to share and when probed said that he has no benefit in mind except that he does not buy organic as he sees no benefit as organic is same as conventional. Participant 24 also stated that there is

*"No benefit to organic consumption; it's a marketing ploy, organic is same as conventional".*

Thus, there seems to be a perception of greenwashing in that some consumers are not aware of organic benefits and believe organic produce is no better than conventional products.

Therefore, varying themes on benefits to organic purchasing were identified, these included positive and negative perceptions towards organic products. There were four of five participants who had positive perceptions such as that organic fresh produce is **healthier** and **better for the environment**. However, one in five participants believed organic fresh produce is **no better than conventional** products. However, while participants were recruited for their belief in organic benefits, there were participants who stated that there was no difference between organic and conventional farming methods.

#### 4.4.1.1 Relationship with Demographic Variables

To address Objective 8 an exploration of the relationship between intention variables and demographic variables is discussed below. It should be noted that exploration is a secondary objective and is based on too small a sample and an unevenly distributed demographic profile and thus results would need validation through a quantitative study. The purpose here is to see whether such demographic variables may be worth further investigation in future.

##### 4.4.1.1.1 Age of Participants

The responses from participants were matched with demographic variables to ascertain if there is any relationship between demographic variables and purchase intention. The following tables present these relationships.

**Table: 4.10:** Relationship Between Age and Themes

Age	Healthy	Better for environment	No better than conventional
20-29 years (N=6)	4 (29%)	1 (17%)	2 (40%)
30-39 years(N=12)	7 (50%)	2 (33%)	3 (60%)
40-49 years (N=4)	2 (14%)	2 (33%)	0
50- 59 years (N=3)	1 (7%)	1 (17%)	0
<b>Total (N=25)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>

This means that of the 14 participants who had **health** as a theme for their intention to purchase organic there were 4 of 14 (29%) participants who were between the ages of 20 and 29 years, 7 of 14 (50%) of participants were between 30 and 39 years. The other 2 of 14 (14%) participants were between 40 and 49, while 1 of 14 participants was between 50 and 59 years. On the theme **better for environment**, 1 of 6 (29%) participants were between the ages of 20 and 29 years, 2 of 6 (33%) of participants were between 30 and 39 years and 40 and 49 years also had 2 of 6 (33%) of participants. Lastly, 1 of 6 (17%) participants were between 50 and 59 years.

Thus, the most prevalent age range in the study, 30 to 39 years, most often mentioned **health** as an important theme for their intention to purchase organic produce while the

participants indicating the theme **better care for the environment** were more evenly spread across the ages. Lastly, on the theme organic is **no better than conventional** was mentioned by younger participants (under the age of 39).

#### 4.4.1.1.2 Age of Children

**Table 4.11:** Age of Children in Household

Age of Children	Healthy	Better for environment	No better than conventional
0 – 18 years (N=16)	9 (64%)	4 (67%)	1(20%)
Over 18 years (N=1)	0	0	1(20%)
No kids (N=8)	5 (36%)	2 (33%)	3(60%)
<b>Total (N=25)</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>

Nine of the 14 (64%) participants who mentioned the theme **healthy**, were living with their children younger than 18 years. There were also five of the 14 (36%) participants who mentioned the theme **healthy** who had no kids in their households. Thus, while there were more participants with kids in the household who perceived organic foods as healthy foods compared to participants with no kids in their households, and if one looks at the proportions of each group, just over half the respondents with children under 18, 56% (9 of 16), perceive organic produce as healthy while 62.5% (5 of 8) of the participants without children perceive organic produce to have this benefit.

On the theme **better for the environment** there were more participants who had kids (67%) in their households who mentioned the theme, **better for the environment** as an important theme for their intention to purchase organic products compared to those who had no kids (33%) in their households. However, looking at the proportions of the groups, in both groups one in four participants see better for the environment as a benefit to buying organic produce. Thus, it seems that having children in the household does not really impact perceptions of the benefits of organic produce although more people overall perceive health benefits than benefits for the environment.

4.4.1 Question 5: *When you purchase food for yourself or your household are your intentions to purchase organic foods? Why so? Why not?*

As expected due to the screening questions, participants were non-purchasers and occasional purchasers of organic products. However, when asked if they intend purchasing organic produce the following frequencies were gathered:

**Table 4.12:** Intention to Purchase Organic Frequencies

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
I don't intend buying organic	17	68%
I intend buying organic	8	32%

While participants were recruited for knowing about organic benefits and non-purchase of organic products, there were 68 % of participants who do not intend purchasing organic while 32 % of participants who intended to buy organic produce and occasionally purchase organic. The main themes from data to explain this lack of intention were:

**Table 4.13:** Intention to Purchase Organic

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Price of organic products	12	48 %
Labelling of organic products	8	32 %
Staying healthy	3	12 %
Availability of organic products	2	8 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most occurring theme given as a reason for lack of intention to purchase organic foods was **price of organic products**. High price was mentioned by participants as a barrier to the organic purchase decision. There were few participants who stated that they intend purchasing organic products but are deterred by price. Participant 6 stated that,

*“I intend to purchase organic but due to high price I sometimes end up buying conventional”.*

This represents a dilemma that participants say they face at the point of purchase. They know and understand the benefits of organic however, the high price of organic deters participants from purchasing organic produce. Literature refers to this dilemma as the **intention-behaviour gap** (Carrington et al., 2010, p.139). Participant 3 stated that,

*“price is the determining factor when buying groceries for my family”.*

According to participants who mentioned price as a deterring element to organic purchase, intention to purchase organic products is present, however, decision to purchase is limited by participants’ budget. Thus, the negative perception of high price may negatively influence intention to purchase organic products. Thus, high price perception acts as a barrier to organic consumption.

The second theme that emerged as the reason for the lack of intention to purchase organic products, was **labelling of organic products**. There was a common comment by participants that organic products are not identifiable and labelled at shops where they purchase their groceries. For example, Participant 17 stated that,

*“Yes, I would like to purchase more organic foods, the only problem is that it’s not always labelled”.*

There was a common comment by participants that organic products are not clearly labelled in retail outlets where they buy their monthly groceries. As discussed earlier, most participants buy their monthly groceries at Pick n’ Pay, Checkers, Food Lover’s Market City, Spar and Woolworths and organic products are not readily available at these shops except for Woolworths and Pick n’ Pay which have organic products sections on their shelves. However, where these stores have organic sections, many consumers are not seeing these. It may be that these sections are small and only include certain fresh produce, but could also be that they are not clearly and distinctively labelled.

However, participants also mentioned that labelling, whether organic or conventional, was not an important element in their intention to purchase products, price was mentioned as the deciding factor. Participant 14 states that,



*“my intentions are to purchase food, it’s never about organically labelled food”.*

While participants mentioned lack of labelling as a deterring factor to intention to purchase organic, others stated that labelling products as organic will not lead them to purchasing organic.

Another related theme that emerged was **availability of organic products**. Participants who stated that they do not intend to purchase organic products cited lack of availability of organic foods at most shops as the reason for a lack of intention to purchase. These participants stated that organic products are not available at most shops around Pietermaritzburg where they do their shopping for their households as these shops do not stock organic products. Participant 1 stated that,

*“when I go out to buy food my aim is not to buy organic food. I think the reason for that lies in the fact that organic foods are so scarce in the stores that one does not remember to look for them”.*

The unavailability of organic products at retail outlets where participants do their shopping was a factor that limited participants from buying organic foods. Thus, availability of organic products at retail outlets in Pietermaritzburg was an element limiting participants’ intention to purchase organic foods and a barrier to organic purchase.

A theme that emerged as a reason for participants’ intention to purchase organic products for themselves or their family was **staying healthy**. This theme was similar to a theme extracted in *Question 4*: Health benefits were also mentioned as a theme to purchase organic products. Participant 6 stated his reasons for organic purchase as,

*“I sometimes buy organic produce for health benefits associated with consuming organic products”.*

The organic purchase decision may be made as a health benefit participants believe come from consuming organic products. However, even though health benefits are stated by participants, they mentioned that they *sometimes* buy organic products; this

means is not a regular purchase decision. Health was also mentioned by participants who wanted to buy more organic products such as Participant 17 who stated that,

*“I sometimes buy organic food for health benefits but I would like to purchase more organic foods”.*

The perception that organic products are healthier than alternative fresh produce has an impact on participants as they state that they would like to purchase more organic products because of health benefits derived from organic consumption

Thus, the majority of responses reflect a lack of intention to purchase organic produce. Varying themes related to reasons for not intending to purchase organic fresh produce were identified; these were: price of organic products, labelling of organic products, availability of organic products.

The most common theme was price of organic products. However, participants generally stated that they perceive organic products as high priced and usually not available or labelled at outlets where they do their monthly shopping. Some participants mentioned the health benefits associated with consuming organic fresh produce as a reason for intending to purchase.

4.4.2 Question 6: *Why do you purchase organic foods? If you don't, what are the reasons for non-purchase?*

In *Question 1* above it was revealed that there were nine participants who stated that they occasionally buy organic and sixteen never buy organic. Furthermore, in *Question 5* above, 68 % of participants don't intend purchasing organic while 32 % of participants intend buying organic produce and occasionally purchase organic. There were reasons given for purchase and non-purchase of organic foods. These reasons were grouped into four themes that emerged from the responses to this question, these were:

**Table 4.14:** Reasons for Purchase and Non-Purchase of Organic Purchases

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Price	11	44 %
Health benefits	8	32 %
Labelling	2	8 %
Availability	2	8 %
No better than conventional	2	8 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

There were similarities in themes to *Question 5* above, but, there were varying views on the reasons for purchasing and not purchasing organic foods with **health benefits** being the only positive attribute associated with reasons for purchasing organic products mentioned by participants.

The **health** theme also emerged in *Question 4* and *Question 5* above where it was associated with positive perceptions of purchasing organic produce. In the interview with Participant 7, she stated that,

*“It’s healthy for the bodies to consume organic products”.*

The perception of **health** is an important element as it shows that some participants believe in **health** as a benefit of organic consumption. Participant 19 stated that,

*“Organic foods are healthier, tastier and status products that match my lifestyle”.*

There were eight participants who had health as their reason for purchase of organic foods, six of eight participants intended purchasing organic foods and two had no intention to purchase organic. Thus, there appears to be a positive relationship between **health** and intention to purchase organic foods.

The **health** theme was most common amongst Participants with children under the age of eighteen as of the eight participants who stated **health** as their reason for purchase

of organic products, seven participants had children under the age of eighteen living with them, while only one had no children living with them. This represented 44% (7 of 16), and 12.5% (1 of 8) of these sample strata. Therefore, it appears that households with children under the age of eighteen (18) are more inclined to purchase organic foods for the health benefits.

The theme **price** was mentioned as the reason for non-purchase of organic products. The theme of price also emerged as one of the themes to *Question 5* above. Participant 3 stated that,

*“price is the determining factor when choosing which food items to buy”.*

The element of price was an important factor that participants took into account while making a purchase decision. The perception of the high price of organic products is a deterring factor leading to non-purchase of organic products. Participant 15 stated that,

*“I avoid purchasing organic because of high price”.*

Thus, the perception of high price deters participants, and thus acts as a barrier to the purchasing of organic products in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

Another theme that emerged was **availability** of organic products at shops where participants do their monthly shopping. As discussed in *Question 3*, participants mentioned that they do their monthly shopping at retail outlets such as Food Lover’s Market, Pick ‘n Pay, Checkers, Woolworths and Spar. In the interview with Participant 5, she stated that,

*“Not many shops sell organic products”.*

The lack of availability of organic products at shops where participants did their monthly shopping was one of the barriers to purchase of organic products. In an interview with Participant 15, she stated that,

*“I don’t buy organic because it’s not available at the shop where I buy groceries for my family”.*

The theme **availability** was related to where participants did their monthly shopping; organic produce is not available at retail outlets where participants did their monthly shopping.

The organic **labelling** was another theme that emerged from this study as a reason for non-purchase of organic food products. Participant 5 stated that,

*“It’s not easy to identify organic products at shops as it’s not clearly labelled”.*

The labelling of organic products makes it easy for consumers to identify and buy such products, however, if organic products are not labelled it makes it difficult for consumers to identify them. Participant 15 also stated that,

*“Organic products are not labelled organic at a shop where I buy my monthly groceries, you have to ask shop attendant to be certain as these products are not labelled”.*

The lack of organic labelling emerged as reason for non-purchase of organic produce; a consumer cannot tell if produce is organic or not.

Another theme that emerged as the reason for the lack of intention to purchase organic foods was **no better than conventional**. This theme was related to a theme extracted in *Question 4* above. Despite participants being recruited for their belief in organic benefits, there were two participants who stated that there was no difference between organic and conventional farming methods. **No better than conventional** was also mentioned as a reason for lack of benefits to purchase organic products. Participant 16 stated that,

*“I don’t see benefits in purchasing organic foods as organic foods are no better than alternative”*

There was lack of participant belief on organic claims made by organic marketers. This was evident when participants were asked if they intend to purchase organic foods. Some participants stated they don’t believe organic foods are any better. Participant 23 stated that,

*“I don’t know of benefits to purchasing organic foods. All produce is from the soil and organic foods are no better than conventional foods”*

The participants’ disbelief of organic claims led to participants regarding organic foods as no better than conventional products. Thus, disbelief of organic claims was a barrier to organic purchase decisions.

Thus, the main reason participants intend to purchase organic products is health benefits derived from organic consumption, however, reasons for non-purchase of organic products includes high price, labelling and availability of organic products.

#### **4.5 Attitude**

The following questions unpack Objective 2 of the study which was: to determine the role of attitude as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. Questions 7 to 10 were asked to address this objective.

4.5.1 Question 7: *Tell me about the feelings or thoughts that you associate with consuming organic food products.*

The following themes emerged from asking participants to outline their feelings or thoughts associated with consuming organic products, and these themes are discussed in detail below.

**Table 4.15:** Feelings or Thoughts Associated with Consuming Organic Products

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Healthy	15	60%
Prestige product for the rich	5	20%
Better care for environment	3	12%
No feelings	2	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most occurring theme was **healthy**; this indicates that participants associate consuming organic products with healthy living. This is a positive attitude that participants have about organic consumption. Participant 3 stated that,

*“I feel it is money well spent consuming a healthier product”.*

The feeling participants have about organic products is that it is money well spent on health products, however, these participants stated that they do not buy organic products in the screening question. Participant 1 stated that,

*“The fundamental feelings that I have towards organic foods are good. I believe it is a healthier alternative to conventional foods and will benefit the consumer more in terms of their well-being too”.*

Participant 17 also stated that,

*“I feel great whenever I purchase organic and I feel I have made a healthier purchase decision”.*

Sixty percent of the participants perceived health as a positive feeling associated with consuming organic products. Thus, participants view organic purchase as a healthier purchase decision and have a positive attitude towards organic food purchase.

The second theme that emerged was **prestige product for the rich** as participants stated their feelings of organic foods is that of prestige products. While this might ordinarily be thought of as a positive attitude based on the field notes of the interviews, the context of this theme was negative. Participants considered organic produce to be for the ‘rich’ not for themselves and thus this theme was coded as negative. For example, Participant 23 stated that,

*“It’s a prestige product for the rich hence its high price”.*

The high price of organic products is one of the reasons participants have negative attitude towards organic products. This negative attitude relates to organic products being perceived as a prestige product. only for the rich. Participant 16 stated that,

*“I don’t purchase organic produce as I regard it a status [prestige] product”.*

The perception of organic produce as a status or prestige product is one of the reasons for non-purchase of organic products as participants feel that with its high price it is targeting a certain niche. In as much as ‘prestige’ might normally be seen as a positive

attitude, in this study high price and prestige perception was mentioned by participants as a barrier to organic purchases. Thus, with high price some participants regard organic products as status products that are not meant for them.

The third theme that emerged was **better care for environment** as participants stated that they feel better about caring for the environment by consuming organic products. Participant 19 stated that,

*“Whenever I consume organic I feel satisfied having contributed to taking care of environment”.*

Even though participants were recruited for their non-purchase of organic food products, they stated that whenever they consume organic products they feel better about caring for the environment. Participant 19 also stated that,

*“I feel satisfied with making eco-friendly decision”.*

There was a feeling of satisfaction that participants had if they consumed organic products and this was because of knowing the benefits of farming food the organic way. There was a positive attitude towards organic food products together with better caring for the environment.

The last theme to emerge on this question was **no feelings towards organic** foods. There were two participants who stated that they had **no feelings towards organic** foods Participant 22 stated that,

*“I don’t purchase organic so I have no feelings towards it”.*

The theme **no feelings towards organic** may be because of not knowing the benefits of organic consumption, leading to a neutral attitude towards organic products.

To sum up, there were positive, negative and neutral attitude themes participants had on feelings associated with consuming organic foods. The positive attitude themes were: **healthy** and **better care for environment** The most common theme was healthy, as participants stated that they associate organic products with health products. The negative attitude theme that emerged was: **prestige products for the rich** and the neutral theme, **no feelings towards organic**. These attitudes may be



associated with high price and lack of availability of organic products and lack of knowledge of organic consumption benefits.

4.5.2 Question 8: *Would you say you have a positive or negative attitude towards organic food consumption? Can you explain why you feel like that?*

Participants attitudes could be grouped as follows:

**Table 4.16:** Themes on Attitude Towards Organic Food Products

Category of Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	19	76%
Negative	6	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Seventy six percent of the participants had a **positive** attitude towards organic while 24 % had a **negative** attitude. Therefore, majority of participants had positive attitude towards organic foods.

While participants were recruited for their non-purchase of organic products and participants also stated they do not intend purchasing organic product in *Question 5* above, however, most participants had positive attitudes towards organic products. These responses of positive attitudes towards organic products without intention to purchase organic represents an **attitude-behaviour gap** (Aschemann-Witzel & Aagaard, 2014, p. 550).

The following themes emerged from asking participants to explain their positive and negative attitudes towards organic food consumption:

**Table 4.17:** Reasons for Attitude Towards Organic Foods

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Health	11	44%
Environmentally safe	6	24%
High price	6	24%
Status product	2	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common theme was **health**; this indicates reason for participants to have positive attitude towards organic products were because they perceive organic products to be a healthy alternative. Participant 1 stated that,

*“I have a positive attitude towards organic food consumption as in the long run it will benefit the consumer due to the health benefits it possesses”.*

The health benefit from consuming organic products was an important feature to participants and it was one of the reasons they had positive attitude towards organic products. Participant 5 stated that their attitude is

*“Positive. Organic products are healthy, pure and contain all natural nutrients”.*

The healthiness of organic products was perceived by participants to be as a result of organic products being pure and containing all natural nutrients. There were 44 % of participants who view health as the reason for their positive attitude towards organic produce. This was important to participants as they perceived it to use less chemicals that can damage or cause disease in the future of participants.

The health theme has emerged as the most common theme affecting participants’ intention to purchase organic products in *Question 4; Question 5; and Question 6* above. The health theme has also emerged as a reason for positive attitude towards organic foods.

The other theme was **environmentally safe**; this indicates that participants' positive attitude towards organic products is because they perceive organic products to be environmentally safe. Participant 10 stated that their attitude is,

*“Positive. It is an environmentally safe option. When I consume organic, I know there were no damaging chemicals used that affect the eco-system”.*

The environmentally safe theme is about participants perceiving organic products to be farmed in a way that takes care of the eco-system without the use of chemicals. Participants stated that they care about the environment and organic products are some of the tools that can be used to ensure better care of environment. Participant 7 states that they have a,

*“Positive attitude because there are environmental benefits to organic consumption such as clean farming without chemicals”.*

There was a common perception by participants that environmental concern is the reason they would like to behave in an environmentally friendly way. This was as a result of perceived environmental benefits from farming the organic way such as less use of chemicals that harm soil in the long run and chemicals that can damage fish if in contact with rivers.

The other theme was **price**; this indicates that participants' attitude towards organic products is because they perceive organic products to be high priced. Participant 22 stated that they have a,

*“Negative attitude, because of its high priced”.*

There was a common view by participants that organic products are high price compared to conventional products. This perception of high price was one the reasons for negative attitude toward organic products. Participant 24 said that they their attitude is,

*“Negative. Organic products are unnecessarily expensive”.*

The participant later stated that high price of organic products is the main reason for her non-purchase of organic products. However, she indicated that if it was the same

price as conventional products, she would choose organic products. This means some participants are aware of organic benefits, however, price remains the deterring factor to organic purchase intention as one in five participants cited high price as reason for non-purchase of organic foods.

The theme of **price** also emerged as common theme of participants' reasons for intention to purchase or not purchase organic products in *Question 4*, *Question 5* and *Question 6* above. Thus, price was also an important reason for the negative attitude towards organic products.

The last theme to emerge was **status product**; participants stated status product as a positive attitude they have towards organic products. Participant 20 stated that,

*“Organic is fashionable and a status product so I feel better if I buy organic it”.*

The participants who had a positive attitude towards organic products stated that they do not buy organic products or buy organic products occasionally, however, they have a positive attitude towards organic products. Also, Participant 19 stated that,

*“I enjoy purchasing organic products. I also enjoy status associated with organic food consumption”.*

This participant also mentioned that he is not a regular buyer of organic product however, he enjoys buying organic when he has financial means as he perceives organic products as a status product.

Therefore, the common theme was that participants had a positive attitude towards organic produce. Eleven participants stated **health** as their reason for a positive attitude, while six had **environmentally safe** as their reason for a positive attitude towards organic produce. Thus 76 % of participants had a positive attitude towards organic produce.

However, there were participants who had negative attitudes towards organic produce; these were attributed to high price associated with organic products which remains a

detering factor to organic purchase decision. Twenty four percent of participants had negative attitude towards organic produce.

4.5.3 Question 9: *Share with me good things associated with consuming organic foods.*

There were two themes that emerged from the interviews on participants’ views on the good thing associated with consuming organic foods. These are tabled below

**Table 4.18:** Good Things Associated with Consuming Organic

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Healthy	18	72 %
Environmentally safe	7	28 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common theme associated with organic products was the **healthy** theme. This represents a positive attitude that most participants have towards organic products. For example, Participant 1 stated that,

*“It’s a safer and healthier alternative to conventional foods due to no pesticides or insecticides being used”.*

The perception of healthiness was an important factor to participants as Participant 5 also stated that,

*“organic products include healthy, nutritious elements that excludes presence of chemicals and are valued by the body”.*

Participants viewed the absence of chemicals as an important factor in organic products. They also said that chemicals cause diseases such as cancer in the long run. Thus, participants viewed the health attribute of organic as a good thing associated with consuming organic products.

The theme of **health** occurred often while looking at attitudes towards organic products in Question 7 and Question 8.

The other theme that emerged in *Question 9*, was **environmentally safe**. Participants had a positive attitude towards organic products because they were perceived to be environmentally safe. This was mentioned by Participant 12 who stated that,

*“By consuming organic, I am taking care of environment as organic farming uses no pesticides, chemicals, and there is no engineering of farming process”.*

There was a drought in South Africa from 2014 to 2016. This led to an increase in food prices and participants kept mentioning that they feel the minimum they can do is act in an environmentally safe way such as farming the organic way in their home gardens to eat organic products without paying a high price charged at the shop. This was mentioned by Participant 4 who stated that,

*“The drought led to me to start my organic garden, it’s the best I can do to take better care of environment. I also buy organic whenever possible because it’s the least I can do to save the environment from our damage”.*

Therefore, participants perceived **health** as a good element associated with purchasing organic products. They also regarded **environmentally safe** as the other good thing associated with purchasing organic.

Thus, the positive attitude participants had towards organic products is a function of perceptions of good health and of environmental safety associated with purchasing organic products.

#### 4.5.4 Question 10: *Tell me about the bad things associated with consuming organic foods*

There were two themes that emerged from the interviews about participants’ views of bad things associated with consuming organic products. These are tabled below.

**Table 4.19:** Bad Things Associated with Consuming Organic

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High Price	18	72%
Unavailability	7	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common theme was on bad things associated with consuming organic was **price** of organic products. Participants stated they can't consume organic foods because of high price. For example, Participant 14 stated that,

*“Organic consumption is associated with high price.”*

The **high price** theme was the most common theme with participants stating that their budget is minimised by the economic conditions in the country so every penny counts. Participant 25 stated that,

*“The price of organic is too high”.*

This perception of high price makes it difficult for participants to make an organic purchase decision. Participant 25 even stated that she is aware of benefits associated with consuming organic however, due to high price, she has no guilt in purchasing conventional products.

The theme of price in relation to attitude of participants to organic products also came out in Question 8 above where participants specified they have a negative attitude towards organic products because of high price of organic products. There were 24 % of participants who had negative attitude towards organic products. However, when participants were asked about bad things associated with organic products 72 % of participants stated **high price**. Thus, high price emerged as a barrier to organic purchases.

The other theme that emerged was **unavailability**, when participants were asked about bad things associated with consuming organic. The unavailability of organic products at supermarkets where participants did their shopping was a barrier to organic purchases. Participant 21 states that,

*“Availability of organic products at normal shops is a mission... we don't always have access to organic shops as these are very scarce in Pietermaritzburg”.*

The bad thing associated with organic product is availability of organic products at the shops where participants did their monthly shopping. The un-availability of organic products makes organic shopping an extra burden due to the need to search for organic produce at special organic shops. Participant 20 stated that,

*“Unavailability of organic products at all food outlets where I do my shopping”.*

The bad thing associated with organic products is its unavailability at all shops where participants did their shopping. Availability of organic products will help participants to remember to make the organic purchase decision. The fact that most shops in Pietermaritzburg do not stock organic products makes it difficult for a consumer to purchase an organic product.

The theme of **availability**, or lack thereof, of organic produce, came out earlier in this chapter while discussing the attitudes consumers had toward purchasing organic products. In *Question 5*, the theme of availability also emerged where participants stated availability of organic products as their reason for non-purchase of organic products. Also in *Question 6*, the theme of lack of availability emerged where participants stated availability of organic products was the reason for their negative attitude towards organic products.

Therefore, the most occurring theme was **high price** as participants regard it as a bad thing associated with purchasing organic products. The other theme was unavailability of organic products where participants did their monthly shopping. Thus, the negative attitude participants had towards organic products is a function of perception of high price and perception of unavailability of organic products.

To sum up, participants had positive attitude towards organic products due to perceived **health** benefits of consuming organic products. The other reason for a positive attitude was the perception that organic products are **environmentally safe**. Participants perceive that organic purchases mitigate the rise of environmental damage. However, some participants had negative attitudes towards organic products



and these are because of **high price, unavailability** of organic products and perception that organic products are status products for the rich. Thus, there were mixed attitude towards organic products.

#### 4.6 Subjective Norm

The following questions unpack Objective 3 of the current study which is: to establish the role of subjective norms as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. Questions 11 and 12 were asked to address this objective.

##### 4.6.1 Question 11: *Is it important or not to you that you consume organic food in the same amount or type as your friends and family?*

There were two themes that emerged. These are tabled below:

**Table 4.20:** Importance of Consuming Organic the Same Way as Friends and Family

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Not important	15	60%
Important	10	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most occurring theme was it was **not important** to consume organic food in the same amount as friends and family. This theme showed that there is limited social influence to purchase organic. Thus, participants enjoy having their own organic beliefs separate from their friends and families. As stated by Participant 1,

*“It’s not important to me at all. I buy what I want and do not take notice or care of what others are buying”.*

Some participants such as Participant 1 indicated that they enjoy being different from others and having unique food choices from family and friends. Participant 21 also stated that it is

*“not important at all to share food choices with family”.*

These participants show that they are not influenced by family or friends to buy organic products; they independently decide to buy or not to buy organic products.

However, for every three consumers not influenced by social norms, there are two consumers who are, and thus the theme it is **important** to consume organic food in the same amount as friends and family showed that some participants are influenced by the organic beliefs of their families and friends. Participant 2 stated that,

*“I like doing things that my family and friends also do and none of them are consuming organic”.*

There were participants who stated that it is a nice feeling to share beliefs with family it shows that you belong. However, they stated that their families had not purchased or consumed organic so they also had not made that purchase decision. Participant 14 stated the following about the importance of consuming organic the same way as friends and family,

*“yes [it is important] because we discuss food choices but we haven’t discussed organic food choices and I like to do what my family does”.*

Thus, food choices were not independently made by the participant but were influenced by family and friends.

To sum up, while more participants indicated that social norms were **not important** in their decision to consume organic food, for every three participants who indicated that social norms were not important, there were two who indicated that they were, thus results are mixed.

#### 4.6.2 Question 12: *Do people whose opinion you value also share your views on purchase or non-purchase of organic? How do you feel about that?*

There were two themes that emerged. These are tabled below:

**Table 4.21:** Opinion Leaders and their Views on Organic Purchasing

Category of Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	56%
No	11	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common response that emerged to the above question was “yes”. People whose opinion participants’ value share similar views on organic non-consumption. For example, Participant 20 stated that,

*“Yes, we share experiences, so food choices are also shared we all don’t buy organic”.*

There was a common pattern to answers by participants that their food choices are shared by their families and friends. Participant 5 stated that,

*“They [family and friends] feel the same and can’t afford to purchase organic as it’s expensive”.*

Most of the participants were mothers and did most of the cooking at their homes. They also stated that they share recipes with their friends and family, however, organic purchase has not been discussed by their families or friends except that it is high priced.

However, an almost equal number of participants (11) indicated that their organic purchasing is not influenced by those whose opinions they value. Thus, in summary it seems that social norms related to those whose opinions matter, do influence organic produce purchases and the influence is largely negative, however, the results again appear to be mixed.

#### **4.7 Perceived Behavioural Control**

The following questions unpack Objective 4 of the current study which is: to ascertain PBC as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. Questions 13 to 16 were asked to address this objective.

##### **4.7.1 Question 13: *If you wanted to change to buy only organic food products, what would make that hard?***

Three themes emerged from the interviews.

**Table 4.22:** What Would Make Organic Purchase Decision Hard

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Price	11	44%
Availability	9	36%
Lack of knowledge about benefits of consuming organic	5	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The main theme was **price**. Participants stated that if they wanted to change and buy only organic, **price** of organic products would make that decision hard as they cannot consume organic foods because of high price. Participant 23 stated that,

*“High price of organic products will make [organic purchase decision] hard”.*

These participants stated that they are always looking for sales promotions at various outlets where they purchase their monthly groceries, so price is one of the most important elements they consider when they make a purchase decision. This was also stated by Participant 14, who said,

*“I would need more money as organic foods are expensive [making organic purchase decision hard]”.*

There was a shared perception that organic products are expensive and participants stated high price as the reason for non-purchase of organic foods. There were 44 % of participants who mentioned high price as reason for non-purchase of organic produce. Thus, high price is a barrier to organic purchases.

The second theme was **availability**. Participants stated that if they wanted to change and buy only organic, **availability** of organic products would make that decision hard. For example, Participant 1 stated that,

*“I would not be able to buy all products I want as [availability of organic products at] stores [is limited] ... Therefore, I would have to travel a lot more in order to find stores that hold organic foods”.*

There was a perception by participants that to purchase only organic products would be a hard decision because it will mean more time spent looking for organic products around the town of Pietermaritzburg. Participant 17 also stated that,

*“Availability of organic products would be a deterring factor to purchasing only organic products”.*

The availability of organic products in Pietermaritzburg remains a deterring factor to participants who are aware of organic benefits and who intend purchasing organic products.

The **availability** theme emerged also in *Question 5* where availability was a deterring factor to organic purchase intention. Also in *Question 6*, the availability theme emerged as one of the reasons for non-purchase of organic produce. However, what makes organic purchase decision hard is the availability of organic products as 36 % of participants perceive availability as reason for non-purchase of organic produce. Thus, there is a perception that availability of organic products is a barrier to organic purchase.

The last theme was **lack of knowledge about benefits of consuming organic**. Participants stated that if they wanted to change to purchasing organic products, **lack of knowledge about benefits of consuming organic** would make purchase decision hard. Participant 3 stated that,

*“lack of information about organic benefits [makes organic purchase hard]”.*

There is a perception that benefits of organic consumption are not well known by participants and this makes it hard for participants to decide to purchase organic products. This lack of information results in participants perceiving organic marketing as a ploy. Participant 21 also stated,

*“better consumer training on other benefits of organic consumption [is necessary for organic purchases]”.*

There was a view that consumer education on benefits of organic consumption is needed to better inform consumers on benefits of consuming organic products for

participants' health. Participants say because there is no one from their families buying these organic products, more consumer education on its benefits is necessary.

Thus, what makes organic purchase decision hard is **lack of knowledge about benefits of consuming organic** as 20% of participants view it as reason for non-purchase of organic produce.

To sum up; price, availability and lack of information on benefits of organic purchasing are barriers to participants changing to buy only organic foods.

#### 4.7.2 Question 14: *What makes it easy to consume organic foods?*

There were three themes that emerged on what makes it easy to consume organic foods. These are tabled below.

**Table 4.23:** What Makes Organic Consumption Easy

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Health	12	48 %
More information on benefits	9	36 %
Nothing	4	16 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The **health** theme was mentioned by participants more than other themes. There was a view that at the point of planning to purchase groceries, health benefits were considered and makes it easy to intend to consume organic products. Participant 5 mentioned that,

*“knowing you are buying a healthier product [makes organic consumption easy]”.*

The marketing promotion of organic health benefits is one of the reasons participants purchase organic products. Participants stated that they purchase organic products for their health benefits, so without knowing about organic produce benefits, participants see high price as unjustified. Better communication of the reasons to buy organic e.g.

the health benefits, would make it easier to purchase organic products. Participant 8 stated that,

*“The fact that no chemicals are used when farming organic... and that organic is healthy [makes organic consumption easy]”.*

The participants stated health benefits as the main reason that makes it easy to purchase organic products. The perception of high price can only be mitigated by selling of organic health benefits and informing participants of these health benefits.

The second theme to emerge was **more information on benefits**, participants stated it as what would make organic consumption easier. Participant 9 stated that,

*“Marketing of organic products stressing [information on benefits to] organic consumption”.*

There was a view shared by participants that there wasn't enough information on the benefits of organic consumption and it was needed as participants viewed organic as a 'new' product so more information on its benefits were needed to make it easy to purchase organic. Participant 23 also stated that it would be easier to buy organic produce if,

*“There is organic information i.e. if we are taught [about] how organic is any better to other products”.*

Thus, participants stated more information on how organic products are better than other products were necessary as they don't know much about organic products except that is high priced and that price is not justified by more information of benefits of organic purchasing.

The last theme to emerge was **nothing** would make organic consumption easier. Participant 1 stated that,

*“I can't think of anything. To me [nothing would make organic purchase easy] purchasing organic food is quite an effort”.*

There was a view from participants that purchasing organic products was an effort as it is not available at most outlets where they purchase their monthly groceries, even at health shops it is high priced so nothing would make the organic purchase decision any easier. Participant 25 stated that,

*“I can’t think of anything that would make purchasing organic easier”.*

The theme **nothing** will make organic consumption easy was a view from participants who perceive the organic purchase decision as a complex decision. Sixteen percent of participants state that nothing would make the organic consumption decision easier. This perception may be as there is lack of consumer education on benefits to organic consumption.

To sum up; perception of health was what makes it easy for participants to consume organic foods, while some participants cited the need for more information to make the organic purchase decision.

#### 4.7.3 Question15: *What would you and/or your family and friends need to purchase more organic food products?*

There were four themes that emerged on what would participants and their families and friends need to purchase more of organic food products. These are tabled below:

**Table 4.24:** What Would Participants and their Families Need to Purchase More Organic

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Higher income	12	48 %
Availability of organic products	5	20 %
Benefits of organic consumption	5	20 %
Labelled organic products	3	12 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>



The most occurring theme was **higher income**, participants stated that they would need more income to purchase more of organic products. Participant 2 mentioned that,

*“to purchase more organic, I would need higher income [as organic products are expensive]”.*

The premium price of organic products is one of the reason for participants requiring higher income to purchase organic products. Participant 16 stated that,

*“I would need more money to afford organic [as organic products are expensive]”.*

There were 48 % of participants who needed higher income to purchase more organic products. These participants stated that purchasing organic foods can be realised by earning higher income as the more their income stays the same the less likely they will purchase organic products.

The second theme was **availability of organic products**. Again, participants stated that they would need greater availability of organic products at retail shops to purchase more organic products. These participants stated that the difficulty to find organic products at shops where they purchase their monthly groceries makes it difficult to make an organic purchase decision. Participant 10 stated that,

*“[I would need] organic foods on our faces [labelled] more often and more shops offering organic products [to purchase more of organic products]”.*

Participants also stated that availability means that organic products are available and labelled organic at retail outlets where they do their monthly shopping, otherwise they perceive organic products as unavailable. Participant 17 stated that,

*“having organic products more readily available at retail outlet”.*

The unavailability of organic products at most retail outlets is thus one of the reasons for non-purchase of organic products.

The third theme was **benefits to organic consumption**. Participants stated that they would need to be told of benefits to organic consumption to purchase organic products.

These participants stated if organic products benefits remain unknown, it is difficult for them to make organic purchase decision. Participant 11 stated that they need

*“More education on the benefits of organic food consumption as I haven’t read up on its benefits and am not interested in buying something I don’t understand”.*

This theme represents a knowledge gap that organic retailers can bridge by informing their consumers of organic benefits. Participant 8 also stated that,

*“[I would need more] information about benefits of organic food versus conventionally farmed food”.*

Participants kept saying there was no effort to educate them on benefits of organic consumption, leading to non-purchase of organic foods.

The fourth theme was **labelled organic products**. Participants stated that they would need clearly labelled organic products to assist them identify organic products at the point of purchase. These participants stated that without a label stating that a product is organic they cannot make organic purchase decisions. For example, Participant 5 stated that

*“[I would need to see] clearly labelled organic products at retail outlets where I do shopping”.*

Participants stated that clear labelling was necessary to remind customer at point of purchase about organic products and to persuade customers to make an organic purchase decision. Participant 5 stated that

*“[I would need] clearly labelled organic products with sales promotions to remind me of the importance of organic purchase”.*

Thus, labelling of organic products was an important element to participants as they stated that without a label it is hard to know if product is organic or not. Some participants stated that at outlets where they buy their monthly groceries there was no label of organic products anywhere and so they were unsure if they buy organic or not.

To sum up, participants would need more income to make organic purchase decisions, organic products would have to be available at outlets where participants shop. Also, benefits of organic consumption would need to be marketed to participants and organic products will need to be properly labelled.

#### 4.7.4 Question 16: *What are your personal barriers to organic food consumption?*

There were three themes that emerged from interviews on what are personal barriers to organic consumption. These are tabled below,

**Table 4.25:** Personal Barriers to Organic Consumption

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Price	20	80 %
Availability	3	12 %
Knowledge of benefits to consuming organic	2	8 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Similar to other questions above, the most occurring theme was **price** as participants emphasised that price was a personal barrier to organic purchase. Participant 6 stated that,

*“Price of organic products is a personal barrier [to organic consumption]”.*

However, other participants such as Participant 16 mentioned that,

*“I can’t afford organic, its overpriced for no reason. The only reason its charged high prices is that marketers are positioning it as a status product”.*

Price of organic products remains a barrier to participants as it makes it hard for participants to afford organic products. Even though some participants stated they are aware of organic benefits, they stated price as the most common personal barrier to organic consumption. Participants also stated that high price was a marketing strategy, as marketers have positioned organic products as; status product, selling its health attributes and positioning it as a status product.

The **price** theme emerged also in Question 5 above, where price was the reason participants do not intend purchasing organic foods. In Question 6, **price** theme emerged as reason for non-purchase of organic foods, while in Question 10, **price** theme emerged as one of bad things associated with consuming organic foods. Lastly, in Question 13 above, **price** was mentioned as what makes organic purchasing decision hard. Also in Question 16, **price** theme emerged as most occurring theme on what are personal barriers to organic food consumption as four in five participants perceive price as a personal barrier to organic consumption. Thus, price of organic products is a barrier to organic purchase.

The second theme was **availability**. Participants stated that availability of organic products where they shop was a personal barrier to organic purchase. Participant 25 stated that,

*“Even when I have money and wish to buy organic, I don’t find it at [supermarkets and] organic shops where I can buy for my family”.*

So, availability is a personal barrier to organic consumption as Participant 7 also stated that,

*“organic products are not available where I shop for my family”.*

The availability of organic products where participants buy their monthly shopping was a perceived difficulty to organic purchase. There are few organic shops in Pietermaritzburg and these are in areas where participants who use public transport cannot access easily. The difficulty in finding organic products where participants do their monthly shopping was therefore one of the reason for non-purchase of organic products.

The third theme was **knowledge of benefits to consume organic**. Participants stated that lack of knowledge of benefits to consuming organic produce was a personal barrier to organic purchase. These participants stated that their main reason for non-purchase of organic products is their lack of knowledge on benefits to consuming organic products. Participant 22 stated their personal barriers to organic food consumption as

*“Knowledge about benefits of consuming organic products [are my personal barrier to organic consumption]”*

Participant 19 stated that

*“I’m not sure I understand organic benefits, I’m not convinced that organic is better”*

There was thus a lack of understanding of organic benefits that led to difficulty in making organic purchase decision.

Thus, the most occurring personal barrier to organic purchase is **price** as four in five participants mentioned price as a deterrent to their purchase of organic products. **Availability** and **knowledge of benefits to consume organic** were also mentioned as reasons for non-purchase of organic foods.

#### **4.8 Moral Attitude**

The following questions unpack Objective 5 of the current study which is: to ascertain the role of moral attitude as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. Questions 17 and 18 were asked to address this objective.

4.8.1 Question 17: *On a scale from 1 – 10, how much do you worry / care about the environment? Can you explain the score?*

After participants were asked to rate their level of worrying/caring about the environment the participants’ responses were grouped at follows:

**Table 4.26:** Care for the Environment

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1 – 3	3	12 %
4 – 6	9	36 %
7 – 10	13	52 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

These responses show that the most common score was 7 – 10, followed by 4 – 6 and

lastly 1– 3. The average score is 6.5 which means that on average participants care about the environment.

From these ratings participants were asked to explain their score and the following themes emerged:

**Table 4.27:** Reasons for Environment Scoring

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
I care about my environment	11	44%
I worry about my actions	7	28%
My actions don't affect the environment	7	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common theme that emerged was participants **care about their environment** and that meant behaving in environmentally responsible way. Participant 1 stated that,

*“is my responsibility to care for the environment because out of it comes all that I need”.*

These participants understood that they had a role to play in caring for the environment and saw caring for the environment as their responsibility. Participant 17 even stated that

*“I participate in green campaigns such as recycling, cleaning river banks and encourage my kids to do the same: it's our responsibility to care for the environment”.*

There was a common view that caring for the environment was everyone's responsibility and parents even stated that they teach their children to do likewise. Caring activities were mentioned by participants and these included recycling, cleaning of rivers, not printing e-mails, using less electricity in households and planting vegetables at home. However, even when participants stated that they cared

about their environment organic purchase was not part of caring for their environment as they were not buyers of organic food products.

The second theme that emerged was participants **worry about their actions** in being environmentally safe. Some participants stated that they felt they were not doing enough to care for the environment and that made them worry about their actions. Participant 14 said:

*“I worry about the environment and our action in caring for environment and believe if we take care of the environment our kids will find it pleasant otherwise, they will not enjoy it”.*

The most mentioned reason for caring for the environment was their children’s wellbeing and the future of the planet. Participants believed that if they do not care for the environment, their kids might find the planet not pleasant and they felt they had a role to play in making this planet a better place by caring for the environment.

The third theme that emerged was **my actions don’t affect the environment**. This meant participants do not connect their actions to caring for environment and do not comprehend how their actions affect the environment. Participant 23 stated that,

*“I barely know how to care for environment and doubt my actions affect the environment”.*

There were participants who were ignorant on what they could do to save the environment, this ignorance leads to lack of awareness on moral attitude towards organic products. Participant 16 stated that,

*“I’m not sure of how to care for the environment”.*

These participants stated that they were unaware of how to care for the environment and do not connect their actions to caring for environment. These participants also do not buy organic products as they see no connection between buying organic produce and caring for the environment. This theme is connected to participants who stated that they were not aware of organic benefits when asked about their attitude and perceived behavioural control towards organic products.

The average score of 6.5 means on average participants care about the environment and reasons for these rating were, **caring for environment** and **worry about my actions** to the environment, however there were few participants who mentioned that their actions do not affect the environment.

#### 4.8.2 Question 18: *Do you think it is morally right to purchase organic foods?*

There were two themes that emerged from interviews on participants view whether it is morally right to purchase organic foods. These are tabled below,

**Table 4.28:** Morality and Organic Products

Category of Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, it is morally right to purchase organic	15	60 %
No, morality has nothing to do with food	10	40 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most occurring category of responses was **yes, it is morally right to purchase organic** as participants explained that organic purchase equals to caring for the environment. Participant 13 stated that,

*“caring for the environment is our moral responsibility”.*

There were participants who viewed organic purchasing as better caring for the environment, they stated that it is the practical way of caring for the environment as organic products are produced without the use of chemicals which are bad for the environment. Participant 22 stated that,

*“morality is green behaviour”.*

Thus, participants viewed organic consumption as a morally right decision, however, they were not purchasers of organic.

The second category of response was **no, morality has nothing to do with food**. Ten participants stated that morality and food are not connected and whether they consume



organic or not has nothing to do with morality. Participant 1 stated that,

*“I wouldn’t say the purchase of organic food has anything to do with morality. I think the food that you eat plays a very small role in protecting the environment as there are much greater environmental threats that we are faced with”.*

There was a view by participants that morality and food have nothing to do with each other. Furthermore, participants stated that the food we eat has little to do with environmental protection. Big industries were mentioned as big players in polluting the environment and in acting in ways that are not morally right. Participant 23 said that,

*“I can’t see logic in [connecting] food decisions and morality”.*

Thus, some participants did not view food decisions as moral decisions and could not connect morality and food purchase decisions. These participants also stated that they do not purchase organic food products as they see no benefits to organic purchase decision.

To sum up, there was high concern for environmental caring observed from participants, however, there were mixed feelings on moral obligation participants had towards caring for the environment.

#### **4.9 Health Consciousness**

The following questions unpack Objective 7 of the current study which is: to ascertain health consciousness of participants as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. *Questions 19 to 20* were asked to address this objective.

##### **4.9.1 Question 19: *Do you believe organic produce is healthier? Why? Why not?***

There were three themes that emerged on that organic products being healthier. These are tabled below.

**Table 4.29:** Healthiness of Organic Products

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Organic products are healthier	12	48%
Organic products aren't healthy	7	28%
I'm not sure if organic is healthy	6	24%
Total	25	100 %

The most occurring theme was that **organic products are healthier**. According to Participant 3,

*“From marketing information, I believe it is healthier as it is farmed without pesticides and other chemicals that may cause us disease”.*

There is a common belief that the absence of chemicals means organic produce is healthier than the alternative conventionally farmed produce as participants explain what healthy means to them. Participant 21 also stated that,

*“chemicals are not used, but natural ways are used when farming organic products”.*

The other element mentioned by participants as an important element to describe healthiness of organic products is natural. Participants believe that organic products are natural and the absence of chemicals makes them natural

The second theme was **organic products aren't healthy**. For example, Participant 16 states that,

*“No, there is no proof to the goodness of organic products. Organic and conventional products are the same”.*

The participants who stated that they do not believe organic products are healthy believed that there was nothing special about organic products and they viewed all vegetables the same. These participants believed that there was no harm to our bodies

caused by chemicals and that organic produce is the same as conventional. Participant 22 stated that,

*“vegetables are vegetables. There are no healthier vegetables”.*

These participants who viewed organic products no better than conventional products also stated that they do not purchase organic products as they do not view organic products as beneficial to the consumer. However, they view all vegetables the same, whether chemicals were used or not.

The third theme was **I’m not sure if organic is healthy** as participants stated that they aren’t sure of organic products health claims. Participants who were not sure of organic products health claims stated that marketing could be misleading them to purchase organic products. Participant 18 stated that,

*“I’m not sure, it could be marketing creating demand for organic products by overselling on health benefits”.*

The participants who stated that they were not sure of organic claims stated that it could be a marketing ploy to encourage them to buying organic products which are no better than conventional products. For example, Participant 4 stated that

*“it could be a marketing ploy. Marketers can create a hype around organic. How can we prove that it’s healthier”.*

Thus, the reason participants do not purchase organic products is that they do not believe the marketing message that claims organic products are healthier than organic products. Therefore, more consumer training may be necessary to inform consumer of organic purchase benefits.

To sum up, while more participants indicated they believe organic products are healthier, there were others who stated they weren’t healthy, while, others indicated they were not sure if organic is healthy, thus results are mixed.

4.9.2 Question 20: *Do you consider yourself a health-conscious consumer? What health activities do you engage in?*

There were two themes that emerged from interviews on whether participants consider themselves health conscious consumers or not. These are tabled below:

**Table 4.30:** Health Consciousness of Participants

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
I'm health conscious	17	68%
I'm not health conscious	8	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common response was participants consider themselves as health-conscious consumers although a third of participants considered themselves as non-health-conscious consumers. Thereafter participants were asked to list activities that they participate in to ensure their health consciousness. These were;

**Table 4.31:** Health Activities of Participants

<b>Health activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exercising at home	9	28 %
Exercising at gym	8	25 %
Eating well with vegetable garden at home	5	15 %
I don't participate in any activity	10	31 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The activities mentioned by participants included exercising at home, exercising at gym and eating well with vegetable garden at home. However, there were participants who stated they do not participate in any health activity and most of these participants also stated that they see no value in organic consumption. Thus, there appears to be a relationship between less health conscious behaviour and non-consumption of organic products.

To sum up, 68% of participants consider themselves health conscious and participate in activities that promote health consciousness.

#### 4.10 Environmental Concern

The following questions unpack Objective 6 of the current study which is: to ascertain environmental concern as a possible barrier to the purchase of organic foods. Questions 21 to 24 were asked to address this objective.

4.10.1 Question 21: *Do you believe human beings damage the environment? If so, how?*

There were two themes that emerged from interviews on participants' belief that human beings damage the environment. These are tabled below;

**Table 4.32:** Humans and Damaging of Environment

<b>Response category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes, humans damage environment	16	64%
No, humans don't damage environment	9	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common response was that **humans damage environment**. Slightly less than two thirds of the participants believed that human beings damage the environment while about a third of participants disagreed with the statement. Participant 2 stated that,

*“Yes, [humans damage the environment] by not caring for environment. We are selfish in the approach of caring for the environment, we don't care about the future”.*

There was a view by participants that not caring for the environment is short term focussed while caring for the environment is long term focussed. Participant 17 state that,

*“Yes, [humans damage the environment]by polluting rivers, industrialisation and not taking care of environment”.*

Thus, participants stated that humans are damaging the environment and should take up the responsibility to care for the environment.

The other response was **humans don't damage environment** as participants stated that they do not believe humans are responsible for damaging the environment. Participant 25 stated that,

*“most damage is done by big industries and not households, there is little damage we do compared to industry”.*

These participants stated that there is little that households can do to save the environment as big industries were responsible for damaging the environment. However, other participants stated that there is something that households can do to save the environment even though they do not contribute much to damaging the environment. Participant 19 stated that,

*“to some degree there is something we can do to save the environment even though we are not responsible, like recycling dirt, etc”.*

Slightly more than a third (36%) of participants believe that humans do not damage the environment as they view it as a large corporation's problem. They cite large industries as being responsible for polluting the environment.

To sum up, 64 % of participants stated that humans are responsible for damaging the environment, and thus accept they have a role to play in households to ensure caring for environment such as, children are informed to recycle and take care of environment and participate in all activities that promote environmental caring. However, 36 % of participants believe that humans do not damage the environment as they view it as a large corporation's problem.

4.10.2 Question 22: *Do you think a lack of concern for the environment is a reason for non-purchase of organic foods? Would you say this applies to you?*

There were two themes that emerged from interviews on participants view on lack of concern for the environment as reason for non-purchase of organic foods. These are tabled below

**Table 4.33:** Environmental Reasons and Organic Consumption

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of information is reason for non-purchase	14	56%
Lack of concern equals no organic	11	44%

The marginally dominant theme was **lack of information is reason for non-purchase** of organic products. For example, Participant 4 stated that,

*“it’s not lack of concern [for the environment] but lack of information about [environmental] benefits of [purchasing] organic foods”.*

There were participants who stated that while they were aware of the difference between organic and conventional products, their knowledge of organic is minimal leading to non-purchase of organic products. Similarly, Participant 21 stated that,

*“It’s about being informed. Where there is no knowledge people do what they think is right”.*

The information about benefits of organic consumption was one of the elements participants stressed saying they do not purchase organic because they are not convinced of organic claims. In the absence of a convincing organic message, they do what they think is right which is to purchase non-organic products.

The second theme was **lack of concern for environment equals no organic** as reasons for non-purchase of organic products. Participant 1 stated that,

*“I purchase organic food mainly for the health benefits. Protecting the environment is a secondary motivation”.*

There was a view that consumers buy organic for health benefits and not to save the environment. This means the motivation for consumers is not saving the environment as that is a secondary motivation. Participant 13 stated that

*“I care about the environment but there is little I can do to protect the environment”.*

There were participants who also stated there was little households could do to save the environment as big industries were major contributors to polluting the environment. Buying organic produce was not perceived to be able to save the environment.

Thus, there were mixed responses that emerged between lack of information about caring for the environment and lack of concern for the environment.

#### 4.10.3 Question 23: *Do people important to you behave in an environmentally friendly way?*

There were two themes that emerged from interviews on participants view of people important to them and their environmental behaviour. These are tabled below

**Table 4.34:** People Important to Participants and Environmental Behaviour

<b>Response category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No, they don't behave in an environmentally friendly way	16	64 %
Yes, they behave in an environmentally friendly way	9	36 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common response was that people important to participants **don't behave in an environmentally friendly** way. Participant 11 stated that,

*“there is a culture of not caring about the environment”.*

The reason participants do not behave in an environmentally friendly way is their lack of concern for environment and a culture of not caring about the environment. This culture leads to non-purchase of organic food products. Participant 17 stated that,

*“why should we care about the environment when big corporations don't”.*



There was a shifting of blame to big corporations by participants as they stated that their friends do not behave in an environmentally friendly way because big corporations also do not behave in environmentally friendly way. Thus, participants stated people important to them do not behave in environmentally friendly way because they have a culture of not caring and they also blame big corporation for the environment.

The second response representing approximately one third of participants was that people important to participants **behave in an environmentally friendly manner**. The reasons for their good behaviour were, according to Participant 5, because

*“there is a connection we share with the environment. If we take care of it, it takes care of us”.*

These participants state that there is a connection between their behaviour and the environment. They stated that if we take care of rivers we can expect to fish from them, however, if we pollute the rivers we can expect no life there. There is a connection between behaviour and what the environment as Participant 17 stated,

*“People important to me care about environment. They also worry about their behaviour and always behave the right way, recycling, not littering”.*

There were participants who stated that people important to them behave in an environmentally friendly way such as recycling, not littering and not printing unnecessarily. These behaviours were mentioned by participants as good and also behaviours that show better caring for the environment.

Thus, the most common theme emerging from almost two thirds of the participants, was that people important to participants do not behave in an environmentally friendly way and their reasons are it is not entirely their role to care for the environment but big business should also do something about it. This finding reinforces finding on social norm where participants stated people important to them were not organic purchasers. However, there were participants who stated that people important to them behave in an environmentally friendly way as they connect their behaviour to the environment.

4.10.4 Question 24: *What is your view on the statement? ‘By purchasing organic food, I can save the environment’*

There were two themes that emerged from interviews on participants view on the statement: By purchasing organic food, I can save the environment. These are discussed below:

**Table 4.35:** Environment and Organic Behaviour

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agree	17	68 %
Disagree	8	32 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

The most common category of response was to **Agree** with the statement,

*“By purchasing organic food, I can save the environment”.*

There were 68 % of participants that with the statement while minority did not agree. Participant 5 state that,

*“Yes, [I can save the environment] because organic food retains and maintains soil structure hence saving the environment”.*

There were participants who understood how organic farming is different from conventional farming and stated these as ways organic saves the environment. Participant 17 also stated that,

*“Yes, purchasing organic is a good act towards saving the environment”.*

These participants stated that organic purchase is a direct way of saving the environment and that benefits to organic purchase are good for health and environmental purposes.

The second category of responses was to **Disagree** with the statement. Participant 24 stated that,

*“There is no relationship between organic farming and saving the environment”.*

Participant 11 also stated that,

*“It doesn't save the environment it's just another marketing message to convince us to buy organic”.*

There were also participants who stated that organic purchasing is a marketing message persuading consumers to buy organic and using environment as a bait to convince participants to purchase more of organic products.

Thus, again about 68 % of participants believed that by purchasing organic foods can save the environment. Whereas 32 % of participants believed that there is not link between saving the environment and organic purchasing.

#### **4.11 Conclusion**

This chapter focused on presenting the research results that were gathered after the researcher had utilised thematic analysis to gather themes and present them as key findings. The next chapter concludes on the research objectives and outlines recommendations.

The following chapter discusses findings in relation to literature and TPB.

## Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings of the questions associated with the objective and compares these with literature in relation to the extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and other related theories. The extended TPB was employed in the current study to provide a theoretical basis for the conceptualised framework to better understand barriers to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

### 5.2 Findings in Relation to Research Objectives

#### 5.2.1 Objective 1: To Ascertain Organic Buying Behaviour and Reasons for Organic Consumption.

The following questions were asked to ascertain organic buying behaviour and reasons for organic consumption, Question 1 asked participants if they *buy organic food products, and if so how often?* Question 2 asked participants *what kinds of organic produce do you buy, if any, and* Question 3 asked participants, *where do you buy from? name the grocery shops.*

Findings of these questions confirmed that participants do not regularly purchase organic products though they know of organic purchase benefits as responses were from participants who never buy organic (64%) and from those who bought organic occasionally (36%).

These results are similar to an observation by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) who stated that irrespective of speedy growth and the forecasts of development in the organic food industry, sales of organic food in the South African food markets are comparatively low compared to other countries. Thus, the current study confirmed that participants do not buy organic with some participants not sure if they buy organic or not due to non-labelling of products.

There were three organic products mentioned by participants, these were organic **fruits, vegetables** and **clothes**. These results are similar to a study conducted in Poland by Bryła (2016, p. 737) where fruit and vegetables were the most frequently bought

organic products. Another study in Egypt by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 183) found that most organic products sold in supermarkets are vegetables and fruits. The grocery shops where participants bought their fresh products from included supermarkets such as Woolworths, Pick n Pay, Food Lover's Market, Checkers and Spar. Thus, fruits and vegetables were mentioned by participants as organic items mostly bought by participants at grocery shops listed above.

#### **5.2.1.1 Objective 1 Conclusion**

Thus, current study confirmed that participants do not buy organic with some participants not sure if they buy organic or not due to non-labelling of products. For participants who stated they purchase organic products occasionally, fruits and vegetables were mentioned as organic items bought mostly at grocery shops listed above. Thus, these supermarkets could be prime distribution outlets for fresh produce suppliers.

#### **5.2.2 Objective 2: To Determine the Role of Attitude as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods**

The following questions were asked to ascertain if attitude is a possible reason for non-purchase of organic foods. Question 7 asked participants to *share feelings or thoughts Question 7 that you associate with consuming organic food products* while Question 8 asked, *would you say you have a positive or negative attitude towards organic food consumption? Can you explain why you feel like that?* Question 9 asked participants to *share with me good things associated with consuming organic foods* and Question 10 asked participants to *share bad things associated with consuming organic foods*.

Findings to Question 7 revealed the following positive themes, **healthy** (60%), **better care for the environment** (12%), negative theme, **prestige product for the rich** (20%), and a neutral theme of **no feelings** (8%). Thus, participants had mixed attitudes towards organic purchases.

Thereafter, participants stated in *Question 9* on 'good things' associated with consuming organic foods that they associate organic foods with being **healthy** and **environmentally safe**. Thus, participants had positive attitude towards organic purchasing and that positive attitude is a good trigger and motive for organic

consumption (Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1068). However, attitude alone does not lead to action.

In a study conducted by Chen (2007, p. 1008) on consumers' attitude toward organic foods in Taiwan, attitude significantly increases intention to purchase organic food. Also in a study by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 124) in India on intention to purchase organic by young consumers, attitude was found to be significant in determining purchase intention. This was also confirmed by Macovei (2014, p. 17) research on predicting pro-environmental behaviour in Romania, who found that consumers had positive attitude towards behaving in a pro-environment manner, which had positive influence on their intention to behave in a pro environmental manner. Also in a study conducted by Yazdanpanah and Forouzani (2015, p. 342) on TPB's application to predict Iranian students' intention to purchase organic food, attitude was a main determinant of students' willingness to purchase organic foods. Thus, attitude is an important construct of TPB to explain intention to purchase organic or not.

The current study also found that participants have positive attitude towards purchasing organic food, however, the study participants were screened and selected for their non-purchase of organic products. How can a participant who does not purchase organic have positive attitude towards organic purchasing? This can be explained by attitude-behaviour gap, the above findings provide evidence that while consumers are inspired by the values of ethical consumerism, a change in consumption behaviour is much less apparent (Carrington et al., 2010, p. 139). This study also found participants with positive attitude towards organic products however, these participants positive attitude does not lead to organic behaviour.

The **attitude-behaviour gap** describes a situation where consumers express a great deal of positive attitudes towards a product, but their actual behaviour falls short to these due to several reasons (Aschemann-Witzel & Aagaard, 2014, p. 550). In the current study participants indicated that they generally do not purchase organic products due to high price, labelling, and lack of availability. However, they have positive attitudes towards organic products, therefore, an attitude-behaviour gap exists

Practically, consumers may have a positive intention towards green products, but may not be able to purchase green due to various reasons such as low income or product

unavailability (Paul et al., 2015, p. 125). In a study by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 184) findings were there are many barriers of organic food consumption such as high price, availability, appearance and trust that food is really organic (Mohamed et al., 2012, p. 184).

The current study's findings were that in *Question 8*, a small number of participants (24%) had a negative attitude towards organic products. These participants felt that organic produce is high priced (24%). *Question 10* further asked participants to *share bad things associated with consuming organic foods*. High price (72%) and unavailability (28%) were the themes that emerged as bad thing associated with consuming organic products. Thus, reasons for negative attitude towards organic products is high price and unavailability of organic products, these can also be regarded as barriers to organic purchases.

#### **5.2.2.1 Objective 2 Conclusion**

There were mixed attitudes about consuming organic foods with positive attitudes dominating. The positive attitude towards organic products were related to health benefits, better care for the environment. A negative attitude was related to prestige product for the rich. There were however some neutral attitudes associated with organic products such as no feelings toward the purchasing organic foods. Even though participants had positive attitudes towards organic products it didn't lead to organic purchase. A positive attitude that does not lead to behaviour is referred to as attitude-behaviour gap. This study found evidence of attitude-behaviour gap in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa with consumers exhibiting mainly positive attitudes towards organic produce and yet still not purchasing organic products.

Some negative attitudes however that could act as barriers to organic purchasing included perceived high price and unavailability of organic products.

#### **5.2.3 Objective 3: To Establish the Role of Subjective Norms as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods**

The following questions were asked to ascertain if subjective norms are reasons for non-purchase of organic products. Question 11 asked, *is it important or not to you that you consume organic food in the same amount or type as your friends and family? and*

Question 12 asked *Do people whose opinion you value also share your views on purchase or non-purchase of organic? How do you feel about that?*

Findings to *Question 11* revealed mixed results with participants stating that it was **not important** (60%) while 40% of participants cite it was **important** to consume organic food in the same amount as friends and family. This meant there was minimal social influence to purchase organic. However, there were participants (56%) who stated that it was important to share organic views with opinion leaders, while 44% of participants stated that it was not important. Findings to *Question 12* also revealed mixed results with more participants (56%) indicating that their **opinion leaders behave in the same way** they do while marginally fewer (44%) participants stated that **they do not share views with their opinion leaders**. Thus, findings show mixed results on subjective norms with participants stating it is not important to consume organic in the same manner with opinion leaders and opinion leaders sharing their views on non-purchase of organic foods.

Literature states that subjective norms are a function of normative beliefs made up of expectations of individuals' reference group formed by their immediate social network, such as family, friends, colleagues or neighbours (Macovei, 2014, p. 19). Subjective norms result that shows high levels of subjective norm means that the behaviour is a social norm while low results show that behaviour is not a social norm (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 123). In a study by Macovei (2014, p. 28) in Romania on applying the TPB in predicting pro-environmental behaviour, subjective norms had an insignificant effect on Intention. Another study by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India also found subjective norm failed to show any significant influence on purchase intention and these findings indicate that buying organic food is yet to become a social norm in a developing nation such as India.

The current study appears to show similar results in that results were mixed on both the importance of family and friends consuming organic products and on the extent to which influential people in the participants' networks, share their feelings and behaviours with regards to organic purchasing. Thus, it seems that organic food is yet to become a social norm in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.



### **5.2.3.1 Objective 3 Conclusion**

Thus, this study showed that results were mixed on the importance of family and friends of participants consuming organic products as well as whether influential others share similar views and behaviours for every three participants who indicated that social norms were not important, there were two who indicated that they were, thus results are mixed. Consumers generally had a positive attitude towards organic products, they do not follow their friend or opinion leaders on this purchase decision, thus subjective norms do not appear to influence behaviour. The lack of influence of social norms as well as lack of behavioural norms to support organic consumption could well act as a barrier to organic purchase.

### **5.2.4 Objective 4: To Ascertain the Role of Perceived Behavioural Control as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods**

The following questions were asked to ascertain the role of Perceived behavioural control as a reason for non-consumption of organic products. Question 13 asked *If you wanted to change to buy only organic food products, what would make that hard*, Question 14 asked, *what makes it easy to consume organic foods?* Question 15 asked, *What would you and/or your family and friends need, to purchase more organic food products?* and Question 16 asked, *What are your personal barriers to organic food consumption?*

Findings of *Question 13*, revealed that high price (44%), unavailability (36%) and to a lesser extent, lack of knowledge (20%) of organic benefits, were what participants regard as factors that made it hard for participants to buy more organic products. *Question 14* revealed that the health (48%) attribute and more information (36%) on organic food products were what makes the organic decision easy. To *Question 15*, participants stated they would need higher income (48%), more availability (20%), more information on the benefits (20%) to organic and better labelling (12%) of organic products, to purchase more organic products. *Question 16* revealed that price (80%) in particular, but also availability (12%) and lack of knowledge (8%) on organic products were personal barriers to organic purchasing.

A study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) found that perceived behavioural control significantly influenced the consumer's intention to purchase organic food. However, a study conducted by Macovei (2014, p. 15) in Romania on predicting pro-environmental behaviour found that PBC has a weak influence on behaviour, however one of the reasons for this weak influence was due to the sample of only 133 respondents which was relatively small (Macovei, 2014). Contrary, a South African study by Mhlophe (2016, p. 5) excluded PBC citing that organic food production and marketing was a fairly new phenomenon in South Africa and respondents were less informed about the topic as compared to consumers in developed countries hence, it followed that consumers in South Africa would perceive themselves as less self-confident and not in control of the situation as compared to overseas consumers, making the construct less relevant for their study.

The current study findings confirm that barriers to organic purchase are perceived to be beyond participants' control and thus may be barriers to organic purchasing. Price in particular but also lack of availability are factors which are beyond the consumers' control. Lack of knowledge of the benefits of organic may be partially under the consumers' control as they can actively seek such information. However, labelling of organic produce not only identifies organic produce but could also be used to educate consumers about the benefits of organic produce and this is another factor beyond the consumer's control.

#### **5.2.4.1 Objective 4 Conclusion**

There does seem to be a perceived lack of control evident in the participants' responses which may well be a reason for their lack of organic purchasing. Price, unavailability and lack of understanding of organic benefits are the main factors contributing to this perceived lack of control which can also explain barriers to organic purchases.

### **5.2.5 Objective 5: To Establish the Role of Moral Attitude as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods.**

The following questions were asked to establish if moral attitude is a possible reason for non-consumption of organic products. Question 17 asked, *On, a scale from 1 – 10, how much do you worry / care about the environment. Can you explain your score?* and Question 18 asked, *do you think it is morally right to purchase organic foods?* Findings to *Question 17* revealed that participants generally care about the environment (44%) and worry about their actions (28%), however at least a third of the responses reflect others who do not believe their actions affect the environment. *Question 18*, revealed that there were mixed views with two thirds of participants stating that it is morally right to purchase organic while one third stating it is not morally right.

In a study conducted in India by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 122) moral attitude had a profound impact as the study findings suggesting the importance of moral attitude in determining the consumer's organic food purchase intention in the Indian context is similar to that of developed nations. This was also supported by a study conducted in Italy, Finland and United Kingdom, where moral attitude had considerable influence on intentions to purchase organic apples and pizza (Arvola et al., 2008, p. 449). However, the current study showed high concern about the environment with mixed feelings on moral obligation of caring for the environment.

#### **5.2.5.1 Objective 5 Conclusion**

Participants in this study generally care about the environment and worry about their actions and think it is morally right to purchase organic products. Thus, for most participants, moral attitude does not seem to be a barrier of organic purchase however, despite showing concern for the environment their actions do not show belief that purchasing organic food purchasing is morally right.

### **5.2.6 Objective 6: To Determine the Role of Environmental Concern as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods.**

The following questions were asked to determine if environmental concern leads to non-purchase of organic products. Question 21 asked, *do you believe human beings damage the environment? If so, how*, Question 22 asked, *do you think a lack of concern for the environment is a reason for non-purchase of organic foods? Would you say this applies to you?* Question 23 asked, *do people important to you behave in an environmentally friendly way*, and finally Question 24 asked *What is your view on these statements? 'By purchasing organic food, I can save the environment'*.

Findings for *Question 21*, revealed that participants believe humans damage the environment as 64 % of participants believe humans damage environment this explains a lack of organic purchase. The response that humans damage the environment confirms that participants do not behave in an environmental caring way leading to lack of organic purchase.

*Question 22*, revealed that lack of information (56%) is a reason for non-purchase of organic foods, while, findings on *Question 23*, revealed that people important to participants do not behave in an environmentally friendly way. *Question 24* revealed that by purchasing organic products, participants (68%) believe they save the environment. However, others do not behave in an environmentally friendly way which supports lack of social norms influence on participants' purchase decision making

In the study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 123) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India, environmental concern did not show any significant influence on purchase intention of organic food. Contrary, findings of a study done in Johannesburg, South Africa, by Mhlophe (2016, p. 22) to explore consumer purchase intentions towards organic foods established that there is a positive relationship between environmental concerns and purchase intention for organic food.

The current study shows that respondents in India were less altruistic in behaviour in comparison to South African counterparts. SA participants' environmental concern was therefore investigated in this study and 68 % of participants consider themselves

health conscious but less than half believe organic is healthier and this lack of belief is viewed as a barrier to organic consumption.

#### **5.2.6.1 Objective 6 Conclusion**

Thus, there were 68 % of participants who believe humans damage the environment but there were mixed views on lack of concern for environment leading to non-purchase of organic foods. People important to participants do not behave in environmentally safe way re-enforcing lack of social norms from participants network to persuade participants to behave in an environmentally safe way. However, 54 % participants believe purchasing organic can save the environment and this finding shows that there are mixed views on concern for environment and this can be a barrier to organic purchases.

#### **5.2.7 Objective 7: To Ascertain the Role of Health Consciousness as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods.**

The following questions were asked to ascertain if health consciousness leads to non-purchase of organic foods. Question 19: *Do you believe organic produce is healthier? Why? Why not?* Question 20: *Do you consider yourself a health-conscious consumer? What health activities do you engage in?*

Findings for *Question 19* revealed that participants believe organic products are healthy (48%) while others do not believe organic products are healthy (28%). However, their belief does not lead to organic purchase decision.

Findings to *Question 20* reveal that participants are health conscious (68%) while others are not health conscious (32%), however half of participants do not purchase organic products.

The study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 125) found that health consciousness among consumers positively influenced their intention to purchase organic foods. Indian consumers were found to be mindful about their health-related issues and consider health as an important parameter while taking the decision to buy food products, like their developed counterparts. Therefore, participants were found

to be health conscious however, this did not lead to intention to purchase organic products.

#### **5.2.7.1 Objective 7 Conclusion**

Thus, findings show that 68 % of participants consider themselves health conscious but less than half believe organic food is healthier. The participants belief in organic not being healthier could be a reason for non-purchase of organic food products.

#### **5.2.8 Objective 8: To Determine Role of Intention as a Possible Barrier to the Purchase of Organic Foods.**

The following questions were asked to determine if intention is a barrier to purchase of organic foods. Question 4, *What are benefits, to purchasing organic foods?* Question 5, *When you purchase food for yourself or your household are your intentions to purchase organic foods? Why so? Why not?* Question 6, *Why do you purchase organic foods? If you don't, what are your reasons for non-purchase?*

Findings for *Question 4, What are benefits, to purchasing organic foods?* revealed that there were varying themes on benefits to organic purchasing, these were healthy, better for the environment and no better than conventional products. However, while participants were recruited for their belief in organic benefits, there were participants who stated that there was no difference between organic and conventional farming methods. *Question 5, When you purchase food for yourself or your household are your intentions to purchase organic foods? Why so? Why not?* revealed that participants do not intent purchasing organic products while findings for *Question 6, Why do you purchase organic foods? If you don't, what are your reasons for non-purchase?* revealed that participants purchase organic products for health benefits, however, intention to purchase of organic products remain low.

In the study conducted by Yadav and Pathak (2016, p. 120) to investigate the consumer's intention to purchase organic food in India, consumers were found to be conscious about their health-related issues and consider health as an important parameter while taking the decision to buy food products like their developed counterparts. The findings of this study are that participants view health benefits as benefits to purchasing organic products.

The current study showed that participants have positive perceptions toward organic products, these included health and better for environment, however, these positive perceptions do not lead to intention to purchase organic. There were 32 % of participants who intend purchasing organic produce and where intention does not lead to behaviour it is regarded as **intention-behaviour gap**. The intention-behaviour gap can be explained as a gap between consumer intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products and their actual purchase behaviour (Carrington et al., 2010, p. 139; Grimmer & Miles, 2017, p. 2). A study conducted on a large sample of Australian consumers to test Carrington et al. (2010, p. 139) conceptual model of the intention-behaviour gap found that intentions facilitated relationship between intention and pro-environmental consumer behaviour. The current study also found presence of intention- behaviour gap as 32 % of participants had positive intentions but this has not led to organic purchase behaviour.

#### **5.2.8.1 Objective 8: Conclusion**

Thus, participants stated health as the main benefit sought when buying organic but participants generally do not intend purchasing organic due to high price, lack of availability and labelling. However, 32 % of participants intend purchasing organic but their intentions do not lead to purchase decision and proves the existence of intention behaviour gap.

#### **5.2.9 Objective 9: To Investigate if Demographic Variables are Barriers to Organic Purchasing**

##### **5.2.9.1 Age**

The age of participants varied from 20 years to 59 years. However most of participants were between age 30 and 39 followed by 20 to 29 year olds. These are the ages where participants have kids or families to buy groceries for. Therefore, participants were relatively young and economically active. The aim of the researcher was to capture the view of the main grocery shopper in a household to ascertain their perceptions on purchasing organic foods.

In a study conducted in Australia by Pearson et al. (2013, p. 50) on purchase frequency of organic products, it was found that younger consumers are more dedicated to

purchasing organic food. There were over 60% of 20 to 29 year olds purchasing regularly reducing dramatically to around 30% for 70+ year olds (Pearson et al., 2013, p. 56). This was confirmed by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) in a study conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, where findings were 35 years and older consumers value green credentials of green wines as a purchasing factor. The current study findings were that the most prevalent age range in the study, 30 to 39 years, most often mentioned **health** as an important theme for their intention to purchase organic produce while the participants indicating the theme **better care for the environment** were more evenly spread across the ages. Lastly, on the theme organic is **no better than conventional** was mentioned by younger participants (under the age of 39).

Thus, the current study concurs with Pearson et al. (2013, p. 50) and Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) that age group 30 to 39 years and above are more dedicated to purchasing organic food as the current study found that they intend to purchase organic foods. Intending to purchase organic foods does not always lead to purchase of organic foods. However, it should be noted that exploration of demographic variables, is a secondary objective and is based on too small a sample and an unevenly distributed demographic profile and thus results would need validation through a quantitative study.

In a study by Gakobo and Jere (2016, p. 1268) findings were that young people are more environmentally conscious but less willing to pay more due to their lower purchasing power, whereas older people with purchasing power are more health conscious and more willing consume organic food. The current study found high intention to purchase organic foods from younger participants but their purchase intention does not lead to purchase decision as participants for the current study were selected for their non-purchase of organic products. However, the current study comprised of small sample size and an unevenly distributed demographic profile and thus results would need validation through a quantitative study.



### **5.2.9.2 Gender**

There were twenty-five interviews conducted and twenty-two were conducted with women. The current research used a screening question for participant inclusion which asked if participants did household shopping and this also led to a predominantly female sample.

In a study conducted in Poland by Bryła (2016, p. 739), it was found that women tend to have more pronounced opinions on organic food compared to conventional food and these differences among genders are particularly large. This was also found in a study conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 260), which found that females perceive green credentials to be a more important purchasing factor than males. Thus, the current study was composed of predominantly female participants as a result of a screening question but the views gathered were adequate for the current study as it assisted the researcher to gather comprehensive data on barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

### **5.2.9.3 Ethnicity**

There was representation of the major race groups in the study with blacks representing majority of participants. However, opinions collected were suitable for the current study and assisted researcher to gather adequate data on barriers to organic purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.

### **5.2.9.4 Education, Employment and Income**

All participants had at least a minimum of a matric with three in five participants having a diploma/degree. There were participants who were students, employed and self-employed with most participants earning some kind of income (92%) with 21 of the participants earning in excess of R250000 per annum. Relative to the South African population overall, this can be considered an educated and financially secure sample which might be expected given that these consumers had indicated that they were aware of benefits of organic products. However, these participants were non-purchasers of organic foods even though they knew of organic benefits.

Literature has revealed that higher levels of education are associated with higher levels of purchasing organic food (Pearson et al., 2013, p. 57). However, according to a study conducted in Egypt, by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 187) there is no significant effect of education level on purchasing decision but, as the education level increases, organic choice increases too. Contrary, a study conducted in Pretoria, South Africa, by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) found that intention to purchase organic food is insignificantly associated with the level of education. Lastly, another study conducted in Cape Town by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) found that higher level of education did not seem to indicate green preference.

The current study findings were from participants who were considered educated and financially secure but were not purchasers of organic products even though they knew of organic benefits to purchasing organic products. However, it should be noted that exploration is a secondary objective and is based on too small a sample and an unevenly distributed demographic profile and thus results would need validation through a quantitative study.

#### **5.2.9.5 Presence of Children in Household**

There were mainly participants with children under the age of 18 years with 64 % of participants having children under 18 yrs. in household. There were also 32 % of participants had no children living in their household. However, it should be noted that the sample size was small and an unevenly distributed demographic profile and thus results would need validation through a quantitative study.

The current study found that while there were more participants with kids in the household who perceived organic foods as healthy foods compared to participants with no kids in their households, and if one looks at the proportions of each group, just over half the respondents with children under 18, perceive organic produce as healthy. However, sample size for the current study was low, hence findings cannot be generalised as results would need validation through a quantitative study.

The presence of young children in the household has been observed to be a reason for organic food purchase (Aschemann-Witzel & Aagaard, 2014, p. 551) This was confirmed by a study conducted in Nairobi, Kenya by Gakobo and Jere (2016, p. 1268)

on indigenous foods that found that, presence of children in a household is a significant factor, which positively influences consumers' attitudes but children's age is a key factor; the higher the age of children, the lower the inclination to buy organic food. This was also found in a study done by Mohamed et al. (2012, p. 183) in Egypt which found that families with children show higher curiosity for organic consumption as a result of health concerns. Thus, households with younger children may be more inclined to purchase organic foods.

The current study found that having kids in the household increases likelihood of investigating healthy food choices for your households. However, the current study was conducted on participants who were not purchasers of organic product hence the findings were that they intend purchasing organic food products.

#### **5.2.9.6 Objective 9: Conclusion**

Thus, the study comprised of a good representative of demographic variables such as gender, age, income, presence of kids in household, ethnicity and education. However, due to small sample size, analysis of the role these characteristics would need to be a focus of further studies.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the findings in relation to each objective extensively pulling through the findings of individual questions and comparing these with literature.

The following chapter discusses limitations of the study, recommendations and final conclusion

## **Chapter 6: Recommendations, Limitations and Final Conclusion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This research aimed to determine barriers to organic produce purchasing in a developing nation, South Africa. In the previous two chapters, findings related to the research were presented and discussed and then conclusions drawn on the research objectives.

In this chapter, the researcher seeks to provide recommendations centered around increasing the purchase of organic products. This is done by providing recommendations of how use the TPB to increase purchase intention. The following recommendations are derived from the study:

### **6.2 Recommendations**

In view of the main findings provided by this study, the following recommendations are suggested;

#### **6.2.1 Consumer Education on Organic Benefits**

There is a need for consumer education on organic products. This study was targeted at participants who understood what the benefits of organic food products are, however, the study found that even when participants stated they knew the benefits of organic products but they could not discuss these benefits. Therefore, more consumer education on benefits of organic consumption is needed to create consumer awareness.

Literature reveals that good knowledge of organic foods tends to be associated with high behavioural intentions (Teng & Wang, 2015, p. 1070) . Magistris and Gracia (2008, p. 929) claimed that increasing organic knowledge is crucial to enhancing organic food consumption, since knowledge of organic foods strongly influences consumer attitudes that directly determine decisions or intentions to buy organic foods.

Consumer education can be a societal marketing exercise that can assist educate society about benefits to organic consumption; such as organic healthiness attributes and ability of organic farming to care for the environment. It can also explain how

society can have their own organic gardens at home and how these can benefit their families.

### **6.2.2 Consumer Education and High Price**

Consumer education can also assist consumers to appreciate the benefits to organic consumption and thereby better understand the high price of organic products. The study findings were participants did not believe organic foods were healthier than alternatives. Thus, benefits to organic consumption need to be communicated to participants as organic benefits outweigh the price of organic products making it easy to make an organic purchase decision.

Literature reveals that change from conventional to organic foods has benefits of caring for the environment (Chen, 2007, p. 1009) leading to long-term value for people and the environment (Yadav & Pathak, 2016, p. 122). These benefits can be communicated to consumers by farmers and retailers of organic products at the point of purchase. This consumer education can assist consumer to make informed purchase decision.

There are various ways that consumer education can be communicated to organic customers. These tools are named communication tools. The current study recommends the following communication tools to achieve product awareness and education of customers:

- Placing advertisements on websites (Mhlophe, 2016, p. 22; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81). The placing of adverts on websites will create awareness on customers on organic products and also achieve customer education.
- Social media presence through sites such as Facebook and Twitter, because they serve as forums where consumers discuss their lives, including their purchases and the items they like (Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81). The current study also recommends social media awareness and education campaign to achieve customer awareness.
- Advertising using traditional methods such as print media (newspapers and magazines). Since organic food is perceived as healthy and environmentally

friendly, advertising should also be included in health and environmental sustainability publications (Hugner et al., 2007, p. 12; Naidoo & Ramatsetse, 2016, p. 81). The current study also recommends the use of traditional advertising methods to create awareness and customer education on benefits of organic consumption.

Thus, consumer education can assist consumers to be better informed about organic benefits which might lead to purchase of organic product.

### **6.2.3 Government Subsidies to Improve Availability of Organic Foods**

The study findings were organic foods were not available where participants did their monthly groceries. One of the reason for lack of availability was farmers are not growing organic foods as the cost of farming organic produce is higher than alternatives.

A study by Mhlophe (2016, p. 18) recommends that it is important for marketing practitioners to consistently expand their efforts in creating positive consumer attitudes, ensure availability of organic food (e.g., through Just-In-Time delivery system) and pledge their support for sustainable environment in order to attract environmentally conscious customers. Another study by Naidoo and Ramatsetse (2016, p. 81) recommends that an increase in the farming and supply of organic food to the markets would help to raise the 'perceived behavioural control' by reducing some barriers like limited availability and accessibility on the market. Therefore, the current study recommends that government can subsidise organic farmers to encourage organic farming also encouraging retailers to reduce pricing to attract consumers with lower prices.

### **6.2.4 Organic Produce Labelling**

The current study found that participants failed to identify organic products from conventional products. The reason for this failure was lack of South African known organic label. A study by Heyns et al. (2014, p. 243) suggested a strong emphasis on certification and labelling certification credentials as a means of promoting or differentiating green products. Thus, an organic label that is promoted in South African would assist consumers to be aware of organic produce and its benefits.

## **6.2.5 Recommendation for Future Research**

6.2.5.1 A quantitative study to measure the effectiveness of the extended TPB in the South African market would yield benefits for better understanding of the organic market and the relative impact of the various variables on intention and purchase of organic produce.

6.2.5.2 More research on the supply side to understand farmer barriers to organic farming and how the value chain and marketing strategy can be improved to get more organic products into retail shops more often.

6.2.5.3 More research on consumer recognition and understanding of organic terminology and symbols

6.2.5.4 Research on organic clothing to ascertain consumer knowledge and attitude towards organic clothing

## **6.3 Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of the study have been grouped into themes as follows:

### **6.3.1 Methodological Limitation**

A methodological limitation is the use of convenience and snowball sampling that does not permit generalisation over the entire population. This sampling decision did however fit with the intention of the research design to seek to explore and better understand barriers to organic consumption in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa through in-depth discussions with consumers.

The sample size of 25 participants was achieved however data saturation was achieved in the responses as there was enough information to replicate the study, the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained, and no further coding was feasible (Fusch & Ness, 2015, p. 1408). This low size can also be explained by sample being drawn specifically from the Pietermaritzburg area, it is possible that participants in other, bigger cities where possibly more organic products are sold may have been different views and should be studied further. Thus, the current study achieved data saturation at 25 participants.

### **6.3.2 Socially Desirable Answers**

Due to the snowball sampling method used, the researcher and participants had a common person that linked them. This could result in socially desirable answers as participants would want to answer questions and appear to know the subject since their friend or network had referred researcher to them. However, the existence of negative responses to questions about attitude, intentions, subjective norms, moral attitude etc by a fair number of participants, up to half the participants in some cases, seems to indicate that this was not too great a problem.

### **6.3.3 Number of Questions**

There were 29 interview questions that participants were asked on an average time of 30 minutes. This led to participants rushing in answering questions towards the end of interview. However, Interview Guide was designed such that the last questions were demographic questions to enable better end of interview.

### **6.3.4 Analysis of Demographics of Participants**

The current study was exploratory in research design; hence sample size was small and unevenly distributed. Demographic profile and results would need validation through a quantitative study. Thus, the limitation of the study is that demographic conclusions of the current study cannot be generalised due to sample size of the study.

## **6.4 Final Dissertation Conclusion**

This research provides evidence that many of these South African consumers are convinced that organic food is more expensive, but also healthier, more environmentally friendly, and more natural than conventional food. They perceive the most important characteristics of organic food to be its healthiness followed by benefits to the environment. High price is consistently perceived to be the main barrier to organic produce purchasing. There appears to be quite extensive confusion on how to identify organic products as there is no common South African organic label. The availability of organic products is also a barrier as consumers cannot find organic product at retail outlets where they do their shopping. The critical barrier to the development of the organic food market in South Africa is the high price, followed by



an insufficient consumer awareness, low availability of organic products, and low visibility in the shop.

These South African consumers generally have a positive attitude towards organic products, they do not follow their friend or opinion leaders on this purchase decision, thus subjective norms do not appear to influence behaviour. These consumers perceive the organic purchase as a difficult decision largely beyond their control and again price, availability and inability to recognise organic produce appear to be the main barriers to purchasing which they perceive to be beyond their control. However, they are environmentally conscious and concerned as well as health conscious but the influence of these factors on organic purchasing behaviour appears limited. Many consumers are not convinced that organic produce is healthier, that it is their moral obligation to buy organic in order to save the environment.

Recommendations were made to unpack the problem of barriers to organic purchases in South Africa. Reasons for barriers to organic purchases were addressed and recommendations associated with increasing organic purchases were provided to increase purchasing of organic products.

The purpose of this study, which was to explore barriers to organic purchases using TPB elements such as attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, environmental concern, moral attitude and health consciousness. There were positive attitudes, low subjective norms, high perceived behavioural control, high environmental concern, mixed moral attitude and high health consciousness. There were elements of attitude behaviour gap. Thus, behaviour towards non-purchase of organic products were explored to determine the existence of a gap between positive attitudes toward organic products and purchase behaviour of organic products in a develop.

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organic products were explored to determine the existence of a gap between positive attitudes toward organic products and purchase behaviour of organic products in a developing nation such as South Africa, is seen to have been achieved by this research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

**Interview Guide**

1. Do you buy organic food products? If so how often?

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2. What kinds of organic produce do you buy, if any?

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3. Where do you buy from, Name the grocery shops?

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Purchase Intention

4. What are benefits, to purchasing organic foods?

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5. When you purchase food for yourself or your household are your intentions to purchase organic foods? Why so? Why not?

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6. Why do you purchase organic foods? If you don't, what are your reasons for non-purchase?

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Attitude

7. Tell me about the feelings or thoughts that you associate with consuming organic food products.

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8. Would you say you have a positive or negative attitude towards organic food consumption? Can you explain why you feel like that?

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9. Share with me good things associated with consuming organic foods.

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10. Tell me about the bad things associated with consuming organic foods

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Subjective Norm

11. Is it important or not to you that you consume organic food in the same amount or type as your friends and family?

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12. Do people whose opinion you value also share your views on purchase or non-purchase of organic? How do you feel about that?

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Perceived Behavioural Control

13. If you wanted to change to buy only organic food products, what would make that hard?

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14. What makes it easy to consume organic foods?

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15. What would you and/or your family and friends need to purchase more organic food products?

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16. What are your personal barriers to organic food consumption?

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Moral Attitude

17. On a scale from 1 – 10, how much do you worry / care about the environment.  
Can you explain your score?

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18. Do you think it is morally right to purchase organic foods?

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Health Consciousness

19. Do you believe organic produce is healthier? Why? Why not?

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20. Do you consider yourself a health-conscious consumer? What health activities do you engage in?

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Environmental Concern

21. Do you believe human beings damage the environment? If so, how?

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22. Do you think a lack of concern for the environment is a reason for non-purchase of organic foods? Would you say this applies to you?

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23. Do people important to you behave in an environmentally friendly way?

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24. What is your view on these statements? 'By purchasing organic food, I can save the environment'

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Please fill in details

Age		Gender		Ethnicity	
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25. Highest qualification

Matric		Degree/Diploma		Post-Graduate		No qualification	
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26. Please choose from a list below.

Employed		Student		Self employed		Pensioner		Unemployed	
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27. Income?

0 to R120K p.a.		R120K to R250K p.a.		Above R250K p.a.	
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28. Do you stay with your children?

Yes		No	
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29. How old are your children?

0 to 10 years		10 to 18 years		Above 18 years	
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Question	Rationale for Question
Introduction of study and explaining that participation is voluntary, participants may withdraw at any stage, and anonymity is guaranteed. Also informing participants that there are no right / wrong answers and their opinions are what matters to this study	To introduce the study and encourage participation.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you buy organic food products? If so how often?</li> <li>2. What kinds of organic produce do you buy? If any</li> <li>3. Where do you buy from? Name the grocery shops?</li> </ol>	To ascertain buying behaviour and buying patterns (Objective 1)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. What are benefits, to purchasing organic foods?</li> <li>5. When you purchase food for yourself or your household are your intentions to purchase organic foods? Why so? Why not?</li> <li>6. Why do you purchase organic foods? If you don't, what are your reasons for non-purchase?</li> </ol>	To ascertain purchasing intentions. (Objective 8)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Tell me about the feelings or thoughts that you associate with consuming organic food products.</li> <li>8. Would you say you have a positive or negative attitude towards organic food consumption? Can you explain why you feel like that?</li> <li>9. Share with me good things associated with consuming organic foods.</li> <li>10. Tell me about the bad things associated with consuming organic foods</li> </ol>	To measure Attitude (Objective 2)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Is it important or not to you that you consume organic food in the same amount or type as your friends and family?</li> <li>12. Do people whose opinion you value also share your views on purchase or non-purchase of organic? How do you feel about that?</li> </ol>	To measure Subjective Norms (Objective 3)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. If you wanted to change to buy only organic food products, what would make that hard?</li> <li>14. What makes it easy to consume organic foods?</li> </ol>	To measure Subjective Norms (Objective 3)

Question	Rationale for Question
<p>15. What would you and/or your family and friends need to purchase more organic food products?</p> <p>16. What are your personal barriers to organic food consumption?</p>	
<p>17. On a scale from 1 – 10, how much do you worry / care about the environment. Can you explain your score?</p> <p>18. Do you think it is morally right to purchase organic foods?</p>	To ascertain Moral Attitude (Objective 5)
<p>19. Do you believe organic produce is healthier? Why? Why not?</p> <p>20. Do you consider yourself a health-conscious consumer? What health activities do you engage in?</p>	To measure Health Consciousness (Objective 7)
<p>21. Do you believe human beings damage the environment? If so, how?</p> <p>22. Do you think a lack of concern for the environment is a reason for non-purchase of organic foods? Would you say this applies to you?</p> <p>23. Do people important to you behave in an environmentally friendly way?</p> <p>24. What is your view on these statements? ‘By purchasing organic food, I can save the environment</p>	To measure Environmental Concern (Objective 6)



## Appendix 2: Informed Consent

### UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent,

#### **Research Project**

**Researcher:** Sandile Mkhize (Telephone number: 082 568 0501) (Email: [hycinth82@gmail.com](mailto:hycinth82@gmail.com))  
**Supervisor:** Prof. Debbie Vigar-Ellis (Telephone number: 033 260 5899) (Email: [vigard@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:vigard@ukzn.ac.za))

**Research Office:** Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Tel: + 27 (0)31 260 8350, Email: [hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za)

I, **Sandile Simphiwe Mkhize** am a **Masters in Commerce in Marketing Management** student in the **School of Management, Information Technology and Governance**, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled (*Barriers to organic food purchases in South Africa*).

The aim of this study is to: determine from South African consumers what factors, they believe, act as barriers to organic purchasing.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained by the researcher and [State Name of School], UKZN. All collected data will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed after 5 years.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSS/1676/016M).

The interview should take about 25 minutes/s to complete. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Researcher's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*This page is to be retained by participant*

## CONSENT

I \_\_\_\_\_ (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*This page is to be retained by researcher*

## Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance



21 December 2017

Mr Sandile Simphiwe Mkhize (200273745)  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Mkhize,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1676/016M  
New Project Title: Barriers to Organic Food Purchases in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

### Approval notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application for an amendment dated 21 December 2017 has now been granted Full Approval as follows:

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Professor Debbie Vigar-Ellis  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Debbie Cunynghame

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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