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Values, attitude, and desire in organic food purchase intention in Mexico

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Introduction: This investigation analyses the purchase intention for organic foods through the influence of the consumer's values, attitude, and desire, how this attitude mediates the relationship between consumer values and purchase intention, and how consumer desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention.

Methods: The quantitative approach was used with a transversal type of research. Data was collected through a survey of 204 consumers of organic foods in Mexico. The analysis of these results was carried out through partial least squares structural equation modeling.

Results: Only appearance consciousness and environmental awareness are the motivators of the goals to influence the behavior of consumers when attitude mediates the relationships. However, when attitude mediated the relationship, health consciousness and social awareness were not significant motivators of behavioral intention.

Discussion: This analysis serves as a basis for deepening the study of gastronomic tourism in rural areas such as Mexico since this type of food is sold in tourist places. The model proposed can be used as a theoretical framework for future studies. Marketers can also use the results in marketing strategies as community marketing in economies like Latin American countries.

KEYWORDS

theory of planned behavior, appearance consciousness, health consciousness, environmental awareness, social awareness

1 Introduction

Organic foods have become attractive to consumers. More and more people are adopting a basic, simple, green lifestyle that seeks environmental preservation, protection, and sustainability (Ali et al., 2023). Additionally, consumers have changed their diet preferences and begun to substitute the purchase of conventional foods with organic foods. However, this transformation is not identical in all countries, as purchasing this type of food is less prevalent in developing economies than in developed economies (Yadav and Pathak, 2016).

In developed economies, the consumption of organic foods is increasing. For example, in the United States, the lowest level of regular consumption is 70% in homes, with percentage the national average being 82% (Organic Trade Association, 2016). Nevertheless, in developing economies such as Mexico, despite being considered one of the 20 countries exporting organic

foods in the world, its internal consumption is barely 15 percent of its organic crops (United State Department of Agriculture, 2022; SIAP, 2020). It indicates a low purchasing behavior toward organic foods in contrast to countries of developed economies. However, in Mexico, its consumer segment has grown by 53% (Rodríguez, 2021), indicating this market's growth potential. To understand the consumption of organic foods, before the purchasing behavior, the intention towards the behavior must be explored (Zagata, 2012; Ham et al., 2018), which will allow organic consumption implications for a context like Mexico, with high extensions of crops to produce organic foods, but also with the highest percentage of this organic production goes to the international market of Japan, the United States, and Europe (SADER, 2022), and low to the domestic market.

Therefore, to increase accessibility and organic consumption in Mexico, the variables that explain purchase intention are analyzed to provide information to generate strategies that encourage organic purchases in this country. For the marketing of organic products, there are various places such as specialized and health food stores, as well as *tianguis* and organic alternative markets. The latter two encourage direct purchases from the producer, and thus from the regional market, consumer-producer, and merchant relationships and create trust among them (Bustamante-Lara and Schwentesius-Rindermann, 2018; Escobar-López et al., 2022). In addition, little is known about the behavior of consumers in these rural areas and emerging markets, which directly and indirectly attract gastronomy tourism, who seek these markets to purchase food, information that little has been neglected by literature extended on purchasing organic food (Escobar-López et al., 2022; Escobar-López et al., 2017).

In Mexico, some studies show the price of organic products, education level, gender, income, and age of consumers are some factors that decrease organic food consumption. The high cost, female, high income, level of education, and age of economically active person influence organic food purchase intention (Escobar-López et al., 2022; Escobar-López et al., 2017; Salgado and Beltrán, 2011; Lopez Salazar, 2019; Sánchez-Bravo et al., 2021; Díaz-Viquez et al., 2015; Espinoza-Ortega et al., 2021). Escobar-López et al. (2017) found seven segments of organic food consumers defined by sociodemographic characteristics and hedonistic and ethical motivations, including ecological awareness, nutritional content, product availability (place of purchase), sensory attributes, product certification, health safety and trust, and socio-economic aspects. Several factors are related to the level of knowledge, identity, familiarity, and social status of the consumer. It indicates that altruistic, sociocultural, and economic values are relevant to purchase intention (Escobar-López et al., 2017; Espinoza-Ortega et al., 2021; Ayaviri-Nina et al., 2022; García-Valdez and Toledo-López, 2019). Ayaviri-Nina et al. (2022) state that demographic and sociocultural factors do not necessarily significantly influence organic product consumption; in contrast, emotional, sentimental, and motivational variables influence significant attitudes in explaining the purchase of organic products. All the above would lead to the understanding of purchasing behavior.

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) is the background theory on purchase behavior, which explains purchase intention. However, there has been an extension of this theory in the model of goal-directed behavior, which proposes the intervention of additional variables to clarify the intention of behavior as a motivational variable to have a model closer to the context of Mexico. Nevertheless, in the

model of goal-directed behavior, the goals are not directly integrated into the model. These are hedonism and ethical or altruistic consumer motivations toward behavioral intention on organic food consumption (Ayaviri-Nina et al., 2022; do Prado and de Moraes, 2020; Eldesouky et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2020; Zheng et al., 2022). Environmental awareness, social awareness, health consciousness, appearance consciousness and animal welfare, sensory aspects, and sociocultural values have been the hedonistic and ethical motivations for increasing organic food consumption (Escobar-López et al., 2017; Salgado and Beltrán, 2011; Sánchez-Bravo et al., 2021; Espinoza-Ortega et al., 2021). To do this, it is necessary to understand how goals affect behavior and the variables that intervene in it. The values are included since they contribute to defining the desired goals of the consumer to motivate them to a specific behavior (Schwartz, 1992).

This study analyzes the indirect effects of values on purchase intentions. The literature is gaping because although direct relationships have been studied, indirect ones have yet to be proven. Building on the work of Fleseriu et al. (2020) and Yadav and Pathak (2016), our study extends the understanding of the direct impact of values on attitude and purchase intention for organic foods. While these authors did not explore the mediating effect of attitude, our research suggests that this could be a significant factor, potentially influencing consumer behavior unexpectedly. Other authors, such as Leyva-Hernández et al. (2021), have confirmed that desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention. A model that integrates how goals, implicit in desire, affect purchase intentions may provide greater clarity in the analysis of the purchase of organic foods. Therefore, the objective of this investigation is to analyze purchase intention for organic foods through the influence of the consumer's values, attitude, and desire, as well as how this attitude mediates the relationship between consumer's values and purchase intention, and how consumer desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention.

This investigation contributes to a better understanding of purchase intention for organic foods by extending the TPB. The study considers that ethical or altruistic-collective values (environmental, social) and hedonics-individual (appearance, health) are analyzed as motivators of goals to influence behavior. It is proposed that consumer values improve the favorable evaluation of the purchase of organic food and thereby modify the consumer's desire when they perceive that through this act, they will realize their goal of taking care of their health and appearance, ensuring the well-being of smallholders, and protecting the environment, which motivates them to increase their purchase intention.

The findings of this investigation generate information for marketing professionals, specifically in terms of the generation of strategies that increase the segment of consumers that buy and consume organic foods. They also generate information for small agricultural producers from developing economies that carry out this family activity with artisanal production techniques. This information can help orient to this market segment and, through sales, can strengthen the local economy, fostering the organic production of agriculture (Bustamante-Lara and Schwentesius-Rindermann, 2018; Escobar-López et al., 2017; Ayaviri-Nina et al., 2022). In addition, it contributes to generating information on factors that explain organic food consumption in *tianguis* and markets in Mexico, which are visited by national and international tourists in states such as Oaxaca, Chiapas, Mexico City, and others.

The rest of the document is organized into four sections. First, the theoretical framework and hypothesis formulation are presented. Second, the investigation method is detailed. Third, the results and discussions are revealed. Finally, the conclusions and implications of the investigation are stated.

2 Theoretical framework

The TPB postulates that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control of behavior explain intention, which defines behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In studies on organic purchasing, this theory explains consumer intention through attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control of behavior. The attitude is the favorable evaluation of the benefits of the purchase. The subjective norms are defined as the opinions of the critical people to the consumer. The perceived control of behavior is the perception that the consumer controls their resources, such as money and time (Carfora et al., 2019; Nguyen T. T. M. et al., 2019).

Another framework used in the analysis of organic purchase is the model of goal-directed behavior, which is an extension of the TPB, given that it includes the motivational process, incorporating desire into the model proposed by Ajzen (1991). Desire is a predictor of intention and is predicted by the attitude, subjective norms, and perceived control of behavior from the TPB. Desire is a mental state, which is why it has behavioral motives, while intention is the disposition toward carrying out a behavior (Kim et al., 2016; Teng and Lu, 2016). In this way, desire transforms volitional and non-volitional processes into motivations to carry out a behavior (Perugini et al., 2001).

However, in the model of goal-directed behavior, it is not mentioned in which way the goals influence behavior, as they are not directly considered in the model. To understand its influence, it's necessary to analyze how goals influence predictors of behavior and, thus, behavior. As such, what goals should be understood? Goals are the benefits that the consumer seeks through consumption (Huffman and Houston, 1993; Peterman, 1997). The consumer achieves their goals through purchases, which does not imply that the purchase represents the goal; instead, those goals can refer to something different that is achieved through a purchase.

To understand what goals, means, and values could be considered. Values are the motivational forces of behavior, such as desired goals (Vinson et al., 1977; Schwartz, 1992) and function as an organized system, which explains the motivational bases of attitudes (Vinson et al., 1977; Schwartz, 1992; Olson and Zanna, 1993). This is to say that consumer values influence attitudes towards purchases. Values can express social motivations, institutional demands, or functional requirements (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987) are strongly related to social and environmental demands or personal requirements such as health and appearance.

In the analysis of organic purchasing through this theoretical framework, attitudes such as a favorable evaluation of purchasing organic foods are highlighted as the main factor in explaining purchase intention above subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Al-Swidi et al., 2014; Sultan et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Boobalan and Nachimuthu, 2020; Pacho, 2020; Asif et al., 2018; Saleki et al., 2019). For that, this study only included the relationship between values and attitude and excluded the model of subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. The TPB was extended by analyzing attitude as one of the predictors that best explain the intention

(Al-Swidi et al., 2014; Sultan et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Boobalan and Nachimuthu, 2020; Pacho, 2020; Asif et al., 2018; Saleki et al., 2019). Therefore, the study only considers attitude as a predictor. Regarding organic purchasing, the following are generally considered predictors of attitude: environmental awareness, social awareness, and health consciousness (Yadav and Pathak, 2016; Fleseriu et al., 2020; Nguyen H. V. et al., 2019; Lee, 2016; Yadav, 2016).

Environmental awareness is the individual perception of environmental problems, the prevention of environmental damage, and the disposition toward preserving the environment (Chen and Tung, 2014; Paul et al., 2016; Molinillo et al., 2019). The relationship between environmental concerns and purchase intention has not only been presented directly, but some articles also indicate an indirect effect in the relationship in the presence of attitude. Countless articles demonstrate that environmental concern positively affects the purchase intention of organic products. For example, Asif et al. (2018) explain the purchase intention of organic foods in Pakistan, Turkey, and Iran and demonstrate that environmental concern directly affects purchase intention. However, they only make the direct effect evident. Also, studies on the purchase of organic foods, such as that of Saleki et al. (2019), confirm that environmental concern directly affects purchase intention. Another study in China, where the direct effect between environmental concern and purchase intention is presented, is that of Li and Jaharuddin (2021). Like previous studies, this one explores the direct impact on the relationship.

Fleseriu et al. (2020) explore the direct effect of environmental concern on attitude and the latter's impact on the purchase intention of organic foods in Romanian consumers. Yadav and Pathak (2016) also found these relationships in their study of students' purchasing intention of organic foods. Although the authors do not test the mediation effect of attitude, it is possible to expect an indirect impact through attitude on the relationship.

Likewise, other studies indicate that environmental awareness influences attitude. Studies such as Lee and Yun (2015) find that environmental awareness significantly influences attitudes toward purchasing organic foods in the United States. Also, research by Smith and Paladino (2010) demonstrates that environmental awareness positively influences attitudes towards organic food in Australia. Moreover, in a study on organic coffee, Lee et al. (2017) found that environmental protection influences purchasing attitudes. More recent studies in technology also confirmed the relationship between environmental awareness and attitude (Shah et al., 2021).

Numerous studies have provided strong evidence that having a positive attitude toward organic foods can significantly increase the likelihood of purchasing them. Teng and Wang (2015), Liang (2016), Bai et al. (2019), Nguyen T. T. M. et al. (2019), and Ahmed et al. (2021) are among the researchers who have confirmed this relationship between attitude and purchase intention of organic foods, as reported in the literature. As previously noted, the analysis of the direct effect of environmental concern or similar variables on the intention to purchase organic foods has been confirmed in studies such as Asif et al. (2018), Saleki et al. (2019), Li and Jaharuddin (2021), and Ahmed et al. (2021). This evidence allows us to postulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between environmental awareness and purchase intention.

Health consciousness is an individual disposition toward carrying out actions for one's health (Teng and Lu, 2016; Molinillo et al., 2019;

Hansen et al., 2018). Like environmental awareness, it is possible to propose that there is an indirect effect between health consciousness and purchase intention when attitude mediates the relationship. For example, in a developing nation, Yadav and Pathak (2016) confirm that health consciousness directly affects attitude and, in turn, directly affects purchase intention. Also, the study by Fleseriu et al. (2020) on organic food consumption in Romania analyzes the positive effect of health coziness on attitude and purchase intention. It proves that attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention. Although the authors did not test attitude mediation, attitude possibly acts as a mediator.

Kim and Chung (2011) analyzed health consciousness positively affecting the attitude toward purchasing organic skin care products. Yadav and Pathak (2016) obtained similar results when analyzing organic foods because they also found a positive effect of health consciousness on attitude. Other studies have found the influence of health consciousness on attitude, such as that of Michaelidou and Hassan (2008), who analyzed the intention to purchase organic foods in Scotland. Chen (2009) found that health consciousness positively influences attitudes toward organic foods in Taiwan. Also, Singh and Verma (2017) confirmed a positive influence of health consciousness on the attitude of Indian consumers towards organic foods. Similar variables were studied by Lee and Yun (2015), who found a positive influence of health on the purchasing attitude toward organic coffee in South Korea. This relationship has also been proven in emerging markets like Mexico (Nagaraj, 2021).

In turn, the literature shows that health consciousness has a positive effect on purchase intention in comparative studies between countries (Asif et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019; Kashif et al., 2020). Asif et al. (2018) find that health consciousness positively affects the intention to purchase organic foods in Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. Also, Wang et al. (2019) Tanzania and Kenya confirm that health consciousness positively influences the intention to purchase organic foods. In Pakistan and Malaysia, Kashif et al. (2020) indicate that health consciousness affects the purchase intention of organic foods. Therefore, the empirical evidence allows the following hypothesis to be postulated:

Hypothesis 2: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intention.

The appearance consciousness is defined as self-perception regarding caring for and the importance of appearance (Goetzke and Spiller, 2014; Kaufmann et al., 2016), which is treated as an egoist motivation or hedonic value, this being a consumer-centered value, which represents pleasure and self-gratification (Grunert and Juhl, 1995). Following this logic, for Yadav (2016), egoist values have a more significant influence than altruistic values over attitudes toward organic foods in a developing nation, which is the context of this study. Kim and Chung (2011) found similar results when analyzing the effect of consumer values on the attitude toward purchasing organic skin and hair care products. They provide that appearance consciousness predicts attitudes toward purchasing organic products in the United States. Similar studies of personal care products confirmed this relationship (Takaya, 2019). When analyzing the purchasing decision of organic foods, Sadiq et al. (2021) find that hedonic values influence the attitude of Indian consumers.

Along these lines, Anisimova (2016) indicates that hedonism is closely related to purchase intention and proves that hedonic benefits cause consumers to have an intention to purchase organic foods in the future. Meanwhile, some studies demonstrate that hedonic values directly affect the purchase intention of organic foods, such as that of Mohammed (2020) in emerging markets. Likewise, Ghali-Zinoubi (2021) demonstrates that hedonic values positively affect both the willingness to pay and the willingness to purchase organic foods. As in the previous cases, it is possible to propose that in addition to the direct effects on the relationships between values and purchase intention, it is possible to postulate an indirect impact due to attitude on the relationships. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between appearance consciousness and purchase intention.

In turn, social awareness is related to improving social well-being and ensuring support for the local social areas (Molinillo et al., 2019; Balderjahn et al., 2013). In this case, social consciousness is seen as an altruistic value since, according to Yadav and Pathak (2016), these values aim to benefit others without considering one's own. In addition to affecting attitudes, social awareness encourages consumers to modify their purchasing decisions for organic foods (Canavari, 2007). However, as in previous cases, the indirect effect has yet to be explored when attitude is the mediating variable.

The direct effects of social awareness or similar variables toward attitude and intention have been previously tested. According to Michaelidou and Hassan (2008), concerns about ethical issues positively and significantly influence attitudes toward organic purchasing. In turn, Nguyen et al. (2017) find that altruistic values positively and significantly influence environmental attitudes. Also, altruistic motivations such as supporting local farmers and animal welfare have a more significant influence on the attitudes of organic food consumers than selfish motivations (Septiani et al., 2019). In his research on the purchase of eco-friendly products, Soyez (2012) demonstrates that consumers with values that benefit others positively and significantly influence pro-environmental attitudes.

Not only does social awareness influence attitude, but it also influences purchase intention. Social awareness is involved in decision-making when purchasing organic foods in local markets (Molinillo et al., 2019; Rana and Paul, 2017). Furthermore, studies prove both direct relationships. Fleseriu et al. (2020) demonstrate that social awareness affects Romanian organic food consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions. Prakash et al. (2018) also found similar relationships in eco-friendly products. They proved that altruistic values affect attitudes and purchase intention. Therefore, as in the previous cases, it is possible to propose the mediation of attitude in the relationship between social awareness and purchase intention. This gives rise to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between social awareness and purchase intention.

According to the TPB, attitude is the favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the individual toward a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the purchase of organic foods, a favorable attitude toward a purchase leads to a disposition toward carrying out a purchase (Hoang et al., 2020). Meanwhile, following the model of goal-directed behavior, attitude

does not directly influence intention but instead desire (Perugini et al., 2001).

In studies on food tourism, when the tourist evaluates a wine tour as necessary, valuable, and beneficial, this increases their desire to enjoy themselves and have an unforgettable experience by going on the tour (Lee et al., 2017). When tourists think a food festival is pleasant, exciting, valuable, and enjoyable, their desire increases (Chang et al., 2018). In responsible tourism, attitude also positively influences desire; when the consumer considers the environmental responsibility programs of airlines to promote air quality, this increases their desire to participate in these programs through traveling with these airlines because they thereby help the environment (Kim et al., 2014).

The model of goal-directed behavior differentiates between desire and intention. Intention is linked to the carrying out of a behavior, while desire is related to achieving a goal (Perugini et al., 2001). The literature on sustainable behaviors shows that consumer desire predicts intention (Han et al., 2016; Meng and Choi, 2016; Han et al., 2018). For example, in the context of tourism, it is shown that the influence of desire on the intention to carry out environmentally responsible behavior is favorable for visiting environmentally responsible museums (Han et al., 2018), as well as when the objective of tourism is to connect with local people and places, which reduces the environmental impact (Meng and Choi, 2016). When repeated behaviors that have an environmentally responsible component are analyzed, it is also shown that desire positively influences intention, specifically when the consumer seeks to stay in a hotel that follows practices that minimize the environmental impact (Han and Yoon, 2015a). As such, desire as the motivational process is the variable that influences intention in sustainable behaviors. Furthermore, it has

been shown that in the consumption of organic foods, desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention (Leyva-Hernández et al., 2021). As such, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 5: Consumer attitude positively influences consumer desire.

Hypothesis 6: Consumer desire positively influences purchase intention.

Hypothesis 7: Consumer desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention.

This investigation takes the TPB attitude to improve the understanding of purchase intentions for organic foods. It adds consumer desire and values to extend the knowledge of purchase intention. As such, the indirect effects of consumer values (environmental awareness, social awareness, health consciousness, and appearance consciousness) on purchase intention and the indirect impact of attitude on purchase intention were evaluated, as described in Figure 1.

3 Materials and methods

The hypothetic-deductive investigation method was used. A cross-sectional and explanatory study was carried out. The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Instituto Politécnico Nacional. A structured questionnaire was used

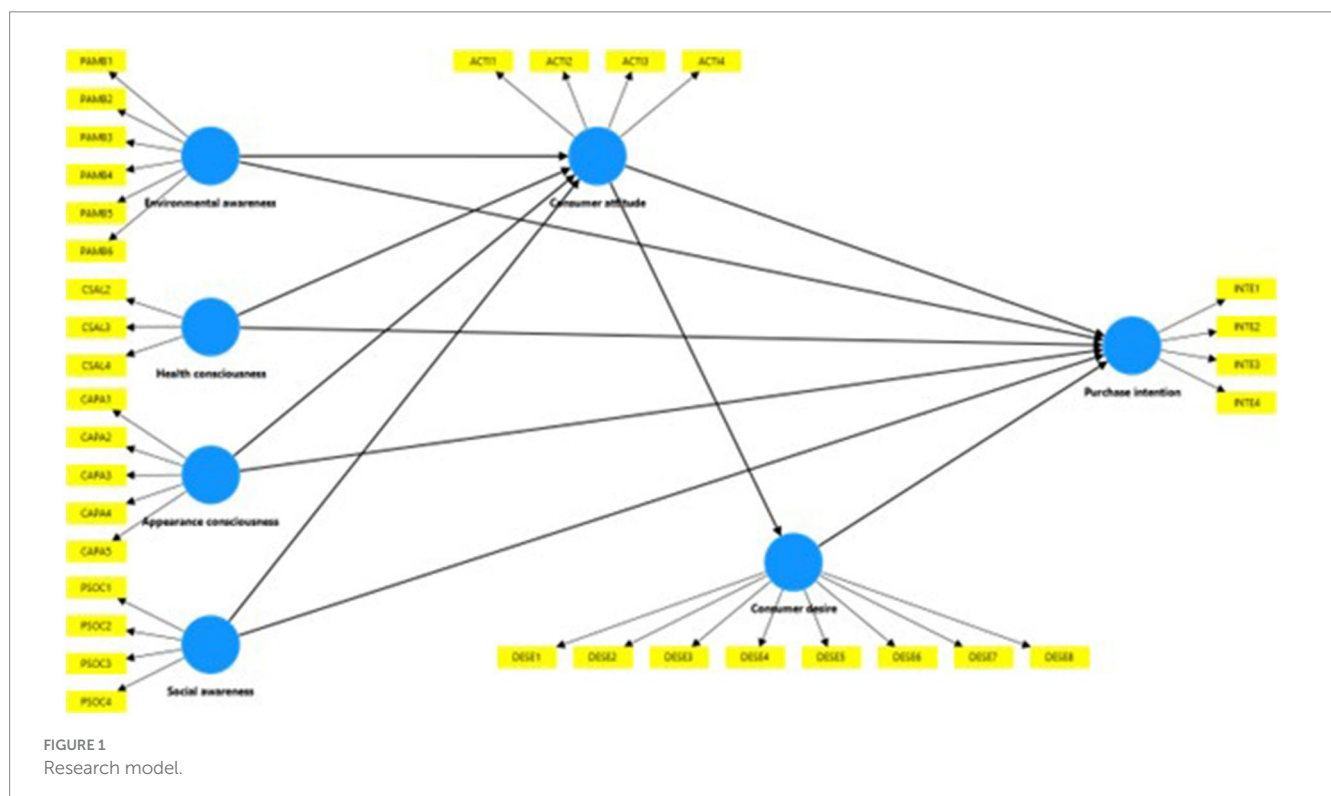


FIGURE 1 Research model.

to collect the data, with a sample of 204 consumers of organic foods from Mexico. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were performed through structural equation modeling using partial least squares. Before this analysis, an exploratory factorial analysis (EFA) was carried out using factor reduction by principal components and Varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sampling adequacy measure values for the environmental awareness construct were 0.776, and its Bartlett test of sphericity was significant. In addition, the value of the total variance explained corresponded to 65.63%. In the case of the health consciousness construct, the KMO value was 0.667 with Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant and had a total variance explained of 75.24%. The appearance consciousness construct had a KMO of 0.711, its Bartlett test was significant, and its value of the total variance explained was 66.93%. The KMO value of social awareness was 0.783, its Bartlett test of sphericity was significant and the value of the total variance explained was 70.38%. For the case of consumer attitude, its KMO value was 0.815, its Bartlett test was significant and the value of the total variance explained was 84.08%. The consumer desire construct had a KMO equal to 0.818 with a significant Bartlett test and a total variance explained of 78.85%. Finally, the EFA values of purchase intention were KMO equal at 0.691, a total explained variance equal to 76.42% and a significant Bartlett's test of sphericity.

3.1 Sampling method

A structured questionnaire was used through convenience sampling to collect the data until a sample was obtained that was greater than the minimum required for data analysis by structural equation modeling by partial least squares. A sample of 204 organic food consumers from Mexico was collected. For data collection, three locations were selected according to Leyva-Hernández et al. (2021), which are the entities with the highest demand for organic food in Mexico: Mexico City, the state of Mexico, and the state of Oaxaca. In the first location, 40% of the sample was collected; in the second location, 31% was collected; and in the third location, the rest of the sample was collected. The sample selection criteria were that the minimum age of the consumers was 18 years and that they consumed organic food. 35% of the data was collected via the internet through Google Forms with a filter question to consider only organic food consumers. 65% of the data was collected face-to-face in alternative markets, *tianguis*, and specialty organic food shops, relying on the voluntary participation of consumers who visited the sample locations. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects interviewed for this study.

Power analysis can obtain the minimum sample size required to treat the data by Partial Least Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). It can be conducted using Cohen's power tables (Benitez et al., 2020). This is necessary to determine the statistical power, the significance level, the number of predictors, and the effect size (Nitzl, 2016). A statistical power of 0.8 and a significance level 0.05 are acceptable (Cohen, 1988). The number of predictors is six, given that the most extensive structural paths are directed toward an endogenous latent variable. Similar investigations obtained a medium effect size (Palmero and Montemayor, 2020). It is recommended to consider a medium effect size for an optimistic approximation of the required

sample size (Benitez et al., 2020). By the power analysis, the size of the sample complies with the minimum required 98 for the data analysis with six predictors, a medium effect size, a level of significance of 0.05, and a statistical power of 0.8 (Benitez et al., 2020; Nitzl, 2016; Cohen, 1992). A statistical power analysis was also performed using G*Power software version 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009). Considering a medium effect size, a significant value of 0.05, and a power of 0.95, the minimum sample size obtained was 111. As with tables, the sample size exceeded the minimum required.

3.2 Measures

The structured questionnaire consisted of 7 latent variables (constructs) that integrated the hypothetical research model (environmental awareness, health consciousness, appearance consciousness, social awareness, consumer attitude, consumer desire, and purchase intention). In addition, the structured questionnaire included sociodemographic variables, which were an entity, gender, age, level of education, and principal place of purchase.

The relative construct of environmental awareness was adapted from the scale used by Chen and Tung (2014) and Paul et al. (2016) to measure the disposition towards carrying out activities that care for the environment and the concern for environmental problems. The relative construct of health consciousness was adapted from the scale Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) used to measure the responsibility and disposition towards being healthy. The construct of appearance consciousness was adapted from the scale proposed by Goetzke and Spiller (2014) to measure the importance and actions that care for one's appearance. Balderjahn et al. (2013) adapted the social awareness construct to measure the consideration of social well-being in people's actions. The relative constructs of consumer attitude, desire, and purchase intention were taken from Leyva-Hernández et al. (2021). The constructs were measured on a Likert scale of 7 points, from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree). The measurements of each construct are shown in Table 1.

3.3 Data analysis

For the data analysis, PLS-SEM was used, which is recommended for complex models (Hair et al., 2011; Sarstedt et al., 2014). Before the modeling evaluation, the structural model specification, the specification for the measurement model, and the data examination with asymmetry and kurtosis values between -1 and $+1$ were carried out (Hair et al., 2017). The algorithm and PLS Bootstrapping consistently estimated the PLS model with 5,000 subsamples and PLS Predict (Hair et al., 2011; Sarstedt et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2019). SmartPLS version 3 and 4 software was used to treat data (Ringle et al., 2015; Ringle et al., 2022).

For the assessment of the measurement model, the indicator loadings, the construct reliability, the convergent validity, and the discriminant validity were evaluated (Sarstedt et al., 2014). This evaluation allows us to validate that the items selected for each latent variable measure it. The structural model assessment evaluated the model's collinearity, determining the path coefficients and their significance values, the determination coefficients R^2 , the effect size f^2 , and the Stone-Geiser values Q^2 (Hair et al., 2019). With the results of

TABLE 1 Construct measurements.

Construct		Author
Environmental awareness		Chen and Tung (2014) and Paul et al. (2016)
PAMB1	I believe that environmental problems are essential.	
PAMB2	I believe that environmental problems cannot be ignored.	
PAMB3	We should be worried about environmental problems.	
PAMB4	I would be willing to reduce my consumption to protect the environment.	
PAMB6	More remarkable societal changes are needed to protect the environment.	
Health consciousness		Michaelidou and Hassan (2008)
CSAL2	I am conscious of my health.	
CSAL3	I take responsibility for the state of my health.	
CSAL4	I am willing to eat as healthily as possible.	
Appearance consciousness		Goetzke and Spiller (2014)
CAPA1	I do something for my appearance.	
CAPA2	I treat my body with products for body care or with massages.	
CAPA4	My appearance is important to me.	
CAPA5	I am conscious of my appearance.	
Social awareness		Balderjahn et al. (2013)
PSOC1	My decisions are generally based on concern for the well-being of others.	
PSOC2	My actions generally consider people's rights.	
PSOC3	My actions help other people.	
PSOC4	I choose alternatives that satisfy the needs of others.	
Consumer attitude		Leyva-Hernández et al. (2021)
Buying an organic food product...		
ACTI1	Is good for the environment.	
ACTI2	Is good for the smallholder farmers and their families.	
ACTI3	Benefits my health.	
ACTI4	Benefits my appearance.	
Consumer desire		Leyva-Hernández et al. (2021)
My desire to buy organic food products to		
DESE1	Look good physically.	
DESE2	Look after my figure.	
DESE3	Look after my health.	
DESE4	Ensure my state of health.	
DESE5	Preserve the environment.	
DESE6	Be an environmentalist.	
DESE7	Contribute to the economy of smallholder farmers and their families.	
DESE8	To guarantee fair prices for smallholder farmers.	
Purchase intention		Leyva-Hernández et al. (2021)
INTE1	I would search for places to buy organic food products.	
INTE2	I would recommend buying organic food products to my acquaintances.	
INTE3	I consider myself to be a loyal buyer of organic food products.	
INTE4	I intend to continue buying organic food products in the future.	

this assessment, the hypotheses tests can be carried out to confirm whether the independent variables proposed in the model significantly affect the dependent variables.

The construct reliability was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the Dijkstra-Henseler value (ρ_A), and Werts' composite reliability with values greater than 0.8 (Benitez et al., 2020; Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). For the convergent validity of the measurement model, a value equal to or superior to 0.5 for the average variance extracted (AVE) and loads more significant than 0.5 were considered, which indicates suitable reliability in the individual indicators that determine each construct (Sarstedt et al., 2014). Table 2 shows the reliability values for the construct and convergent validity.

The discriminant validity was verified through the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loading analysis, and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Hair et al., 2017). It was verified that the square root of the AVE of a construct was more significant than its correlation with other constructs in the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Sarstedt et al., 2014), as shown in Table 3. Meanwhile, the cross-loading analysis verified that none of the indicators would be loaded with greater intensity within another construct that wasn't being measured (Barclay et al., 1995). By the HTMT ratio of correlations, the discriminant validity between the two constructs was validated with values below 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015).

4 Results

Of the sample, 57% of the consumers of organic foods from the sampling were young adults, of which 26% were found in the range of 18 to 28 years old and 29% within the range of 29 to 38 years old. 68% of those interviewed are women, and 74% of the consumers had a higher education. Table 4 shows the demographic profile of those interviewed. The results show a more significant response from the female gender in the data collected via the Internet than face-to-face. In the sample collected face to face and via the Internet, the age group and educational level group with the highest representation was between 29 to 38 years old and bachelor's degree, respectively. Most of the samples collected face-to-face selected specialized stores as their prominent place to buy organic food. Most of the samples selected via the internet chose the supermarket.

The hypotheses were tested with the structural model assessment results, as shown in Table 5 and Figure 2. Hypothesis 1 was supported. When testing the indirect effect, it is confirmed that consumer attitude significantly mediated the relationship between environmental awareness and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.104, p = 0.042$). This shows that there is no direct effect on the part of environmental awareness in purchase intention, but there is an indirect effect when it mediates consumer attitude. As consumer value, environmental awareness significantly influenced consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.249, p = 0.017$), but it did not significantly influence purchase intention ($\beta = -0.008, p = 0.900$). Meanwhile, consumer attitude significantly influenced purchase intention ($\beta = 0.419, p = 0.000$).

Hypothesis 2 was not supported. When testing the indirect effect, consumer attitude did not mediate the relationship between health consciousness and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.062, p = 0.083$). Health consciousness also did not significantly influence consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.148, p = 0.050$), though it significantly influenced purchase intention ($\beta = 0.152, p = 0.030$).

TABLE 2 Construct reliability and convergent validity.

Construct	Load	AVE	ρ_A	Composite reliability	α
Environmental awareness					
PAMB1	0.746	0.569	0.879	0.867	0.869
PAMB2	0.662				
PAMB3	0.664				
PAMB4	0.918				
PAMB6	0.752				
Health consciousness					
CSAL2	0.625	0.635	0.857	0.837	0.834
CSAL3	0.871				
CSAL4	0.87				
Appearance consciousness					
CAPA1	0.801	0.55	0.832	0.83	0.83
CAPA2	0.738				
CAPA4	0.728				
CAPA5	0.694				
Social awareness					
PSOC1	0.827	0.602	0.86	0.852	0.859
PSOC2	0.731				
PSOC3	0.789				
PSOC4	0.753				
Consumer attitude					
ACTI1	0.922	0.79	0.94	0.937	0.937
ACTI2	0.926				
ACTI3	0.902				
ACTI4	0.799				
Consumer desire					
DESE1	0.599	0.591	0.927	0.919	0.917
DESE2	0.648				
DESE3	0.842				
DESE4	0.834				
DESE5	0.907				
DESE6	0.724				
DESE7	0.755				
DESE8	0.792				
Purchase intention					
INTE1	0.882	0.709	0.912	0.906	0.903
INTE2	0.867				
INTE3	0.717				
INTE4	0.890				

AVE-average variance extracted, ρ_A - Dijkstra-Henseler's value, α - Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Hypothesis 3 was supported. With the intervention of the mediation of consumer attitude, appearance consciousness significantly influenced purchase intention ($\beta = 0.091, p = 0.007$).

TABLE 3 Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio.

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Environmental awareness	0.754						
2. Health consciousness	0.656 (0.647)	0.797					
3. Appearance consciousness	0.540 (0.541)	0.555 (0.565)	0.741				
4. Social awareness	0.592 (0.591)	0.456 (0.466)	0.492 (0.491)	0.776			
5. Consumer attitude	0.529 (0.523)	0.474 (0.471)	0.482 (0.486)	0.395 (0.393)	0.889		
6. Consumer desire	0.533 (0.522)	0.532 (0.521)	0.418 (0.429)	0.499 (0.499)	0.746 (0.749)	0.769	
7. Purchase intention	0.432 (0.425)	0.494 (0.489)	0.306 (0.305)	0.379 (0.383)	0.715 (0.713)	0.704 (0.703)	0.842

The square root of the AVE is on the diagonal (bold). The Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio is in parentheses.

TABLE 4 Demographic profile of the respondents.

Demographic variables		Total	Face to face	Via internet
Entity	Mexico City	82 (40%)	50 (38%)	32 (43%)
	State of Mexico	63 (31%)	40 (31%)	23 (31%)
	State of Oaxaca	59 (29%)	40 (31%)	19 (26%)
Gender	Female	138 (68%)	80 (62%)	58 (78%)
	Male	66 (32%)	50 (38%)	16 (22%)
Age	Between 18 to 28 years old	52 (26%)	30 (23%)	22 (30%)
	Between 29 and 38 years old	64 (31%)	36 (28%)	28 (38%)
	Between 39 and 48 years old	38 (19%)	31 (24%)	8 (11%)
	Between 49 and 58 years old	34 (17%)	23 (18%)	11 (15%)
	59 years and above	15 (7%)	10 (7%)	5 (6%)
Education level	Less than a bachelor's degree	53 (26%)	40 (31%)	13 (18%)
	Bachelor's degree	103 (50%)	71 (54%)	32 (43%)
	Master's degree	45 (22%)	18 (14%)	27 (36%)
	Holding a doctorate	3 (2%)	1 (1%)	2 (3%)
Main place of purchase	Market	2 (1%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
	Organic market	42 (20%)	30 (23%)	12 (16%)
	Supermarket	38 (19%)	12 (9%)	26 (35%)
	Tianguis	52 (25%)	36 (28%)	16 (22%)
	Specialized store	55 (27%)	46 (35%)	9 (12%)
	Other	15 (7%)	4 (3%)	11 (15%)

Also, appearance consciousness significantly influenced consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.216, p = 0.001$) but did not influence purchase intention ($\beta = -0.100, p = 0.151$).

However, hypothesis 4 was not supported. Consumer attitude did not mediate the relationship between social awareness and consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.032, p = 0.444$). Social awareness did not influence consumer attitude ($\beta = 0.076, p = 0.245$) nor purchase intention ($\beta = 0.036, p = 0.172$).

Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7 were supported. Consumer attitude significantly influenced consumer desire ($\beta = 0.697, p = 0.000$), and consumer desire significantly influenced purchase intention for organic foods ($\beta = 0.309, p = 0.002$). Also, consumer desire mediated the relationship between consumer attitude and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.216, p = 0.003$).

Regarding consumer values, environmental awareness has the most significant positive effect on attitude, followed by appearance consciousness. Health consciousness is the only value that directly affects purchase intention. Regarding indirect effects, there is only attitude mediation between the relationship's environmental awareness and purchase intention and appearance consciousness and purchase intention.

Additionally, it was verified that the VIF values of the structural model were less than 5, not to have multicollinearity problems (Hair et al., 2011). The effect size of consumer attitude and desire was more significant than 0.35 (Cohen, 1992). The R^2 values for purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.512$) were moderate, and the R^2 values for consumer desire ($R^2 = 0.483$) and consumer attitude ($R^2 = 0.285$) were weak (Hair et al., 2011). It can be inferred that purchase intention is the variable with a greater degree of model explanation. The Q^2 value was 0.248 for consumer attitude, 0.260 for consumer desire, and 0.190 for purchase intention. This indicates that the model's independent variables have a predictive power of almost 19% in the purchase intention.

For the model adjustment, the obtained result for the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was 0.083, less than 0.1, which indicates an acceptable adjustment (Kline, 2015). This criterion is recommended to evaluate the model fit (Benitez et al., 2020; Ringle et al., 2020). This indicates an unlikely difference between the hypothesized and accurate models (Henseler et al., 2016).

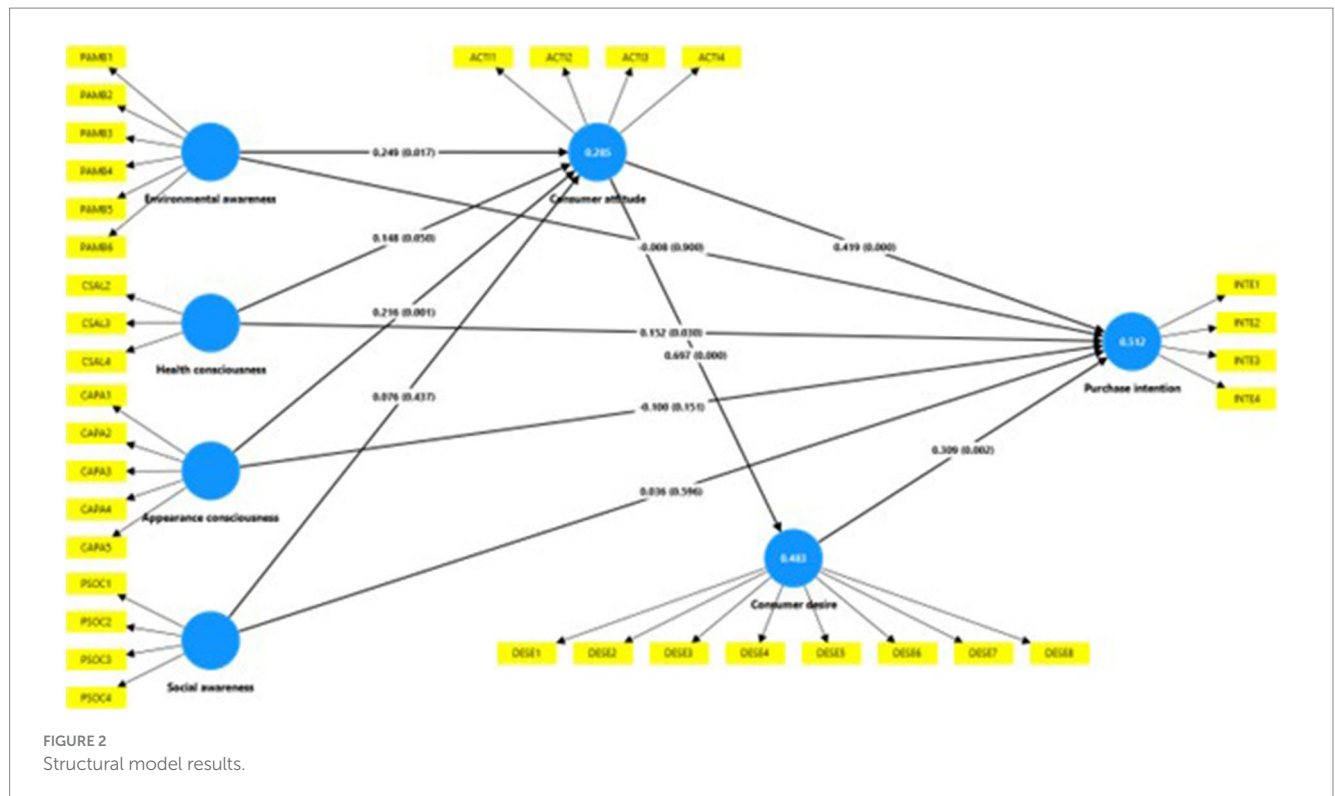
5 Discussion

In this study, only two consumer values positively influenced attitude, environmental awareness, and appearance consciousness. Attitude also mediated the relationships between

TABLE 5 Structural model assessment.

Hypotheses	β	Mean	Standard deviation	t	f ²	VIF	Hypotheses supported
H ₁ :Environmental awareness→Consumer attitude→Purchase intention	0.104	0.109	0.051	2.033*	-	-	Yes
H ₂ :Health consciousness →Consumer attitude→Purchase intention	0.062	0.059	0.036	1.733 ns	-	-	No
H ₃ :Appearance consciousness→ Consumer attitude→ Purchase intention	0.091	0.094	0.033	2.716**	-	-	Yes
H ₄ :Social awareness →Consumer attitude→Purchase intention	0.032	0.026	0.042	0.766 ns	-	-	No
H ₅ :Consumer attitude →Consumer desire	0.697	0.699	0.05	13.908***	0.942	1.000	Yes
H ₆ :Consumer desire →Purchase intention	0.309	0.309	0.102	3.043**	0.090	2.241	Yes
H ₇ :Consumer attitude →Consumer desire→Purchase intention	0.216	0.216	0.074	2.926**	-	-	Yes

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001, ns: not significant, β -path coefficient, t-t value, f²-effect size, VIF- variance inflation factor.



environmental awareness and purchase intention, as well as appearance consciousness and purchase intention. The consumer has individual (appearance consciousness), hedonic, and altruistic (environmental awareness) values. This consumption is explained not only by ethical motivations but also by egoistic

motivations. Organic food consumers have this polarity in their motivations, have both ethical and prosocial behaviors, and are not characterized by being fully committed as ethical consumers. This polarity is seen in food and other green consumption without total commitment. For this reason, consumers can also

be classified according to their environmental commitment (Song and Kim, 2019; Arruda Filho, 2022; Afonso et al., 2018).

Purchasing organic food offers advantages both for society as a whole and for individuals. It contributes to social responsibility, supports ecological sustainability, and is advantageous for consumer health. Nevertheless, findings from this study indicate that social awareness did not drive consumers to buy organic products. Shoppers are more inclined to choose organic foods primarily for health reasons. However, awareness of environmental issues and concern for appearance had a positive effect on the intention to purchase organic food when attitude played a mediating role.

Meanwhile, attitude positively influenced desire, which itself influenced intention. It is essential to understand that consumers' concerns about the environment, willingness to take personal and social action, and attention to appearance significantly shape their perceptions. It causes favorable evaluations regarding purchasing organic foods. They believe their purchase benefits the environment, health, appearance, and smallholders. The consumer who perceives benefits in purchasing organic foods desires to carry out their purchase. They believe that with the purchase, they can generate a positive change in their person, specifically in their physique, figure, and health, as well as the economy of producers and their families, guarantee fair prices, and preserve the environment. Because of their desire to make these purchases, they are more willing to search for, recommend, continue buying, and be loyal buyers of organic foods. The study findings confirm that attitude is modified through values (environmental awareness and appearance consciousness), as is the favorable evaluation of purchases of the smallholder farmers, environment, and the person. This evaluation modifies desire, the motivational process influencing purchase intention. The extension of the TPB was accomplished by considering values as a predictor of attitude (Vinson et al., 1977; Schwartz, 1992; Olson and Zanna, 1993), considering only the attitude of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991), with the addition of desire as a predictor of intention and the predicted variable of attitude from the model of goal-directed behavior (Perugini et al., 2001).

Consumer values relate to social awareness, personal gratification, social power, safety, and collective well-being humans seek (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987). Upon protecting the environment, human beings also seek social recognition for carrying out an activity that benefits the collective, increasing their social power, understood as social control or authority. The consumers can be seen as "leaders"; in this way, they have control and authority over other members of the collective. Through maintaining the environment and smallholder farmers, consumers can also guarantee their safety in the long term, which is necessary for their survival.

Caring for one's appearance, how to be aware of how you look, using body care products, massages, and more things for appearance care indicates that the consumer seeks gratification related to pleasure and happiness. Additionally, in caring for their appearance, the individual could seek recognition from others who offer social status. As with the case of protecting the environment as well as worrying about environmental problems, reducing consumption, and being aware that greater social changes are necessary for the preservation of the environment, the consumer obtains social recognition, as food is not only related to a biological need but also coexistence with a social group (Poulain, 2019).

The results also confirm the influence of attitudes such as the evaluation of the benefits of purchasing organic food towards the

consumer in terms of their appearance and health, smallholder farmers and their families, and the environment on the desire of consumers to look good physically, ensure their health and the environment and be environmentalists when purchasing organic food. In literature regarding consumption, where a sustainable goal is involved, attitude influences consumer desire to fulfill this social and environmentally responsible goal, which can indicate that the consumer seeks social recognition and obtains a different status from the other members of the collective. For example, the study by Kim et al. (2014) finds that US airline consumers' attitudes influence their desire to participate in social and environmental programs. This is also found in responsible tourism. The study by Han and Yoon (2015b) reveals that attitude influences the desire to stay in an environmentally responsible hotel.

The positive relationship between the consumer's desire to maintain a good appearance, take care of their appearance and health status, preserve the environment, and be environmentalist has also been demonstrated in the purchase intention seen as the search for places selling organic foods, the recommendation and future purchase of organic foods and loyalty towards these products. This relationship is similar to that found in previous studies in tourist accommodation, which show similar results in repeated environmentally responsible purchasing, where the desire for sustainability influences the intention to revisit an environmentally friendly hotel (Han and Yoon, 2015a). When the desire is related to health, this relationship is also confirmed, as this desire influenced the intention to visit a Korean medicine festival (Song et al., 2014).

Some authors state that demographic differences also affect this type of consumption, such as the level of education, the higher education, the higher the consumption, and the level of income, age, and gender. Female consumers represent this consumption, the economically active millennial generation (Escobar-López et al., 2022; Díaz-Viquez et al., 2015; Espinoza-Ortega et al., 2021; Ayaviri-Nina et al., 2022). These are similar to the findings of this research since the most represented group is women between 29 and 38 years of age with a bachelor's degree. However, this research did not analyze the effect of sociodemographic variables on consumption, which is a limitation of the study. Future studies can examine the relationship between age, educational level, gender, and purchase intention.

Consumer values, only represented by environmental awareness and appearance consciousness, imply that social recognition motivates favorable attitudes toward organic foods. These results indicate that the consumer's purchase intention is motivated by the guarantee of safety through caring for themselves, their appearance and health, and preserving the environment. Further studies can explore self-image as a predictor of attitudes. In addition, given that the values that motivate the goals for the consumption of organic foods are both hedonic and altruistic, it is recommended that future research aims to create a segmentation of these consumers based on their values that not only have implications for incentives for this type of consumption but rather encourage gastronomic tourism.

Given that social recognition plays a relevant role in changing perceptions of organic foods, marketers can use this in marketing strategies. Community marketing works for these foods, where marketers contact consumers as brand ambassadors. Marketers offer benefits to the brand ambassadors in return for recommendations. As such, the consumer gains benefits from the marketer and the recognition of their peers, while the marketer attracts new consumers.

This strategy can be used in Mexico, as the investigation observed that small producers generally sell their products and establish one-on-one relationships with their consumers. They have direct communication and, with it, can establish this marketing strategy. In turn, they could bolster this strategy by using social networks to make recommendations, as the results show that most of their consumers are young adults, who generally have a greater affinity for this type of resource.

The study's main limitation was analyzing organic purchase intention, as there is an emerging market for organic foods as a movement in Mexico. Most of these foods are marketed in unestablished markets, some mobile and without regulations. Meanwhile, internal consumption in Mexico is low. As such, it was opted to measure behavior intention due to probable bias. This study is proposed to be replicated in countries with a consolidated market for organic foods, measuring behavior to identify similarities and differences between consumers. Another limitation of the study was the sample size; however, the type of treatment used allowed the analysis of samples that met a minimum required size through power analysis. In this sense, it is recommended that future studies carry out a confirmatory analysis with a larger sample.

In Mexico, the lack of a political program that promotes the production and consumption of this type of food is notable. This investigation is of great relevance for those who make decisions in public policy and for practitioners in the development of organized production and the consolidation of the market, not only in Mexico but also in Latin America. This model serves as a theoretical basis for the analysis of purchase intention for organic foods, and the results are also helpful for the design of strategies that increase consumption in economies like Latin American countries.

6 Conclusion

The objective of the research is to analyze purchase intention for organic foods through the influence of the consumer's values, attitude, and desire, as well as how this attitude mediates the relationship between consumer's values and purchase intention and how consumer desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention, it is confirmed only when attitudes intervene as mediator, consumer values regarding environmental awareness and appearance consciousness affect purchase intention. In contrast, desire mediates the relationship between attitude and purchase intention.

The proposed model supports adding new variables in the study of purchase intention for organic foods. These aspects have not been analyzed before and can serve as a theoretical framework for future studies in similar contexts. The motivation of attitude is social recognition and the safety of the consumer through their values: environmental awareness and appearance consciousness (altruistic and hedonic values). In addition, through considering the purchase of organic foods to be beneficial, consumers are motivated by the desire to benefit smallholders, the environment, or themselves; this leads to them being disposed toward carrying out the purchase.

Data availability statement

Publicly available datasets were analyzed in this study. This data can be found at: <http://doi.org/10.17632/pbhpbtzxcwg.1>.

Ethics statement

The studies involving humans were approved by Institutional Review Board of the Instituto Politécnico Nacional. The studies were conducted in accordance with the local legislation and institutional requirements. The participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

Author contributions

SL-H: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. AT-L: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – original draft. AH-L: Formal analysis, Methodology, Software, Validation, Writing – original draft. PA-R: Visualization, Writing – review & editing. MA-R: Visualization, Writing – review & editing.

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