IRJEMS International Research Journal of Economics and Management Studies
Published by Eternal Scientific Publications
ISSN: 2583 – 5238 / Volume 4 Issue 3 March 2025 / Pg. No: 210-217
Paper Id: IRJEMS-V4I3P123 Doi: 10.56472/25835238/IRJEMS-V4I3P123

Research Article

Testing Theory of Planned Behaviour to Predict Purchase Intention of Millets

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Received Date: 28 February 2025 Revised Date: 13 March 2025 Accepted Date: 15 March 2025 Published Date: 18 March 2025

Abstract: *Across the globe, millet is celebrated by creating awareness, holding workshops, and conducting food festivals to contribute to the International Year of Millets 2023, declared by the United Nations in its 75th session of the General Assembly. Unlike rice or wheat, the millet purchase decision is unique due to the lack of awareness, limited knowledge, and occasional use of millets. Hence, the present study aims to check the purchase intention of millets by using a popular model, the "Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)." The model comprises three independent variables: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control, and one dependent variable, intention. The present study used a survey method and a structured questionnaire based on a standard TPB scale to collect the data from the respondents following a convenience sampling method. The multiple linear regression results indicate that the TPB model explained 54.7 % of the variance in predicting the intention to purchase millets. Perceived behaviour control is the main predictor, followed by attitude and subjective norm. The present study will help understand the factors that influence the purchase intention of millets and create marketing strategies that will enhance the purchase and consumption of millets. In addition, the present study will contribute to the theoretical understanding of the purchase intention of millets.*

Keywords: *Theory of planned behaviour, Purchase, Millets, Attitude, Subjective Norm, Perceived Behavioural Control.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Millets are superfoods packed with essential nutrients and provide wide health benefits, including prevention, management, and curing various lifestyle-related illnesses. As per the study findings of Shirisha, S.D.S.N (2018), 70% of the respondents reported improved health due to millet consumption. Similar findings were reported by Shah et al. (2024), indicating the practice of preparing millets for parents experiencing lifestyle disease. Positive millet consumption behaviour was reported in studies conducted by Shirisha, S.D.S.N (2018); Thodeti Manasa et al. (2024); Adithya Girijavallabhan et al. (2022); Rizwana et al. (2023). Awareness of millets, including their nutritional and health benefits, played an important role in consumers consuming them. MK Vahini et al. (2023) highlighted an association between millet awareness and consumption. This association between the awareness and consumption of millet is valid even for school children Prashanthi et al., (2022). Apart from the awareness, geographical location and demographic factors also played an important role in the purchase and consumption of millets. MK Vahini et al. (2023) reported that urban households consumed more millet per month when compared to rural households. With regards to specific geographical location, Kavimalar et al., (2024) highlighted that Karnataka state's high production of millets and high rate of consumption also was observed. Shirisha, S.D.S.N (2018) indicated that income, education, and health level of the family members had influenced the consumption behaviour of millets; similar findings were reported by Rizwana et al. (2023); in addition to income and education, age also played an important role in determining the consumption of millets.

Millet consumption frequencies were reported by studies such as Shirisha, S.D.S.N (2018) study where the consumers consumed millet daily, Purvi Jain and Renu Mogra (2023) highlighted that 51.6% of the consumers consumed millet often, Lakshmy Priya et al., (2024) found that 41% of the consumers consumed millets one to 3 times a week, Adithya Girijavallabhan et al., (2022) reported 23% consumers consumed millets 3-4 times a week. The main reasons for consuming millets are mainly related to managing health problems, losing weight, and the taste of millets Kane-Potaka et al., (2021). Lakshmy Priya et al. (2024) reported that the nutritional value of millets and the health benefits of millets were the important motives for consuming millets. In this scenario, various stakeholders are trying to revive the millets and make millets part of the daily diets and lifestyles of the people. Due to urbanization, westernization, and the shift towards convenience, the food choice behaviour of consumers is more towards trendy foods that are not good for health and sustainability. This includes increased consumption of rice, wheat, junk foods, sugary beverages, etc.

An article published by UNICEF South Asia highlights that junk food is inescapable in today's youth lives and makes people sick. The article further highlighted that young people are conditioned to eat junk food due to exposure to televisions, in schools and shops etc. Hence, it is difficult to escape. By understanding unhealthy eating patterns, several initiatives have been recently launched across the globe, such as the United Nations declaration of the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets, the Branding of Millets as a Global Superfood, and the Launching of National Millet Mission in the year 2007 to promote the production and consumption of millets. Very recently, the launch of “Flavours of Shree Anna: Sehat aur Swaad Ke Sang" was launched by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India.

While efforts are made to enhance the popularity and consumption of millets, it is important to know the factors that influence the purchase intention of millets. Hence, the present study is aimed to check the purchase intention of millets in India.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Selected research papers that have used the theory of planned behaviour in food, food choice behaviour, and food context are reported to develop theoretical support for the present study.

In general food choice behaviour, Nardi et al. (2019) used the theory of planned behaviour to predict food choice behaviour. The findings of their study reported that attitude was the predictor of intention, with an R-value of 0.386. In the healthy eating behaviour context, Brouwer, A.M. & Mosack, K.E. (2015) extended the theory of planned behaviour to know healthy eating behaviours. The study results reported that all the TPB variables, such as attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control, had predicted healthy eating behaviour. An additional variable, identity as a healthy eater, also predicted healthy eating behaviour, mainly fruit and low-fat dairy consumption. In ethnic food choice behaviour, Ahmad et al. (2020) applied the theory of planned behaviour to understand the food choice motives in the Pakistan context with a specific focus on the intention to purchase ethnic foods among tourists. As per the study results, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control positively influenced the purchase intention of Pakistani ethnic food among tourists. A similar study was conducted in the Malaysian context; Ting et al. (2016) extended the theory of planned behaviour to know the ethnic food consumption intention. The results of their study reported that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control positively impacted the Dayak ethnic food consumption of non-Dayak Malaysians. In the organic food consumption context, Aertsens et al. (2009) used the theory of planned behaviour to predict the intention to consume organic food. Attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influenced organic food consumption. In the fruit and vegetable context, Miguel (2022) adopted the theory of planned behaviour and extended the theory to predict domestic fruit and vegetables. The authors reported that the TPB model was relevant to knowing the consumer's intention to purchase domestic fruits and vegetables in Portugal. In the technology context, Wen et al. (2022) used the theory of planned behaviour to predict the intention to use food delivery Apps. The results indicated that attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control from the original TPB model, and an additional variable, trust predicted the intention to use food delivery Apps. In the halal food context, Lim et al. (2022) applied the theory of planned behaviour to understand the non-Muslim consumer's intention to purchase halal food products in the Malaysian context.

The results indicated that all the TPB variables influenced the purchase intention of halal food products among non-Muslim consumers in Malaysia. Other food choice behavior-related studies are,

Adel et al. (2022) reported that the extended TPB model constructs predicted 79.9% intention to purchase suboptimal produce and 65.3% intention to recommend suboptimal produce to others. Lu et al. (2010) used the theory of planned behaviour to understand the intention to follow precautionary behaviour to avoid consuming food having dairy products. The results reported that subjective norm, attitude, and perceived behavioural control from the TPB model and additional variables such as news attention and perceived reliability of information influenced the intention to follow precautionary food choice behaviour. Soon, J.M. and Wallace, C.A. (2018) explored the role of provenance and ethical standards on consumers' food choices and purchase intention. The results indicated that attitude and perceived behavioural control could predict food purchase intention with provenance and ethical standards. The study reported that the TPB model explained 50% of the variance in the intention to purchase food with provenance and ethical standards, with an R2 value of 0.50. The authors also indicated that adding other variables, such as preference for ethically sourced food and perceived knowledge, did not improve the prediction power of the model.

Ting, S.-H et al. (2024) explored the intention to reduce food waste with specific reference to young consumers using the theory of planned behaviour. The study found all three TPB variables. Attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control influenced the intention to reduce food waste. Khan Y et al. (2023) investigated attitude, purchase intention, and consumer purchasing behaviour in the context of organic food. The study found that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control significantly impacted organic food purchases. Balıkçıoğlu Dedeoğlu, S. et al. (2022) aimed to understand the local food consumption intention. The authors reported that attitude towards local food and perceived behavioural control influenced the local food consumption intention. Cao, D et al. (2024) found a significant relationship between perceived behavioural control,

subjective norm, and attitude and other variables such as sensory-driven and cognition-driven pleasure for the purchase intention of organic food. Gakobo et al . (2016) applied the theory of planned behaviour to understand the intention to consume Indigenous African foods. As hypothesized, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control had positively influenced the intention to consume Indigenous African food. The authors reported that the TPB model could explain 62.3% of the variance in predicting the intention to consume Indigenous African food. Matharu, M et al . (2022) reported that perceived behavioural control was the important factor determining household food waste reduction. Huo, H et al. (2023) highlighted that the purchase intention of organic food among Chinese Consumers was influenced by attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. An additional variable, trust also played an important factor. Thaivalappil, A. et al. (2020) study revealed the role of attitude and subjective norm in predicting the intention to thaw meats safely. In addition, perceived behavioural control was an influencing factor in predicting the intention to thaw meats and store leftover food. Iranmanesh M et al. (2020) found that attitude and religious self-identity influenced the willingness to pay for certified Halal food. Sia, J.K.-M, et al. (2024) found consumers' intention to reuse food delivery containers was influenced by perceived behavioural control and attitude. Serebrennikov, D et al . (2024) reported that the attitude of the consumers, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control positively influenced organic food purchase behaviour. Amalia, F.A . et al. (2020) reported that attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, and religiosity determined Indonesian Millennials Halal Food Purchasing behaviour. Based on the evidence of the above studies, it is clear that the theory of planned behaviour can be a good theoretical model to predict the purchase intention of millets.

III. RESEARCH GAPS

Studies using the theory of planned behaviour to predict the purchase intention of millets have yet to be found in the literature. Most of the studies in the past focused on general food choice behaviour (Nardi et al.,2019), healthy eating behaviour (Brouwer, A.M. & Mosack; K.E., 2015), ethnic food choice behaviour (Ahmad et al., 2020; Ting et al., 2016), organic food consumption behaviour (Aertsens et al., 2009), fruit and vegetable purchase context (Miguel , 2022), halal food context (Lim et al., 2022), technology context (Wen et al., 2022), intention to reduce food waste (Ting, S.-H et al., 2024), purchase intention of organic food (Khan, Y et al., 2023), local food consumption intention (Balıkçıoğlu Dedeoğlu, S. et al., 2022), purchase intention of organic food (Cao, D et al., 2024), intention to consume Indigenous African foods (Gakobo et al .,2016), food waste reduction intention in the household (Matharu, M et al ., 2022), purchase intention of organic food (Huo, H et al., 2023), intention to thaw meats safely and store leftover food (Thaivalappil, A. et al ., 2020), willingness to pay for certified Halal food (Iranmanesh, M et al., 2020), intention to reuse the food delivery containers (Sia, J.K.-M et al., 2024), organic food purchase behaviour (Serebrennikov, D et al ., 2024) and Millennials Halal Food Purchasing behaviour (Amalia, F.A et al.,2020). Due to this literature gap, the present study is expected to fill the gap in the literature and contribute to the theory of understanding the purchase intention of millets.

IV. CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS

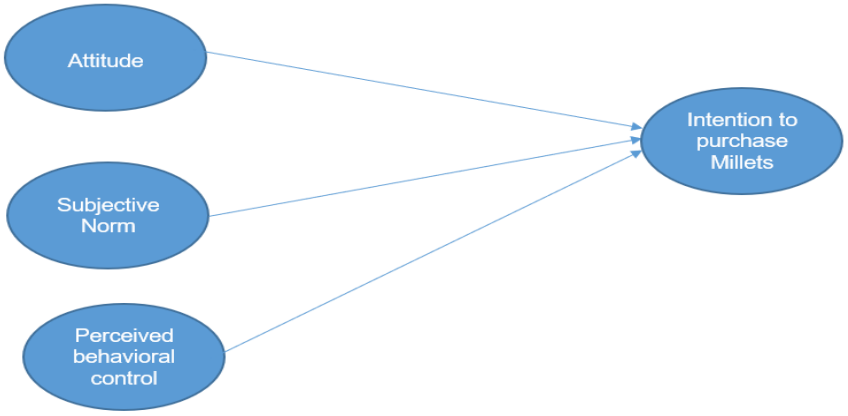

Figure:1: Theory of Planned Behaviour Ajzen, I. (1991)

Attitude in the theory of planned behaviour model refers to how an individual perceives performing a particular behaviour. The attitude can be negative or positive. If the individual possesses a positive attitude, the intention to engage in a particular behaviour will be positive. In the present study, customers having a positive attitude about millets will have a positive intention to purchase millets. The subjective norm in the theory of planned behaviour refers to what an individual thinks about the approval or disapproval received from the immediate referents. If the individual values the approval of the immediate referents, then the intention to perform or engage in a particular behaviour is high. In the present study, customers valuing the opinions or approval

of the immediate referents such as friends, family members or doctors than the intention to purchase the millets will be positive. Perceived behaviour control in the theory of planned behaviour refers to the availability of the time, money, energy, or other resources to engage in a particular behaviour. If the individual has time, money, and energy, it will positively influence engaging in a particular behaviour. In the present study, customers with time, money, energy, and other resources will likely positively intend to purchase millets. Attitude, Subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control are the independent variables in the TPB model, and the intention to purchase millets is the dependent variable.

Hypothesis development:

Based on the evidence from (Nardi et al.,2019); (Brouwer, A.M. & Mosack K.E., 2015), (Ahmad et al., 2020 Ting et al., 2016), (Aertsens et al., 2009); (Aertsens et al., 2009) (Wen et al., 2022); (Lim et al., 2022); (Adel et al., 2022); (Lu et al ., 2010) and (Soon, J.M. and Wallace, C.A. 2018), Ting, S.-H et al., (2024) Khan, Y et al., (2023) Balıkçıoğlu Dedeoğlu, S. et al., (2022), Cao, D et al., (2024), Gakobo et al .,(2016), Matharu, M et al ., (2022), Huo, H et al., (2023), Thaivalappil, A. et al ., (2020), Iranmanesh, M et al., (2020), Sia, J.K.-M, et al., (2024), Serebrennikov, D et al ., (2024) and Amalia, F.A ., et al. (2020) studies, the following hypothesis is proposed for the present study.

Hypothesis 1: Attitude positively influences the intention to purchase millet
Hypothesis:2: Subjective norm positively influences the intention to purchase millet
Hypothesis 3: Perceived behavioural control positively influences the intention to purchase millets.

V. OBJECTIVES

Primary Objective:
The study's main objective is to predict the purchase intention of millets using the theory of planned behaviour.

Secondary Objective:

1. To know the influence of attitude on the intention to purchase millet
2. To understand the influence of subjective norms on the intention to purchase millet
3. To explore the influence of perceived behavioural control on the intention to purchase millet

VI. METHODOLOGY

The study used a survey method to collect data from the respondents using the convenience sampling method. The survey was conducted using a structured online questionnaire in a Google form. Any individual above the age of 18 years and have purchased millets at least once were eligible to participate in the survey. The questionnaire captured data related to attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control based on the standard TPB scale in a 5-point Likert agreement scale. In total, 382 responses were received. After checking for the data's completeness, all the responses were analyzed. Multiple linear regression analysis was done to check the relationship between the Independent variables (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control) and the Dependent Variable (Intention to purchase millets).

VII. ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Table 1: Overall theory of planned behaviour model to predict the intention to purchase millet

Model Fit Measures

							Overall Model Test			
Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	AIC	BIC	RMSE	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.739	0.547	0.513	108	117	0.737	16.1	3	40	< .001

As indicated in Table 1, the R2 value is 0.547. This implies that the variables in the theory of planned behaviour model (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control) explained 54.7% of the variance in predicting the purchase intention of millets, and the model is significantly fit (F=16.1, p=< 0.001)

Table 2: Regression results for the predictor variables.

S.No	Predictor	β	t	p
1	Attitude	0.198	1.179	< 0.001
2	Subjective Norm	0.188	1.616	< 0.001
3	Perceived behavioural control	0.493	3.074	< 0.001

Dependent variable: Intention to purchase millet

As indicated in Table 2, Regression analysis indicates that attitude (0.198) with p-value < 0.001, subjective norm (0.188) with p-value < 0.001, and perceived behaviour control (0.493) with p-value < 0.001 are the significant predictors of intention to purchase millets. Perceived behavioural control is the top predictor, followed by attitude and subjective norm.

VIII. DISCUSSION

Table 3: Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Variable	Hypothesis Support Status
1	Attitude positively influences the intention to purchase millet	Supported
2	Subjective Norm positively influences the intention to purchase millet	Supported
3	Perceived behavioural control positively influences the intention to purchase millet.	Supported

As per the results reported in Table 3, all three variables positively influence the purchase intention of millets. The top predictor is perceived behavioural control, which indicates the availability of time, money, energy, and opportunities to purchase millet. The second predictor is an attitude, which positively influences the intention to purchase millet. It implies that customers have a positive attitude towards purchasing millets, and the final predictor is the subjective norm. Subjective norm has a positive influence on the intention to purchase millet. It means that immediate referents such as friends, family members and doctors approve the intention to purchase millets, and customers value such opinions towards purchasing millets.

The results of the present study are consistent with the findings of Ting, S.-H et al., (2024) in intention to reduce food waste, Khan, Y et al., (2023) in organic food purchase, Balıkçıoğlu Dedeoğlu, S. et al., (2022) in local food consumption intention , Cao, D et al., (2024) in purchase intention of organic food, Gakobo et al .,(2016) in intention to consume indigenous African food, Huo, H et al., (2023) in intention to purchase organic food, Thaivalappil, A. et al ., (2020) in intention to thaw meats and store leftover food, Serebrennikov, D et al ., (2024) in intention to purchase organic food and Amalia, F.A ., et al (2020) in intention to purchase Halal food, A.M. & Mosack, K.E. (2015) on healthy eating behaviour, Ahmad et al., (2020) on purchase intention of Pakistani ethnic food among tourists, Ting et al., (2016) in Dayak ethnic food consumption intention, Aertsens et al., (2009) in organic food consumption, Miguel (2022) in domestic fruit and vegetable purchase intention, Lim et al., (2022) in purchase intention of halal food products among non-Muslim consumers, Adel et al., (2022) in intention to purchase suboptimal produce, Lu et al., (2010) in intention to avoid consuming foods with dairy products, Soon, J.M. and Wallace, C.A. (2018) in food purchase intention with provenance and ethical standards.

Regarding the explanatory power of the TPB model, the present study results indicate a 54.71% variance in predicting the purchase intention of millets. While compared with Adel et al. (2022), the explanatory power of the present study is slightly lower, the explanatory power of Adel et al. (2022) extended TPB model is 79.9%. While comparing with Soon, J.M. and Wallace, C.A. (2018), the explanatory power of the present study TPB model is higher at 54.71%. In contrast, Soon, J.M. and Wallace, C.A. (2018) study for food purchase intention with provenance and ethical standards explanatory power was only 50%.

IX. IMPLICATIONS

The present study provides both theoretical and practical implications. The study tested the theory of planned behaviour to predict the intention to purchase millets, and the TPB model is acceptable for understanding the purchase intention of millets. The study reported the predictor variable that influences the intention to purchase millets. As indicated in the results, perceived behavioural control, attitude, and subjective norm significantly influenced the purchase intention of millets. The main theoretical implication of the present study is that the Theory of Planned Behaviour can be a useful and applicable model to predict the purchase intention of millets.

The practical implications of the present study include perceived behaviour control as the top predictor variable in predicting the purchase intention of millets. It implies that consumers purchasing millet possess the required time, money and energy. It indicates a great business opportunity for the millet producers and the marketers to provide wide millet choice and make it easily available for the consumers to purchase in the market. The second predictor variable in the TPB model was attitude. Consumers purchasing millets have a positive attitude toward purchasing millets. The millet marketers should be careful in maintaining the current positive attitude of the consumers towards purchasing millets and find ways to enhance the attitude by conducting various awareness/education-related programmes related to millet. In addition, the millet producers, marketers and sellers shall ensure that the quality of the millet is always ensured to create satisfaction of the consumers, thereby retaining a positive attitude towards purchasing millet. The third predictor variable in the TPB model was the subjective norm. Subjective norm indicates that immediate referents such as friends and family members approve the consumers to purchase millets and the consumers value such approvals. Marketers should also focus on important referents to enhance positive word-of-mouth communication and recommend millet purchases to friends and family members.

In addition to the above, the following recommendations given by the authors of various studies shall be used to promote the purchase and consumption of millets. As Kane-Potaka et al. (2021) recommended, social media shall be used to promote millet in the urban market. Along with social media, the focus shall be placed on designing tasty millet products, creating awareness among consumers by indicating the nutritional and health benefits of millet and making millet accessible to the Urban markets. Kavimalar et al. (2024) recommended promoting millets as a staple food by indicating the benefits of consuming millets, such as the nutritional benefits of millets, economic developments occurring via millets, and their boost to agriculture. Adithya Girijavallabhan et al. (2022) recommended to use Public Distribution System (PDS) to distribute millets to consumers. MK Vahini et al. (2023) suggested making millets affordable to the mass market, and Purvi Jain and Renu Mogra (2023) recommended popularizing the millets to a large population. Mohan A. et al. (2022) suggested that food manufacturing companies provide a variety of millet-based snacks, such as ready-to-eat millet food / ready-to-cook millet food, as suggested by U. Sangeetha et al. (2022). Mohan A. et al. (2022) also informed a policy by the Food and Health Department to promote millet-based food.

U. Sangeetha et al. (2022) reported that consumers had recommended ready-to-cook or ready-to-eat value-added millet-based products. Recommendation of Alam Prashanthi et al. (2022), where a focus on millet-based education may increase millet awareness and enhance millet consumption.

X. LIMITATIONS

Although the present study has satisfactorily achieved the objectives set, recognizing the limitations of the present study is important. The study did not include other variables that may influence the purchase intention of millets. Such variables also could enhance the predictor power of the TPB model. The generalization of the present study results should occur cautiously since the present study has used a convenience sampling method. In addition, the population for the present study is mainly from the respondents representing India.

XI. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Future research should focus on adding more predictor variables to enhance the explanatory power of the TPB model by an extended TPB model. In addition, the study can be conducted in specific geographical locations and check the predictive power of the TPB model. Apart from the purchase intention, future research shall focus on understanding millet' consumption intention using the planned behavior model theory.

XII. CONCLUSION

Food choice behaviour is complex, mainly because the consumers' needs and expectations towards food are different. The difference in preference for food in terms of taste, texture, health benefits, nutritional content, price, cuisine, portion size, ease of availability, and convenience can be easily witnessed in consumption behaviour. Millets are not an exemption. The production, purchase, and consumption of millets is evolving. In a situation where all the stakeholders in the public and private institutions are actively promoting millets, the demand for millets is expected to increase in the days to come. Conducting more awareness/ educational programmes for the consumers in the market is the need of the hour. Such efforts will help enhance the purchase and consumption of millets and the overall image and patronage. It is a known fact; that consumers are purchasing and consuming millet due to its nutritional and health benefits.

Along with the nutritional and health benefits, the taste of the millet also is an important factor in consuming millet, as indicated in the Kane-Potaka et al., (2021) study. Marketers must ensure that all the important attributes expected by the consumers in the market in millets are fulfilled to attract and retain customers for a lifetime. The present study has set a tone for millet purchase and consumption research. This will help transform how millets are promoted, marketed and sold to the consumers more experientially.

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