

2018

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Recommended Citation

Levesque, Nataly; Pons, Frank; and Omid, Mahshid, "Toward a better understanding of Organic Products Consumption: The Key Role of Consumers' Involvement" (2018). *Association of Marketing Theory and Practice Proceedings 2018*. 38.
https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/amp-proceedings_2018/38

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ABSTRACT

Food consumption is at the base of human needs and represents an important part of our everyday life (Gottschalk & Leistner, 2013). Furthermore, the organic food market is probably the most promising sector of the global food industry (Tarkiainen & Sundqvist, 2009). However, the gap, often mentioned in the literature, between positive attitude towards organic products and actual behavior regarding these products still represents a major issue. Thus, in this paper, we propose to address this issue using an extended version of the Theory of Planned Behavior to explain parts of this gap and to highlight the crucial role played by consumers' involvement as a moderator of all relationships in this robust model.

To this end, a structural equation modeling was performed and the statistical analysis of a sample of 1327 French consumers supports our organic products buying behavior model. Involvement is a moderator, especially for high-involvement consumers. In particular, the results show that the perceived behavioral control doesn't have a direct effect on consumers' buying behavior, but the inclusion of the moderating role of involvement impacts positively this relation for low-involvement consumers.

This article concludes with several relevant suggestions in order to help managers to address this attitude-behavior gap. For instance, as increasing consumers' involvement with organic products seems to decrease the gap between intention to buy organic products and the actual behavior, we suggest to promote organic consumption through increasing consumers' involvement with organic products. A short-term strategy could be to enhance involvement by stressing the personal benefits of organic products, while in long-term involvement, and thus organic consumption, can be promoted by emphasizing social and environmental importance of organic consumption. Additional suggestions to develop future researches in the area are also provided in the paper.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Nataly Levesque is a PhD candidate and lecturer in Marketing at Laval University, Quebec, Canada. Her research interests lie in the field of social psychology of consumer behavior. More specifically, she studies brand management focusing on human brand and fans. Her research is supported by The Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture (FRQSC). Nataly also has an MSc in Marketing, from the School of Management (ESG UQAM), and a BA in communication from University of Montreal.

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Dr. Pons is Full Professor of Marketing at Laval University, Quebec, Canada. He has published more than 45 peer-reviewed articles in such publications as *the International Journal of Research in Marketing*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Journal of Service Research*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Psychology and Marketing* or *Journal of International Business Studies* and he has presented papers at more than 60 international conferences. Frank is also a member of the editorial board and the case editor of the *International Journal of Sport Marketing and Sponsorship* as well as an editorial review board member of the *Journal of Business Research*. In addition, he has been guest editing several issues for marketing journals.

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Mahshid Omid is a PhD graduate from Laval University, Quebec, Canada and is currently working in the private sector.

