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Consumer Perception of Corporate Social Responsibility Dimensions in the
Organic Food Sector

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1. Introduction

The organic food sector has shown extensive growth in the last decade. Especially within the European Union, various sustainability efforts, initiatives, and support programs for organic farming, together with increasing consumer education on the subject, have contributed to the strong development of the sector (Zuzek et al., 2023). Specifically, Austria represents one of the most developed organic farming sectors in Europe with 26.5% of the utilized agricultural area (FiBL, 2023) with organic market share of 11,6% of the total retails market (Austria - OrganicTargets4EU).

The agricultural development of the Austrian organic food market is the result of a consistent policy commitment to sustainable practices, with the state playing a central role in supporting and promoting organic farming (Darnhofer et al., 2019).

Another important driver is the active involvement of major supermarket and retail chains in the marketing of organic products, making them easily accessible to consumers (AMA Agrarmarkt Austria, 2021).

In the early stages of organic farming development, the Austrian organic food market relied primarily on a supply-push strategy. However, long-term government commitment, continuous investment in sustainable resources within the sector, and the engagement of mainstream market players have resulted in very high organic food awareness and growing demand among Austrian consumers (Darnhofer et al., 2019; FiBL, 2023).

Organic food consumption in Austria is not just a short-lived trend but is an important part of consumer food related values and behaviours. The continual exposure of Austrian consumers to organic industry shapes the values and attitudes in connection to food sustainability. Therefore, Austrian grocery shoppers represent a unique and distinctive group in terms of consumer behaviour, which raised the interest in focusing the research on this relevant sector (Darnhofer et al., 2019).

In the organic food industry, companies are obligated to commit to certain standards under EU law, such as restrictions on pesticide use and requirements for organic production (Regulation (EU) 2018/848). However, beyond these regulations, consumers increasingly expect more from organic food companies (Lerro et al., 2018, Hasanzade et al., 2019). To fulfil these expectations, companies integrate additional initiatives into their corporate strategies, often referred to as corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR involves conducting initiatives across various sustainability aspects. Environmental sustainability is the most commonly recognised dimension, but CSR also includes social aspects involving both upstream and downstream supply chain actors, such as workers and suppliers (United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO]). CSR initiatives improve company perception, increase employee satisfaction, and are important for brand image, consumer loyalty, and trust building with customers (Hengboriboon et al., 2022).

However, companies benefit from these activities only if consumers are aware of them and if the initiatives meet consumer expectations. The role of consumers in understanding CSR strategies is crucial, as consumers are direct stakeholders responsible for the profitability of companies (Lerro et al. 2018, Hengboriboon et al., 2022). When consumer perception meets expectations, trust and commitment can occur. On the other hand, companies that fail to meet these expectations may not only remain unnoticed but may also face negative consumer reactions and possible boycotting (Hasanzade et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, several studies have shown the importance of company sustainability efforts for the consumer in their daily decision-making process, especially in the case of sustainable products. For example, the study by Pivato et al., (2008) shows the consumer awareness of CSR initiatives is

correlated with trust and brand loyalty. Similarly, the study of Weiping et al., (2021) confirms that both corporate ability and corporate social responsibility significantly influence corporate image, which in turn affect consumer trust as well as purchase intention.

While a significant amount of the research conducted in the sector of organic food examined the role of various motivations on the consumers purchase intention, there is a lack of holistic perspective on how CSR initiatives and corporate sustainability activities are perceived and understood by consumers, as it was also mentioned by some studies on sustainable consumption (Rana et al., 2019., Camilleri et al., 2023., Alam et al., 2025). Therefore, this research focuses on analysing the consumer perspective regarding sustainability activities in the organic food sector. The aim is to provide deeper insights into consumer perception and understanding in order to evaluate the current level of awareness, analyse possible gaps and opportunities, and provide a broader understanding of the consumer point of view.

Analysing consumer awareness can provide valuable insights into consumer perception, allowing companies to adjust communication strategies, improve CSR planning, and increase overall consumer satisfaction, while further embedding the image of a responsible company within market norms (Zuzek et al., 2023).

This study contributes to the research on consumer motivations and both internal and external motives behind organic food consumption, by examining CSR from the consumer perspective and linking consumer behaviour with managerial frameworks. Rooted in the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) theory, this research builds on the framework of Maloni and Brown (2006) to provide a comprehensive approach to CSR initiatives by dividing them into five dimensions: environmental sustainability, social sustainability, health and food safety, animal welfare, and fair trade and procurement. The study primarily uses primary data collected specifically for this research to analyse the awareness of these dimensions, taking in consideration additional constructs such as self-reported importance, identity expression, and sensory appeal.

The findings of this research aim to contribute to the understanding of consumer perception of CSR initiatives in the food sector and determine which dimensions are the most visible and meaningful for the organic food consumers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Key definitions

The study is situated within the organic food sector. **Organic food** is defined by in the European context is defined as products produced in accordance with the production practices stated in Regulation (EU) 2018/848. The regulation establishes a set of strict requirements focusing on a sustainable agricultural system, with core principles including environmental preservation (for instance, respecting natural agricultural cycles), animal welfare, and sustainability throughout all stages of the supply chain (European Parliament, 2018). In the case of processed food, in order to be labelled as organic, a minimum of 95% of its agricultural ingredients must originate from certified organic production (Regulation (EU) 2018/848).

In the global context, organic food is defined through national or regional policies. While specific requirements may differ across regions, organic production is generally interpreted through principles of environmental protection, restriction of genetically modified organisms, reduced use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, and higher standards of animal living conditions (IFOAM – Organics International)

Beyond this legally mandated standards, more and more companies in the organic food sector engage in voluntary sustainability initiatives, that go beyond the legal compliance. These activities are known as **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** and are defined as a management concept defined through the implementation of companies' social and environmental concerns within their operational activities and communication with stakeholders. The goal of CSR is to balance the economic, social, and environmental aspects of company operations, thereby creating competitive advantage, strengthening stakeholder relationships, and contributing to broader social and environmental issues in benefit of society and the planet (United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO]).

Main CSR issues are commonly defined by the United Nations Development Programme as including environmental management and eco-efficiency, working conditions, community relations, human rights, and anti-corruption measures. (United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO]).

In order to structure this CSR activities, this research is grounded in **Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Framework**. Triple Bottom Line is a business framework that suggests that a company's sustainability level can be evaluated through the performance of three pillars: Planet, People, and Profit. Planet represents the environmental dimension and focuses on responsible use of natural resources and environmental protection. People represent the social aspect, including consumers, workers, and local communities, as well as fair working conditions and ethical practices. Profit represents economic sustainability and refers to the company's financial stability and its ability to maintain long-term performance while operating responsibly (Elkington 1997., Ksiezak, 2017).

Building on TBL pillars and the framework of Maloni and Brown (2006), this research categories CSR into five **sustainability dimensions** and defines them as follows: Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability, Health and Food Safety, Animal Welfare and Fair Trade and Procurement. These five dimensions are a base of empirical part of this study. Understanding the perception of this suitability dimensions are measured through the concept of **consumer awareness**. Consumer awareness generally describes the knowledge that consumer possesses regarding their right, the product, the marker and the producer (Kaur & Bhatia, 2018). In the context of this research, consumer awareness measures the knowledge consumer have regarding different sustainability activities of the company. When it comes to actual behaviour, the variable connecting awareness to action is **purchase frequency**, defined in the context of this research as how often consumers purchase organic food products (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

In order to get a deeper understanding of the consumer perception of CSR, this research introduces additional variables to analyse the consumer awareness through. For instance, **consumer preferences** in a broad sense represent a set of needs, desires and experiences that shape the attitude of the customer towards the product or service and/or the company that provides it (Kotler & Keller, 2016). In the context of this research, consumer preferences are studied by the importance they assign to the various sustainability initiatives of the company.

Additionally, two psychological variables are examined as potential predictors of consumer awareness, **Identity Expression** is a variable used to analyse to which extent is purchasing of organic food utilised by respondents to portray their personal values and create a socially desirable image (Bai et al., 2019). Another psychological variable applied in this research is Sensory Appeal. **Sensory Appeal** In the context of this research is the number of food characteristics that consumer evaluate the organic food compared to the non-organic alternatives. (Aertsens et al., 2009).

Analysing a number of variables in combination with demographic characteristics may help to identify patterns within a sample, which can serve as a basis for consumer segmentation. **Consumer segmentation** is the process of dividing a consumer base into smaller groups. It can be conducted according to various factors, such as shared socio-demographic characteristics, consumer preferences, and consumer behaviour (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

2.2. Search Strategy and Selection Criteria

To establish the theoretical foundation of this study, the literature search was performed using the following academic databases: Scopus, Google Scholar and Springer. The search was performed through a multi-stage approach to the existing studies that are relevant for the research objectives. Since there are two perspectives that are especially relevant for this study, the literature review was conducted in a few steps. First, the focus was on studying the consumer motivations to purchase organic food. The terms used for the search were as follows:

("organic food" OR "organic products" OR "sustainable food" OR "bio food") AND ("consumer awareness" OR "motivation" OR "attitude" OR "preference" OR "values" OR "consumer behaviour")

For the extended search:

("food" OR "sustainable products" OR "green consumption") AND ("consumer awareness" OR "motivation" OR "attitude" OR "preference" OR "values")

The aim of this stage is to provide an understanding of the general consumers' perspective and attitude towards organic food. In particular the relevance for this research was in determining the main drivers of organic food consumption and identifying the relevant dimensions that are later adopted in this study, such as environmental concern, health concern and animal welfare.

In the second step, the focus was on identifying the studies examining the consumers perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility. For this search the following terms were used:
("organic food" OR "organic products" OR "sustainable food" OR "bio food") AND ("corporate social responsibility" OR "CSR" OR "sustainability practices" OR "sustainability dimensions") AND ("consumer awareness" OR "perception" OR "attitude" OR "importance" OR "consumer segmentation")

For the extended search:

*(“corporate social responsibility” OR “CSR” OR “sustainability dimensions”)
AND (“consumer awareness” OR “perception” OR “importance” OR “segmentation” OR “consumer profiling”)*

The studies identified during this stage were later used to structure the empirical model of the research and support the development of the studied sustainability dimensions.

In order to limit the number of results, the following selection criteria were applied to select the relevant studies from the total number of papers.

1. The relevance of the industry. Since food industry in general is different to other products categories, the studies focusing on food, particularly organic food were prioritized.
2. The relevance of the topic. Despite a number of papers being from psychological rather than business perspective, they were defined as relevant as long as they could provide an overview of what consumers expect from the company. However, the papers with neuroscientific focus, were excluded from the review.
3. The key stakeholder. As this research focuses on the consumer perspective, therefore the papers that have their research focused entirely on other stakeholders, such as investors, supply chain efficiency, or the financial and environmental impact of CSR without the context of consumer behaviour, were excluded.
4. The publication time of the research. The studies published in the last 10 years were selected. The exception were the papers that provide theoretical background as well as the research that are considered a basis for the sector are cited by many authors.
5. The quality of the journal. Preference was given to the well-established and cited scientific journals.

2.3. Review Table

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
1	Aertsens, J., Verbeke, W., Mondelaers, K., & Van Huylenbroeck, G	Personal determinants of organic food consumption: A review.	2009	<i>British Food Journal</i> , 111(10), 1140-1167. https://doi.org/10.1108/00070700910992961 Impact factor: 4.2	Theory of Planned Behaviour Values Theory	162 papers	Literature Review	Unspecified	Unspecified	Social preferences such as universalism, including environmental protection and animal welfare, play a key role in shaping positive attitudes toward organic food. Socio-demographic variables show limited explanatory power for organic food preferences.
2	Ahmad W., Ahmad S., Yanping Z., Abbasi A., Qayyum M.	The Moderating Role of Awareness in the Influence of Corporate Social Responsibility on Businesses' Identity Attraction for Consumers: The Mediating Role of Consumer–Brand Congruity	2025	Corporate Reputation Review doi: https://doi.org/10.1057/s41299-025-00243-4 Impact factor: 1.6	Social Identity Theory	349 Pakistani respondents	Self-administered questionnaire, 5-point Likert Analysis: PLS SEM	- CSR - CSR Awareness - CSR Support - Consumer–Brand Congruity - Brand Assessment - Identity Attraction - Consumer–Company Identification	Unspecified	The analysis of the Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives influences on consumer attraction to the company identity revealed the significant positive effect CSR have on costumer-company identity, with consumer awareness of CSR strengthening this relationship.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
3	Alam, M. Z., Silawi A., Albakri R., Jamal H., Aggad K., Fatima Z.	Corporate social responsibility in the organic food industry: pathways to sustainability and consumer trust.	2025	Lex Localis- Journal of Local Self-Government ISSN:1581-5374 E-ISSN:1855-363X VOL. 23, NO. 10 (2025) doi: 10.52152/801262 Impact factor: 1.2	Unspecified		Literature Review	- CSR Initiatives and Environmental Sustainability - Impact of CSR on consumer preference - Consumer Trust and Transparency - Ethical Business Practices and CSR - Technological Innovation and CSR - CSR and Regulatory Compliance	Unspecified	Consumers associate CSR-supported organic products with health, safety, ethical values, trust, brand loyalty, and higher perceived value, resulting in a willingness to pay price premiums. Further research: The role of demographic factors in shaping consumers' perceptions of CSR. The influence of growing environmental and health awareness on the importance of CSR for consumers. Cultural and geographical context, through country- or region-specific studies.
4	Balaguru, S.; Erjuan, X.; Singh, K. D.	The Effect of CSR on Consumers Trusts and Purchase Intention: The Moderating Role of Digital CSR Communication and Perceived Risk	2024	Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal, Vol. 16(3), pp. 229–240 DOI: 10.35870/ijmsit.v5i1.3800 Impact factor: n/a	Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR)	254 Masasian shoppers	Self-administered online questionnaire 5-point Likert Analysis: PLS SEM	- CSR - Digital CSR Communication - Consumer Trust - Perceived Risk - Purchase Intention	Unspecified	CSR have a direct positive effect on both consumer trust as well as purchase intention when it comes to online retail sector. However, the perceived risk is not found to be influenced by CSR.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
5	Boccia F., Sarnacchiaro P.	The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Consumer Preference: A Structural Equation Analysis	2018	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management 25, 151–163 10.1002/csr.1446 Impact factor: 9.1	Knowledge-Attitude-Behaviour	332 Respondents	SEM framework	- Attitude - Behaviour - Knowledge	- Gender, - Age	The degree of consumer awareness is the most significant element when it comes to behaviour towards CSR. Further Research: Influence of personal values on the three CSR dimension: environmental, social and economical
6	Camilleri, M. A., Cricelli, L., Mauriello, R., & Strazzullo, S.	Consumer perceptions of sustainable products: A systematic literature review.	2023	<i>Sustainability</i> , 15 (11), 8923. https://doi.org/10.3390/su15118923 Impact Factor: 3.3	The triple bottom line (TBL) framework	80 scientific publications Scopus	Systematic literature review	- Environmental Impact Dimension - Social and Ethical Dimension - Economic and Performance Dimension	Unspecified	The research main focus on identifying the link between consumer preferences and their purchase behaviour showed, that despite a large number of studies on the subject, the available literature often presents unconvulsive or uncertain results. Further research: - Holistic perspective: adapting the psychological approach for the companies' communication strategies. - Research outside of “green sector”. - Combination of multiply sustainability dimensions

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
7	Chaudary, S., Zahid, Z., Shahid, S., Khan, S. N., Azar, S	Customer perception of CSR initiatives: its antecedents and consequences	2016	Social Responsibility Journal, 12(2), pp. 263–279. 10.1108/SRJ-04-2015-0056 Impact factor: 4,6	Unspecified	Indian consumers 17 to 45 years old that are at least somehow aware of CSR	Self-administrated questionnaire Analysis: Structural equation modelling	- Green Image - Corporate Culture - Philanthropic CSR - Ethical CSR - Environmental CSR - Customer Attachment - Perceived Corporate Performance - Repurchase Intention - Loyalty	Unspecified	Consumers' cultural perceived fit with the company as well as CSR capability has a big influence of customer perception of the company, and subsequently their trust and loyalty.
8	Chekima, B., Oswald, A. I., Wafa, S. A., & Chekima, K.	Narrowing the gap: Factors driving organic food consumption	2017	Journal of Cleaner Production, 166, 1438-1447. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.08.086 Impact Factor: 10	Unspecified	133 Malaysian Consumers	Structured questionnaire Analysis: Performance matrix analysis	- Product-Specific Attitude - Health Orientation - Sensory Appeal - Future Orientation - Organic Food Consumption	- Gender - Age - Highest academic qualification - Employment - Yearly Income	Product-specific attitude, sensory appeal, and health orientation are having positive impact on influencing individuals' consumption of organic food. Further research: Comparative research of the common organic food buyers with the customers who only consider the purchase.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
9	Chryssohoidis , G. M., & Krystallis, A.	Organic consumers' personal values research: Testing and validating the list of values (LOV) scale and implementing a value-based segmentation task.	2005	Food Quality and Preference, 16(7), 585-599. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2005.01.003 Impact Factor: 4,9	List of Values Scale	205 Greek consumers of organic food products	Structured questionnaire Analysis: The confirmatory factor analysis	- Sense of accomplishment - Self-respect - Security - Self-fulfilment - Excitement - Sense of belonging - Fun and enjoyment of life	- Gender - Family size - Number of children under the age of 20 - Marital status - Educational level - Profession - Monthly income	Self-interested preferences expressed through values as self-respect and enjoyment were found to have a significant positive effect on the purchase intention towards organic food. Generally, internal values were found have significantly more effect on the purchase intention than external values.
10	Dangi, N., Gupta, S. K., & Narula, S. A.	Consumer buying behaviour and purchase intention of organic food: A conceptual framework	2020	<i>Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal</i> , 31(6), 1515-1530. https://doi.org/10.1108/meq-01-2020-0014 Impact Factor: 5	Theory of planned Behaviour	Pool of 154072 Consumers from 91 research studies	Literature Review	Unspecified	Unspecified	There are significant differences between emerging and high-incomes economy when it comes to consumers preferences towards organic food. Among the most influenceable factors affecting green purchase behaviour are health concern, and environmental concern. The social and animal concerns are found to be much less significant.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
1 1	Devi, K., Singh, G., Roy, S. K., & Cúg, J.	Determinants of organic food purchase intention: the moderating role of health consciousness	2023	<i>British Food Journal, Vol. 125(11), pp. 4092–4122.</i> https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-03-2023-0220 Impact Factor: 4.2	Extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	701 consumers from New Zealand and Fiji	Structured questionnaire Analysis: Partial Least Squares Path Modelling	- Purchase intention toward organic food - self-risk perception - health consciousness; beliefs - Values - social networking - culture - attitude	- Age - Education - Income	Organic food purchase intention is mainly driven by health-related motives. Especially important role plays self-risk perception and consumer belief. Health consciousness is a moderator and strengthens the effect of self-risk perception, belief and values on purchase intention
1 2	Furman, A.; Maison, D.; Sekścińska, K.	Segmentation Based on Attitudes Toward Corporate Social Responsibility in Relation to Demographical Variables and Personal Values – Quantitative and Qualitative Study of Polish Consumers	2019	<i>Frontiers in Psychology (Business Psychology & Social Innovations)</i> https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00450 Impact Factor: 2,9	Unspecified	1055 Polish consumers, age 18-55	Mixed-methods approach Quantitative: CAWI survey Qualitative: Semi-structured in-depth interviews Analysis: segmentation - psychological interpretation	- CSR Knowledge - Attitudes toward CSR - Responsible Consumption Behaviour - Perceived Motives of CSR - Personal Values	- Gender - Age - Education level - Income / economic status - Employment status - Marital status - Children - Place of residence	Psychographic variables, especially personal values, explain consumer attitudes toward CSR more consistently than demographic variables (except gender). CSR awareness differs significantly across consumer segments, but positive attitudes or emotions toward CSR do not necessarily translate into responsible behaviour (awareness–attitude–behavior gap). Demographics alone are insufficient for CSR segmentation, value-based segmentation provides deeper explanatory power.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
1 3	Hajar Fatemi & Laurette Dubé	The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Priming on Consumers' Consumption and Lifestyle Choices with Intertemporal Trade-offs	2021	<i>European Journal of Marketing</i> , 55(12) https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-04-2020-0250 Impact Factor: 6.4	Consideration of Future Consequences (CFC), CSR priming framework	USA participants	Experimental design (4 studies) Analysis: Mediation analysis	- CSR priming; preference for later-larger vs sooner-smaller rewards - saving vs spending - healthy vs unhealthy food choices	Unspecified	Exposure to CSR activities can positively influence consumer decision making beyond the company itself. Consumers exposed to CSR priming were more likely to choose long-term beneficial options such as healthier food choices, saving money and delayed rewards. CSR communication can increase consumers' consideration of future consequences and encourage more responsible consumption and lifestyle behaviour.
1 4	Hansen, T., Sørensen, M. I., & Eriksen, M. R.	How the interplay between consumer motivations and values influences organic food identity and behaviour	2018	<i>Food Policy</i> , 74, 39-52. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2017.11.003 Impact Factor: 6	Organic food identity model	1176 Danish shoppers	Online questionnaire Analysis: Descriptive statistics of study constructs, weighted correlation matrix	- Environmental consciousness - Health consciousness - Social consciousness - Organic food identity - Organic food behaviour	- Organic food Involvement - Social Norm - Perceived organic food price - Gender - Age - Education - Income	The results of the study suggest the dominance of egoistic motives over altruistic motives when it comes to organic food identity. Egoistic motive represented by health consciousness positively drives consumers' organic food identity, whether social consciousness (a mix of egoistic and altruistic motives) negatively drives organic food identity. Environmental consciousness is unrelated to organic food identity.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
1 5	Hasanzade , V., Osburg, V.-S. and Toporowski, W.	Selecting decision-relevant ethical product attributes for grocery shopping	2018	Management Decision, 56(3), pp. 591–609. doi:10.1108/md-12-2016-0946. Impact factor: 5,9	Value-belief-norm theory	249 German consumers	Online Survey: Choice-based conjoint (CBC) analysis	- Preservation of biodiversity - Protection of valuable resources - Species-appropriate husbandry - Food - Payment of dairy farmers - Social responsibility - Country of origin - Price	Unspecified	Animal welfare represents the greatest benefit for the respondents. The next relative importance is human rights The aspect of environmental protection ranked last. The researchers warn to interpret the ethical aspect of animal welfare with caution as it might be affected by health concern of the consumers. Further research: Investigation of preferences for ethical product attributes within different markets and focus groups
1 6	Henri Kuokkanen & William Sun	Companies, Meet Ethical Consumers: Strategic CSR Management to Impact Consumer Choice	2019	<i>Journal of Business Ethics</i> , https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04145-4 Impact Factor: 6.7	Strategic CSR management	308 potential tourists in the UK, 2464 choice observations	Quantitative choice experiment	- CSR strategy formulation - Implementation and evaluation - CSR orientation - Stakeholder emphasis - CSR fit with business - CSR action style - CSR verification - Social desirability and cynicism bias	- Gender - Age - Education - Income - Travel Frequency	CSR can influence consumer choice, when company CSR activities match consumer demand for it. Consumers prefer CSR that have focus on the natural environment, local communities, proactive actions and externally verified evidence. However, some CSR activities, such as consumer-focused responsibility had a negative effect on choice. This suggest that companies should choose CSR activities that are visible and relevant to consumers.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
1 7	Hsu, S.Y., Chang, C.-C. and Lin, T.T.	Triple bottom line model and food safety in organic food and conventional food in affecting perceived value and purchase intentions	2019	British Food Journal, 121(2), pp. 333–346. doi:10.1108/bfj-07-2017-0403. Impact factor: 4.2	Tripple Bottom Line	363 Taiwanese respondents	Online Survey, 7 points Likert Scale Analysis: Structural Equation Modelling	- Environmental Concern - Food Safety Concern - CSR - Perceived value - Attitude - Purchase Intention	Unspecified	The study has proven a significant influence environmental CSR has towards attitude and purchase intention both in organic and conventional food context.
1 8	Hwang, J.	Organic food as self-presentation: The role of psychological motivation in older consumers' purchase intention of organic food.	2016	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 28, 281-287. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2015.01.007 Impact Factor: 13,1	Unspecified	222 University employees	Self-administrated online survey Analysis: Confirmatory factor analysis	- Self-presentation - Food safety concerns - Environmental concerns - Ethical consumer-identity	Income	Self-presentation and food safety have been found to have a positive impact on older consumers' organic food purchase intention. Meanwhile environmental concern and ethical concern did not have a positive effect on the older customers' purchase intention. Further research: Expanding investigation of ethical concern by giving it different contextualisation.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
19	Janker, J., Mann, S.	Understanding the social dimension of sustainability in agriculture: a critical review of sustainability assessment tools.	2020	Environment, Development, Sustainability 22, 1671–169. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-018-0282-0 Impact factor: 5	Unspecified		Literature Review	- Unspecified	Unspecified	Despite the growing number of tools designed to assess sustainability, there is a lack of universal consensus on what represents social sustainability in the agriculture sector.
20	Junghyun Kim & Taehoon Park	How Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Saves a Company: The Role of Gratitude in Buffering Vindictive Consumer Behaviour from Product Failures	2020	<i>Journal of Business Research</i> , 117, 461–472, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.024 Impact Factor: 9.8	Unspecified	409 Participants	Experimental design Analysis: Mediation analysis	- CSR engagement - Gratitude - Perceived trustworthiness - Failure attribution - Negative word-of-mouth - Desire for revenge - Online revenge	- Age - Gender	Prior CSR engagement can help to protect the company in case of product failure by reducing the urge of consumers for vindictive reactions. CSR increases consumer gratitude, which strengthens perceived trustworthiness and lowers negative word-of-mouth.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
21	Lerro M, Vecchio R, Caracciolo F, Pascucci S, Cembalo L.	Consumers' heterogeneous preferences for corporate social responsibility in the food industry	2018	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management. 2018; 25: 1050–1061. https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1519 Impact factor: 9.1	Unspecified	1007 Italian Respondents	Questionnaire 1.Likert scale 7-Point 2.Ranking Analysis: Cluster Analysis ANOVA	- Awareness and knowledge of CSR - Consumer Preferences for CSR: - WTP	- Gender - Age - Education - Occupation - Monthly Income - Residence	In the Italian marketing the hierarchy for CSR preferences is as follows: 1.) Health and Safety 2.) Ethical Work Conditions 3.) Environmentally friendly The study also identified 5 different consumer groups in the Italian market such as: 1.) Environmentalists 2.) Pro socialists 3.) Collectivists 4.) Animal Friends 5.) Selfish health cantered Exploring the preferences of other stakeholder of organic food industry. Studying WTF in context of expanded CSR activities and different products

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
2 2	Luomala, Harri; Puska, Petteri; Lähdesmäki, Merja; Siltaoja, Marjo; Kurki, Sami	Get some respect – buy organic foods! when everyday consumer choices serve as prosocial status signalling	2020	Appetite, 145, p. 104492. doi:10.1016/j.appet.2019.104492. Impact Factor: 3,8	Unspecified	Political science students Survey I: Size: 189 Survey II: 259 Field Study Size:334	Questionnaire and a field study Analysis: one-way ANOVA	- Altruism - Status - Honesty	Unspecified	Consumers who choose organic food are generally viewed as more status driven and altruistic oppose to the ones that choose regular products.
2 3	Martini, M., Fedi, A., Murphy, B., Dean, M., & Loera, B.	More Than Organic: Consumer Expectations of Sustainability and Quality. Evidences from a Qualitative Study in Italy	2023	Journal of Food Products Marketing, pp.1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/10454446.2023.2284725 Impact factor: 2,4	Unspecified	9 focus group 59 participants total. Italian Consumers	Open Question Interview. Analysis: Temple Analysis Approach	- Benefits for consumer - Benefits for Plant & Society	Unspecified	The research has determined several consumer expectations from organic food products both within private (self-interested) and public (social or altruistic) attributes. It can be summed up into three categories: consumer oriented (excellent food quality), society oriented (ethical production and distribution) and communication (organic food labels with sufficient information about the mentioned factors).

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
2 4	Massey, M., O'Cass, A., & Otahal, P.	A meta-analytic study of the factors driving the purchase of organic food.	2018	Appetite, 125, 418-427. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2018.02.029 Impact Factor: 3,8	Unspecified	150 Manuscripts (pooled sample of 124,353 respondents)	Literature Review	- Credence - Search - Experience	Unspecified	Perception of organic food have higher Nutritional Value positively affect both purchase intention. Slightly less increase in intention is influence by the quality and safety. Health and environmental concern associations have an even lower influence on intention. Price increases are positively influencing the purchase intention.
2 5	Paul, J., & Rana, J.	Consumer behaviour and purchase intention of organic food	2013	<i>SSRN Electronic Journal.</i> https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2326893 Impact Factor: 0.2	Unspecified	463 organic food shoppers in Delhi National Capital Region	Face to face questionnaire, with closed-ended questions Analysis: factor analysis and cluster analysis	- Reasons for purchase - Satisfaction factors	Unspecified	Health Concern represents the most frequently defined motive for choosing organic food. For majority of the consumers overall benefits of organic food are what increases their purchase intention. Non availability of organic food was found to be the main barrier for the purchase, being more important than high price.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
26	Popovics, A.	Characteristics of Consumer Segments based on Consumer Habits and Preferences from an Environmental and Social Responsibility Perspective	2024	<i>Acta Polytechnica Hungarica, Vol. 21, No. 12</i> Impact Factor: 1.4	Unspecified	1852 Hungarian shoppers	Quantitative online survey	- Environmentally conscious factor - Need factor - Price sensitive factor	- Gender - Age	Consumer habits/preferences provide a usable basis for segmentation and reveal distinct consumer types. Three statistically distinct segments emerged: Functional buyers (necessity-driven). Environmentally conscious shoppers (organic/animal-free/local/recycled/origin priorities). Price-sensitive customers (cheapness and second-hand dominate)
27	Rana, J., & Paul, J	Health motive and the purchase of organic food: A meta-analytic review	2019	<i>International Journal of Consumer Studies</i> , 44(2), 162-171. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12556 Impact Factor: 7.6	Multilevel meta-analyses	196 quantitative research papers	Systematic literature review	- Health Concern	Unspecified	Health factor has a positive effect on the attitude towards organic food. However, the strength of the effect is significantly inconsistent within studies. Further research: Research on other factors specific to organic that may influence the attitude, specifically: Environment consciousness, ethical concerns, animal welfare, Status symbol and social consciousness

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
2 8	Rizzo, G., Testa, R., Schifani, G	The Value of Organic plus. Analysing Consumers' Preference for Additional Ethical Attributes of Organic food Products	2023	Social Indicators Research (2023). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-023-03123-8 Impact factor: 3,6	Unspecified	110 respondents, Italian consumers	Experimental Auction combined with closed questions questionnaire.	- Pro-environmental attitudes - Positive attitudes towards local food - Pro social attitudes - WTP organic food with eco-friendly packaging - WTP organic food from local farms - WTP organic food from social farms	- Sex at Birth - Age - Education - Freq. of organic food consumption - Freq. of eggs consumption	All of the studied ethical plus attributes positively correlated with WTP. It confirmed that products with higher ethical standards is the promising strategy in the food industry that can positively benefit all the involved stakeholders.
2 9	Talwar, S., Jabeen, F., Tandon, A., Sakashita, M., & Dhir, A.	What drives willingness to purchase and stated buying behaviour toward organic food? A stimulus–organism–Behaviour–Consequence (SOBC) perspective	2021	Journal of Cleaner Production, 293, 125882. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.125882 Impact Factor: 10	Stimulus–Organism–Behaviour–Consequence (SOBC) paradigm	928 Japan, adults aged 30–65 years	Self-administrated questionnaire Analysis: Descriptive statistics of study constructs	- Health Consciousness - Food Safety Concern - Openness to Change - Self-Identity - Ethical Self-Identity - Willingness to purchase - Stated Buying Behaviour	- Age, - Gender, - Personal Income	Health consciousness is positively associated with openness to change, self-identity and ethical self-identity, therefore consumers with high degree of health consciousness are likely to change their food habits in favour of organic food. Food Safety Concern is positively associated with openness to change and ethical self-identity, but not self-identity.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
30	Tamana Anand, Jayalakshmy Ramachandran, G. S. Batra	Does Organic Food Consumers' Perception of Organisation CSR Matter: Evidence from Malaysia	2024	<i>FIIB Business Review</i> , 16(1) https://doi.org/10.1177/0976030X241257123 Impact Factor: 2.8	Legitimacy Theory, Stakeholder Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	313 organic food consumers in Malaysia	Quantitative survey, structured Likert-scale questionnaire Analysis: Correlation analysis, Multiple Regression	- Health benefits - Knowledge of organic products - Environmental concerns - Trust in organic products - Affordable price - Perception of organisation CSR	- Gender - Age - Occupation - Education - Income - Family Size	Consumers' perception of organic food manufacturers' CSR activities is significantly influenced by all studied attributes. The strongest effect has health benefits, followed by trust, environmental concerns, knowledge of organic products and trust in organic products. The study concludes that organic food companies should prioritize transparent communication of health benefits and trustworthy information, to strengthen consumer trust and improve CSR perception.
31	Tandon, A., Dhir, A., Kaur, P., Kushwah, S., & Salo, J	Behavioural reasoning perspectives on organic food purchase	2020	<i>Appetite</i> , 154, 104786. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.104786 Impact Factor: 3.8	Behavioural reasoning	307 Indian Shoppers	Structured questionnaire Analysis: Descriptive Statistics Correlation Analysis	- Nutritional Content - Ecological & animal welfare - Natural content - Risk Barrier - Usage Barrier - Value - Attitude	Unspecified	The naturalness, nutritional value and ecological welfare all have significant effect when it comes to purchase intention. Especially naturalness was found to have a significant value when it comes to Indian consumers' purchase behaviour

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
3 2	Tandon, A., Jabeen, F., Talwar, S., Sakashita, M., & Dhir, A.	Facilitators and inhibitors of organic food buying behaviour	2021	Food Quality and Preference, 88, 104077. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2020.104077 Impact Factor: 4,9	Combination of: -Dual Factor Theory -Innovation Resistance Theory -The Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework	928 Japanese residents aged 30–65 years	Closed Questions survey Analysis: Confirmatory factor analysis	- Health Consciousness - Ecological Welfare - Nutritional Content - Natural Content - Value Barrier - Usage Barrier - Risk Barrier - Stated Buying Behaviour	- Age - Household Income - Personal income	Consumers who have high Health Consciousness are positively oriented towards organic food, find organic food more environmentally friendly, have better nutrition and natural contents. Further research: Research on the gap between consumer willingness to buy organic food vs. actual buying behaviour. Measure the effect of culture on individuals' consumption of organic food. Gender Based studies
3 3	Valero-Gil, J., Escario, J.-J., Belanche, D., Casaló, L. V.	Understanding organic food consumption in the European Union: The Interaction Between Health and environmental consumer's goals.	2023	British Food Journal, 125(11), 4017–4033. https://doi.org/10.1108/bfj-10-2022-0907 Impact factor: 4.2	Goal-directed behaviour Decision theory (Cost-benefit paradigm)	26669 EU resident, 15+ years old	Self-administrated online survey Analysis: Logistic Regression	- Environmental concern - Health concern - Economic concern	- Gender - Age - Level of education - Place of living - Life satisfaction - Political ideology	Health concern is positively associated with an increase in organic food consumption. Environmental concern is positively associated with an increase in organic food consumption As health concern increases, the positive association between environmental concern and organic food consumption will be reduced. Consumer's severe economic problems are negatively associated with an increase in organic food consumption.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
3 4	Vasilev V.	Corporate social responsibility in the food industry: challenges and prospects for improving customer relationships	2025	BIO Web of Conferences 173 , 04001 (2025) <i>AFE-2024</i> https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/202517304001 <i>Impact factor: 0.3</i>	Unspecified	500 Survey Respondents	Literature Review Secondary reviews of Case studies	- Consumer trust - Satisfaction - Loyalty	Unspecified	CSR initiatives are crucial in building long term consumer relationship. Despite CSR being essential for the modern companies' business development, there are difficulties that companies may face in their implementation, such as lack of recourses, customers' scepticism of green-washing and difficulties in communication with the customers. Further research: Addressing cultural and regional expectations of consumers' CSR
3 5	Wang, J., Pham, T. L., & Dang, V. T.	Environmental consciousness and organic food purchase intention: A moderated mediation model of perceived food quality and price sensitivity	2020	International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17(3), 850. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17030850 <i>Impact factor: 4.6</i>	Unspecified	518 Consumers in food retailers in Guangdong, China	Systematic random sampling technique Analysis: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis	- Environmental consciousness - Perceived food quality - Price sensitivity - Organic food purchase intention	- Gender - Age - Marital status - Income - Purchase Experience	There is an established positive effect of the environmental consciousness on the organic food purchase intention. It is shown that social preferences play a big role for Chinese consumers, specifically in organic food sector. The consumer connects the perceived food quality with the environment. Price sensitivity plays a moderating role in the relationship between perceived food quality and purchase intention.

	Author(s)	Title	Year	Outlet	Theory	Sample	Methodology	Factors Measures	Control Variables	Main Conclusion
3 6	Wei Wei, Gaeul Kim, Li Miao, Carl Behnke, Barbara Almanza,	Consumer inferences of corporate social responsibility (CSR) claims on packaged foods	2018	Journal of Business Research, Volume 83, 2018, Pages 186-201, ISSN 0148-2963, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.10.046 . Impact factor: 10,5	Elaboration Likelihood Model	30 participants	Online Survey 2 factorial experimental Study Analysis: Multivariate Analysis of Covariance	- Health Benefit Perception - Taste Perception - Attitude - Purchase Intention	- Individual differences: -Subjective nutritional knowledge - -Nutritional involvement - -Diet Restrain Behaviour - Demographic Variables	Consumer-oriented CSR claims on packaging are most strongly associated with health benefits of tested food products, while employee-oriented claims is most strongly linked to expected taste perception and attitude towards the company. All the claims had a positive effect on consumers' WTP. Further research: Expending the studied CSR activities to understand the influence of each domain on consumers' inferences.
3 7	Yadav, R.	Altruistic or egoistic: Which value promotes organic food consumption among young consumers? A study in the context of a developing nation	2016	<i>Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services</i> , 33, 92-97. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2016.08.008 Impact Factor: 13,1	Unspecified	304 Indian Consumers, age 18-30	Structured questionnaire Analysis: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis	- Attitude - Environmental Concern - Health Concern - Purchase Intention	- Age - Gender - Education	Both altruistic and egoistic values have a significant influence in determining the green purchase behaviour of young consumers (Egoistic values are described though health concern while altruistic – environmental concern.). However, egoistic values described through the health concern has been found to have stronger influence.

2.4. Literature Review Analysis

Organic food market has been attracting researchers due to the uniqueness and complexity of its consumer behaviour. Being part of the sustainability market, it has a deep connection to consumer green behaviour and ecological variables the same time, when it comes to the food aspect, quality and taste are undeniably important attribute (Janker & Mann, 2020). Moreover, organic food products can be described as credence goods, as the value-added factors might not be initially visible or easily assessable for the consumer but still play an important role in shaping buying behaviour (Aertsens et al., 2009).

A substantial body of research on organic food consumption lies within the scope of psychological and behavioural theories, focusing on internal motivation and value systems (Aertsens et al., 2009; Dangi et al., 2020). One of the most widely applied frameworks in this field remains the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which suggests that consumers' buying patterns are linked to their subjective norms that reflect social pressure, attitude towards the behaviour and perceived behaviour control (Aertsens et al., 2009; Dangi et al., 2020; Devi et al., 2023). In the context of organic food consumption, TPB helps to explain how positive attitudes towards sustainability and health influence purchase intention and purchase behaviour (Dangi et al., 2020). Within the studies the common topic is the comparison of egoistic and altruistic motivation, and to which extend can they predict purchase behaviour (Yadav, 2016., Dangi et al., 2020)

The general comparison between egoistic and altruistic motives is a recurring theme across various studies on organic food consumption. Cross-national studies repeatedly indicate that egoistic motives, such as health consciousness, nutritional value, and sensory appeal, often demonstrate a stronger positive effect on purchase intention (Dangi et al., 2020; Yadav, 2016; Hansen et al., 2018). However, altruistic values such as animal welfare and environmental protection remain significant contributors in shaping attitudes toward organic food and, in some cases, even outweigh egoistic motives (Hasanzade et al., 2018; Tandon et al., 2020).

This difference can be attributed to many factors. Besides health concern, and environmental motives, organic food consumption can also be manifestation of identity expression. Studies of Hwang (2016), Hansen et al. (2018), and Luomala et al. (2020) suggest that organic food choices may communicate personal values, ethical identity, status, or self-presentation. Therefore, organic food can function as symbolic consumption behaviour link to consumers' desire to portray socially valued self-image (Hwang, 2016).

Another important factor in the context of organic food consumption is sensory appeal (Chekima et al., 2017). When it comes to food products, outside of other criteria, taste, freshness, texture, and smell are expected and can be viewed as indicators of perceived quality (Massey et al., 2018; Martini et al., 2023). Previous research demonstrates that these factors are important drivers of purchase intention, therefore suggesting that sustainability perceptions may partially overlap with product quality expectations (Chekima et al., 2017, Massey et al., 2018).

Additionally, the Value-Belief-Norm Theory used in the research by Hasanzade et al. (2018) explains pro-social behaviour as driven by individuals' internal values, which result in a feeling of responsibility and form a foundation for social and environmental decisions. In the context of organic food, the VBN theory is applied to explain motivations related to ethical drivers rather than personal benefit (Hasanzade et al., 2018). Another framework often applied in the research on consumer motivations is the Stimulus-Organism-Response model, which helps identify which external stimuli can trigger consumers' internal evaluation and result in a behavioural response, in this context usually expressed through purchase intentions (Talwar et al., 2021; Tandon et al., 2021).

While these theories focus on the psychological perspective, they provide important insights into understanding why sustainability initiatives matter in the organic food sector. However, within existing

literature, less attention has been given to understanding how consumers perceive and differentiate specific sustainability activities behind organic food products (Camilleri et al., 2023; Janker & Mann, 2020). A number of studies highlights the importance of CSR awareness (Furman et al., 2019, Alam et al., 2025, Ahmad et al., 2025) but it is often treated as a general construct rather than being separated into concrete sustainability dimension such as environment protection practices, animal welfare, health and food safety, social conditions and fair trade (Janker & Mann, 2020; Camilleri et al., 2023; Furman et al., 2019)."

The body of research that shifts the focus from product-centred to company-centred evaluation is substantially smaller. Various sustainability initiatives of companies are usually examined through the lens of Corporate Social Responsibility. CSR is generally interpreted as a multidimensional construct consisting of key sustainability dimensions such as environmental sustainability, work-related sustainability practices, food safety practices, health-related initiatives, animal welfare, and transparency in communication (Maloni & Brown, 2006; Lerro et al., 2018; Janker & Mann, 2020; Alam et al., 2025).

These dimensions vary slightly across different studies, as there is still a lack of a unified CSR scale specifically designed for the organic food sector, as also mentioned by Janker & Mann (2020). Empirical findings consistently demonstrate that consumers associate CSR-active companies with higher credibility and perceived value, which in turn increases loyalty and willingness to pay premium prices (Lerro et al., 2018, Alam et al., 2025).

The studies focusing on consumer segmentation based on how important company initiatives are to consumers and how aware consumers are of them are even fewer. However, these studies underline the heterogeneity of consumer perceptions of organic food company activities (Lerro et al., 2018; Furman et al., 2019; Popovics, 2024). Organic food is perceived from different angles, with some research focusing on psychographics and value-based segmentation, while others apply cluster analysis and mixed methods to identify segments such as environmentalists, health-centred consumers, animal welfare-oriented consumers, and others (Lerro et al., 2018).

Several studies further suggest that social demographic variables alone provide limited explanation when analysing CSR perception and organic food preferences. Instead, additional factors such as psychographic characteristic, attitudes and personal values are found to explain consumer differences more effectively than demographic variables alone (Aertsens et al., 2009; Furman et al., 2019; Lerro et al., 2018).

The study by Wei et al. (2018) shows that different sustainability dimensions have different effects on different consumer perceptions and evaluations. For example, food manufacturing CSR had the strongest effect on health and nutritional value perceptions, while employee welfare had a stronger effect on attitude and taste perception, and eco-friendly packaging positively influenced credibility. Employee welfare was found to have the overall strongest positive effect. This suggests that awareness of different CSR dimensions may influence different consumer evaluation factors and that the effect of CSR can be dimensions specific (Wei et al., 2018).

Overall, the literature review shows that organic food consumption can be influenced by a combination of various factors, such as egoistic motives, altruistic values, sensory expectations, identity-related factors, and the perception of CSR (Aertsens et al., 2009; Hansen et al., 2018; Hwang, 2016; Chekima et al., 2017; Furman et al., 2019). However, fewer studies focus on distinguishing between different sustainability dimensions based on CSR related activities and whether awareness of these dimensions translates into perceived importance and/or purchase behaviour (Boccia & Sarnacchiaro, 2018; Lerro et al., 2018; Camilleri et al., 2023; Alam et al., 2025). Therefore, this research contributes by analysing consumer awareness across several sustainability dimensions in the organic food sector.

2.5. Research gap

In the context of organic food consumption, consumers have generally higher expectations towards the companies and the products, which was confirmed by the Martini et al. (2023). Beyond guaranteed by the European Law added value factors (such as prohibited use of GMOs) consumer also expect organic food producers to be engaging in voluntary sustainability activities and initiatives. The study by Wei et al. (2018) found that employee related corporate practices have the strongest positive influence on the attitude towards the company. A deeper understating of which CSR practices are recognised by various consumer groups can help organic food producers to understand the consumer expectations, adjust the visibility of sustainability dimensions and establish long term consumer brand relationship.

Despite the identified importance of CSR awareness for the consumer-company relationship, the research specifically focused on consumer awareness still remains limited (Boccia & Sarnacchiaro, 2018). Existing research has shown rather inconsistent results, where the level of consumer awareness of specific CSR activities depends on the region (Alam et al., 2025) and/or the value orientation of the consumer (Furman et al., 2019). Existing studies suggest that consumer awareness may be based on an internal value-related system, therefore creating possibilities for consumer segmentation (Aertsens et al. 2009; Habel et al. 2016; Furman et al. 2019). A few researchers mention the lack of research on consumer segmentation being explored in the literature (Popovics, 2024). Moreover, most of the existing research focuses either on a single sustainability dimension (in most cases Environmental Sustainability) or analyses CSR awareness as a whole without distinguishing between individual dimensions (Furman et al., 2019; Boccia & Sarnacchiaro, 2018), which limits the understanding of the difference of awareness and differences in perception across dimensions.

According to Furman (2020), demographics alone are insufficient for CSR segmentation, while value-based segmentation provides deeper explanatory power. The value segmentation logic was also confirmed in the several other studies (Habel et al., 2016; Popovics, 2024).

The study by Lerro (2018) on CSR awareness in the Italian organic food, from a managerial perspective, suggests five consumer segments based on their priority of Corporate Social Responsibility dimensions: Environmentalists, Pro-Socials, Collectivists, Animal Friends, and Self-Health-Centred consumers. This aligns with the main CSR dimensions by Maloni and Brown (2006) and therefore serves as a guide according to importance. While the study by Lerro et al. (2018) represents an important development in the direction of separating CSR dimensions, its focus was primarily on self-reported preferences rather than awareness, and it was limited to the Italian market, therefore not fully addressing the existing research gap.

Based on the existing empirical studies and the provided background, this research focuses on analysing consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities across different CSR dimensions, investigates how awareness differs within these dimensions and examines the existence of patterns to identify consumers segments as well as possible awareness-importance gaps.

Research Question: How does consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities across different CSR dimensions vary within the organic food sector?

2.6. Framework and Hypotheses development

In order to measure and analyse the difference of consumer awareness across different sustainability dimension, the next step of this research was to identify the relevant for the organic food sector

sustainability practices. The determination of these practices was grounded in the Tripple Bottom Line Framework, which provided the structural basis for categorising sustainability activities (Ksiezak, 2018). Insights from the previous research on consumer motivations for purchasing organic food were then applied in order to complement these categories. Finally, the framework Corporate Social Responsibility in the Supply Chain by Maloni and Brown (2006), which has been widely used in food related sustainability research, was used to support the interpretation of the sustainability dimensions.

The Triple Bottom Line is a framework first introduced in 1997 by Elkington and has since been widely used in variety of managerial and sustainability research (Ksiezak, 2018). It is also called 3P, as it consists of three pillars: People, Planet and Profit which correspond to Social, Environmental and Economic dimensions of sustainability. The theory suggests that corporate sustainability should be evaluated through a consideration of all three pillars. Since this research is performed from the angle of consumer perception, the focus lies on environmental and social pillars, which are more directly observable and interpretable by consumers (Ksiezak, 2018).

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability corresponds to the Planet pillar of TBL framework and is one of the most recognizable CSR dimensions from consumer perspective (Ksiezak, 2017). In the context of organic food, environmental sustainability stands for practices focused on reducing the negative impact that companies' operations may have on the environment, such as reduction of pollution and waste, mindful use of resources and implementation of sustainable agronomic practices (Maloni & Brown, 2006; Janker & Mann, 2020; Alam et al., 2025).

Prior research consistently demonstrates that environmental concern plays a significant role in consumers' organic food purchasing decision making process (Yadav, 2016). Lockie et al. (2002) found that organic consumers consider environmental issues much more often, then non-organic food consumers. It was then confirmed by Golob & Kronegger (2019), that consumers that exhibit at least moderate engagement in environmental issues are more likely to choose sustainable products when given a choice. Environmental Concern has repeatedly been identified as important factor in driving the interest in organic food consumption within the number of various studies (Yadav, 2016; Diagourtas et al., 2022).

European consumers, who tend to have a strong environmental preference, also consider the factor of sustainability as an important point in the purchase decision making (Valero-Gil et al., 2023). The study by Lerro et al., (2018) additionally identified environmental CSR to be important for sustainable shoppers in the food sector and have a positive correlation with the willingness to pay extra for organic food products.

Social Sustainability

Social sustainability corresponds to the People pillar of the TBL and refers to corporate responsibility towards community, responsibility towards employees and responsibility towards customers. Social responsibility therefore represents the interest of various stakeholders and can be implemented though a number of different activities, for example fair wages, no discrimination at a workplace and support of local communities (Ksiezak, 2017). The study by Janker, J. & Mann, S. (2018) defines social responsibility in agriculture as a collective term that represents human rights, work, quality of life and impact on society.

Although social sustainability is not generally identified as a primary motivation for organic food consumption, research indicates that it an important CSR dimension from consumer perspective (Lerro M. et al., 2018; Martini et al., 2023). The study by Catlin et al. (2017) shows that both environmental and social sustainability are relevant for shoppers with ethical values, although there is

substantial differences of motivations and psychological profiles. This suggests that social sustainability may be recognised and valued differently across various consumer segments.

Health and Food Safety

Although health and food safety are not traditionally treated as separate CSR dimensions, within the organic food sector they represent highly visible sustainability-related activities from the consumer perspective and are therefore included as a separate dimension in this research. It has been consistently proven, that health concern is an important factor specifically in food related consumption behaviour (Marchand et al., 2010) and is found to be one of the leading motives in the purchase motivations for the organic food (Valero-Gil et al., 2013; Tandon et al., 2020; Tandon et al., 2021). Consumers with high level of health consciousness tend to believe, that organic food can influence their health in a positive way (Teng & Lu, 2016).

The literature review by Rana & Paul (2020), showed that it is consistent within studies to see the clear connection between consumers' health concern and their purchase behaviour of organic food. However, the strength of this relationship varies greatly within different markets. When it comes to Austrian market, 60% of consumers express an intention to adopt healthier diets, and 27% of respondents consider organic food to be an important part of healthy lifestyle (Billa Umfrage, 2022).

From a perspective of consumers' CSR awareness related to health and food safety, the study performed by Lerro M. et al., (2018) that initiatives in this dimension are among the most recognisable suitability actions, suggesting that this dimension is likely to have a high awareness level among different groups of consumers.

Animal Welfare

Animal welfare is often included in environmental sustainability, since it generally falls under the protection of living creatures and the environment, and therefore represents the planet pillar of the TBL theory. However, in the contest of organic food sector, it is important to make a distinction, since animals are not just part of the environment, but are also directly used in the production. Following the framework by Maloni and Brown (2006), animal welfare represents the ethical treatment and standards of living during all stages of production, focusing on minimising the suffering of the animal at every point of its life, including the breeding, transportation and slaughtering

Empirical evidence suggests that the animal welfare represent a distinct area of consumer concern. Lerro M. et al., (2018) identified the consumer cluster concerned with the well-being of animal as "animal friends". The studies on how different CSR practices related to animal protection perceived by consumers show not only the increased interest in buying organic (Aertsens et al., 2009; Lerro et al., 2018), but also increased willingness to pay (Hasanzade et al., 2018; Dangi et al., 2020).

However, those results need to be used with caution, as some preferences for animal welfare in the food production is motivated by consumer perception that they will get a healthier product (Massey et al., 2018,). For example, in the research Rizzo et al., (2023) free-range eggs are perceived premium quality and is associated with willingness to pay premium, which however, mostly because of consumer perception of free-range eggs as of higher quality.

Fair Trade & Procurement

Fair trade and procurement activities refer to the companies' transparent and fair practices in relationship to the suppliers (Lerro M. et al., 2018). In terms of TBL framework, these practices fall under the social pillar, however, to differentiate between upstream and downstream supply-chain issues,

as well as create a more specific and understandable study measures for the survey participants, this research defined Fair Trade and Procurement as a separate dimension. This separation is consistent with both the Maloni and Brown (2006) framework and studies in the similar setting in the organic food sector (Lerro M. et al., 2018).

In terms of consumer motivation, the fair-trade practices are rarely considered as a possible driver in consumers' purchase intention. It may be connected to the fact, the generally consumer are least informed about supplier related CSR practices (Schouteten et al., 2022). Since the data on both consumer awareness and importance of fair trade related activities is limited, the inclusion of this dimension contributes to expanding the understating the fair-trade perception in the sustainability sector.

Previous research demonstrates that perceptions of corporate sustainability activities are not the same across dimensions (Wei et al., 2018; Lerro et al., 2018; Hasanzade et al., 2018; Alam et al., 2025). Credence goods theory suggests that product-related attributes that are directly connected to the product experience, such as health and food safety, are better perceived by consumers than process-related attributes that occur in the background, such as supply chain practices or social sustainability activities (Grunert et al., 2014; Massey et al., 2018). These findings are also supported by Lerro et al. (2018), who identified a hierarchy of CSR dimensions based on consumer awareness in Italian households, ranking health and safety highest and fair trade lowest. Similarly, Alam et al. (2025) found that consumers associate organic food companies most strongly with health and product quality. These findings suggest that awareness is shaped by the visibility of, and the perceived direct benefits consumers may receive from, a product. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

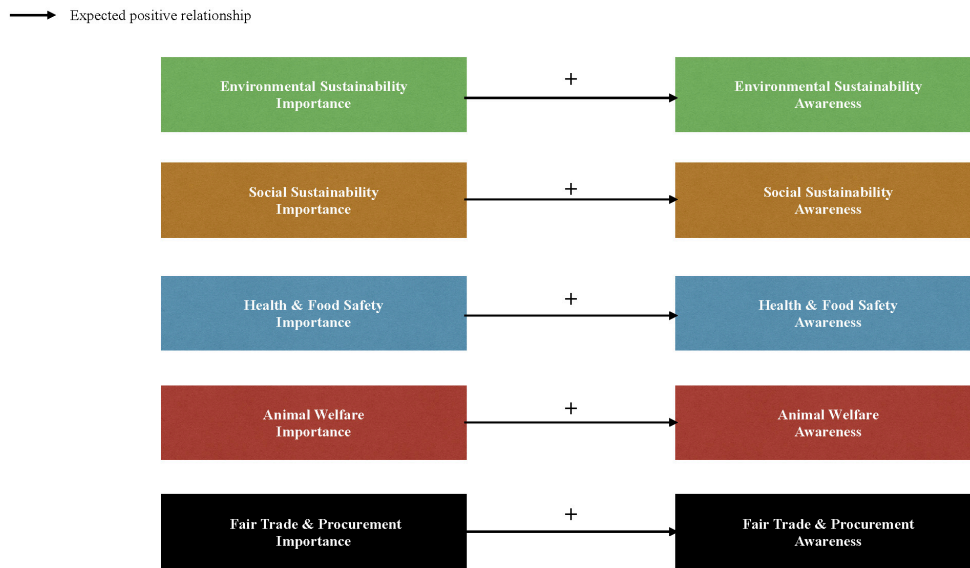
H1: Consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities of organic food companies differs across sustainability dimensions

The relationship between the awareness of CSR activities and their perceived importance is suggested by the Value-Belief-Norm framework, which proposes that consumers' internal values influence their attention to and perception of relevant information (Hasanzade et al., 2018).

In the context of this research and its CSR dimensions, consumers who assign higher personal value to a specific sustainability aspect are expected to be more perceptive towards activities related to that aspect, which may result in higher awareness. Boccia and Sarnacchiaro (2018) support this argument by identifying consumer awareness as a significant factor linking CSR knowledge to behaviour. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H2: Perceived importance of CSR dimensions positively predicts consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities within those dimensions

Figure 1 Conceptual representation of H2: Expected effect of perceived CSR importance on consumer awareness

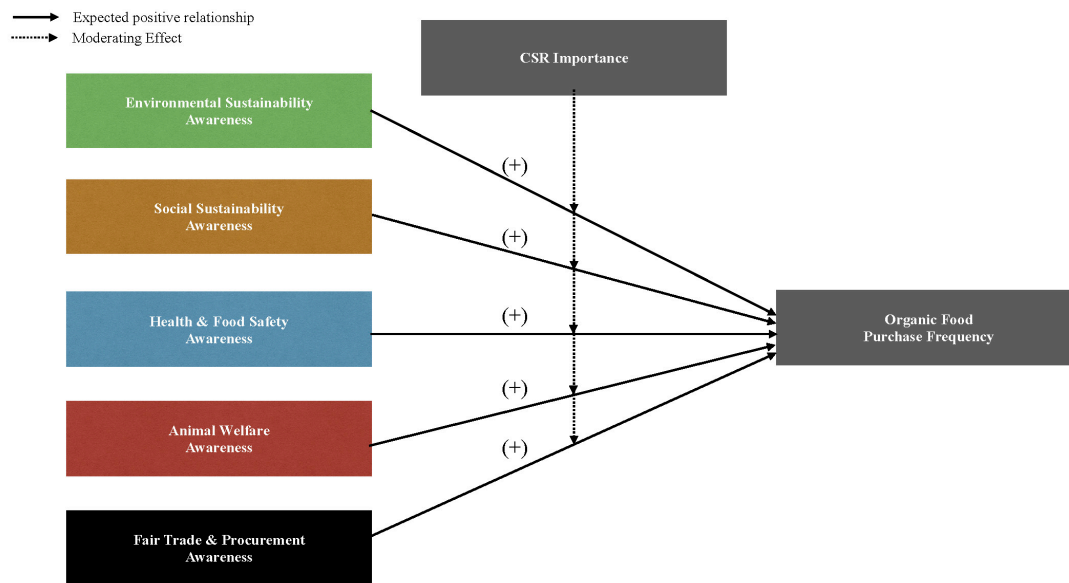


When it comes to examining the relationship between CSR awareness and organic food purchase frequency, the Knowledge – Attitude- Behaviour (KAB) model provides a useful theoretical framework. The theory suggests that consumer knowledge of sustainability activities shapes their attitudes towards an organic food company, which subsequently influences purchasing behaviour. The moderating role of perceived importance is based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model, which suggests that consumers process information more deeply when it carries personal relevance (Wei et al., 2018).

Therefore, the positive effect of awareness on purchase frequency is expected to be stronger among consumers who assign higher importance to the respective CSR dimension.

H3: Consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities positively predicts organic food purchase frequency, and this relationship is moderated by the perceived importance of CSR dimensions.

Figure 2 Conceptual representation of H3: Moderating effect of perceived CSR importance on the relationship between awareness and purchase frequency



Identity Expression

In the context of organic food consumption, identity expression refers to the degree to which the purchase of organic food is motivated by the desire to express personal values. The act of purchasing organic food can be used to project a desirable self-image, such as being more ethical, healthy, sustainable, or able to afford premium-quality products (Bäckström et al., 2003; Makatouni, 2002). This serves as an extrinsic motivation caused by external social pressure and the expected reward for engaging in ethical and sustainable actions, such as purchasing organic products. Identity expression therefore may reflect both intrinsic value alignment as well as the desire to communicate the desired self-image to others (Tandon, 2020).

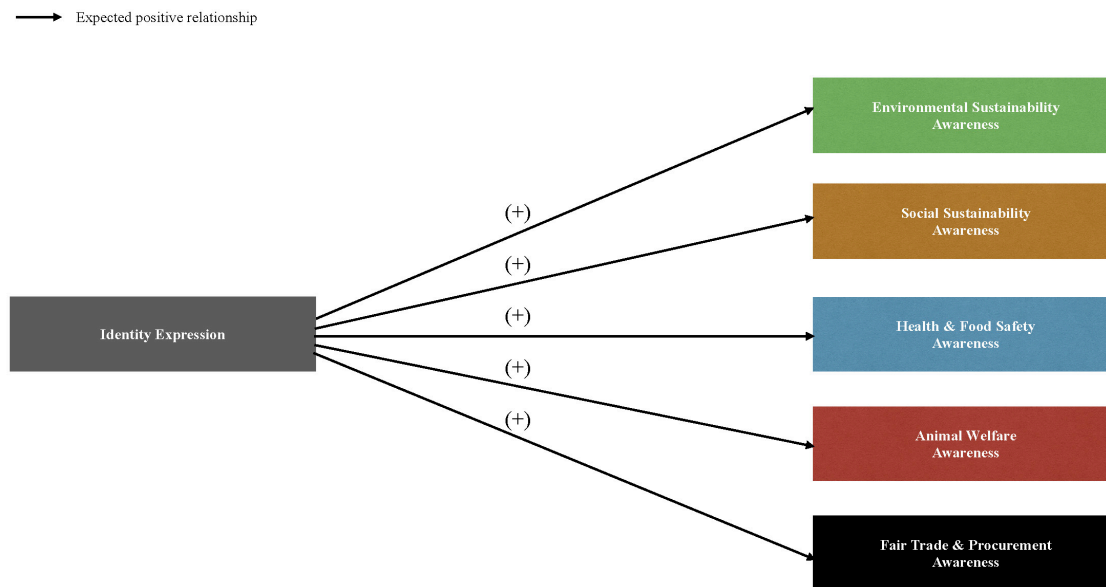
In the behavioural experiment by Salazar et al. (2012), belonging to specific social groups was also found to affect the buying behaviour of sustainable products. The experiment additionally provided evidence of social influence effects such as herd behaviour and social learning (Salazar et al., 2012). Hwang (2016) found a strong effect of self-presentation on willingness to buy organic food among older consumers. This is an especially interesting finding, since the commonly identified motivation of environmental concern has a very insignificant effect on older consumers in other studies.

Within the scope of this research, identity expression is used to capture the extent to which awareness levels might be affected by the desire to fulfil social expectations. Including this construct enables a more complex understanding of how image-related drivers interact with awareness levels in the organic food sector.

Therefore, this research suggests the following hypothesis:

H4: Higher levels of identity expression are positively associated with consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities across CSR dimensions.

Figure 3 Conceptual representation of H4: Expected relationship between identity expression and CSR awareness



Sensory Appeal

Sensory Appeal is a collective term used for description of the product attributes such as appearance, freshness, texture, colour, smell, and taste (Gumay & Sobari, 2023). Previous research has found that anticipated enjoyment can have a significant influence on the attitudes and buying behaviour (Michaelidou & Hassan, 2007). When it comes to choosing food products, sensory qualities play an important role in evaluation of the food products and often used as signals of expected taste quality (Tandon 2020). Therefore, it can be a deciding factor, whether the consumer choose or not this product, without taking in consideration sustainability activities of the company.

Existing literature suggest that consumers associate organic food with superior sensory attributes such as freshness, naturalness and product quality, which can be interpreted by consumer as signals for more healthy and safer products (Rana & Paul, 2020; Martini et al., 2023).

When it comes to defined CSR dimensions, health & food safety and animal welfare include activities that are directly connected to the product itself and therefore might be perceived by consumers as the activities that influence product quality the most (Massey et al., 2018; Tandon et al., 2020; Rana & Paul, 2020). At the same time, the dimensions of environmental sustainability, social sustainability, and fair trade & procurement may appear more process-related, as they are associated with production methods and supply chain practices, and are therefore less directly observable through product consumption (Grunert et al., 2014; Janker & Mann, 2020; Schouteten et al., 2022)..

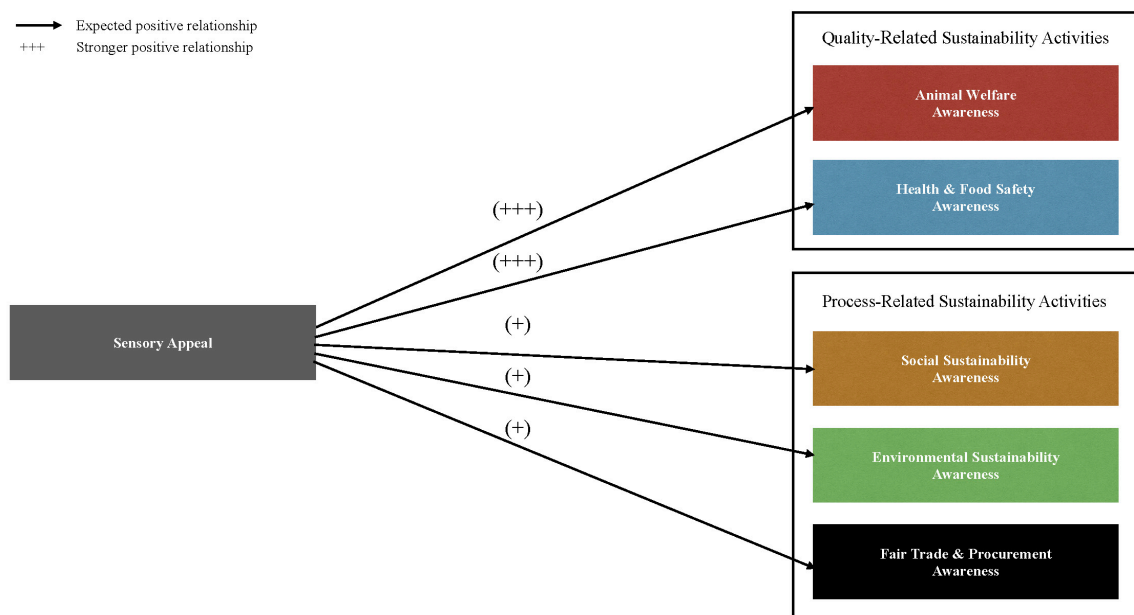
Since many CSR activities represent product attributes, that cannot be directly verified by consumer, sensory characteristics can function as heuristic cues when consumer access product quality. This makes sensory appeal a relevant variable in analysing organic food purchase behaviour (Tandon et al., 2020).

As suggested by Credence Theory, the five CSR dimensions examined in the research can be grouped into two categories: product quality related and process related (Grunert et al., 2014). Product quality related CSRs are Health and Food Safety and Animal Welfare, which are connected to the physical product and therefore are more easily perceived, while process related dimensions, Environmental

Sustainability, Social Sustainability, and Fair Trade and Procurement, are related to production and the supply chain and tend to be more invisible at the point of consumption (Massey et al., 2018; Janker & Mann, 2020). Based on the fact that Sensory Appeal is a heuristic cue for product quality assessment (Tandon et al., 2020), the following hypothesis suggests the following:

H5: Higher levels of Sensory Appeal importance are positively associated with awareness of quality-related sustainability activities (Animal Welfare and Health & Food Safety) compared to process-related activities (Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability, Fair Trade & Procurement)

Figure 4 Conceptual representation of H5: Expected relationship between sensory appeal and awareness of quality-related and process-related CSR activities



3. Methodology

3.1. Method Selection

A variety of research methods can be applied in business studies, allowing the researcher to choose the most suitable option to fulfil the research purpose and test the hypotheses in a comprehensive manner. The main approaches usually considered are qualitative, quantitative, and experimental research designs (Saunders et al., 2023).

Qualitative research is commonly conducted through open-ended interviews or focus groups, which typically involve a smaller sample size. It focuses on analysing patterns in wording, opinions, and personal expressions of respondents. This method allows deeper insight into emotions, expectations, and motivations, which can sometimes be lost in numerical analysis. It is widely used in consumer studies because it helps to understand how people feel and think. However, one of the main disadvantages is that the interpretation of results may be influenced by the subjective bias of the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Experimental design is another possible approach, where variables are tested in a controlled environment in order to observe causal effects. While this method can provide strong validity, it usually requires more resources, time, and strict control conditions, which were not feasible within the scope of this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Quantitative methods, on the other hand, allow a statistical approach to data analysis. With numerical data, it becomes possible to test relationships between variables, analyse correlations, identify patterns, perform segmentation, and examine mediating or moderating effects. (Saunders et al., 2023). Since this research aims to measure consumer awareness of CSR dimensions and examine its relationship with preferences and purchasing behaviour, a quantitative method was selected. This approach allows awareness to be measured in numerical values and enables structured comparison between respondents. It also allows the comparison of awareness across sustainability dimensions and the testing of relationships between awareness, perceived importance, and purchase behaviour.

The survey was designed using the SurveyMonkey platform and distributed online through a survey link.

The survey distribution was conducted through several channels in order to increase the diversity of respondents. First, the survey was shared among personal associates and colleagues from previous work experience, which allowed for some variation in age and employment background, although the geographic reach remained relatively limited.

Second, the survey was distributed within university groups and student-related channels. This contributed to a younger and more academically oriented respondent base, which may have additionally influenced the demographic structure of the sample.

Third, social media platforms were used to engage a broader audience. The survey was reposted and shared on platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn, allowing for a wider reach beyond immediate personal and university networks.

However, this method also has several limitations within the context of this study. First of all, the sample size of 107 respondents remains relatively small and may therefore limit the applicability and generalisability of the findings. Additionally, some demographic groups were underrepresented despite the grouping of variables, which may influence the statistical results and reduce the possibility of identifying stronger demographic differences.

Moreover, there is a possible sampling bias connected to the survey distribution process. Since the survey was distributed online and participation was voluntary, respondents with stronger interest in sustainability, organic food, or CSR-related topics may have been more likely to participate in the research. Furthermore, compared to datasets collected by professional market research companies with larger resources and broader respondent access, the quality and representativeness of the dataset may be more limited.

All statistical analyses and calculations within this research were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 31.0.0.0 (117).

3.2. Survey Design

To study the connection between CSR awareness, perceived importance of CSR activities and purchase behaviour, the multi-sectional survey was designed. The self-administrated questionnaire is distributed online to the heterogeneous sample of respondents with main residence in Austria that are older than 18 years old.

In the **first** party of the survey, the general demographic information such as age, gender, education, income, and place of living (federal district) is collected through single choice questions.

In the **second** part of the survey the respondents were asked to think about the organic food company that they usually buy from, and then to evaluate how familiar they are with the CSR activities of the said company. For this part of the survey 5-point Likert scale is used (1 = not familiar at all, 5 = very familiar).

Each CSR dimension was operationalised through one to three measurement items

This approach to measure the consumers CSR awareness has been adopted in previous studies, including Lee et al. (2009), Singh et al. (2017), Ahmad et al. (2024) and Balaguru et al. (2025).

In the **third** section of the survey the respondents were asked to rank the importance of CSR engagement (1= the most important, 5 = the least important).

This ranking approach to measuring CSR related consumer preferences was previously used by Lerro et al. (2018).

Finally, the additional constructs of Sensory Appeal and Identity Expression were measured and included in the analysis.

3.3. Study Measurement Items

Measurement Scale Development

The items used in this study were developed through adaptation from previous empirical research in the fields of organic food consumption and consumer CSR literature. Given the absence of a single comprehensive scale that simultaneously includes all five CSR dimensions examined in this study, namely Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability, Health and Food Safety, Animal Welfare, and Fair Trade and Procurement, the measurement instrument was developed using a composite scale

development approach. This approach is consistent with consumer behaviour research, where context-specific constructs are often operationalised through the adaptation of items from multiple sources.

Where possible, the dimensions were adopted from existing validated empirical studies. However, where existing scales did not fully represent the studied dimensions in a way that was applicable to the context of this research, additional items were developed based on the CSR framework proposed by Maloni and Brown (2006) and supported through studies examining the same dimensions from different methodological perspectives.

The primary empirical sources used for item development were Lee et al. (2015), Lerro et al. (2018), and Stanco and Lerro (2020). In order to ensure the adequacy of the selected items, this research applied the following criteria during item selection: conceptual consistency, consumer-facing relevance, and previous empirical use. Conceptual consistency was based on alignment with the CSR dimensions proposed by Maloni and Brown (2006). Since the theoretical foundation of this study relies heavily on the framework developed by Maloni and Brown (2006), consistency and overall conceptual coherence were ensured through alignment with their dimensions.

Where existing items did not fully cover the defined constructs, such as in the case of Social Sustainability and Fair Trade and Procurement, additional items were adapted from relevant studies (Mohan, 2009; Janker & Mann, 2020).

In order to minimise potential instability of the measurement scale resulting from combining items from different sources, items within each dimension were selected to represent a single underlying CSR concept. The wording and level of abstraction were kept as consistent as possible to maintain comparability within dimensions. Therefore, despite being adapted or developed from different sources, all items reflect the same theoretical CSR dimensions defined by the framework of Maloni and Brown (2006).

This approach is consistent with CSR measurement research, where CSR dimensions with broader definitions are represented through several related items that capture the same underlying domain rather than separate activities (Öberseder et al., 2014).

Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Environmental Sustainability item measures were primarily developed based on the Ecological Welfare construct by Lee et al. (2015), from which the item corresponding to sustainable packaging was adapted. Additional environmental items were supported by Maloni and Brown (2006) and Stanco and Lerro (2020), who identify environmental protection, pollution reduction and sustainable agricultural practices as important CSR activities within the organic food sector.

The selected items represent key aspects of Environmental Responsibility within the organic food sector, such as sustainable packaging, reduction of pollution and waste, and sustainable agronomic practices. While adapted from different sources, all items correspond to the same underlying concept and reflect companies' efforts to minimize their environmental impact.

Social Sustainability Awareness

The development of the Social Sustainability Awareness items for this research relied heavily on interpretations from existing empirical studies, as this dimension is relatively underrepresented in the organic food sector. The items were developed in accordance with the Human Rights and Labour dimensions identified by Maloni and Brown (2006). The defined items were also supported by Lerro et al. (2018), who described the same constructs and included them as one of the CSR dimensions used in the ranking scale of their research.

The selected items represent key aspects of Social Sustainability within the context of the organic food sector, such as support for local communities, equal treatment of employees, and fair working conditions. This approach is also consistent with Öberseder et al. (2014), who identified employee-related and community-related CSR activities as important elements of Social Sustainability.

Health and Food Safety Awareness

Health and Food Safety items were mostly drawn from Lee et al. (2015). Lee et al. (2015) validated a Nutritional Content scale ($CR = .859$, $AVE = .605$; $\alpha = .86$) composed of four items relating to vitamins, health, nutritional value, and protein content. Items 2 and 3 of this research were adapted from this scale, with the wording slightly simplified in order to increase the accessibility of the survey.

Additionally, Item 1 was drawn from Stanco and Lerro (2020) and Maloni and Brown (2006). The inclusion of this item was motivated by the Health and Safety dimension proposed by Maloni and Brown (2006), which explicitly identifies chemical use management as an important concern within food supply chains. Therefore, the item was added to provide a more complete representation of CSR activities related to Health and Food Safety, capturing additional aspects of the construct beyond nutritional content alone.

Animal Welfare Awareness

The Animal Welfare item was adopted directly from Lee et al. (2015), where it was included under the Ecological Welfare scale with standardised coefficients ranging from .643 to .714 for the items relating to animal pain and animal rights, respectively. The selected item corresponds to the Maloni and Brown (2006) framework, as well as the dimension used in the study by Lerro et al. (2018). For this dimension, a single item is used as it represents a narrow definition within the context of this research. Unlike other CSR dimensions, it focuses on a single clearly defined concept rather than broader constructs.

Fair Trade and Procurement Awareness

Fair Trade is the most underrepresented of all the dimensions when it comes to understanding consumer perceptions. Therefore, the study measures were developed specifically for this research to adequately represent the construct and ensure alignment with the other dimensions. The study items are grounded in the framework proposed by Maloni and Brown (2006). They also correspond to the definition used by Lerro et al. (2018) in their research.

Maloni and Brown (2006) identified Fair Trade as an important CSR dimension within the food supply chain, while Mohan (2010) argues that Fair Trade seeks to promote greater equity for producers. Castaldo et al. (2009) further describe Fair Trade as a mechanism that supports ethical trade relationships and fair treatment of producers. Therefore, the three constructs identified for this dimension are rooted in the underlying theory and, moreover, are consistent with the definition of CSR used by Lerro et al. (2018).

Table 3.1 CSR Awareness Measurement Items

Dimension	Items
Environmental Sustainability	1. The sustainability of the packaging. 2. Engagement in reducing pollution and waste. 3. Engagement in Sustainable Agronomic Practices (rotating crops, assuring biodiversity).
Social Sustainability	1. Support of the local farmer community. 2. Engagement in the good work ethical practices in terms of eliminating any possible gender/race discrimination at a workplace. 3. Engagement in the good work ethical practices in terms of minimal wage and work benefits.
Health & Food Safety	1. Reduced use of pesticides and fertilisers beyond the bidding requirements. 2. Providing organic food with higher nutritional value. 3. Promotion of the healthy lifestyle.
Animal Welfare	1. Adoption of production practices that eliminate any unnecessary suffering of animals.
Fair Trade & Procurement	1. Operation within transparent trade practices. 2. Fair Treatment among suppliers and distributors. 3. Involvement in support of the suppliers (Payment of a guaranteed minimum price, long term contracts).

CSR Preferences

In addition to awareness measures, respondents were also asked to rank the perceived importance of each sustainability dimension. The ranking scale ranged from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important).

1. **Environmental**

2. **Social Sustainability**

3. **Health & Food Safety**

4. Animal Welfare

5. Fair Trade & Procurement

Additional Studied Constructs

In addition to CSR-related sustainability dimensions, this research also included two additional constructs connected to non-CSR related motivations for organic food consumption: Identity Expression and Sensory Appeal. These constructs were included in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour and analyse whether self-related and product-related motivations may influence awareness of sustainability activities.

Identity Expression measurement items were directly adopted from the studies by Hwang (2016) and Singh & Verma (2017). Hwang (2016) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .895 for the Self-Presentation construct, while Singh and Verma (2017) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .873 for the Subjective Norm construct. Sensory Appeal items were primarily based on the study by Lee et al. (2015), who reported a Cronbach's alpha of .81 for the corresponding sensory construct, with one additional item related to smell included in order to better capture the sensory evaluation of organic food products.

Table 3.2 Measurement Items for Identity Expression and Sensory Appeal

Dimension	Items	Source
Identity Expression	1.Purchasing organic food is part of how I express my personality	Hwang, 2016 (1,2)
	2.People like me are expected to consume organic food	Singh & Verma, 2017 (3,4)
	3.My loved ones expect me to purchase more organic food for them	
	4.People persuade me that I should buy organic products in order to have better life	
Sensory Appeal	1.I believe that organic food smells better than non-organic alternatives	Lee et al., 2015 (2, 3, 4)
	2. I believe that organic food looks better than non-organic alternatives	
	3.I believe that organic food has a better texture than non-organic alternatives	
	4.I believe that organic food tastes better than non-organic alternatives	

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Validity of the Scales

Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the multi-item constructs. Most dimensions demonstrated acceptable reliability levels above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, while Health & Food Safety and Social Sustainability showed slightly lower but still acceptable values considering the exploratory nature of the research (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Reliability Analysis of Study Constructs

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
Environmental Sustainability	0.704
Social Sustainability	0.698
Health & Food Safety	0.623
Fair Trade & Procurement	0.844
Identity Expression	0.858
Sensory Appeal	0.732

The results of the reliability analysis indicate acceptable internal consistency across the majority of the studied constructs. Fair Trade & Procurement and Identity Expression demonstrated particularly strong reliability values. Although Health & Food Safety showed a lower Cronbach's Alpha value (0.623), it was retained due to the exploratory nature of the research and the conceptual relevance of the items

To further assess the validity of the constructs, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed separately for each multi-item awareness dimension. First, the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were examined. As shown in table 4.2, all dimensions demonstrated acceptable KMO values (above the minimum threshold of 0.50) and statistically significant Bartlett's Tests ($p < .001$), therefore, the data was confirmed to be suitable for factor analysis.

The analyses explained between 44.55% and 64.03% of the total variance (Table 4.2). The strongest factor structure was identified for Fair Trade & Procurement, while the lowest explained variance was observed for Environmental Sustainability (44.55%), although this value remained within an acceptable range. Overall, the findings provided additional support for the validity of the constructs.

Table 4.2 Sampling adequacy and explained variance

Construct	KMO	Bartlett's Test (p)	Variance Explained (%)
Environmental Sustainability	.649	< .001	44.55
Social Sustainability	.696	< .001	62.10
Health & Food Safety	.655	< .001	50.95
Fair Trade & Procurement	.696	< .001	64.03

The factor loadings show that all items loaded adequately on their respective dimensions (Table 4.3). The strong loadings were found for the Social Sustainability items related to the elimination of gender/race discrimination and work conditions. The Fair Trade & Procurement dimension also demonstrated strong loadings.

Environmental Sustainability showed comparatively lower loadings, with the lowest being for the sustainability of the packaging. However, the value remains above the commonly accepted threshold. Overall, the findings provided additional support for the validity of the constructs.

Table 4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Construct	Item	Factor Loading
Environmental Sustainability	Reducing pollution and waste	0.739
	Sustainable agronomic practices	0.722
	Sustainability of the packaging	0.519
Social Sustainability	Support of the local farmer community	0.703
	Elimination of gender/race discrimination	0.834
	Minimum wage and work benefits	0.820
Health & Food Safety	Reduced use of pesticides and fertilisers	0.678
	Higher nutritional value	0.762
	Promotion of a healthy lifestyle	0.699
Fair Trade & Procurement	Transparent trade practices	0.780
	Fair treatment among suppliers and distributors	0.827
	Support of suppliers through minimum prices and long-term contracts	0.793

4.2. Sample Description

Due to the distribution of the survey through various channels, including social media and private network shares, the exact number of people who received and viewed the survey invitation is not possible to calculate; therefore, the response rate could not be determined. The total number of respondents was 109.

Prior to analysis, the data quality was assessed based on the following criteria: the completeness of the survey answers, the existence of straight lining, a completion time below 1 minute, and duplicate responses (the complete duplication of answers with the same timestamp and IP address). Based on these criteria, 2 respondent answers were removed from the data. The remaining 107 responses were used in the research.

The sample is largely composed of respondents aged 25- 34, with more than 60% belonging to this age group, and is skewed towards female participants. Most respondents have a university degree, indicating a relatively highly educated sample. The respondents are mostly employed either full-time or part-time. The level of income is relatively evenly distributed across the middle-income categories. More than half of the sample resides in Vienna.

For further analysis, the demographic variables were combined as shown in the Table 4.4 to ensure sufficient group sizes. Smaller categories were merged into larger groups to ensure adequate representation. The resulting distribution is presented below.

Table 4.4 Grouped Demographic Variables

Variable		N
Gender:	<i>Male</i>	38
	<i>Female</i>	69
Age:	<i>18-24</i>	17
	<i>25-34</i>	66
	<i>35+</i>	24
Gross Annual Income:	<i><24,999 EUR</i>	40
	<i>25,000-74.999 EUR</i>	29
	<i>>74,999 EUR</i>	35
Education:	<i>No University Degree</i>	14
	<i>University Degree</i>	93
Employment:	<i>Student</i>	26
	<i>Part Time</i>	32
	<i>Full Time</i>	49
Residence:	<i>Austria</i>	85
	<i>Outside of Austria</i>	22

4.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Key Variables

To get a general idea about the tendencies of consumer perception in terms of both awareness and importance, the research looks into the generalised trends of the key variables. This allows the identification of the sustainability dimensions that are the most visible and meaningful from the consumer perspective, as well as those that remain underrepresented within consumer awareness. Analysing the overall patterns also provides a broader understanding of how consumers evaluate sustainability activities in the organic food sector before moving into more detailed demographic and behavioural analysis.

4.3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Consumer Awareness

Prior to the further analysis, the dimension scores were checked for normality using skewness and kurtosis statistics. All values have been found to fall within the accepted range, indicating no substantial deviations from normality (Table A.72).

As a first step of the analysis, descriptive statistics of consumer awareness were calculated using means and standard deviations (Table 4.5). Although the constructs are based on 5-point Likert scale items, which are technically ordinal in nature, mean scores are reported here for descriptive purposes, which is a common practice in consumer research.

Table 4.5 Descriptive statistics of consumer awareness (N=107)

Study Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Environmental Sustainability	3.26	0.96
Engagement in reducing pollution and waste	3.17	0.97
Engagement Sustainable Agronomic Practices (rotating crops, assuring biodiversity)	3.07	0.93
The sustainability of the packaging	3.55	0.98
Social Sustainability	3.17	1.09
Support of the local farmer community	3.41	0.97
Engagement in the good work ethical practices in terms of eliminating any possible gender/race discrimination at a workplace	3.07	1.19
Engagement in the good work ethical practices in terms of minimal wage and work benefits	3.02	1.11
Health & Food Safety	3.57	0.94
Reduced use of pesticides and fertilisers beyond the bidding requirements	2.57	1.02
Providing organic food with higher nutritional value	3.43	0.93
Promotion of the healthy lifestyle	3.79	0.86
Animal Welfare	3.62	0.99
Adoption of production practices, that eliminate any unnecessary suffering of animals	3.62	0.99
Fair Trade & Procurement	2.83	1.12
Operation within transparent trade practices	2.81	1.12
Fair Treatment among suppliers and distributors	2.98	1.11
Involvement in support of the suppliers (Payment of a guaranteed minimum price, long term contracts)	2.71	1.14

The means presented in table 4.5 provide an initial overview of the awareness across the CSR dimensions. To determine whether the observed differences between the dimensions were statistically significant, the Friedman test was additionally conducted. Even though the awareness scores did not find to have substation deviations from normality, the Friedmans test was selected over ANOVA. This was based on the fact that awareness measures were collected with Likert scale and that all dimensions were evaluated by the same respondents. Therefore, the Friedmans test was considered appropriate for identifying differences in awareness within the studies CSR dimensions.

Table 4.6 Mean Ranks of Perceived Awareness Across Sustainability Dimensions

Sustainability Dimension	Mean Rank
Environmental Sustainability	2.76
Social Sustainability	2.76
Health & Food Safety	3.64
Animal Welfare	3.55
Fair Trade & Procurement	2.29

Table 4.7 Friedman Test Results for Sustainability Dimension Awareness Rankings

Statistic	Value
N	107
Chi-Square (χ^2)	66.68
df	4
p-value	< .001

The Friedman test shows a statistically significant result, indication that consumer awareness significantly differs across the dimensions. The mean ranks in Table 4.6 show that Health & Food Safety (M = 3.57, SD = 0.94) and Animal Welfare (M = 3.62, SD = 0.99) were ranked the highest, while Fair Trade and Procurement was ranked the lowest (M = 2.83, SD = 1.12). This is consistent with the results shown in Table 4.5. In order to identify exactly which pairs of dimensions differ significantly for one another, post-hoc pairwise comparison using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test with Bonferroni correction was performed.

Table 4.8 Post-hoc Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Pairwise Comparisons of CSR Awareness Dimensions

Comparison	p-value
Environmental Sustainability vs. Social Sustainability	.969
Environmental Sustainability vs. Health & Food Safety	< .001
Environmental Sustainability vs. Animal Welfare	.001
Environmental Sustainability vs. Fair Trade & Procurement	.022
Social Sustainability vs. Health & Food Safety	< .001
Social Sustainability vs. Animal Welfare	.001
Social Sustainability vs. Fair Trade & Procurement	.003
Health & Food Safety vs. Animal Welfare	.620
Health & Food Safety vs. Fair Trade & Procurement	< .001
Animal Welfare vs. Fair Trade & Procurement	< .001

Note: Pairwise comparisons were conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. A Bonferroni correction was applied to control for multiple comparisons, resulting in an adjusted significance level of $p < .005$.

The post-hoc pairwise comparisons revealed significant differences between the following pairs: Environmental Sustainability and Health & Food Safety, Environmental Sustainability and Animal Welfare, Social Sustainability and Health & Food Safety, Social Sustainability and Animal Welfare, Social Sustainability and Fair Trade & Procurement, Health & Food Safety and Fair Trade & Procurement, and Animal Welfare and Fair Trade & Procurement.

The results demonstrate the highest awareness of Health & Food Safety and Animal Welfare activities. Environmental Sustainability and Social Sustainability exhibited moderate awareness levels, while Fair Trade & Procurement demonstrated the lowest level of awareness among the studied CSR dimensions.

Interpreting Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Environmental Sustainability awareness shows a moderate score and is unevenly distributed across the studied points. The sustainability of packaging, which is easily visible and tangible for consumers, received the highest score (M = 3.55, SD = 0.98), while deeper knowledge-related aspects such as crop rotation (M = 3.07, SD = 0.97) received a comparatively lower score. The results indicate that while consumers notice the most accessible environmental efforts, such as sustainable packaging, there is a

lower level of awareness regarding deeper sustainability practices that might arguably play an even more important role in environmental preservation.

Interpreting Social Sustainability Awareness

The findings reveal comparatively low awareness of the Social Sustainability dimension, with the lowest mean scores observed for “engagement in good work ethical practices in terms of minimum wage and work benefits” ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.11$) and “engagement in good work ethical practices in terms of eliminating possible gender/race discrimination at the workplace” ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.19$). This suggests that activities that remain behind the scenes and do not directly interact with consumers tend to have a lower level of visibility and perception.

Interpreting Health and Food Safety Awareness

Based on the mean values and taking into consideration the SD spread, Health and Food Safety demonstrate one of the highest awareness levels among respondents ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.94$). Interestingly, promotion of a healthy lifestyle received the highest score within the Health and Food Safety dimension ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 0.86$). This might indicate that the image of a company and its self-positioning as a “healthy brand” is more easily recognised by consumers than more operational sustainability activities such as reduced pesticide use or higher nutritional value.

Interpreting Animal Welfare Awareness

Animal Welfare received the highest overall awareness mean score; however, the spread is also significant ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.99$). Based on this, the research may suggest the presence of a consumer segment with particularly high awareness of animal welfare activities, while consumers outside this segment demonstrate lower awareness of the issue.

Interpreting Fair Trade and Procurement Awareness

The research discovered that awareness of Fair Trade and Procurement activities is the lowest across all dimensions ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.12$). The results suggest that consumers have a relatively low level of awareness regarding fair trade and procurement initiatives. This finding is not surprising, as these activities are typically less visible and occur further upstream in the supply chain. Compared to more tangible or consumer-facing dimensions, such as health or packaging, fair trade practices are less salient and therefore less cognitively accessible to the average consumer.

4.3.2. Descriptive statistics of consumer importance

In order to analyse the differences in the assigned importance to the CSR dimension, a Friedman test was performed. Based on the results, a statistically significant difference in the importance ranking was detected $\chi^2(4) = 114.19$, $p < .001$.

As portrayed in table 4.6, Environmental Sustainability (Mean Rank = 3.86) and health and Food Safety received the highest importance ranking, which is also consistent with the previous research.

Consistently with the previous research, Environmental Sustainability and Health and Food Safety (Mean Rank = 3.78) have the highest priorities for the consumers. Those are the CSR activities that are the most communicated and at the same time the most expected by the organic shoppers.

Animal Welfare CSRs represent a moderate importance within a sample (Mean Rank = 2.97).

The lowest priorities are Social Responsibility (Mean Rank =2.33) and Fair Trade and Procurement (Mean Rank = 2.07). Both dimensions had the lowest awareness score; therefore, the research can conclude that the customers do not associate social sustainability and fair trade and procurement as relevant CSR for the organic food sector. Similar patters can be seen in the awareness analysis, where those dimensions also recorded lower awareness.

Table 4.9 Importance Rankings Across Sustainability Dimensions (Friedman Test)

Sustainability Dimension	Mean Rank
Environmental Sustainability	3.86
Health and Food Safety	3.78
Animal Welfare	2.97
Social Sustainability	2.33
Fair Trade and Procurement	2.07

N	χ^2	df	p
107	114.19	4	< .001

4.4. Influence of Demographics on the Key Variables

In the next step the research analyses the influence of demographic characteristics on the consumer awareness as well as the perceived importance of sustainability activities. The aim of the analysis is to identify patterns among different consumers groups and determine which demographical factors have influence in the perception of sustainability actions in the organic food environment. The analysis used different statistical techniques, depending on the measurement scale of the variables. One-way ANOVA and independent samples t-tests were applied to the awareness dimension scores, as these variables represent composite averages across multiple Likert scale items. Nonparametric tests were applied for all importance variables.

4.4.1. Gender Effects

Gender effects have shown consistently non-significant results across all measured variables, therefore suggesting that gender is not a differentiating factor in the context of the research

Awareness of CSR Dimensions

The results of the T-Test (Table A.2) indicate no statistically significant effect of gender on awareness across the examined sustainability dimensions. Environmental Awareness $p = .982$, Social Awareness $p = .808$, Health and Food Safety Awareness $p = .824$, Animal Welfare Awareness $p = .910$, and Fair-Trade and Procurement Awareness $p = .884$. The mean scores across male and female respondents were highly comparable within all studied dimensions.

Importance of CSR Dimensions

Similarly, the Mann–Whitney U test did not show any statistically significant differences in the importance scores between male and female respondents across the studied sustainability dimensions. Environmental Sustainability $p = .144$ (Table A.16), Social Sustainability $p = .484$ (Table A.17), Health and Food Safety $p = .670$ (Table A.18), Animal Welfare $p = .817$ (Table A.19), and Fair Trade Importance $p = .350$ (Table A.20).

Identity Expression

The independent samples t-test showed no statistically significant gender differences in identity expression ($p = .854$, Table A.40).

Sensory Appeal

The independent samples t-test no meaningful gender differences in sensory appeal ($p = .509$, Table A.45).

4.4.2. Age Effects

Within the demographic analysis, age was revealed to be the most pronounced demographic factor across all the tested variables. The analysis showed that younger consumers demonstrate the highest awareness for environmental sustainability. When it comes to importance, a declining with age trend (youngest prioritize most, older least) is detected within the social sustainability dimensions. Reverse pattern is shown in the health and food safety importance, with older consumers rating this dimension higher on the importance than younger. This pattern is expected and supported within the existing research. Older demographic is also rating sensory appeal of organic food significantly higher, than the other age groups.

Awareness of CSR Dimensions

The results of the ANOVA analysis (Table 4.10) indicate a marginally significant effect of age on the awareness within the environmental dimension ($F = 3.020$, $p = .053$). Based on the finding younger respondents (18-24 years old) have slightly higher awareness score than respondents in the middle-age group (25-34 years old). The post-hoc Tukey HSD comparison between age groups 1 and 2 showed marginal significance, while between other groups no significance was found (Table 4.11).

Table 4.10 ANOVA Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness Across Age Groups

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	3.710	2	1.855	3.020	.053
Within Groups	63.872	104	0.614		
Total	67.581	106			

Table 4.11 Post-hoc Comparisons (Tukey HSD): Age Differences in Environmental Awareness

Comparison	Mean Difference	p
Age 1 vs Age 2	0.504	.052
Age 1 vs Age 3	0.279	.501
Age 2 vs Age 3	-0.225	.454

Across the other dimensions, age did not appear to have a statistically significant effect on awareness. Social Sustainability $p = .112$ (Table A.3), Health and Food Safety $p = .705$ (Table A.4), Animal Welfare $p = .490$ (Table A.5), and Fair-Trade and Procurement Awareness $p = .112$ (Table A.6).

Importance of CSR Dimensions

When it comes to importance, the results of the Kruskal–Wallis tests indicate the limited influence that consumers' age has on the self-stated importance of sustainability activities across the dimensions. The most significant effect is shown within the social sustainability dimension ($\chi^2(2) = 6.754$, $p = .034$), with younger participants ranking it the highest, and the importance decreasing as the age group increases (Table 4.12). The observed tendency may reflect the higher involvement of younger consumers in social issues.

Table 4.12 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Social Sustainability Importance Across Age Groups

Age Group	N	Mean Rank
18–24	17	70.59
25–34	66	52.30
35+	24	46.92
Total	107	

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	6.754
df	2
p-value	.034

A similar tendency is observed in the health and food safety dimension ($\chi^2(2) = 4.684$, $p = .096$), with mirrored results: the oldest respondents rank it the highest, while younger respondents rank it the lowest, although this difference is not statistically significant (Table 4.13). This result is expected as older consumers are usually more concerned with health-related issues and therefore may place greater importance on food quality and safety.

Table 4.13 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Health and Food Safety Importance Across Age Groups

Age Group	N	Mean Rank
18–24	17	40.53
25–34	66	55.30
35+	24	59.98
Total	107	

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	4.684
df	2
p-value	.096

Across Environmental Sustainability (Table A.21), Animal Welfare (Table A.22), and Fair Trade and Procurement (Table A.23), no statistically significant effects were detected.

Identity Expression

The one-way ANOVA did not reveal statistically significant differences across age groups ($p = .463$, Table A.41)

Sensory Appeal

The one-way ANOVA revealed significant age difference ($p=.011$) in the sensory appeal score within the age groups (Table 4.14). The Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons (Table 4.15) indicate that the oldest age group reported significantly higher sensory appeal scores for organic food than the youngest and middle-aged respondents. The finding suggests that older consumers higher evaluate sensory characteristic of organic food such as smell, taste and texture

Table 4.14 One-Way ANOVA Results for Sensory Appeal Across Age Groups

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	8.860	2	4.430	4.707	.011
Within Groups	97.883	104	0.941		
Total	106.743	106			

Table 4.15 Post-hoc Comparisons (Tukey HSD): Sensory Appeal Across Age Groups

Comparison	Mean Difference	p
Age Group 1 vs 2	-0.285	.528
Age Group 1 vs 3	-0.873	.015
Age Group 2 vs 3	-0.587	.033

4.4.3. Education Effects

Education effect showed to have mixed pattern within the tested variables. Within the awareness dimension, the counter-intuitive result revealed that respondents without university degree have higher awareness of fair trade & procurement activities. The same respondent group was also found to assign higher importance to animal welfare in the organic food sector. The respondents without university degree have as well reported to assign higher sensory preferences of organic food.

Awareness of CSR Dimensions

Based on the independent samples t-test, education level shows a significant difference only for fair-trade awareness, where respondents without a university degree report higher awareness (Table 4.16). This result is unexpected, as higher education is often associated with broader knowledge, especially in constructs like fair trade and procurement, which rely more on knowledge rather than pure impulse or empathy. The results can be explained by the fact that respondents with higher education may perceive the messages more critically, while those without a university degree might interpret them more

generally. However, it is important to mention that the results must also be interpreted with caution due to the unequal group sizes.

No statistically significant result was found within other dimensions

Table 4.16 Independent Samples t-Test Results for Sustainability Awareness Across Education Groups

CSR Dimension	No University (N = 14) Mean (SD)	University (N = 93) Mean (SD)	t (df)	p-value	Cohen's d
Environmental Sustainability	2.91 (0.85)	3.19 (0.79)	-1.19 (16.53)	.251	-0.36
Social Sustainability	3.50 (0.71)	3.12 (0.88)	1.81 (19.50)	.085	0.45
Health & Food Safety	3.86 (0.72)	3.53 (0.71)	1.58 (16.95)	.132	0.46
Animal Welfare	3.64 (1.08)	3.61 (0.99)	0.10 (16.44)	.923	0.03
Fair Trade & Procurement	3.38 (0.58)	2.75 (1.01)	3.35 (26.67)	.002	0.65

Importance of CSR Dimensions

The Mann-Whitney U analysis has found the significant difference ($U = 418.500$, $Z = -2.219$, $p = .026$) assigned to the importance of animal welfare based on education (Table 4.17). Respondents without university degree tend to assign significantly higher importance to animal welfare compared to respondents with university degree. No statistically significant differences were found within the other dimensions: Environmental Sustainability $p = .207$ (Table A.28), Social Sustainability $p = .267$ (Table A.29), Health and Food Safety $p = .789$ (Table A.30), and Fair Trade and Procurement $p = .542$ (Table A.31)

Table 4.17 Mann-Whitney U Test Results for Animal Welfare Importance Across Education Levels

Statistic	Value
Mann-Whitney U	418.500
Z	-2.219
p-value	.026

Education Level	N	Mean Rank
No University Degree	14	70.61
University Degree	93	51.50
Total	107	

Identity Expression

The independent samples t-test did not reveal statistically significant differences in identity expression based on education level ($p = .337$, Table A.44)

Sensory Appeal

The independent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant effect of education on sensory appeal ($p = .028$, Table 4.18). Respondents without a university degree reported higher sensory preference scores compared to respondents with a university degree.

Table 4.18 Independent Samples t-Test Results for Sensory Appeal by Education Level

Education Level	N	Mean	SD
No University Degree	14	3.46	1.04
University Degree	93	2.83	0.98

Test Statistic	Value
t	2.234
df	105
p-value	.028
Mean Difference	0.631
Cohen's d	0.640

4.4.4. Employment Effects

The only marginally significant effect of employment was observed within the awareness of fair trade and procurement activities, where full-time employees reported slightly lower awareness. Within the other variables, no significant effect was detected.

Awareness of CSR Dimensions

A marginally non-significant effect of employment status on awareness was observed by One-way ANOVA analysis ($F = 2.873$, $p = .061$), indication, that full time respondent reported lower fair trade and procurement scores compared to other groups (Table 4.19). However, Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons did not reach statistical significance (Table 4.20).

Table 4.19 One-Way ANOVA Results for Fair Trade & Procurement Awareness Across Employment Groups

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	5.402	2	2.701	2.873	.061
Within Groups	97.789	104	0.940		
Total	103.191	106			

Table 4.20 Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test for Fair Trade & Procurement Awareness Across Employment Groups

Comparison	Mean Difference	p
Student vs Part-time	0.067	.963
Student vs Full-time	0.485	.103
Part-time vs Full-time	0.418	.144

Importance of CSR Dimensions

The Kruskal–Wallis analysis approached statistical significance, with full-time employed respondents assigning the highest importance to Health and Food Safety. $P=.065$ (Table 4.21)

Table 4.21 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Health and Food Safety Importance by Employment Status

Employment Status	N	Mean Rank
Student	26	43.56
Part-time	32	53.03
Full-time	49	60.17

Test Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	5.469
df	2
p-value	.065

Across the other dimensions, employment did not show any statistically significant effect. Environmental Sustainability $p = .790$ (Table A.32), Social Sustainability $p = .221$ (Table A.33), Animal Welfare $p = .611$ (Table A.34), and Fair Trade and Procurement $p = .712$ (Table A.35).

Identity Expression

The one-way ANOVA analysis did not identify statistically significant differences in identity expression across employment groups ($p = .397$, Table A.44)

Sensory Preferences

The one-way ANOVA analysis also showed no statistically significant differences in sensory preferences across employment groups ($p = .572$, Table A.48)

4.4.5. Income Effects

Income effect was found to be significant in the importance score for health and food safety. The respondents with higher income have reported greater importance for this dimensions than others. This pattern is expected and aligns with the finding that older respondents put more importance for the mentioned dimension.

Awareness of CSR Dimensions

The conducted One-way ANOVA analysis has shown no statistically significant effects of income on awareness across the studied sustainability dimensions: Environmental Sustainability $p = .549$ (Table A.7), Social Sustainability $p = .447$ (Table A.8), Health and Food Safety $p = .564$ (Table A.9), Animal Welfare $p = .314$ (Table A.10), and Fair Trade and Procurement $p = .388$ (Table A.11). This finding was somewhat unexpected, as previous research often suggests that consumers with higher income may demonstrate greater interest in added-value product factors, including company sustainability involvement, due to their higher purchasing power compared to lower-income consumers.

Importance of CSR Dimensions

The Kruskal–Wallis analysis have an identified statistically significant effect ($H=6.374$, $p=.041$) of income on reported consumer importance of health and food safety sustainability involvements (Table 4.22). Consumers with increased income tend to prioritise the quality of the produce and generally are more willing to pay premium price. Therefore, this finding is consistent with existing consumer profiling research.

Table 4.22 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Health and Food Safety Importance Across Income Groups

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	6.374
df	2
p-value	.041

No statistically significant effect of income was found within the other sustainability dimensions: Environmental Sustainability $p = .988$ (Table A.24), Social Sustainability $p = .906$ (Table A.25), Animal Welfare $p = .197$ (Table A.26), and Fair Trade and Procurement $p = .107$ (Table A.27).

Identity Expression

The one-way ANOVA analysis did not identify a statistically significant effect of income on identity expression ($p = .129$, Table A.41)

Sensory Appeal

The one-way ANOVA analysis identified a marginal significant effect of income on sensory appeal ($p = .077$, Table A.45). Although slight differences between income groups were observed, the Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons did not reveal statistically significant differences between individual groups (A.46).

4.4.6. Place of residence effect

Awareness of CSR Dimensions

The independent samples t-test analysis identified effect of place of residence on consumer awareness. The only statistically significant difference was within health and food safety dimension ($t = 2.177$, $p = .032$), where consumers living outside of Austria reported higher awareness score than those living in Austria.

Marginally significant effect was also observed in the social sustainability dimension ($t = 1.950$, $p = .054$), where respondents outside Austria again reported slightly higher awareness levels. No statistically significant differences based on place of residence were identified within environmental sustainability, animal welfare, or fair trade and procurement awareness (Table 4.23).

Table 4.23 Independent Samples t-Test Results for Sustainability Awareness Across Residence Groups

Sustainability Dimension	Residence	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Environmental Sustainability	Not Austria	22	3.36	0.88	1.373	.173
	Austria	85	3.10	0.77		
Social Sustainability	Not Austria	22	3.49	1.01	1.950	.054
	Austria	85	3.09	0.81		
Health & Food Safety	Not Austria	22	3.86	0.76	2.177	.032
	Austria	85	3.50	0.69		
Animal Welfare	Not Austria	22	3.82	0.91	1.064	.290
	Austria	85	3.56	1.02		
Fair Trade & Procurement	Not Austria	22	2.94	1.11	0.554	.581
	Austria	85	2.81	0.96		

Importance of CSR Dimensions

Place of residence was not found to have any statistically significant effect on the reported importance across any of the studied sustainability dimensions. Environmental Sustainability $p = .502$ (Table A.36), Social Sustainability $p = .165$ (Table A.37), Health and Food Safety $p = .864$ (Table A.38), and Animal Welfare $p = .466$ (Table A.39).

4.4.7. Patterns summary

Table 4.24 Summary of Significant Demographic Effects

Demographic Variable	Outcome Variable	Sustainability Dimension	p-value	Direction
Age	Awareness	Environmental Sustainability	.053	Younger respondents more aware
Age	Importance	Social Sustainability	.034	Younger respondents assign higher importance
Age	Sensory Appeal	Sensory Appeal	.011	Older respondents report higher sensory appeal
Education	Awareness	Fair Trade & Procurement	.002	Non-university respondents more aware
Education	Importance	Animal Welfare	.026	Non-university respondents assign higher importance
Education	Sensory Appeal	Sensory Appeal	.028	Non-university respondents report higher sensory appeal
Income	Importance	Health & Food Safety	.041	Higher-income respondents assign higher importance
Residence	Awareness	Health & Food Safety	.032	Non-Austrian residents report higher awareness

The results presented in Table 4.24 suggest that perceptions of sustainability activities in the organic food sector are more nuanced and cannot be strictly profiled through traditional demographic models. Overall, the patterns can be summarized as follows: age having the strongest influence among the demographic factors, showing significant or marginal effects across multiple dimensions. Demographic factors such as gender, income, and education show only limited influence. Residence was found to be relevant for awareness, but not for importance, suggesting differences in exposure rather than values.

The Health & Food Safety dimension showed the most consistent and expected effects across multiple variables.

4.5. Hypothesis testing

H1: Consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities of organic food companies differs across sustainability dimensions

To analyse the difference in the awareness scores across the sustainability dimensions, a Friedman's test was conducted. The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4.5 illustrate visible differences between the examined sustainability dimensions. The results of the Friedman test confirmed that the differences between the dimensions were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 66.68$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$).

The mean rank analysis showed that Health & Food Safety (Mean Rank = 3.64) and Animal Welfare (Mean Rank = 3.55) had the highest levels of consumer awareness. In contrast, Fair Trade & Procurement received the lowest mean rank (2.29). Environmental Sustainability and Social Sustainability occupied middle positions within the awareness hierarchy. The finding shows the clear awareness hierarchy across the sustainability dimensions, therefore supporting H1.

H2: Perceived importance of CSR dimensions positively predicts consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities within those dimensions

In order to test this hypothesis, separate multiple regression analyses were conducted for each sustainability dimension while controlling for demographic variables including gender, age, income, education, employment, and residence.

The Animal Welfare dimension supported the proposed hypothesis, with a statistically significant positive relationship identified between perceived importance and awareness ($B = 0.188$, $p = .033$), as presented in Table 4.25. Respondents who assigned greater importance to animal welfare also demonstrated higher awareness of sustainability activities related to animal welfare practices.

However, the overall regression model was not statistically significant ($F(7, 96) = 1.31$, $p = .253$, $R^2 = .087$, $Adjusted R^2 = .02$), indicating that only limited proportion of the variation in awareness can be explained by the model. Therefore, the results must be interpreted with caution.

Table 4.25 Multiple Regression Results Predicting Animal Welfare Awareness from Perceived Importance and Demographic Variables

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.001	0.577	5.204	< .001	–
Gender	0.024	0.213	0.114	.910	1.095
Age	-0.115	0.181	-0.635	.527	1.333
Income	0.286	0.152	1.879	.063	1.782
Education	0.064	0.295	0.217	.829	1.089
Residence	-0.254	0.264	-0.960	.340	1.205
Employment	-0.100	0.176	-0.569	.571	2.150
Animal Welfare Importance	0.188	0.086	2.169	.033	1.102

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.087	.021	1.31	.253

To assess the possible reverse causality between awareness and perceived importance, a regression analysis was also performed in the reverse direction, using Animal Welfare Importance as the dependent variable and Animal Welfare Awareness as the predictor (Table 4.26). The reverse analysis revealed a significant positive relationship ($B = 0.249$, $p = .033$). Furthermore, the reverse model was statistically significant overall ($F(7, 96) = 2.13$, $p = .047$, $R^2 = .135$), whereas the original model was not ($F(7, 96) = 1.31$, $p = .253$, $R^2 = .087$). These findings suggest that awareness may be a stronger predictor of importance than the reverse. However, due to the cross-sectional nature of the data used in this study, casual direction cannot be established.

Table 4.26 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Animal Welfare Importance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.199	0.678	4.721	< .001	–
Gender	0.054	0.245	0.219	.827	1.095
Age	-0.108	0.208	-0.516	.607	1.335
Income	-0.372	0.174	-2.133	.035*	1.764
Education	-0.621	0.335	-1.855	.067	1.052
Residence	-0.156	0.305	-0.511	.610	1.213
Employment	0.396	0.199	1.987	.050*	2.072
Animal Welfare Awareness	0.249	0.115	2.169	.033*	1.044

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.367	.135	.072	2.133	.047

For Environmental Sustainability ($p = .805$) (Table A.49), Social Sustainability ($p = .805$) (Table A.51), Health & Food Safety ($p = .733$) (Table A.53), and Fair Trade & Procurement ($p = .570$) (Table A.55), no statistically significant predictive relationship between perceived importance and awareness was identified. This was confirmed in the reverse direction as well, with no significant relationship identified, when regressing importance on awareness across the dimensions (Table 4.27).

Table 4.27 Comparison of Original and Reverse Regression Analyses Between Awareness and Perceived Importance

Sustainability Dimension	Importance → Awareness (B)	Predictor p	Model p	Awareness → Importance (B)	Predictor p	Model p
Environmental Sustainability	-0.019	.805	.517	-0.033	.805	.633
Social Sustainability	0.020	.797	.453	0.035	.797	.236
Health & Food Safety	0.018	.733	.168	0.066	.733	.205
Animal Welfare	0.188	.033*	.253	0.249	.033*	.047*
Fair Trade & Procurement	0.043	.570	.175	0.078	.570	.462

Overall, the findings provide only partial support for H2. The proposed relationship between importance and awareness was confirmed only within the Animal Welfare dimension, though the overall model awareness was found not to be statistically significant. The reverse regression analysis further indicates

potential bidirectionality. Therefore, the direction of this relationship cannot be fully confirmed with the data used in this research.

H3: Consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities positively predicts organic food purchase frequency, and this relationship is moderated by the perceived importance of CSR dimensions.

To test H3, separate moderated regression analyses were conducted for each sustainability dimension. The analysis test whether awareness predicts organic food purchase frequency, and if this relationship is moderated by the stated importance of the respected sustainability dimension.

The findings show little support for the hypothesis. Animal Welfare awareness was identified as a significant positive predictor of organic food purchase frequency (Table 4.28). Consumers with higher awareness of animal welfare sustainability activities reported higher purchase frequency of organic food products. However, the interaction effect between awareness and perceived importance was not statistically significant, indicating that perceived importance did not moderate the relationship.

Table 4.28 Moderated Regression Results Predicting Purchase Frequency from Animal Welfare Awareness and Importance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	-0.110	0.208	-0.526	.600
Age	0.266	0.178	1.493	.139
Income	-0.019	0.153	-0.124	.902
Education	0.000	0.289	0.001	.999
Residence	0.139	0.263	0.530	.598
Employment	0.127	0.173	0.733	.465
Animal Welfare Awareness	0.248	0.100	2.478	.015
Animal Welfare Importance	-0.084	0.087	-0.964	.338
Awareness × Importance	-0.092	0.083	-1.102	.273
Constant	2.904	0.455	6.381	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.137	.055	1.66	.110

To assess potential reverse causation, the regression analysis was also performed in the reverse direction, testing whether purchase frequency predicts Animal Welfare Awareness (Table 4.29). In the reverse model, purchase frequency was found to be significant positive predictor of awareness (B = 0.235, p = .021). In addition, Animal Welfare Importance was also identified as a significant predictor (B = 0.192, p = .026).

These findings suggest a potential bidirectional relationship between Animal Welfare Awareness and purchase frequency. Therefore, the causal direction of the relationship cannot be established with certainty based on the present cross-sectional data.

Table 4.29 Reverse Regression Results Predicting Animal Welfare Awareness from Purchase Frequency and Animal Welfare Importance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	0.046	0.209	0.221	.826
Age	-0.174	0.179	-0.971	.334
Income	0.250	0.153	1.636	.105
Education	0.083	0.293	0.282	.778
Residence	-0.253	0.259	-0.974	.333
Employment	-0.113	0.174	-0.651	.517
Purchase Frequency	0.235	0.100	2.354	.021
Animal Welfare Importance	0.192	0.085	2.268	.026
Purchase Frequency × Importance	-0.046	0.086	-0.527	.599
Constant	3.737	0.459	8.135	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.142	.060	1.73	.092

The moderated regression analysis for Social Sustainability produced unexpected results (Table 4.30). Social Sustainability awareness was shown to have a statistically significant negative effect on organic food purchase frequency.

This finding is counterintuitive and requires deeper interpretation. One possible explanation may be a more critical approach within the decision-making process. Greater awareness can contribute to increased scepticism toward existing sustainability practices within the social dimension. Another possible explanation is connected to the demographic profile identified previously, as respondents with higher social sustainability awareness were generally younger consumers. Therefore, they may have more limited financial resources to afford the premium prices often associated with organic food products.

Table 4.30 Moderated Regression Results Predicting Purchase Frequency from Social Sustainability Awareness and Importance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	-0.134	0.209	-0.639	.524
Age	0.184	0.181	1.018	.312
Income	0.085	0.148	0.577	.565
Education	-0.022	0.290	-0.076	.940
Residence	-0.003	0.263	-0.012	.991
Employment	0.101	0.174	0.581	.563
Social Sustainability Awareness	-0.236	0.114	-2.075	.041
Social Sustainability Importance	-0.086	0.085	-1.007	.316
Awareness × Importance	0.134	0.103	1.304	.196
Constant	3.020	0.456	6.626	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.100	.014	1.16	.331

To assess potential reverse causation, the regression analysis was also performed in the reverse direction, testing whether purchase frequency predicts Social Sustainability Awareness (Table 4.31). The reverse analysis revealed that purchase frequency was a borderline significant predictor of Social Sustainability Awareness ($B = -0.177$, $p = .051$), mirroring the negative direction that was found in the

original model. Although the effect was found to be close to statistical significance the consistency of the relationship across both models suggests that the association may not operate in only one direction. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution and may reflect a common underlying dynamic between purchase frequency and Social Sustainability Awareness.

Table 4.31 Reverse Moderated Regression Results Predicting Social Sustainability Awareness from Purchase Frequency and Social Sustainability Importance

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	0.023	0.187	0.121	.904
Age	-0.094	0.162	-0.579	.564
Income	0.065	0.131	0.497	.620
Education	-0.318	0.256	-1.242	.218
Residence	-0.293	0.231	-1.268	.208
Employment	-0.055	0.152	-0.362	.718
Purchase Frequency	-0.177	0.089	-1.976	.051
Social Importance	0.009	0.077	0.112	.911
Purchase Frequency × Importance	0.069	0.074	0.928	.356
Constant	3.817	0.405	9.431	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.110	.025	1.29	.253

The analysis of the remaining sustainability dimensions did not reveal any statistically significant relationships: Environmental Sustainability (Table A.57): No significant main effect ($B = 0.077$, $p = .539$) or interaction ($p = .356$) Health and Food Safety (Table A.59): No significant main effect ($B = 0.157$, $p = .271$) or interaction ($p = .514$) Fair Trade and Procurement (Table A.61): No significant main effect ($B = -0.108$, $p = .306$) or interaction ($p = .752$).

The reverse causation analyses were also performed for these dimensions. Consistent with the original model, the reverse analyses did not reveal any statistically significant result (Table 4.32).

Table 4.32 Comparison of Original and Reverse Moderation Models

CSR Dimension	Original Model: Awareness → Purchase Frequency (R ² , p)	B	p	Reverse Model: Purchase Frequency → Awareness (R ² , p)	B	p
Environmental Sustainability	R ² = .103, p = .301	0.077	.539	R ² = .076, p = .562	0.057	.499
Health & Food Safety	R ² = .102, p = .317	0.157	.271	R ² = .119, p = .197	0.085	.252
Fair Trade & Procurement	R ² = .101, p = .321	-0.108	.306	R ² = .118, p = .203	-0.110	.275

Overall, Hypothesis 3 received only limited support. While Animal Welfare awareness demonstrated a significant positive effect on organic food purchase frequency, the hypothesised moderating role of perceived importance was not confirmed (Table 4.28), and the overall model did not reach statistical significance. Moreover, the reverse analysis revealed a significant relationship. Indicating a possible reverse causation that cannot be ruled out (Table 4.29).

The hypothesised moderating effect of perceived importance was also not supported in the remaining sustainability dimensions, as none of the interaction terms reached statistical significance. In addition, Social Sustainability Awareness showed an unexpected negative relationship with purchase frequency. The reverse analysis further revealed a marginally significant effect in the opposite direction, suggesting a potential bidirectional relationship.

Taken together, these findings, along with the absence of significant effects within Environmental Sustainability, Health & Food Safety, and Fair Trade & Procurement, suggest that the relationship between sustainability awareness and organic food purchase behaviour is more complex than originally hypothesised and differs substantially across sustainability dimensions.

Before running the combined regression model, Spearman correlations were calculated within the studied dimensions (Table A.73). Despite the fact that some of the dimensions showed significant positive correlations (r ranging from .183 to .620) none exceeded the commonly used threshold for severe multicollinearity ($r > .70$).

To examine the combined influence of CSR awareness dimensions on organic food purchase frequency, this research performed a multiple linear regression analysis. Animal Welfare Awareness was found to be a significant positive predictor of purchase frequency, indicating that respondents with higher awareness of animal welfare activities reported more frequent organic food purchases. In contrast, Social Sustainability Awareness was found to have a significant negative relationship with purchase frequency.

Environmental Sustainability Awareness, Health & Food Safety Awareness, and Fair Trade & Procurement Awareness did not show significant effects within the combined model. Due to the fact that Social Sustainability Awareness and Animal Welfare Awareness remained significant when all awareness dimensions were considered simultaneously, these dimensions can be regarded as the strongest awareness-related predictors of organic food purchase frequency identified in this study. The overall model was statistically significant ($F(5, 101) = 3.775$, $p = .004$, $R^2 = .157$), explaining 15.7% of the variance in purchase frequency.

Table 4.33 Combined Multiple Regression Model Predicting Organic Food Purchase Frequency from CSR Awareness Dimensions

Predictor	B	β	p
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	0.007	0.005	.955
Social Sustainability Awareness	-0.410	-0.362	.005
Health & Food Safety Awareness	0.238	0.173	.187
Animal Welfare Awareness	0.240	0.244	.033
Fair Trade & Procurement Awareness	-0.050	-0.050	.664

F(df1, df2)	p	R ²	Adjusted R ²
F(5, 101) = 3.775	.004	.157	.115

In order to ensure the correct interpretation of the regression results, multicollinearity was assessed using tolerance and VIF values (Table 4.34). All VIF values remained well below the commonly accepted threshold of 5.0, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern. Therefore, all awareness dimensions were retained in the combined regression model.

Table 4.34 Collinearity Diagnostics for the Combined Regression Model

Predictor	Tolerance	VIF
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	.896	1.116
Social Sustainability Awareness	.530	1.885
Health & Food Safety Awareness	.490	2.040
Animal Welfare Awareness	.656	1.524
Fair Trade & Procurement Awareness	.621	1.611

H4: Higher levels of Identity Expression are positively associated with higher consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities within all dimensions

Hypothesis 4, suggesting that higher levels of Identity Expression are positively associated with higher consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities across all dimensions, was only partially supported (Table 4.35). The relationship was tested through a series of multiple linear regression analyses. As shown in the regression results, Identity Expression demonstrated only a marginal positive association within the Health and Food Safety dimension. No statistically significant effects were found within the remaining sustainability dimensions.

Table 4.35 Multiple Linear Regression Results Predicting Health and Food Safety Awareness from Identity Expression

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.091	.061	0.607	.545
Age	-0.049	-.043	-0.386	.700
Income	0.062	.074	0.588	.558
Education	-0.289	-.138	-1.394	.166
Residence	-0.479	-.269	-2.572	.012
Employment	0.097	.109	0.789	.432
Identity Expression	0.146	.169	1.722	.088

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(7, 96)	p
.126	.062	1.98	.066

Environmental Sustainability Awareness did not demonstrate any statistically significant association with Identity Expression ($\beta = -.016$, $p = .872$) (Table A.56). Similarly, Social Sustainability showed only a weak and non-significant relationship ($\beta = .038$, $p = .706$) (Table A.57). Animal Welfare demonstrated a moderate but statistically non-significant association with Identity Expression ($\beta = .116$, $p = .256$) (Table A.58).

Despite the marginal positive association identified within the Health & Food Safety dimension, the absence of significant relationships across the remaining sustainability dimensions indicates that Identity Expression is not a consistent predictor of sustainability awareness. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 received only very limited support.

H5: Consumers who perceive organic food as sensorially superior show greater awareness of quality-related sustainability activities (animal welfare, health & food safety) than process-related activities (environmental, social, fair trade)

Hypothesis 5 was analysed through separate regression analyses for each sustainability dimension. The findings provide partial support for the hypothesis. As shown in Table 4.36, sensory preferences demonstrated a significant positive association with Animal Welfare awareness ($\beta = .216$, $p = .048$).

This finding indicates that consumers who perceive organic food as superior in terms of sensory quality compared to non-organic alternatives are more aware of animal welfare sustainability practices.

The identified relationship may suggest that consumers connect sensory product quality with production conditions and ethical farming practices. Animal welfare sustainability activities are often associated with healthier livestock conditions, more natural production methods, and higher perceived product quality, which may strengthen awareness among consumers who value sensory product attributes.

Table 4.36 Regression Results Predicting Animal Welfare Awareness from Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	-0.004	-.002	-0.018	.986
Age	-0.252	-.157	-1.334	.185
Income	0.177	.152	1.164	.247
Education	0.115	.040	0.379	.706
Residence	-0.288	-.117	-1.089	.279
Employment	-0.006	-.005	-0.034	.973
Sensory Preferences	0.217	.216	2.001	.048

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(7, 96)	p
.081	.014	1.21	.306

A positive association was also found within the Health & Food Safety dimension (Table 4.37), although the effect was weaker and only marginally significant ($\beta = .176$, $p = .098$). In contrast, no significant associations were found for the more process-related sustainability dimensions, including Environmental Sustainability ($\beta = .091$, $p = .404$), Social Sustainability ($\beta = -.051$, $p = .639$), and Fair Trade & Procurement ($\beta = -.118$, $p = .269$).

Overall, the findings suggest that consumers who perceive organic food as sensorially superior tend to be more aware of sustainability activities that are commonly associated with product quality and direct consumer experience. In contrast, sensory preferences do not appear to increase awareness of sustainability activities that are less visible to consumers and occur more in the background of the supply chain. Therefore, the hypothesis is partially supported.

Table 4.37 Regression Results Predicting Health & Food Safety Awareness from Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.085	.056	0.563	.575
Age	-0.099	-.085	-0.740	.461
Income	0.042	.050	0.393	.695
Education	-0.233	-.111	-1.091	.278
Residence	-0.480	-.269	-2.573	.012*
Employment	0.128	.144	1.047	.298
Sensory Preferences	0.128	.176	1.671	.098

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(7, 96)	p
.124	.060	1.95	.070

Following the individual analyses for H4 and H5, a combined regression model was constructed to examine whether Identity Expression and Sensory Preferences jointly predict CSR awareness across the five sustainability dimensions.

Additionally, a series of multiple regression analyses were conducted using both Identity Expression and Sensory Preferences while controlling for demographic variables (Table 4.38).

None of the models reached statistical significance; however, Health and Food Safety Awareness approached significance. Neither Identity Expression nor Sensory Preferences were shown to be significant predictors in the combined models. Full regression coefficients are reported in Tables A.64–A.68 in the Appendix A.

Table 4.38 Combined Effects of Identity Expression and Sensory Preferences on CSR Awareness Dimensions

Awareness Dimension	Identity β	p	Sensory β	p	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	Model p
Environmental Sustainability	-0.107	.403	0.161	.243	.074	-.004	0.95	.480
Social Sustainability	0.106	.408	-0.120	.383	.075	-.003	0.96	.473
Health & Food Safety	0.110	.376	0.105	.432	.132	.058	1.80	.087
Animal Welfare	-0.009	.947	0.222	.107	.081	.004	1.05	.408
Fair Trade & Procurement	-0.014	.912	-0.109	.419	.107	.032	1.43	.195

These results suggest that Identity Expression and Sensory Preferences do not have a meaningful combined effect on CSR awareness. Although H4 and H5 identified some individual relationships, these effects were not strong enough to improve the combined model.

5. Discussion

The study focuses on analysing the perception of sustainability and CSR-related activities from the consumer perspective within the organic food sector by exploring consumer awareness and examining it through the lens of reported importance, identity expression and sensory appeal. The key focus of the study is understanding general patterns of consumer knowledge in term of CSR initiatives in the organic food sector, as well as analysing consumer expectations regarding the value-added attributes associated with organic food products. The research is conducted in the Austrian market, which represents one of the key organic food sectors in the Europe and continuous growth both from in the farming as well as in the retail sectors.

For the interpretation of the results, it is important to highlight that the respondents were asked to evaluate the sustainability activities of one organic food company (that is not defined in the research and is a choice of the consumer) that they were familiar with. Therefore, the awareness reported in the study may reflect how transparently these companies communicate their sustainability activities, rather than consumers' general awareness of sustainability issues in the organic food sector. In this way, respondents who selected companies with more visible CSR communication may have reported higher awareness levels across all dimensions, regardless of their personal internal priorities. This limitation also extends to the fact that the companies were not recorded; therefore, it was not possible to control for differences in CSR communication and informational strategies of the company. Further research should address this limitation by including the selected company as a separate variable.

Before discussing the hypotheses, it is worth to mention the observed demographic patterns established with this research, as they provide important context for interpreting the results. To further explore and establish the observed patterns, demographic differences were examined in relation to the key study variables: CSR awareness, perceived importance of CSR, Identity Expression, and Sensory Preferences.

Gender showed no significant differences across any of the variables. Age was found to be one of the most important demographic factors. Older respondents reported significantly higher Sensory Preference scores, while younger respondents showed marginally higher Environmental Sustainability Awareness and assigned greater importance to Social Sustainability. Education was also associated with several significant differences. For example, respondents without a university degree reported higher awareness of Fair Trade & Procurement, higher importance of Animal Welfare, and higher Sensory Preference scores. When it comes to residence, the only significant association was found for Health & Food Safety Awareness, with respondents living outside Austria reporting higher awareness levels.

Overall, demographic patterns were not consistent with previous studies, where clear patterns could be identified (Lerro et al., 2018; Furman et al., 2019), making demographic-based consumer profiling less applicable within the sample used in this research. This suggests that consumer behaviour within the sample of this research goes beyond simple demographic categorisation and is likely influenced by more complex psychological or value-based factors. The expectation from previous research that younger consumers are generally more environmentally conscious (Alam et al., 2025) was not confirmed either through awareness or perceived importance. This indicates that within the present sample, environmental awareness appears to be relatively equally distributed across age groups, rather than concentrated among younger consumers only.

H1 proposes that consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities differs across sustainability dimensions. This hypothesis was supported and is consistent with existing literature, revealing a hierarchy in the visibility of CSR activities within the organic food sector (Lerro, 2018., Alam et al, 2025). However, the patterns within the study sample differ slightly from previous studies. The highest overall awareness was determined for two dimensions: Animal Welfare and Health & Food Safety. While the strong awareness of Health & Food Safety is supported by various studies (Lerro, 2018; Grunert et al., 2014; Jung & Ha-Brookshire, 2017; Rousseau & Vranken, 2013). Animal Welfare

appears to be a more market-specific attribute. From the previous research, this dimension got rated so highly in German food market (Hasanazade et al., 2018) which might suggest similarities between Austrian and German markets. Moreover, it should be noted that the higher awareness levels observed for Animal Welfare and Health and Food Safety may also partly reflect the sustainability points that the companies choose to communicate, rather than overall awareness of consumers for these sustainability dimensions.

The dimensions of Social Sustainability and Fair Trade & Procurement received the lowest awareness scores, which is consistent with existing studies and further confirms that process-related CSR activities tend to have lower consumer visibility (Lerro et al., 2018; Grunert et al., 2014; Janker & Mann, 2020; Massey et al., 2018). Environmental Sustainability was positioned in the middle of the awareness hierarchy. This result was slightly lower than expected based on previous research (Janker & Mann, 2020; Alam et al., 2025). However, the findings suggest that Animal Welfare should be analysed as a separate dimension, as it overtook Environmental Sustainability in consumer awareness within the sample of this research. This pattern may also be partly explained by the specific Austrian context. The higher awareness of Animal Welfare issues among consumers may be influenced by Austria's strong tradition of regional farming and livestock production (Hasanzade et al., 2018). As a result, consumers may be more frequently exposed to animal welfare topics, which could contribute to higher awareness levels of this dimension.

At the same time, the stronger visibility of Health & Food Safety compared to Environmental Sustainability is in line with previous literature. (Hansen et al., 2018; Lerro et al., 2018). The findings suggest that while some sustainability awareness tendencies appear to be cross-market and consistent internationally, other patterns remain highly market-specific. Similarly, demographic consumer profiling may be strongly dependent on the specific market context.

H2 proposed that the perceived importance of sustainability dimensions positively predicts awareness of those dimensions. The hypothesis received only limited support, as the relationship was confirmed only for Animal Welfare. It is important to note that the original regression model was not statistically significant. One possible explanation is that consumers may be more aware of certain sustainability activities simply because they were communicated more prominently by the company they selected. Furthermore, the reverse testing of the model showed a stronger overall fit, suggesting that awareness may influence perceived importance rather than the other way around. However, due to the cross-sectional nature of the data, the direction of the relationship cannot be determined with certainty. This finding may suggest an important practical implication: if awareness drives importance rather than the reverse, the effective CSR communication can not only increase awareness of sustainability dimension but also shape the importance for the consumers.

H3 proposed that consumer awareness of sustainability activities positively predicts organic food purchase frequency and that this relationship is moderated by the perceived importance of the respective CSR dimension. The findings provided only very limited support for this hypothesis. Animal Welfare Awareness was found to be a significant predictor of purchase frequency, indicating that consumers with higher awareness of Animal Welfare CSR activities tend to purchase organic food more often. However, the overall model did not reach statistical significance. At the same time, the reverse analysis revealed a significant effect in the opposite direction, suggesting that purchase frequency may influence awareness. The direction of this relationship therefore cannot be determined with certainty.

An unexpected negative relationship was identified between Social Sustainability Awareness and purchase frequency. Interestingly, this was the only sustainability dimension showing a negative effect. This finding should, however, be interpreted with caution. While the original model suggests that higher Social Sustainability Awareness is associated with lower organic food purchase frequency, the reversed analysis showed a borderline significant effect in the opposite direction, indicating a possible bidirectional relationship.

One possible explanation is that consumers who purchase organic food more frequently may be more engaged with sustainability topics and therefore develop a more critical view of social sustainability practices. In addition, respondents with higher Social Sustainability Awareness tended to be younger, which may be linked to lower purchase frequencies due to more limited financial resources and the relatively high price premiums associated with organic food products (Aertsens et al., 2009). As the study is based on cross-sectional data, no causal relationship can be established, and the observed effect may reflect a combination of awareness, attitudes, and purchasing abilities. The finding that younger respondents reported higher awareness of Social Sustainability may indicate the presence of consumer clusters identified in previous studies, such as more pro-social consumer groups (Lerro, 2018).

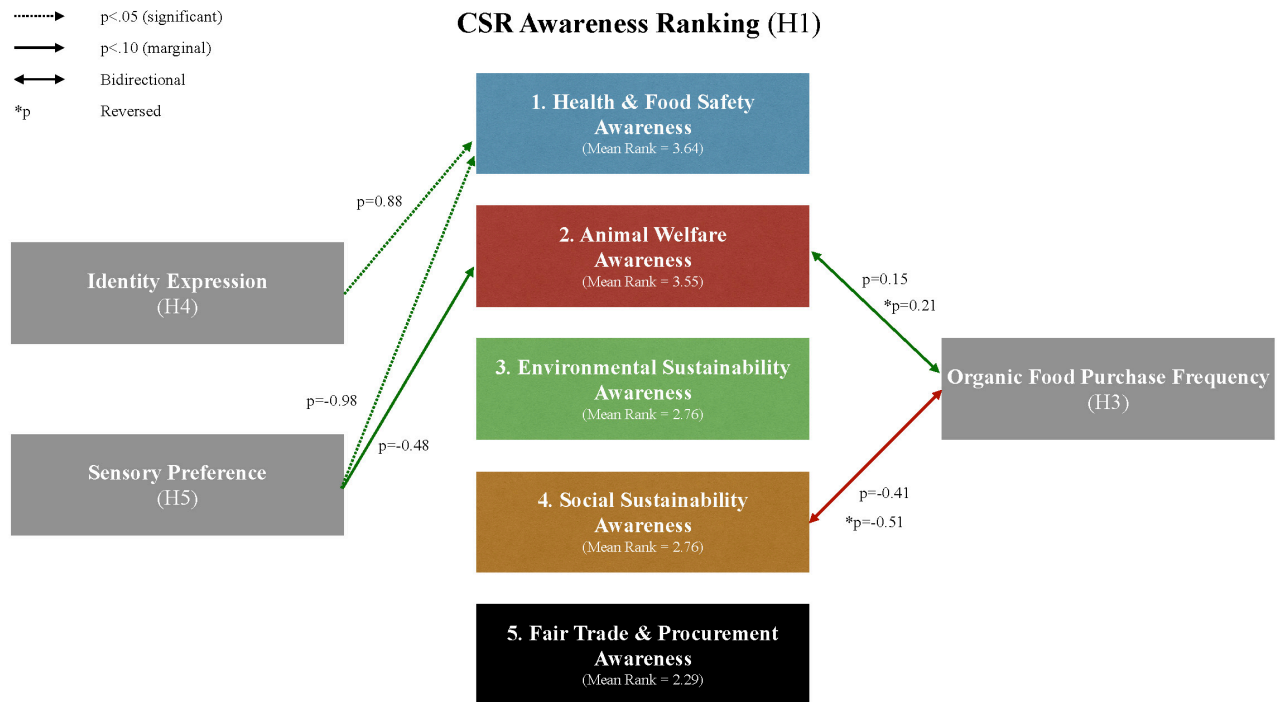
The hypothesised moderating role of perceived importance was not supported in any of the sustainability dimensions. Taken together, these findings suggest that the relationship between CSR awareness and organic food purchase behaviour is more complex than originally hypothesised and may be bidirectional in nature.

H4 proposes that higher level of Identity Expression is positively associated with higher consumer awareness of corporate sustainability activities across all dimensions. The hypothesis tested whether the desire for social self-expression contributes to higher CSR awareness, meaning that consumer who wish to express themselves socially or present a certain lifestyle may influence the awareness level of the studied sustainability dimensions. Overall, the findings did not provide strong support for the hypothesis. Only the Health & Food Safety dimension showed a marginally positive association with awareness, which is consistent with existing research (Hwang et al., 2016). However, no significant relationships were identified within the other dimensions. Therefore, identity expression does not appear to strongly influence consumer awareness of sustainability activities in the organic food sector outside of health and food safety.

H5 proposed that consumers who perceive organic food as sensorially superior show greater awareness of quality-related sustainability activities (Animal Welfare and Health & Food Safety) than process-related activities (Environmental Sustainability, Social Sustainability, and Fair Trade & Procurement). The hypothesis was partially supported. The findings indicate that consumers who perceive organic food as sensorially superior tend to report higher awareness of direct product-related sustainability activities from the consumer perspective. This aligns with existing literature suggesting that consumers associate organic food with superior sensory attributes such as freshness, naturalness, and product quality, which are interpreted as signals of healthier and safer products (Massey et al, 2018; Rana & Paul, 2020; Martini et al., 2023). The findings therefore further support the idea that Health & Food Safety and Animal Welfare are sustainability dimensions that consumers perceive as being directly connected to product quality and personal consumption experience.

Figure 1 presents a summary of the key findings of this research.

Figure 5 Key Findings Related to Consumer Awareness for CSR Activities in the Organic Food Sector



6. Conclusion

The study has focused on providing insights into consumer perception of different CSR activities through the analytical framework of five sustainability dimensions: environmental, social, health and food safety, animal welfare, and fair trade and procurement. While existing literature has continuously established the importance of CSR for consumers in the organic food sector, most previous research has applied narrow analytical framework, focusing mostly on health and environmental attributes of organic food that can contribute to the purchase behaviour (Aertsens et al., 2009; Rana & Paul, 2020). The studies that include fuller spectrum of CSR activities are limited and mostly market specific (Lerro et al., 2018; Alam et al. 2025). Therefore, this research addresses the gap by providing nuanced awareness analysis for the Austrian market and increases the understanding of underrepresented sustainability aspects from the consumer point of view.

Contrary to initial expectation, the analysis did not confirm the existence of distinct demographic clusters, indication that consumer profiling is more complex in the Austrian market. This finding can be explained by the deep cultural importance of sustainability values in Austrian society, where environmentally conscious behaviour does not commit to the expected demographic boundaries such as age and gender, and instead is distributed across diverse consumer segment.

Despite predictions, self-stated importance does not have a strong influence on awareness, showing that internal values are not the sole driver of the educational behaviour of consumers. Through the research, it was determined that consumers who think that organic food tastes, smells, and looks better than non-organic alternatives are more aware of the direct product-related sustainability dimensions. This suggests that awareness is driven not by importance, but rather by internal heuristic values. Meanwhile, Self-Identity was not found to be correlated with awareness.

The research question asks, how consumer awareness of corporate social sustainability difference across the sustainability dimensions. The findings suggest that awareness is hierarchical and is not evenly distributed across the dimensions. Health & Food Safety and Animal Welfare were found to have the highest awareness among the respondents of the sample, while Social Sustainability as well as Fair Trade & Procurement were recognised relatively low in the awareness score. Despite being perceived as highly important, Environmental Sustainability only reached medium positioning in the awareness hierarchy.

Overall, this research demonstrates that consumer awareness of CSR activities within the organic food sector is multidimensional and selective. Consumers appear to be significantly more aware of sustainability dimensions that are visible, product-related, and directly connected to perceived quality, while process-related sustainability activities remain less recognised despite their importance within the supply chain (Grunert et al., 2014; Massey et al., 2018).

Contribution to Academic Research

The findings of this research contribute to the existing literature on consumer perception of sustainability initiatives in the organic food sector. While previous studies have mainly focused on motivations linked to personal value systems and are mostly conducted in the context of environmental and health-related dimensions (Aertsens et al., 2009; Furman et al., 2019; Rana & Paul, 2020), this research is rooted in the managerial framework of CSR activities and analyses the perception of

sustainability not only as an intrinsic motivation, but also from the point of view of visibility and consumer awareness.

The study provides additional insights into how sustainability awareness functions in a mature organic environment, since it focuses on the well-developed organic market of Austria (Darnhofer et al., 2019). Due to the high integration of organic food within Austrian consumer culture (Darnhofer et al., 2019; AMA Agrarmarkt Austria, 2021), the research contributes to understanding how consumers perceive sustainability activities in a market where organic food consumption is already highly normalized.

Moreover, the research contributes methodologically by combining awareness, perceived importance, demographic analysis, and behavioural variables within one integrated framework. The findings provide a foundation for future research exploring how sustainability awareness influences purchasing behaviour, how different sustainability dimensions are perceived by consumers, and how visibility of sustainability activities can shape consumer decision-making in the organic food sector.

Managerial Implementations

The findings of the research provide several managerial implications that can be applied to optimise the companies' communication and CSR strategies within the organic food sector.

First of all, the results can contribute to the development of communication strategies related to brand positioning and CSR communication. Understanding consumer perception allows companies to identify which sustainability dimensions are the most visible and perceived as important by consumers and therefore streamline marketing campaigns and communication activities towards these aspects. The findings show that health & food safety and animal welfare are the most recognised dimensions, suggesting that these activities are currently the most visible from the consumer perspective.

At the same time, dimensions with lower awareness, such as social sustainability and fair trade & procurement, provide an opportunity for companies to educate consumers and differentiate themselves from competitors. Since the organic food sector is highly competitive and continuously growing (Darnhofer et al., 2019), stronger communication of less visible sustainability activities may help companies create additional value and strengthen brand positioning within the market.

Another applicable insight emerged while comparing the awareness hierarchy and the importance rankings. Environmental Sustainability was ranked as the most important sustainability dimension, despite showing only moderate awareness levels. Animal Welfare demonstrated relatively high awareness while being assigned only moderate importance. In contrast, Health and Food Safety ranked highly in both awareness and importance. Social Sustainability and Fair Trade and Procurement received relatively low rankings in terms of both awareness and importance. This information can be used by companies to analyse existing importance-awareness gaps within their consumers and address them with the suitable marketing strategies.

However, it is important to note that the two concepts were measured using different approaches and therefore represent different types of data. As a result, the comparison provided is purely descriptive in nature.

Moreover, the findings highlight the importance of consumer education. The results suggest that consumers are more aware of sustainability activities that are directly visible or closely connected to the product itself, while broader supply chain and social responsibility activities remain less recognised. Therefore, companies may benefit from implementing clearer and more transparent communication strategies explaining their sustainability practices and long-term commitments.

Limitations

Several limitations of this research need to be acknowledged.

First, unequal frequencies within respondent groups created disproportionality across some demographic categories. Despite the grouping and exclusion of categories with very small numbers of respondents, certain groups remained underrepresented, and the findings should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Second, the sample size of 107 respondents remains relatively small and may limit the generalisability of the findings. Some demographic groups were particularly skewed, which may have reduced the ability to identify stronger demographic patterns.

Third, company selection bias needs to be addressed. The organic food companies selected by respondents to evaluate the awareness of their CSR activities were not recorded during the survey process. This could have resulted in respondents who had larger companies with more extensive sustainability marketing communications as a reference reporting overall higher awareness across all dimensions than those who were thinking of smaller companies. This may have caused uncontrolled variance that cannot be separated from genuine differences in consumer awareness.

Moreover, two awareness scales demonstrated Cronbach's alpha values slightly below the commonly recommended threshold of .70. Although the reliability scores remained acceptable for exploratory research, stronger internal consistency would improve future measurements.

Finally, perceived importance was measured using a single ranking question, which limited the depth of analysis. Future research could benefit from using more extensive multi-item scales in order to capture consumer value orientation and sustainability importance more comprehensively.

Further Research

Future research should investigate the studied effects within a larger sample in order to improve the generalisability of the findings. It would also be valuable to conduct a more detailed analysis focusing on one leading organic food producer, allowing a deeper understanding of consumer perception in relation to specific company sustainability activities and communication strategies.

It would be valuable to include specific organic food producers as a part of the survey, which would allow a comparative analysis between differently sized companies, as well as making it possible to link reported awareness levels to the existing marketing strategies of these companies, which would help to further confirm the link between communication and perception of CSR.

Moreover, future research could include qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups in order to provide more in-depth insights into consumer perceptions, motivations, and interpretations of sustainability activities within the organic food sector.

Additional studies conducted across different markets and countries would also be beneficial to compare how cultural and market differences influence the awareness as well as the importance of CSR activities from the consumer perspective. Since previous studies have shown differences in values and attitudes towards CSR, this could be beneficial in providing insights for crafting specific communication strategies for each market.

Finally, in future studies, cluster analysis can be applied in order to establish consumer segments based on their awareness and importance across CSR dimensions and to determine the existence of distinct consumer groups.

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A. Appendix. Detailed Statistical Analysis Results

1.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table A.1 Demographical Sample Characteristics

Variable Name	Description	Frequency (%)
Age	Under 18	0
	18-24	15,89%
	25-34	61,68%
	35-44	17,76%
	45-54	4,67%
	55-64	0%
	65+	0%
Gender	Male	35,51%
	Female	64,49%
	Divers	0%
Education Level	Compulsory school (Pflichtschule)	0%
	Secondary school (Matura)	12,15%
	Apprenticeship (Lehre)	0,93%
	University education (Universität/FH)	86,92%
	Other	0%
Occupation	Employed full-time	42,99%
	Employed part-time	28,04%
	Unemployed	2,80%
	Student/In Education	23,36%
	In Pension	0,93%
	Prefer not to answer	0%
	Other	0%
Gross Annual Income	Under 12,500€	16,82%
	12,500€ - 24,999€	20,56%
	25,000€ - 49,999€	27,10%
	50,000€ - 74,999€	27,10%
	75,000€ - 99,999€	3,74%
	Over 100,000€	1,87%
	Prefer not to answer	2,80%
Residence	Vienna	52,21%
	Burgenland	0,93%
	Lower Austria	10,28%
	Upper Austria	6,54%
	Salzburg	0,93%
	Carinthia	0,93%
	Tyrol	3,74%
	Vorarlberg	0,93%
	Styria	0,93%
	Residence outside of Austria	20,56%

1.1.1. Awareness Analysis

Table A.2 Independent Samples t-test Results for Awareness of Sustainability Dimensions by Gender

Dimension	Male Mean	Female Mean	t	p	Cohen's d
Environmental Awareness	3.16	3.15	0.02	.982	0.01
Social Awareness	3.14	3.18	-0.24	.808	-0.05
Health Awareness	3.55	3.58	-0.22	.824	-0.05
Animal Welfare Awareness	3.63	3.61	0.11	.910	0.02
Fair Trade Awareness	2.82	2.85	-0.15	.884	-0.03

Table A.3 One-Way ANOVA Results for Social Sustainability Awareness by Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	3.283	2	1.642	2.235	.112
Within Groups	76.380	104	0.734		
Total	79.663	106			

Table A.4 One-Way ANOVA Results for Health and Food Safety Awareness by Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.362	2	0.181	0.350	.705
Within Groups	53.804	104	0.517		
Total	54.167	106			

Table A.5 One-Way ANOVA Results for Animal Welfare Awareness by Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.434	2	0.717	0.718	.490
Within Groups	103.856	104	0.999		
Total	105.290	106			

Table A.6 One-Way ANOVA Results for Fair Trade Awareness by Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	4.258	2	2.129	2.238	.112
Within Groups	98.933	104	0.951		
Total	103.191	106			

Table A.7 One-Way ANOVA Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.785	2	0.393	0.603	.549
Within Groups	65.781	101	0.651		
Total	66.566	103			

Table A.8 One-Way ANOVA Results for Social Sustainability Awareness by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.236	2	0.618	0.811	.447
Within Groups	76.995	101	0.762		
Total	78.231	103			

Table A.9 One-Way ANOVA Results for Health and Food Safety Awareness by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.602	2	0.301	0.576	.564
Within Groups	52.720	101	0.522		
Total	53.322	103			

Table A.10 One-Way ANOVA Results for Animal Welfare Awareness by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	2.314	2	1.157	1.171	.314
Within Groups	99.801	101	0.988		
Total	102.115	103			

Table A.11 One-Way ANOVA Results for Fair Trade Awareness by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.827	2	0.914	0.955	.388
Within Groups	96.617	101	0.957		
Total	98.444	103			

Table A.12 One-Way ANOVA Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness Across Employment Groups

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.944	2	0.972	1.540	.219
Within Groups	65.637	104	0.631		
Total	67.581	106			

Table A.13 One-Way ANOVA Results for Social Sustainability Awareness Across Employment Groups

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.824	2	0.912	1.218	.300
Within Groups	77.839	104	0.748		
Total	79.663	106			

Table A.14 One-Way ANOVA Results for Health & Food Safety Awareness Across Employment Groups

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.016	2	0.008	0.016	.984
Within Groups	54.150	104	0.521		
Total	54.167	106			

Table A.15 One-Way ANOVA Results for Animal Welfare Awareness Across Employment Groups

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.080	2	0.040	0.040	.961
Within Groups	105.209	104	1.012		
Total	105.290	106			

1.1.1.Importance Analysis

Table A.16 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Environmental Sustainability Importance by Gender

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	1096.000
Wilcoxon W	1837.000
Z	-1.461
p-value	.144
N	107

Table A.17 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Social Sustainability Importance by Gender

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	1207.000
Wilcoxon W	3622.000
Z	-0.701
p-value	.484
N	107

Table A.18 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Health and Food Safety Importance by Gender

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	1249.000
Wilcoxon W	3664.000
Z	-0.426
p-value	.670
N	107

Table A.19 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Animal Welfare Importance by Gender

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	1276.500
Wilcoxon W	2017.500
Z	-0.232
p-value	.817
N	107

Table A.20 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Fair Trade Importance by Gender

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	1176.000
Wilcoxon W	3591.000
Z	-0.935
p-value	.350
N	107

Table A.21 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Environmental Sustainability Importance by Age

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	1.947
df	2
p-value	.378
N	107

Table A.22 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Animal Welfare Importance by Age

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	1.222
df	2
p-value	.543

Table A.23 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Fair Trade and Procurement Importance by Age

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	2.446
df	2
p-value	.294
N	107

Table A.24 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Environmental Sustainability Importance by Income

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	0.024
df	2
p-value	.988
N	107

Table A.25 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Social Sustainability Importance by Income

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	0.198
df	2
p-value	.906
N	107

Table A.26 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Animal Welfare Importance by Income

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	2.203
df	2
p-value	.332
N	107

Table A.27 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Fair Trade Importance by Income

Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	2.783
df	2
p-value	.249
N	107

Table A.28 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Environmental Sustainability Importance by Education

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	520.000
Wilcoxon W	625.000
Z	-1.263
p-value	.207
N	107

Table A.29 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Social Sustainability Importance by Education

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	535.000
Wilcoxon W	640.000
Z	-1.109
p-value	.267
N	107

Table A.30 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Health and Food Safety Importance by Education

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	623.500
Wilcoxon W	4994.500
Z	-0.268
p-value	.789
N	107

Table A.31 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Fair Trade Importance by Education

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	589.000
Wilcoxon W	694.000
Z	-0.609

p-value	.542
N	107

Table A.32 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Environmental Sustainability Importance by Employment Status

Employment Status	N	Mean Rank
Student	26	56.17
Part-time	32	55.50
Full-time	49	51.87

Test Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	0.472
df	2
p-value	.790

Table A.33 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Social Sustainability Importance by Employment Status

Employment Status	N	Mean Rank
Student	26	62.65
Part-time	32	49.56
Full-time	49	52.31

Test Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	3.023
df	2
p-value	.221

Table A.34 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Animal Welfare Importance by Employment Status

Employment Status	N	Mean Rank
Student	26	55.60
Part-time	32	49.59
Full-time	49	56.03

Test Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	0.986
df	2
p-value	.611

Table A.35 Kruskal–Wallis Test Results for Fair Trade and Procurement Importance by Employment Status

Employment Status	N	Mean Rank
Student	26	55.83
Part-time	32	56.38
Full-time	49	51.48

Test Statistic	Value
Kruskal–Wallis H	0.680
df	2
p-value	.712

Table A.36 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Environmental Sustainability Importance by Residence

Sustainability Dimension	Residence	N	Mean Rank	Mann–Whitney U	Z	p
Environmental Sustainability	Not Austria	22	50.20	851.500	-	.502
	Austria	85	54.98		0.672	

Table A.37 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Social Sustainability Importance by Residence

Sustainability Dimension	Residence	N	Mean Rank	Mann–Whitney U	Z	p
Social Sustainability	Not Austria	22	61.91	761.000	-1.388	.165
	Austria	85	51.95			

Table A.38 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Health and Food Safety Importance by Residence

Sustainability Dimension	Residence	N	Mean Rank	Mann–Whitney U	Z	p
Health & Food Safety	Not Austria	22	54.95	914.000	-0.171	.864
	Austria	85	53.75			

Table A.39 Mann–Whitney U Test Results for Animal Welfare Importance by Residence

Sustainability Dimension	Residence	N	Mean Rank	Mann–Whitney U	Z	p
Animal Welfare	Not Austria	22	58.16	843.500	-0.729	.466
	Austria	85	52.92			

1.1.2. Identity Expression

Table A.40 Independent Samples t-test Results for Identity Expression by Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Mean Diff.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	p (2-tailed)	Cohen's d
Male	38	2.70	0.76							
Female	69	2.73	0.87	-0.19	105	-0.03	-0.36	0.30	.854	-0.04

Table A.41 One-Way ANOVA Results for Identity Expression by Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.067	2	0.534	0.776	.463
Within Groups	71.492	104	0.687		
Total	72.559	106			

Table A.42 One-Way ANOVA Results for Identity Expression by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	η^2
Between Groups	2.832	2	1.416	2.091	.129	.040
Within Groups	68.405	101	0.677			
Total	71.238	103				

Table A.43 Independent Samples t-test Results for Identity Expression by Education

Education Level	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Mean Diff.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	p (2-tailed)	Cohen's d
No University Degree	14	2.92	0.83							
University Degree	93	2.69	0.83	0.96	105	0.23	-0.24	0.70	.337	0.28

Table A.44 One-Way ANOVA Results for Identity Expression by Employment

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.277	2	0.639	0.932	.397
Within Groups	71.282	104	0.685		
Total	72.559	106			

1.1.3.Sensory Preferences

Table A.45 Independent Samples t-test Results for Sensory Preferences by Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Mean Diff.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	p (2-tailed)	Cohen's d
Male	38	2.83	0.90							
Female	69	2.96	1.06	-0.66	105	-0.13	-0.54	0.27	.509	-0.13

Table A.46 One-Way ANOVA Results for Sensory Preferences by Income

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	η^2
Between Groups	5.038	2	2.519	2.633	.077	.050
Within Groups	96.634	101	0.957			
Total	101.672	103				

Table A.47 Tukey HSD Post-hoc Comparison Results for Sensory Preferences by Income

Comparison	Mean Difference	p	95% CI
Income Group 1 vs 2	-0.497	.098	[-1.065, 0.070]
Income Group 1 vs 3	-0.404	.181	[-0.942, 0.135]
Income Group 2 vs 3	0.094	.923	[-0.490, 0.678]

Table A.48 One-Way ANOVA Results for Sensory Preferences by Employment

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	1.140	2	0.570	0.561	.572
Within Groups	105.603	104	1.015		
Total	106.743	106			

1.2. Hypotheses Testing Results

Table A.49 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.205	0.450	7.130	< .001	–
Gender	-0.018	0.175	-0.104	.917	1.108
Age	-0.030	0.148	-0.202	.841	1.328
Income	0.092	0.123	0.749	.456	1.732
Education	0.327	0.240	1.362	.176	1.072
Residence	-0.132	0.217	-0.609	.544	1.206
Employment	-0.223	0.142	-1.571	.120	2.087
Environmental Importance	-0.019	0.078	-0.248	.805	1.054

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.247	.061	-.007	0.891	.517

Table A.50 Reversed Multiple Linear Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.376	0.641	5.269	< .001	–
Gender	0.248	0.228	1.091	.278	1.095
Age	-0.067	0.193	-0.346	.730	1.327
Income	0.108	0.161	0.669	.505	1.734
Education	0.429	0.314	1.368	.175	1.071
Residence	0.223	0.283	0.788	.433	1.203
Employment	-0.165	0.187	-0.883	.380	2.124
Environmental Sustainability Awareness	-0.033	0.133	-0.248	.805	1.064

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.227	.052	-.018	0.747	.633

Table A.51 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.205	0.450	7.130	< .001	–
Gender	-0.018	0.175	-0.104	.917	1.108
Age	-0.030	0.148	-0.202	.841	1.328

Income	0.092	0.123	0.749	.456	1.732
Education	0.327	0.240	1.362	.176	1.072
Residence	-0.132	0.217	-0.609	.544	1.206
Employment	-0.223	0.142	-1.571	.120	2.087
Environmental Sustainability Importance	-0.019	0.078	-0.248	.805	1.054

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.258	.066	-.002	0.976	.453

Table A.52 Reversed Multiple Linear Regression Results for Social Sustainability Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	2.914	0.752	3.875	< .001	–
Gender	-0.222	0.250	-0.888	.377	1.095
Age	-0.409	0.213	-1.923	.057	1.337
Income	0.086	0.176	0.486	.628	1.727
Education	0.442	0.344	1.286	.201	1.068
Residence	-0.167	0.312	-0.536	.593	1.220
Employment	-0.138	0.203	-0.679	.499	2.074
Social Sustainability Awareness	0.035	0.135	0.258	.797	1.070

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.299	.090	.023	1.350	.236

Table A.53 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Health and Food Safety Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.921	0.361	10.864	< .001	–
Gender	0.107	0.153	0.698	.487	1.096
Age	-0.040	0.131	-0.303	.763	1.351
Income	0.066	0.108	0.609	.544	1.760
Education	-0.326	0.209	-1.556	.123	1.063
Residence	-0.479	0.190	-2.519	.013*	1.210
Employment	0.113	0.124	0.910	.365	2.080
Health & Food Safety Importance	0.018	0.054	0.342	.733	1.102

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.316	.100	.034	1.523	.168

Table A.54 Reversed Multiple Linear Regression Results for Health and Food Safety Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	2.675	0.983	2.722	.008	–
Gender	0.093	0.289	0.321	.749	1.100
Age	0.328	0.245	1.339	.184	1.328
Income	0.281	0.204	1.376	.172	1.733
Education	-0.383	0.400	-0.958	.341	1.080

Residence	-0.319	0.370	-0.863	.390	1.280
Employment	0.140	0.236	0.594	.554	2.090
Health and Food Safety Awareness	0.066	0.193	0.342	.733	1.110

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.307	.094	.028	1.424	.205

Table A.55 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Fair Trade and Procurement Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	3.765	0.457	8.232	< .001	–
Gender	0.000	0.208	0.001	.999	1.100
Age	-0.259	0.177	-1.463	.147	1.348
Income	0.049	0.147	0.333	.740	1.737
Education	-0.569	0.284	-2.007	.048*	1.054
Residence	0.117	0.260	0.448	.655	1.228
Employment	-0.154	0.170	-0.910	.365	2.096
Fair Trade & Procurement Importance	0.043	0.076	0.570	.570	1.067

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.314	.099	.033	1.503	.175

Table A.56 Reversed Multiple Linear Regression Results for Animal Welfare Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	VIF
Constant	1.300	0.789	1.647	.103	–
Gender	-0.191	0.278	-0.686	.494	1.094
Age	0.315	0.238	1.325	.188	1.354
Income	-0.165	0.196	-0.842	.402	1.726
Education	0.233	0.387	0.601	.549	1.095
Residence	0.521	0.345	1.511	.134	1.202
Employment	-0.226	0.227	-0.994	.323	2.092
Fair Trade and Procurement Awareness	0.078	0.137	0.570	.570	1.106

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p
.256	.066	-.002	0.964	.462

Table A.57 Moderated Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Purchase Frequency

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	-0.144	0.213	-0.673	.503
Age	0.276	0.180	1.534	.129
Income	0.057	0.150	0.378	.706
Education	-0.093	0.300	-0.309	.758
Residence	0.061	0.268	0.227	.821
Employment	0.101	0.176	0.575	.567

Environmental Awareness	0.077	0.125	0.617	.539
Environmental Importance	0.137	0.095	1.444	.152
Awareness × Importance	-0.109	0.117	-0.928	.356
Constant	2.911	0.455	6.394	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.103	.018	1.21	.301

Table A.58 Reversed Moderated Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	0.022	0.179	0.126	.900
Age	-0.037	0.150	-0.243	.808
Income	0.090	0.123	0.730	.467
Education	0.311	0.241	1.290	.200
Residence	-0.093	0.221	-0.420	.675
Employment	-0.243	0.143	-1.699	.093
Purchase Frequency	0.057	0.084	0.679	.499
Environmental Sustainability Importance	-0.032	0.079	-0.408	.684
Purchase Frequency × Importance	-0.075	0.074	-1.011	.315
Constant	3.138	0.380	8.253	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.076	-.012	0.86	.562

Table A.59 Moderated Regression Results for Health and Food Safety Purchase Frequency

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	-0.121	0.213	-0.571	.570
Age	0.274	0.185	1.484	.141
Income	0.087	0.152	0.568	.571
Education	0.082	0.298	0.277	.783
Residence	0.065	0.274	0.235	.815
Employment	0.112	0.183	0.614	.541
Health & Food Safety Awareness	0.157	0.142	1.108	.271
Health & Food Safety Importance	-0.094	0.075	-1.255	.213
Awareness × Importance	-0.074	0.112	-0.655	.514
Constant	2.680	0.460	5.826	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.102	.016	1.18	.317

Table A.60 Reversed Moderated Regression Results for Health and Food Safety Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	0.118	0.153	0.770	.443
Age	-0.075	0.133	-0.561	.577
Income	0.066	0.109	0.605	.547

Education	-0.330	0.210	-1.573	.119
Residence	-0.487	0.190	-2.562	.012*
Employment	0.100	0.125	0.805	.423
Purchase Frequency	0.085	0.074	1.154	.252
Health & Food Safety Importance	0.030	0.055	0.549	.584
Purchase Frequency × Importance	-0.048	0.056	-0.854	.395
Constant	4.077	0.334	12.204	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.119	.034	1.40	.197

Table A.61 Moderated Regression Results for Fair Trade and Procurement Purchase Frequency

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	-0.093	0.213	-0.439	.662
Age	0.190	0.186	1.021	.310
Income	0.095	0.154	0.614	.540
Education	-0.046	0.296	-0.155	.877
Residence	-0.002	0.267	-0.008	.994
Employment	0.094	0.176	0.537	.593
Fair Trade & Procurement Awareness	-0.108	0.105	-1.029	.306
Fair Trade & Procurement Importance	0.107	0.078	1.371	.174
Awareness × Importance	0.028	0.087	0.317	.752
Constant	2.998	0.475	6.307	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.101	.015	1.17	.321

Table A.62 Reversed Moderated Regression Results for Fair Trade and Procurement Awareness

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Gender	0.003	0.209	0.016	.987
Age	-0.231	0.179	-1.290	.200
Income	0.046	0.148	0.314	.754
Education	-0.546	0.285	-1.921	.058
Residence	0.142	0.262	0.541	.590
Employment	-0.136	0.170	-0.798	.427
Purchase Frequency	-0.110	0.100	-1.098	.275
Fair Trade & Procurement Importance	0.052	0.077	0.680	.498
Purchase Frequency × Importance	0.065	0.072	0.913	.364
Constant	3.725	0.452	8.245	< .001

R ²	Adjusted R ²	F(9, 94)	p
.118	.033	1.39	.203

Table A.63 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness and Identity Expression

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	-0.021	-.013	-0.121	.904
Age	-0.027	-.021	-0.181	.857
Income	0.091	.096	0.741	.460
Education	0.314	.134	1.310	.193
Residence	-0.137	-.069	-0.634	.527
Employment	-0.218	-.219	-1.534	.128
Identity Expression	-0.016	-.016	-0.162	.872

Table A.64 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Social Sustainability Awareness and Identity Expression

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.028	.015	0.146	.884
Age	-0.142	-.101	-0.887	.377
Income	0.045	.044	0.340	.735
Education	-0.302	-.119	-1.166	.247
Residence	-0.308	-.142	-1.319	.190
Employment	-0.060	-.056	-0.393	.695
Identity Expression	0.040	.038	0.378	.706

Table A.65 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Animal Welfare Awareness and Identity Expression

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.020	.009	0.091	.928
Age	-0.157	-.098	-0.852	.396
Income	0.218	.187	1.431	.156
Education	-0.012	-.004	-0.041	.967
Residence	-0.291	-.118	-1.086	.280
Employment	-0.045	-.037	-0.257	.798
Identity Expression	0.139	.116	1.142	.256

Table A.66. Multiple Linear Regression Results for Fair Trade Awareness and Identity Expression

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.002	.001	0.011	.991
Age	-0.237	-.150	-1.345	.182
Income	0.047	.041	0.324	.747
Education	-0.588	-.206	-2.064	.042
Residence	0.136	.056	0.531	.597
Employment	-0.153	-.127	-0.906	.367
Identity Expression	-0.089	-.075	-0.759	.450

Table A.67 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Environmental Sustainability Awareness and Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	-0.037	-.022	-0.210	.834
Age	-0.066	-.051	-0.431	.668
Income	0.073	.077	0.591	.556

Education	0.377	.161	1.526	.130
Residence	-0.133	-.067	-0.620	.537
Employment	-0.213	-.214	-1.506	.135
Sensory Preferences	0.074	.091	0.839	.404

Table A.68 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Social Sustainability Awareness and Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.040	.022	0.214	.831
Age	-0.115	-.082	-0.687	.494
Income	0.058	.056	0.430	.668
Education	-0.349	-.137	-1.306	.195
Residence	-0.311	-.144	-1.334	.185
Employment	-0.060	-.055	-0.389	.698
Sensory Preferences	-0.045	-.051	-0.470	.639

Table A.69 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Health and Food Safety Awareness and Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.085	.056	0.563	.575
Age	-0.099	-.085	-0.740	.461
Income	0.042	.050	0.393	.695
Education	-0.233	-.111	-1.091	.278
Residence	-0.480	-.269	-2.573	.012*
Employment	0.128	.144	1.047	.298
Sensory Preferences	0.128	.176	1.671	.098

Table A.70 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Animal Welfare Awareness and Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	-0.004	-.002	-0.018	.986
Age	-0.252	-.157	-1.334	.185
Income	0.177	.152	1.164	.247
Education	0.115	.040	0.379	.706
Residence	-0.288	-.117	-1.089	.279
Employment	-0.006	-.005	-0.034	.973
Sensory Preferences	0.217	.216	2.001	.048

Table A.71 Multiple Linear Regression Results for Fair Trade Awareness and Sensory Preferences

Predictor	B	β	t	p
Gender	0.013	.007	0.064	.949
Age	-0.187	-.119	-1.022	.310
Income	0.068	.060	0.465	.643
Education	-0.652	-.229	-2.222	.029*
Residence	0.135	.056	0.528	.599
Employment	-0.176	-.146	-1.047	.298
Sensory Preferences	-0.116	-.118	-1.111	.269

Table A.72 Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics for Consumer Awareness Dimensions

Construct	Skewness	Kurtosis
AW_ENV	-0.007	-0.147
AW_SOC	0.069	-0.534
AW_HEL	0.012	-0.003
AW_ANI	-0.213	-0.979
AW_FAI	-0.091	-0.497

Table 73 Spearman Correlations Between CSR Awareness Dimensions

Variable	AW_ENV	AW_SOC	AW_HEL	AW_ANI	AW_FAI
AW_ENV	1.000	.186	.298	.224	.183
AW_SOC	.186	1.000	.566	.343	.620
AW_HEL	.298	.566	1.000	.559	.452
AW_ANI	.224	.343	.559	1.000	.244
AW_FAI	.183	.620	.452	.244	1.000

B. Appendix. Survey questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed and distributed via the online platform SurveyMonkey.

1. How old are you?
 - ☐ Under 18
 - ☐ 18-24
 - ☐ 25-34
 - ☐ 35-44
 - ☐ 45-54
 - ☐ 55-64
 - ☐ 65+
2. What is your gender?
 - ☐ Male
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Diverse
3. What is your annual gross income?
 - ☐ Under 12,500€
 - ☐ 12,500€ - 24,999€
 - ☐ 25,000€ - 49,999€
 - ☐ 50,000€ - 74,999€
 - ☐ 75,000€ - 99,999€
 - ☐ Over 100,000€
 - ☐ Prefer not to answer
4. What is your current employment status?
 - ☐ Employed full-time
 - ☐ Employed part-time
 - ☐ Unemployed
 - ☐ Student/in education
 - ☐ In pension
 - ☐ Prefer not to answer
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - ☐ Compulsory school (Pflichtschule)
 - ☐ Secondary school (Matura)
 - ☐ Apprenticeship (Lehre)
 - ☐ University education (Universität/FH)
 - ☐ Other (please specify)
6. Indicate a place of your primal residence
 - ☐ Vienna
 - ☐ Burgenland
 - ☐ Lower Austria
 - ☐ Upper Austria
 - ☐ Salzburg
 - ☐ Carinthia
 - ☐ Tyrol
 - ☐ Vorarlberg
 - ☐ Styria
 - ☐ Residence outside of Austria

7. How often do you buy organic food?

- ☐ Very Frequently
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

8. Think about the organic food producer you buy the most from (if you do not buy organic food, think about the most popular organic food supplier you know).

In the following section, please indicate your familiarity with **corporate social responsibility engagements** for your chosen company.

- ☐ Next

9. Reducing pollution and waste

- ☐ Extremely aware
- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not so aware
- ☐ Not at all aware

10. Sustainable agronomic practices (rotating crops, assuring bio-diversity)

- ☐ Extremely aware
- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not so aware
- ☐ Not at all aware

11. Sustainability of the packaging

- ☐ Extremely aware
- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not so aware
- ☐ Not at all aware

12. Support of the local farmer community

- ☐ Extremely aware
- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not so aware
- ☐ Not at all aware

13. Good work ethical practices in terms of eliminating gender/race discrimination at a work place

- ☐ Extremely aware
- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not so aware
- ☐ Not at all aware

14. Good work ethical practices in terms of minimal wage and work benefits

- ☐ Extremely aware
- ☐ Very aware
- ☐ Somewhat aware
- ☐ Not so aware

- Not at all aware
15. Reduced use of pesticides and fertilisers beyond the bidding requirements
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
16. Providing products with higher nutritional value
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
17. Promotion of a healthy lifestyle
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
18. Adoption of production practices, that eliminate any unnecessary suffering of animals
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
19. Operation within transparent trade practices
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
20. Fair treatment of suppliers and distributors
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
21. Involvement in support of the suppliers (payment of a guaranteed minimum price, long-term contracts)
- Extremely aware
 - Very aware
 - Somewhat aware
 - Not so aware
 - Not at all aware
22. Now think about organic food producers in **general**. Please, rank the following **corporate social responsibility** activities according to their importance in your opinion:
1. Environmental sustainability

2. Health and food safety
3. Animal welfare
4. Social sustainability
5. Fair trade and procurement

23. In the next section please indicate if the following statements apply to you personally.

- ☐ Next

24. Purchasing organic food is part of how I express my personality

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little
- ☐ Does not apply to me at all
- ☐ I do not buy organic food

25. People like me are expected to consume organic food

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little
- ☐ Does not apply to me at all

26. My loved ones expect me to purchase more organic food for them

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little
- ☐ Does not apply to me at all

27. People persuade me that I should buy organic food in order to have a better life

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little
- ☐ Does not apply to me at all

28. I believe organic food smells better than non organic alternatives

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little
- ☐ Does not apply to me at all

29. I believe organic food tastes better than non organic alternatives

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little
- ☐ Does not apply to me at all

30. I believe that organic food has a better texture than non organic alternatives

- ☐ Fully applies to me
- ☐ Strongly applies to me
- ☐ Somewhat applies to me
- ☐ Applies to me very little

- Does not apply to me at all

31. I believe organic food looks better than non organic alternatives

- Fully applies to me
- Strongly applies to me
- Somewhat applies to me
- Applies to me very little
- Does not apply to me at all

Abstract

Der Bio-Lebensmittelsektor stellt einen einzigartigen Markt dar, auf dem die Durchsetzung von Nachhaltigkeitsmaßnahmen der Unternehmen für Verbraucher ein wichtiger Aspekt bei ihrer Entscheidungsfindung ist. Das Verbraucherbewusstsein für Maßnahmen dieser Art zu verstehen ist entscheidend für die Entwicklung eines nachhaltigen, langfristigen Aktionsplans zum Tragen einer Unternehmerischen Sozialverantwortung (Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR), welche für einen Großteil der Stakeholder von Bedeutung sein kann. Die Analyse dieses Verbraucherbewusstseins in verschiedenen Dimensionen von Nachhaltigkeitsmaßnahmen ist jedoch nach wie vor begrenzt. In der Literatur werden Einstellungen gegenüber der CSR häufig als Gesamtkonzept betrachtet und Verbraucher aus ihrer Perspektive in Verbindung mit den ideellen Werten untersucht, ohne dabei zwischen spezifischen Nachhaltigkeitsdimensionen zu differenzieren.

Im Rahmen dieser Studie wurde ein theoretisches Konzept für die Gliederung der CSR-Aktivitäten zusammengestellt, um mithilfe eines Online-Fragebogens spezifische Primärdaten von Teilnehmern zu erfassen. Der Schwerpunkt lag dabei auf der Messung des Verbraucherbewusstseins für verschiedene CSR-Dimensionen im Bio-Lebensmittelsektor, der Analyse möglicher Unterschiede zwischen demografischen Gruppen sowie der Analyse des Bewusstseins anhand zusätzlicher Motivationsvariablen wie Identitätsausdruck und sensorische Eigenschaften. Die Ergebnisse liefern Einblicke in die Wahrnehmung einzelner CSR-Dimensionen durch die Verbraucher und zeigen erhebliche Unterschiede in der Wahrnehmung der einzelnen Nachhaltigkeitsdimensionen auf: Dabei weisen „Health and Food Safety“ sowie „Animal Welfare“ das höchste Level an Bewusstsein auf, während „Fair Trade and Procurement“ das geringste Level an Verbraucherbewusstsein verzeichnen. Die demografische Analyse ergab, dass das Alter die einflussreichste Variable ist. Die vermutete Korrelation zwischen Wichtigkeit und Bewusstsein verschiedener CSR-Aktivitäten zeigte sich in sehr begrenztem Ausmaß.

Diese Erkenntnisse zielen darauf ab, die aktuelle Literatur zur Verbraucherwahrnehmung von CSR zu erweitern und gleichzeitig mögliche Chancen für Unternehmen zur Optimierung ihrer Nachhaltigkeitsstrategien aufzuzeigen.