

Measuring the Impact of Consumer Quality Perceptions on Purchase Intentions towards Agro Products with Geographical Indications in Karnataka

Dharmojirao T.Y.¹, Dr. T.S. Devaraja²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Studies in Commerce, University of Mysore, P.G. Centre Hemangothri, Hassan-573226

²Professor, Department of Studies in Commerce, University of Mysore, P.G. Centre Hemangothri, Hassan-573226

Abstract

This study evaluates consumer awareness and perceptions of agricultural products with Geographical Indications (GIs) in Karnataka, India. The present study employed a quantitative survey research design to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer awareness, quality perceptions, and purchase intentions towards Agro Products with GIs. The Structured questionnaire was administered to 346 participants. Convenience sampling technique was used to selection of Sample respondents. The findings reveal while a few GI products enjoy regional recognition and market visibility, there is a significant scope for improving awareness and promotion of lesser-known GI-tagged agro products. The study finds a Strong Relationship between Quality of GI tagged Products and Customer purchase intentions. Consumers' perceptions of quality strongly influence their purchase decisions. This study validates the importance of perceived quality in customer decision-making. Perceptions of quality, authenticity, and cultural value positively influence consumer attitudes, while limited availability and higher prices pose challenges. The study concludes with recommendations for enhancing consumer awareness and promoting GI agro-products in Karnataka.

Keywords: Geographical Indications, Consumer awareness, Quality Perceptions, Satisfaction Purchase Intension, Agro Products

Introduction

Product quality significantly influences consumer perception, shaping their evaluations of price fairness and brand loyalty. The relationship between consumer quality perceptions and purchase intentions is a critical area of inquiry in the field of marketing, particularly within the context of agro products with Geographical Indications (GIs). Geographical Indications serve as a certification mechanism that links products to specific regions, thereby enhancing their perceived quality and authenticity. The characteristics of GIs, such as market recognition and cultural history, are crucial in shaping consumers' online purchase intentions for fresh agricultural products (Zhan et al., 2024). Proximity to the GI production area correlates with stronger associations of quality attributes, indicating that consumers closer to these regions perceive higher quality (Rabadán et al., 2021).

Geographical indications are labels or designations that identify a product as originating from a specific region, and they are often associated with unique qualities, traditions, or

characteristics tied to that region. These labels are designed to protect the interests of producers, promote local economies, and provide consumers with information about the product's origin, quality, and authenticity (Glogoveţan et al., 2022) (Rabadán et al., 2021). GIs are particularly important in the agro-food sector, where they are used to differentiate products based on their geographical origin, cultural heritage, and production methods. For consumers, GIs often serve as a signal of quality, authenticity, and reliability, which can influence their purchasing decisions (Bravo et al., 2024) (Bouhaddane et al., 2023).

The concept of Geographical Indications has its roots in the European tradition of associating certain products with their place of origin, such as Champagne or Roquefort cheese. The legal protection of GIs at an international level was first established in the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property in 1883, and further strengthened by the Lisbon Agreement in 1958. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in 1994 brought GIs into the global spotlight, requiring World Trade Organization (WTO) members to provide legal means to protect GIs. This agreement first time to use the term 'Geographical Indications' to recognise origin-based products in member countries. And it defines GIs as "indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin." According to World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) the expression of Geographical Indication means "a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin".

The concept of Geographical Indications has gained significant traction globally to protect and promote regional sparse Products. In the context of agricultural products, GIs serve multiple purposes: they act as intellectual property rights, safeguarding traditional knowledge and production methods; they function as marketing tools, differentiating products in increasingly competitive markets; and they contribute to rural development by supporting local economies and preserving cultural heritage. India has seen a steady increase in GI registrations since implementing the Geographical Indications of Goods Act in 2003, This growth reflects the country's rich diversity in agricultural products and traditional crafts, as well as a growing recognition of the potential economic and cultural benefits of GI protection. The Indian GI landscape encompasses a wide range of products, from agricultural commodities like Darjeeling Tea and Alphonso Mangoes to handicrafts such as Kancheepuram Silk and Mysore Sandal Soap.

The state of Karnataka, located in southern India, known for its diverse agro-climatic conditions, presents a particularly interesting case study for GIs in agriculture. Known for its diverse agro-climatic zones ranging from coastal regions to the Western Ghats and the Deccan Plateau, Karnataka boasts a rich variety of agricultural products with unique characteristics tied to their geographical origins. GI-tagged products of Karnataka represent the unique agricultural heritage of different regions, with its diverse agro-climatic zones, presents an interesting case study for examining GIs in agriculture. The state has several GI-tagged products representing its agricultural heritage, including Coorg Orange, Mysore Betel Leaf, Udupi Mattu Gulla Brinjal, and Nanjanagud Banana. From Karnataka has 24 GI tagged Agricultural products.

These GIs not only highlight the state's agricultural diversity but also represent potential avenues for enhancing rural livelihoods and preserving traditional farming practices. However, the impact of these GIs on consumer perceptions and behavior remains understudied, particularly in the context of local and national markets.

The protection of GIs in India is seen b to preserve traditional knowledge, support rural livelihoods, and promote India's cultural heritage. However, the implementation and impact of GIs in India have not been without challenges. India has been proactive in registering GIs, there are issues with enforcement and market development. And argued that many GI products in India struggle to command premium prices or gain significant market recognition. In this context, understanding consumer awareness and perceptions of GIs is crucial for unleashing their potential benefits.

Geographical Indications (GIs) considered as an important tool for protecting and promoting traditional agricultural products. However, the impact of GIs on consumer perceptions of quality, particularly in the context of India's agricultural sector, remains understudied. The main objective of this research is to investigate how GIs influence consumer quality perceptions of agricultural products in Karnataka, and to what extent these perceptions affect purchasing decisions towards agricultural products of Karnataka.

Indications of product Source is a crucial aspect in consumer quality perception, particularly in agricultural products. Consumer quality perceptions towards Geographical Indications (GIs) are a vital area of research that intersects with marketing, consumer behavior, and agricultural economics. In this prospects Geographical Indications not only signify the origin of products but also serve as indicators of quality and authenticity of the product.

Consumer awareness and knowledge about GIs significantly influence their quality perceptions. Examining consumer quality perceptions, economic aspects play a crucial role. It has been observed that while GIs can add value, higher prices for GI products do not always guarantee market success. Consumers may be hesitant to pay a premium for products that carry GI labels, particularly if they perceive the price-value relationship to be unfavourable (Bhuian et al., 2018). This complexity suggests that consumer attitudes towards pricing are integral to understanding quality perceptions. As such, producers must navigate the challenges of marketing GI products within the context of consumer price sensitivity. In the context of the Sicilian wine industry, GIs, specifically PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) and PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) certifications, have shown a significant impact on wine pricing, with certified wines commanding higher premiums (Zhang et al., 2022). This raises the question of whether consumers' willingness to pay is more strongly influenced by brand identification and psychological ownership rather than by the GI label alone.

Expectations of consumers and producers regarding GIs can differ significantly. Consumers often expect GIs to convey specific quality characteristics linked to geographic origin, whereas producers may view GIs as a competitive advantage (Teuber, 2011).

Understanding consumer perceptions and behaviour towards GI-tagged agricultural products is crucial for realizing the potential benefits of GIs, which include premium pricing, market differentiation, and rural development (Bramley et al., 2009). Despite the potential benefits of

GIs, there is limited research on consumer awareness and perceptions of GI-tagged agro-products in India. Even though the registration of these GIs represents a significant achievement, the true measure of their impact lies in consumer awareness and market response. Nevertheless, there is a noticeable gap in the literature regarding consumer awareness and perceptions of GI-tagged agro-products in India, particularly in Karnataka. This study aims to bridge this gap by evaluating consumer awareness, Quality perceptions, and purchasing behaviours related to agro products with GIs in Karnataka.

Review of Literature

The impact of quality perceptions on purchase intentions is a central theme, with studies showing Geographical Indications (GIs) labels can enhance willingness-to-pay and buying behavior for many consumers. Geographical Indications (GIs) serve as important quality signals for agricultural products, linking them to specific regions and production methods. The review of literature helps to finding the gaps in understanding how quality perceptions translate to actual purchases, especially in the Indian context.

Consumer Quality Perceptions and GIs

Consumer quality perceptions refer to the extent to which consumers believe that a product with a GI label meets their expectations for quality, safety, and authenticity. These perceptions are shaped by various factors, including intrinsic and extrinsic product attributes, cultural associations, and the credibility of the GI label itself. Intrinsic attributes of a product, such as taste, texture, and appearance, play a significant role in shaping consumer quality perceptions. For example, studies have shown that consumers are more likely to perceive GI-labeled products as higher quality if they exhibit superior intrinsic attributes, such as better flavor or texture (Espejel-Blanco et al., 2008) (Espejel-Blanco & Fandos-Herrera, 2008). Extrinsic attributes, such as the product's origin, certification, and labeling, also influence quality perceptions. The presence of a GI label is often interpreted by consumers as a guarantee of quality and authenticity, which can enhance their trust in the product (Bravo et al., 2024) (Bouhaddane et al., 2023). The cultural and regional associations of a GI-labeled product can also influence consumer quality perceptions. For instance, products from regions with a strong reputation for producing high-quality agro-food products are often perceived as superior, even if the intrinsic attributes are not significantly different from non-GI products (Fan & Weiming, 2023) (Rabadán et al., 2021). The credibility of the GI label itself is a critical factor in shaping consumer quality perceptions. If consumers perceive the GI label as credible and trustworthy, they are more likely to associate it with higher quality and authenticity (Bouhaddane et al., 2023) (Brandão et al., 2012).

The Role of Quality Perceptions in Purchase Intentions

The relationship between consumer quality perceptions and purchase intentions is well-documented in the context of GI-labeled products. Consumers who perceive a product as high quality are more likely to have a positive attitude towards it, which in turn increases their intention to purchase the product. Quality perceptions have a direct and significant impact on purchase intentions. Studies have shown that consumers are willing to pay a premium for GI-labeled products if they perceive them as higher quality and more authentic than non-GI

products (Aprile et al., 2012) (Brandão et al., 2012). Perceived value acts as a mediator between quality perceptions and purchase intentions. Consumers who perceive a GI-labeled product as offering greater value for money are more likely to intend to purchase it (Zhan et al., 2024) (Bravo et al., 2024). The relationship between quality perceptions and purchase intentions can be moderated by various factors, such as consumer knowledge, trust, and loyalty. For example, consumers with higher knowledge of GI labels are more likely to perceive them as indicators of quality, which can strengthen their purchase intentions (Užar & Filipović, 2023) (Užar et al., 2022).

Factors Influencing Consumer Quality Perceptions

Several factors influence consumer quality perceptions of GI-labeled products, including: The intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of the product, such as taste, texture, origin, and certification, are key determinants of consumer quality perceptions (Espejel-Blanco et al., 2008) (Espejel-Blanco & Fandos-Herrera, 2008). Consumers who are more knowledgeable about GI labels and their significance are more likely to perceive GI-labeled products as higher quality (Užar et al., 2022) (Glogoveţan et al., 2022). Trust in the GI label and loyalty to the product or brand can enhance consumer quality perceptions and strengthen purchase intentions (Užar & Filipović, 2023) (Brandão et al., 2012). Products that are strongly associated with a specific cultural or regional identity are often perceived as higher quality, which can influence purchase intentions (Fan & Weiming, 2023) (Rabadán et al., 2021).

The Impact of GI Labels on Consumer Behavior

GI labels have a significant impact on consumer behavior, particularly in terms of purchase intentions. The presence of a GI label can influence consumers' attitudes, preferences, and willingness to pay a premium for the product. Consumers generally have positive attitudes towards GI labels, perceiving them as indicators of quality, authenticity, and reliability (Aytıp & Cankaya, 2022) (Bravo et al., 2024). Many consumers are willing to pay a premium for GI-labeled products if they perceive them as offering greater value in terms of quality and authenticity (Aprile et al., 2012) (Brandão et al., 2012). The presence of a GI label can significantly increase purchase intentions, particularly among consumers who value quality, authenticity, and sustainability (Zhan et al., 2024) (Likoudis et al., 2016).

Quality perceptions have critical role in driving purchase intentions for agro products with geographical indications. By addressing the factors that influence these perceptions, stakeholders can effectively leverage GI labels to enhance consumer trust and loyalty.

Despite the insights gathered from the existing literature, several knowledge gaps remain unaddressed. First, more comprehensive studies are needed to explore the impact of consumer education campaigns on the quality perceptions of GIs. Investigating how targeted marketing strategies can improve consumer understanding and engagement with GI products may yield valuable insights for producers and marketers. Longitudinal studies that track changes in consumers' perceptions of GIs over time could offer insights into the effectiveness of marketing strategies and consumer education efforts. Such studies would allow researchers to assess how shifts in consumer knowledge and attitudes influence market trends for GI products in the future.

Consumer quality perceptions of geographical indications are influenced by a multitude of factors, including awareness, economic considerations, and production specifications. While GIs have the potential to enhance perceived quality and support local economies, challenges remain in effectively communicating their benefits to consumers. Addressing existing knowledge gaps through future research is essential for optimising the impact of GIs in the marketplace, ultimately benefiting both consumers and producers.

Research Objectives

Based on the literature review, the following research objectives are proposed:

1. To Analyse the consumers awareness on Agro products with Geographical Indication in Karnataka.
2. To measure the relationship between Quality Perception and Purchase Intension towards GI agro products from Karnataka.

Research Hypothesis

Based on literature review and the research objectives, the following hypothesis has been formulated.

H₀: There is no significant impact of Quality Perception on Purchase Intension of GI tagged Agro products in Karnataka.

H₁: There is no significant impact of Quality Perception on Purchase Intension of GI tagged Agro products in Karnataka.

Methodology

The present study employed a quantitative survey research design to gain a comprehensive understanding of consumer awareness, quality perceptions, and purchase intentions towards Agro Products with GIs. The Structured questionnaire was administered to 346 participants. Convenience sampling technique was used to selection of participants from urban and rural areas of Karnataka. The questionnaire consisted of 4 items measuring quality perceptions and 5 items assessing purchase intentions towards Agro Products with GIs. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, were designed asking the respondents to rank their importance of agreement on a scale items of 1 to 5 with '1 Strongly Disagree' and '5 as Strongly Agree'. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. Reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the Quality Perception and Purchase Intention scales. Regression analysis was employed to determine the impact of Quality Perception on Purchase Intentions towards Agro Products with GIs from Karnataka. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 23, with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$.

Results and Discussion

The present study aimed at analyse the Consumer awareness and impact of Quality perceptions on Purchase intensions of GI tagged Agro products in Karnataka. Quantitative research approach is adopted to draw the inference. Primary data is collected through structured

questionnaire using Five Point scaling(Strongly agree 5 to Strongly Disagree 1). Simple linear regression technique is employed to measure the influence of Quality perceptions on Purchase intentions of GI tagged Agro products in Karnataka.

Consumer Awareness of GIs with Agro Products

Table 1 : Awareness of GI products

Sl.No	Agro Product with Geographical Indications	Percentage
1	Mysore Jasmine	51.3
2	Chikmagalur Arabica Coffee	46.6
3	Mysore Betel leaf	41.3
4	Byadagi Chilli	37.0
5	Coorg Orange	35.8
6	Nanjanagud Banana	30.5
7	Coorg Arabica Coffee	21.4
8	Coorg Green Cardamom	21.1
9	Bangalore Rose Onion	20.8
10	Bangalore Blue Grapes	20.5
11	Baba Budangiris Arabica Coffee	20.2
12	Gulbarga Tur Dal	17.3
13	Appemidi Mango	17.3
14	Udupi Jasmine	16.1
15	Malabar Pepper	12.3
16	Sirsi Supari	12.0
17	Kamalapur Red Banana	11.1
18	Indi lemon	11.1
19	Monsooned Malabar Robusta Coffee	10.9
20	Udupi Mattu Gulla Brinjal	10.3
21	Devanahalli Pomello	9.4
22	Monsooned Malabar Arabica Coffee	8.8
23	Hadagali Jasmine	6.5

24	Kari isad mango	10.1
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Note: Multiple choice answers. Hence total percentage is greater than 100.

The data presented in Table 1 reveals varied levels of consumer awareness regarding Geographical Indications (GI) among agro products in Karnataka. The highest awareness is observed for Mysore Jasmine (51.3%), followed closely by Chikmagalur Arabica Coffee (46.6%) and Mysore Betel Leaf (41.3%), suggesting these products have a stronger market presence and cultural familiarity. Other products like Byadagi Chilli (37.0%), Coorg Orange (35.8%), and Nanjanagud Banana (30.5%) also show moderate awareness.

However, the awareness significantly drops for products such as Hadagali Jasmine (6.5%), Monsooned Malabar Arabica Coffee (8.8%), and Devanahalli Pomello (9.4%), indicating that many GI products are still relatively unknown to a large section of consumers. Notably, even widely consumed items like Gulbarga Tur Dal (17.3%) and Malabar Pepper (12.3%) reflect low levels of awareness, possibly due to insufficient branding or regional market reach.

This pattern suggests that while a few GI products enjoy regional recognition and market visibility, there is a significant scope for improving awareness and promotion of lesser-known GI-tagged agro products through targeted campaigns, educational programs, and better labeling practices.

Table 2: Awareness of GI label or Tag as a consumer

Awareness level	Frequency	Percent
Highly aware	157	45.4
Less Aware	159	46.0
Not Aware	30	8.7
Total	346	100.0

Table 3 shows that 45.4 percent of respondents are very aware of GI labels or tags, while about the same amount (46.0) are less informed, with approximately nine percent admitting that they are unaware of the relevance of GI tag products.

Table 3: Source of the Awareness

Sl.No	Source	Frequency	Percentage
1	Friends/Family	100	31.6
2	Word of mouth	64	20.2
3	Social media	110	35.0
4	News or ads on televisions	42	13.3

	Total	316	100.0
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Note: Those respondents saying “Not Aware” in Table 2 are not considered.

Furthermore, among those having awareness of GI tag products. the source of information for 31.5 percent of respondents is through friends and family members (Table 9) while one-fifth (20 percent) of them disclosed that it through word of mouth they were able to get awareness on the relevance of GI products. Similarly, 35 percent of them stated that social media is the primary source of information on getting more awareness of GI products while in case of 13.3 percent of respondents, news and ads on television became the source for getting awareness.

Table:4 Regression Model Summary

Model Summary ^b								
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		df1	df2	Sig. F Change
				R Square Change	F Change			
.782 ^a	0.612	0.611	0.28916	0.612	542.037	1	344	0.001
A. Predictors: (Constant), Quality_Perceptions								
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intentions								

The simple linear regression analysis exhibited a strong relationship between quality perceptions and purchase intentions. The model demonstrates a substantial explanatory power, with the R^2 value of 0.612, indicating that 61.2% of the variance in purchase intentions can be explained by quality perceptions. The adjusted R^2 of .611 suggests that the model is well-fitted and the explained variance is consistent. It is implied that improving customers quality perception towards Agro products with geographical indications product can substantially impact their likelihood of making a purchase.

Table: 4 Analysis of Variance of Model

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.322	1	45.322	542.037	.000 ^b
	Residual	28.763	344	.084		
	Total	74.085	345			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intentions						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality_perceptions						

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table shows a statistically significant regression model, $F(1, 344) = 542.037, p < .001$. This indicates that the model is statistically significant and that quality perceptions are a meaningful predictor of purchase intentions.

Table:5 Model Coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.509	.123		12.273	.000
	Quality Perceptions	.696	.030	.782	23.282	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intentions						

The constant term is 1.509 (SE = .123), which represents the expected purchase intentions when quality perceptions are zero. Quality Perceptions independent variable has the regression coefficient (B) is .696 (SE = .030), with a standardized beta of .782. This suggests a strong positive relationship ($\beta=0.782$) between quality perceptions and purchase intentions. The t-test statistics for the quality perceptions predictor is statistically significant ($t = 23.282, p < .001$), H_1 fully asserted, confirming the strong predictive power of the variable. Hence, it is inferred that for every one-unit increase in Quality Perceptions of GI tagged Agro products, it is likely to increase Consumer Purchase intentions towards agro product is 0.696.

The study finds a Strong Relationship between Quality of GI tagged Products and Customer purchase intentions. Consumers' perceptions of quality strongly influence their purchase decisions. This study validates the importance of perceived quality in customer decision-making. Prioritizing strategies for enhancing quality perceptions, as they strongly influence purchase intentions. It suggests that there is a need for investment in quality communication and perception management in GI tagged Agro Products through Developing multi-channel communication strategies, create tangible evidence of agro product, and implement transparent quality assurance processes.

Conclusion

Product Quality is a critical driver of customer purchase decisions. The present study underscores the significance of consumer quality perceptions and purchase intentions towards agro products with Geographical Indications (GIs) in Karnataka. By systematically examining how perceived quality influences consumer behavior, the study highlights the critical role that GIs play in enhancing product authenticity and regional identity. The findings indicate that certifications such as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) not only bolster consumer trust but also reinforce the cultural heritage associated with these products. As Karnataka continues to highlight its agricultural diversity, leveraging these insights can aid producers, marketers, and policymakers in promoting

sustainable practices and driving economic development. Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of consumer engagement within the agricultural sector, emphasizing the importance of GI quality perceptions in shaping market dynamics and consumer preferences.

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