

RESEARCH ON FACTORS INFLUENCING THE INTENTION TO PURCHASE VEGAN FOOD OF GEN Z CONSUMERS IN VIETNAM

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Abstract

The study conducted a survey of 166 Gen Z consumers to find out the factors influencing Gen Z's intention to buy vegan food in Vietnam. Data were cleaned and processed using SMARTPLS software. The study identified that perceived behavioral control (PBC), media influence (MI), and attitude toward vegan food (ATT) are the key factors driving Gen Z's vegan food purchase intention. Meanwhile, subjective norm (SN) and environmental perception (EA) did not have significant effects. This result provides a basis for businesses and marketers to build appropriate strategies to reach this group of potential customers.

Keywords: Factors, Purchase Intention, Vegan Food, Gen Z, Vietnam.

1. INTRODUCTION

Veganfoods are products that “completely eliminate ingredients of animal origin” (Vegansociety.com, 2025). The demand for vegan food consumption worldwide is increasing strongly, especially among young consumers - Generation Z. According to a report by Innovamarketinsights.com, (2025), the consumption rate of meat substitutes in Vietnam is currently 25%, higher than the global average (20%). This trend continues to grow due to a greater focus on health and menu diversification.

In that context, Generation Z - characterized by technology savvy, health-consciousness, and a high sense of social and environmental responsibility - is becoming the group leading the green and vegan consumption trend in Vietnam. Survey results in March 2022 show that about 64% of Gen Z consumers in Vietnam choose healthy eating for long-term health benefits (Statista.com, 2022). Gen Z is a growing consumer group with growing purchasing power and shaping trends, but quantitative research on the factors that motivate or hinder them from choosing vegan foods remains limited. This is the research gap that needs to be filled to understand the motivations, thereby proposing marketing strategies and policies to encourage sustainable consumption. These factors provide the basis for a thorough study of the factors influencing the purchase intention of vegan food among this specific target group.

The study uses the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explain and predict purchase intention. The objectives of this study include: (1) Identifying factors affecting the intention to purchase vegan food of Gen Z in Vietnam; (2) Testing the impact of these factors on the intention to purchase vegan food; (3) Identifying the relative impact level of each factor and proposing managerial implications for vegan food businesses. Specifically, the study will use an online survey method combined with linear regression analysis to assess the impact of factors on the intention to buy vegan food of Gen Z in Vietnam. The research results are

expected to provide empirical evidence on the vegan consumption motivations of Generation Z in Vietnam, thereby supporting businesses in building appropriate product and communication strategies and contributing to promoting the trend of green and sustainable consumption.

2. THEORETICAL BASIS AND RESEARCH MODEL

2.1. Concepts

(1) Gen Z, Gen Z characteristics in consumer behavior

According to Pew Research Center (2019), Gen Z, also known as Zoomers, are individuals born between 1997 and 2012. The choice of this time frame is based on the context of dramatic economic, technological and social change. Similarly, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Gen Z is defined as “the generation of people born in the late 20th and early 21st centuries,” starting around 1996 or 1997 until around 2010. Despite slight differences in timelines, studies generally agree on the demographic characteristics of Gen Z. In Vietnam, according to data from the General Statistics Office and populationpyramid.net (2025), Gen Z is between the ages of 15 and 29, with a population of up to 20.46 million people, accounting for about 20.1% of the total population. By 2025, Gen Z will enter the 15–30 age group, becoming the main consumer group and having a profound influence on purchasing decisions in households (PwC, 2021). This opens up great potential for studying their consumer behaviour, especially in areas such as vegan food – a trend that is gaining increasing attention as consumers move towards healthier and more sustainable lifestyles. As the first generation to grow up with smartphones, social media and digital platforms, Gen Z tends to have less direct contact with the physical world, instead having a strong presence in online space. They rely heavily on mobile devices and consider social media platforms an essential part of their daily lives. Platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Facebook or YouTube are not only entertainment tools but also channels for Gen Z to discover new products, access information and build brand awareness. Furthermore, Gen Z tends to be “experimental consumers,” meaning they are willing to try new products and diverse experiences before making a long-term purchase decision (Francis, T., & Hoefel, F. (2022). Gen Z also stands out for its high sense of social and environmental responsibility. According to Deloitte research (2024), Gen Z is the generation most concerned about issues of climate change, animal protection, and food safety. Their consumption trends increasingly prioritize environmentally friendly products, recycled packaging, and concern for ethical factors in business. Therefore, vegan food products not only meet health needs but also suit the living values of this generation.

(2) Vegan food

Vegan food: are foods that are completely plant-based, containing no animal ingredients whatsoever, including meat, fish, eggs, milk, honey and other animal-derived products (Agnoli C, Baroni L, Bertini I, et al, 2017). This is also the criterion to distinguish vegan food from vegetarian food– may include some animal products such as milk or eggs– vegan foods completely eliminate any animal-related elements in the production and processing. Vegan

foods, as defined by The Vegan Society (2020), are products that “completely eliminate ingredients of animal origin” and “promote the development of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, people and the environment”. According to Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018), animal food production, especially red meat, generates many times more greenhouse gas emissions than plant foods. Animal husbandry also causes deforestation, water pollution and biodiversity loss (Steinfeld, H., et al. (2006). Nutritionally, a vegan diet includes major food groups such as vegetables, fruits, grains, beans, nuts and products made from them (tofu, plant milk, etc.). Compared to the vegetarian diet, the vegan diet completely excludes all animal products, including eggs, dairy, and honey. The vegan diet is not only a nutritional choice but also a lifestyle, reflecting the ethical, environmental and health values of the consumer (Vicente J. C., et al, 2025). Vegan diets have been shown to be beneficial to health if followed scientifically and in a balanced manner. According to research by Timothy J Key., et al, (2006), a vegan diet can reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and certain types of cancer. This comes from the fact that vegan foods are typically low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and rich in fiber, vitamins and minerals.

2.2. Research overview

Theory of planned behavior (TPB). The theory of planned behavior is a development and improvement of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Ajzen and Fishbein (1991) and is a commonly used theory when wanting to predict a specific behavior of any individual, which can be the behavior of choosing to buy products, services... The two main factors influencing decisions are personal attitudes and subjective norms. In which, personal attitude is measured by beliefs and evaluations of the results of that behavior. Ajzen (1991) defines subjective norm as the perception that influential people think that an individual should or should not perform a certain behavior. With three main factors: attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, TPB has been widely applied in consumer behavior research, especially in the field of environmentally friendly foods such as organic foods, sustainable foods, and vegan foods. Overview of studies related to TPB and vegan food, some domestic and foreign studies have used TPB to explore sustainable food consumption motivation in the young generation:

- Jakubowska, D., et al, (2024) Study on Sustainable Food Purchase Intentions of Gen Z in Poland. The study uses the Theory of Planned Behavior as a theoretical framework to explore how the theory’s variables (personal attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control), supplemented with three additional factors: consumer knowledge, trust, and health concerns, influence Generation Z’s intention to purchase sustainable food. Results showed that attitude and knowledge were significant predictors of sustainable food consumption in Generation Z, while subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, health consciousness, and trust did not significantly influence purchase intention. This study highlights the importance of educational campaigns and marketing strategies that increase consumer knowledge and shape positive attitudes towards sustainable food.
- Using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Fatya Altı Amalial (2021) this study aims to measure Generation Z’s behavioral intention towards organic food consumption in

Indonesia. An online questionnaire was distributed to the target respondents and 250 valid responses were received for analysis. This study used partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the hypothesis. It was observed that all TPB variables significantly described positive effects on behavioral intention. The results imply that Indonesian Generation Z consumers have positive intentions towards organic food consumption. Therefore, the findings of this study improve our understanding of TPB in the context of organic food. Organic food businesses can use the tested TPB variables in their daily business operations to serve Generation Z customers.

- Mai., N. P, & Nam., D.V, (2023) study combines the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Motivation-Opportunity-Ability (MOA) Framework. TPB focuses on attitudes, social norms, and behavioral control, while MOA emphasizes motivation, opportunity, and ability. This model helps explain the gap between intention and behavior to purchase organic food. Data was collected from 426 Gen Z participants in Hanoi, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City, analyzed using SmartPLS software. Research results show that trust is the most important factor influencing purchasing behavior, Environmental awareness has a strong impact on attitudes, reflecting Gen Z's sensitivity to climate change. Research also shows that Price is not a barrier to organic food consumption among Gen Z.

2.3. Proposed research model

Based on clarifying the theory of consumer behavioral intention, the theory of reasoned behavior (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and some studies on the trend of vegetarian food consumption behavior, the research team proposes the following model, hypothesis, and research scales:

- Attitudes toward vegan food: Measuring Gen Z's positive beliefs and feelings about vegan food based on health, ethics, and personal lifestyle.
- Subjective norms: Measuring the influence of family, friends and celebrities on vegan food purchase intention.
- Perceived behavioral control: Measures individual control regarding price, availability, and ease of use of vegan foods.
- Environmental awareness: Measuring Gen Z's interest in the positive impact of vegan food on the environment. Gen Z, characterized by a sustainability-conscious generation, they tend to perceive that consuming vegan foods helps reduce negative impacts on the environment (such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing the use of land and water resources). Environmental awareness may indirectly influence purchase intention through shaping positive attitudes toward vegan food. When consumers are aware of environmental benefits, they will have a more favorable attitude towards this product (Ajzen, 1991).
- Media influence: Measuring the impact of media (including social media, advertising) on awareness and purchase intention of vegan food.
- Purchase intention: Measuring Gen Z's willingness and commitment to purchasing vegan food.

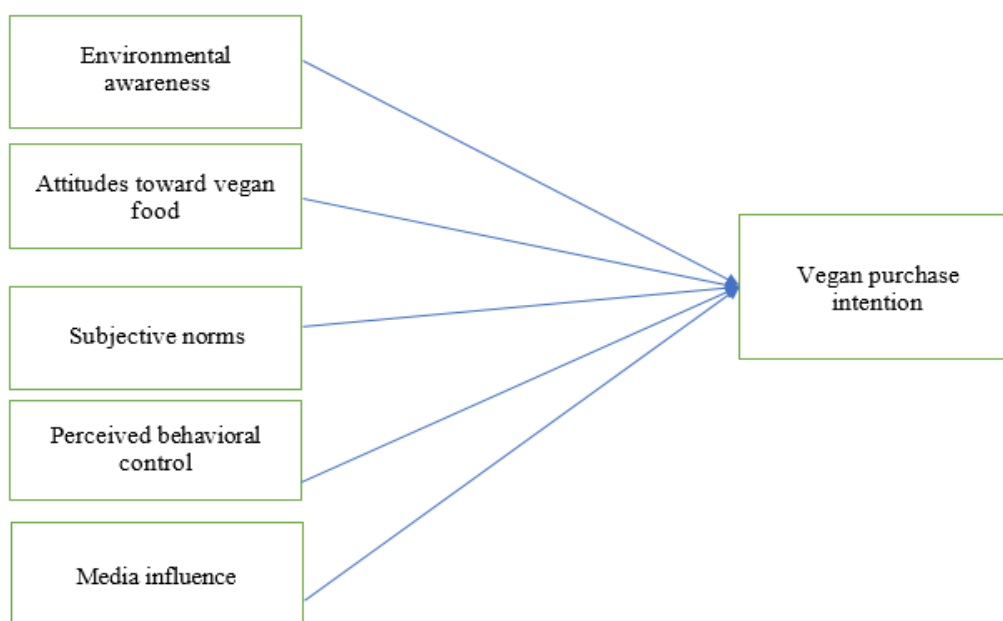


Figure 1: Proposed model

Source: The research team's proposal

Research hypothesis:

H1: Attitudes towards vegan food are positively related to purchase intention of vegan food

H2: Subjective norms are positively related to vegan food purchase intention

H3: Perceived behavioral control is positively related to vegan food purchase intention

H4: Environmental concern is positively related to vegan food purchase intention

H5: Media influence has a positive correlation with the intention to purchase vegan food

Table 1: The scales

Variable	Encoding	Scales
Attitudes towards vegan food (ATT)	ATT1	I believe that vegan food is good for my health
	ATT2	I enjoy vegan food
	ATT3	I feel that consuming vegan food is a popular trend among young people today
	ATT4	I feel like buying vegan food is something Gen Z should experience
Subjective Norms (SN)	SN1	My family encourages me to eat vegan food
	SN2	My friends think I should buy vegan food
	SN3	The celebrities I follow on social media influence my decision to buy vegan food
Perceived Behavioral Control- PBC	PBC1	I feel the prices of vegan food are reasonable and I can afford it
	PBC2	I can easily find vegan food
	PBC3	I am willing to spend time and money to buy vegan food
	PBC4	I can easily use or prepare vegan foods in my daily life

Environmental Awareness- EA	EA1	I believe that consuming vegan food helps reduce negative impacts on the environment
	EA2	Protecting the environment through consuming vegan food fits with my ethical values
	EA3	I believe that, in order to survive, humans need to maintain a balanced relationship with nature
	EA4	I want to buy vegan food to contribute to the green living trend
Media Influence- MI	MI1	Information from social media made me want to try vegan food
	MI2	Vegan food advertisements influence my purchasing decisions
	MI3	Articles or videos about vegan food increase my understanding of this product
Purchase Intention- PI	PI1	I will buy vegan food when I get the chance
	PI2	I would prefer vegan foods over regular foods
	PI3	I will recommend friends and relatives to buy vegan food

Source: Proposed research team

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data collection method

Based on the theory and overview of research on factors affecting the intention to consume vegan food of Gen Z, the factors included in the research model include the variables: (i) “Attitude towards vegan food”, (ii) “subjective norms”, (iii) “perceived behavioral control”, (iv) “environmental awareness”, (v) “media influence” affecting (vi) “intention to purchase vegan products”. The survey was constructed with a 5-point Likert scale, with:

- 1) *Strongly Disagree*
- 2) *Disagree*
- 3) *Neutral*
- 4) *Agree*
- 5) *Strongly Agree*

Quantitative research methods were conducted to collect opinions from Gen Z - those who have consumed vegan food. After developing the survey, the research team conducted a random pilot survey on 10 Gen Z people. The preliminary survey results showed that opinions agreed with the factors included in the model.

Due to time and resource constraints for the survey, the author used a convenient sampling method. The minimum sample size required was calculated according to the formula $n=50 + 8 \cdot m$ (m: number of independent variables) (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). In the case of a study with 6 variables, the minimum number of ballots needed to be collected was $50 + 8 \cdot 6 = 98$ ballots. The survey subjects were Gen Z, who intended to buy vegan products.

From the perspective of collecting as many observation samples as possible to ensure the stability of the impact, the questionnaire was sent to the survey subjects by sending them online via the google form link: <https://forms.gle/B7KamfwukY5imBab9>. The number of ballots

collected was 166, of which 106 ballots from people who had consumed vegan products were further included in the analysis of product consumption intentions, and 40 ballots from people who had never consumed vegan products were surveyed about the reasons for not choosing this product.

3.2. Data processing method

Quantitative research methods were conducted to process research data collected from a survey of Gen Z who had consumed vegan foods. The structural regression equation has the general form:

$$YD = a*ATT + b*SN + c*PBC + d*EA + e*MI$$

SMARTPLS software is used to test hypotheses and evaluate the impact level of factors.

Step 1: Evaluating Measurement Model

Evaluating measurement model based on examining values of reliability, quality of observed variable, convergence, and discriminant

- Testing the quality of observed variables (Outer Loadings)

Outer Loadings of observed variables are indicators showing the degree of association between observed variables and latent variables (proxy variables). Basically, outer loadings in SMARTPLS are the square root of the absolute value of R² linear regression from the latent variables to the sub-observed variables.

Hair et al. (2016) suggest that the outer loadings should be greater than or equal to 0.708 observed variables that are quality. To make it easier to remember, the researchers rounded off the threshold to 0.7 instead of the number 0.708.

- Evaluating Reliability

Evaluating the reliability through SMARTPLS by two main indicators, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). Composite Reliability (CR) is preferred by many researchers over Cronbach's Alpha because Cronbach's Alpha underestimates the reliability compared with CR. Chin (1998) claims that in exploratory research CR must be over 0.6. For confirmed studies, the 0.7 threshold is the appropriate level of CR (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). Other researchers agree that 0.7 is the appropriate threshold for the vast majority of cases such as Hair et al. (2010), and Bagozzi & Yi (1988). Thus, the reliability through SMARTPLS is shown by Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.7 (DeVellis, 2012); Composite Reliability CR ≥ 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988).

- Testing Convergence

Evaluating Convergence on SMARTPLS is based on Ave (Average Variance Extracted). Hock & Ringle (2010) claim that a scale reaches a convergence value if AVE reaches 0.5 or higher. This level of 0.5 (50%) means that the average latent variable will explain at least 50% of the variation of each sub-observed variable. Thus, convergence is evaluated by Average Variance Extracted AVE ≥ 0.5 (Hock & Ringle, 2010).

- Testing Discriminant Validity

Discriminant value is used to consider whether a research variable is really different from other research variables in the model. To evaluate the discriminant validity, Sarstedt & et al (2014) said that considering two criteria including cross-loadings and the measurement of Fornell and Larcker (1981). Cross-loading coefficients are often the first approach to evaluating the discriminant validity of indicators (observed variables) (Hair, Hult, et al., 2017). The load factor of the observed variable (indicator) linked in the factor (latent variable) should be greater than any of its cross-load factors (its correlation) in the other factors.

Fornell and Larcker (1981) recommend that discriminant is ensured when the square root of AVE for each latent variable is higher than all correlations between latent variables. In addition, Henseler & et al (2015) used simulation studies to demonstrate that discriminant validity is better evaluated by the HTMT index that they developed. With the HTMT index, Garson (2016) said that the discriminant validity between two latent variables is guaranteed when the HTMT index is less than 1. Henseler & et al (2015) propose that if this value is below 0.9, the discriminant validity will be guaranteed. Meanwhile, Clark, L. A., & Watson, D. (1995) used a stricter standard threshold of 0.85. SMARTPLS preferred a threshold of 0.85 in the evaluation.

- Testing Multicollinearity

In this study, the author uses a scale related to multicollinearity as a variance magnification factor (VIF). Very high levels of multicollinearity are indicated by VIF values ≥ 5 ; the model does not have multicollinearity when VIF indicators < 5 (Hair et al., 2016).

Step 2: Evaluating Structural Model

After evaluating the satisfactory measurement model, evaluate the structural model through the impact relationship, path coefficient, R squared, and f squared.

- Evaluating impactful relationships

To evaluate impact relationships, use the results of Bootstrap analysis. Based mainly on two columns (1) Original Sample (normalized impact factor) and (2) P Values (sig value compared to 0.05 significance level).

- Original Sample: Standardized impact factor of the original data. SMARTPLS have no unstandardized impact factor.
- Sample Mean: The average standardized impact factor of all samples from Bootstrap.
- Standard Deviation: Standard deviation of the standardized impact factor (according to the original sample).
- T Statistics: Test value t (test student the meaning of the impact).
- P Values: The significance level of the T Statistics. This significance level is considered with comparative thresholds such as 0.05, 0.1, or 0.01 (usually used as 0.05).

Evaluating the level of interpretation of the independent variable for the dependent variable by R2 coefficient (R square). To evaluate the R2 coefficient, we will use the results of the PLS Algorithm analysis. The R2 value evaluates the predictive accuracy of the model and shows the level of interpretation of the independent variable for the dependent variable. R square is between 0 and 1, the closer to 1 indicates the more independent variables that account for the dependent variable (Hair, Hult, et al, 2017).

In addition, when evaluating factors, collected data will be synthesized, calculated, and reflected in charts, tables, and drawings using Excel software. With the factors influencing the design according to the Likert 5 scale, when evaluating the level of influence of the factors, the average value achieved by the scales will be calculated; determine the average score within which response threshold and see the level of influence of each factor according to the average value achieved.

$$\text{Distance value} = (\text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum}) / n = (5-1)/5 = 0.8$$

Rating thresholds based on mean score values:

- + 1.00 - 1.80: Strongly disagree
- + 1.81 - 2.60: Disagree
- + 2.61 - 3.40: Neutral
- + 3.41 - 4.20: Agree
- + 4.21 - 5.00: Strongly agree

4. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics

The survey link received 166 responses, with details on gender, occupation, age and monthly income as follows:

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of survey participants

Income	Number of people	Percentage (%)	Occupation	Number of people	Percentage (%)
No income	85	51.2%	Secondary and High school Students	58	34.9%
< 5 million VND	49	29.5%	University Students	97	58.4%
5< under 10 million VND	15	11.4%	Workers	9	5.4%
10< under 50 million VND	11	6.6%	Other	2	1.2%
From 50 million VND and above	2	1.2%			
Age	Number of people	Percentage	Gender	Number of people	Percentage
12- under 18 years old	47	23.8%	Male	31	18.7%
18 to under 23 years old	108	65.1%	Female	129	77.7%
23 to 28 years old	11	6.6%	Prefer not to specify	6	3.6%

Source: Survey results

The gender of the survey participants was mainly female with 129 people, accounting for 77.7%, 31 people (18.7%) were male and 6 people (3.6%) did not want to specify.

The survey participants were Gen Z, so the age of the survey participants was mainly from 18 to under 23 years old (108 votes, equivalent to 65.1%); 77 votes (23.8%) from 12 to under 18 years old; 11 votes (6.6%) from 23 to 28 years old.

Since the majority of survey participants were students (155 votes, equivalent to 93.3%), the income of survey participants was mainly no income (85 votes, 51.2%) and less than 5 million VND/month (49 votes, 29.5%), and from 5 to less than 10 million VND, there were 15 votes (11.4%); income from 10 to less than 50 million VND, there were 11 votes (6.6%); and income over 50 million VND accounted for the lowest proportion (1.2%).

Vegan food consumption is popular, among 166 respondents, 106 (63.9%) have ever bought vegan food and 60 (36.1%) have never bought vegan food. In more detail, regarding the purpose of consumption, 96 votes (equivalent to 90.6%) bought for consumption, only 18 people (17%) bought for the purpose of giving/giving/presenting. Of the 106 people, the frequency of consuming vegan food was mainly occasional (48%) and rare (47%), only 5% used it regularly (weekly).

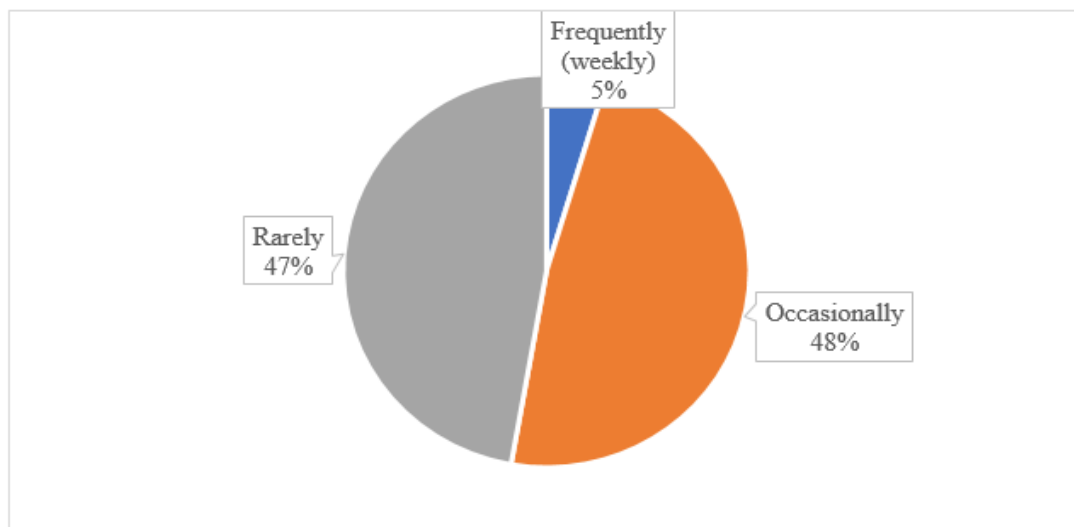


Figure 2: Frequency of vegan food consumption

Source: Survey results

Of the 60 people who have never used this product, the reasons for not buying it are shown in Figure 2. Other common reasons are no income, no intention of using, not being vegetarian.

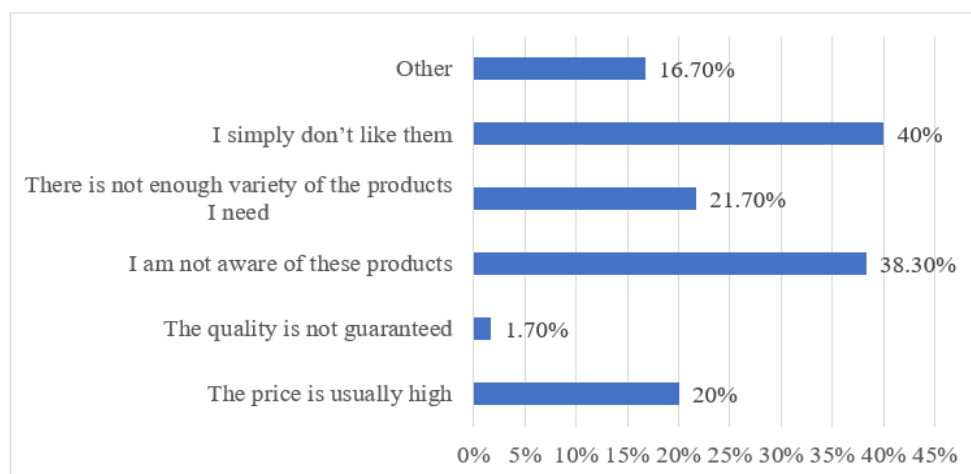


Figure 3: Reasons for not consuming vegan food

Source: Survey results

4.2. Research model testing results

4.2.1. Quality control of observed variables

The quality of observed variables is assessed through the outer loadings. The quality of the observed variables is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Outer loadings of factors influencing Gen Z's intention to purchase vegan food

	ATT	EA	MI	PBC	PI	SN
ATT2	0.833					
ATT3	0.747					
ATT4	0.825					
EA1		0.832				
EA2		0.927				
EA3		0.837				
EA4		0.861				
MI1			0.910			
MI2			0.888			
MI3			0.933			
PBC1				0.837		
PBC2				0.808		
PBC3				0.873		
PBC4				0.834		
PI1					0.873	
PI2					0.893	
PI3					0.929	
SN1						0.810
SN2						0.914
SN3						0.727
ATT1	0.743					

Source: Test results of the research team

The results from Table 3 show that the outer loadings of all the total variable correlation coefficients of the variables affecting the intention to buy vegan food of Gen Z (all > 0.7) (Hair & et al, 2016) show that the observed variables are significant.

Testing the reliability of the scale

Assessing the reliability of the scale of factors affecting the intention to buy vegan food of Gen Z on PLS-SEM through two main indexes: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR).

Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability of Factors Affecting Gen Z's Intention to Purchase Vegan Food

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
ATT	0.796	0.807	0.868	0.621
EA	0.888	0.904	0.922	0.748
MI	0.897	0.904	0.935	0.829
PBC	0.859	0.866	0.904	0.703
PI	0.881	0.883	0.926	0.808
SN	0.753	0.761	0.860	0.674

Source: Test results of the research team

According to Table 4, after analyzing the reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the factor, the results are: Attitude towards vegan food (ATT) reached 0.796; Subjective norms (SN) reached 0.753; Perceived behavioral control (PBC) reached 0.859; Environmental awareness (EA) reached 0.888, Media influence (MI) reached 0.897, Vegan food purchase intention (PI) reached 0.881.

Thus, all scales satisfy the condition > 0.7 (DeVellis, 2012) and do not violate any rule of eliminating variables, so no variables are eliminated and can be accepted in terms of reliability.

The composite reliability (CR) of all observed variables is also > 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) (Table 4). Therefore, the scale is reliable, has analytical significance and is used in the next factor analysis.

Convergence

According to the data analysis results in Table 4, the average variance extracted (AVE) of the factor: Attitude towards vegan food (ATT) reached 0.621; Subjective norm (SN) reached 0.674; Perceived behavioral control (PBC) reached 0.703; Environmental awareness (EA) reached 0.748, Media influence (MI) reached 0.829, Vegan food purchase intention (PI) reached 0.808... Thus, the average variance extracted (AVE) index of all variables is > 0.5 (Hock & Ringle, 2010), which shows that the model satisfies the convergence conditions.

Discriminant Validity

Results in Table 5 on the Fornell-Larcker index of the research model of factors affecting Gen Z's intention to buy vegan food (PI): Attitude towards vegan food (ATT); Subjective norm (SN); Perceived behavioral control (PBC); Environmental perception (EA), Media influence (MI) all ensure discrimination as all the square root AVE values on the diagonal are higher than

their off-diagonal values. Therefore, in terms of discriminant validity, the two criteria including cross-loading coefficient and Fornell and Larcker criteria have satisfied the conditions (Fornell, D.F. Larcker., 1981).

Table 5: Fornell-Larcker index of the research model of factors affecting the intention to buy vegan food of Gen Z

	ATT	EA	MI	PBC	PI	SN
ATT	0.788					
EA	0.676	0.865				
MI	0.636	0.601	0.910			
PBC	0.669	0.670	0.633	0.838		
PI	0.739	0.698	0.760	0.778	0.899	
SN	0.630	0.551	0.675	0.756	0.662	0.821

Source: Test results of the research team

f² function value

The f^2 function value represents the influence level of the structure (factor) when removed from the model. The f^2 values correspond to 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, corresponding to small, medium, and large influence values (Cohen, 1988) of the exogenous variable. If the effect size < 0.02 , it is considered that there is no influence.

Table 6: Summary table of f^2 values

	ATT	EA	MI	PBC	PI	SN
ATT					0.089	
EA					0.027	
MI					0.237	
PBC					0.195	
PI						
SN					0.007	

Source: Test results of the research team

In this model, in Table 6 we see the factors: Attitude towards vegan food (ATT); Perceived behavioral control (PBC); Environmental awareness (EA), Media influence (MI) have an average impact on the intention to buy vegan food of Gen Z (PI).

The Subjective norm (SN) factor has an effect size of $0.007 < 0.02$, which is considered to have no impact on the intention to buy vegan food.

Results of impact assessment using structural model

Assessing impact relationships

The relationship and level of influence of factors affecting the intention to buy vegan food of Gen Z on SMARTPLS is shown in Figure 4.

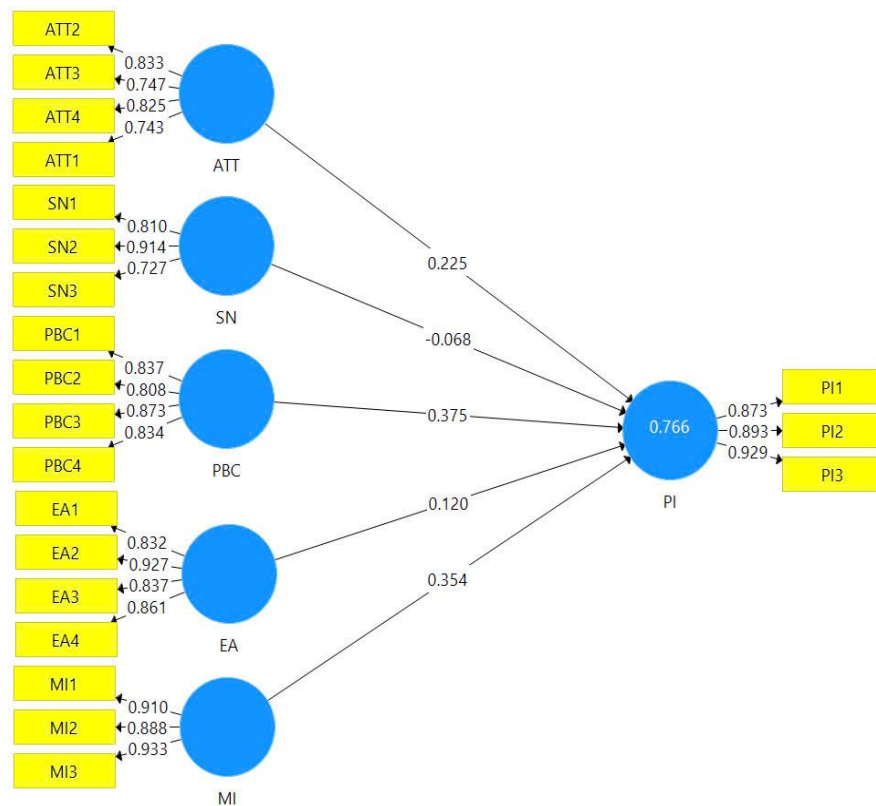


Figure 4: Factors influencing Gen Z's intention to purchase vegan food

Source: SMARTPLS test results of the research team

The results of Bootstrap analysis to evaluate the influencing relationships are shown in Table 7. Accordingly, the variables: Attitude towards vegan food (ATT); Perceived behavioral control (PBC); Media influence (MI) have an influence on “Gen Z's intention to buy vegan food (PI). These factors have P Values <0.05 (Hypothesis H1, H3, H5 are all accepted at the 5% significance level). The factors “Subjective Norm” (SN) and “Environmental Awareness” (EA) have P Values >0.05 (Hypothesis H2, H4 are not accepted at the 5% significance level).

Table 7: Structural model path coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ATT -> PI	0.225	0.228	0.085	2.656	0.008
EA -> PI	0.120	0.118	0.078	1.539	0.125
MI -> PI	0.354	0.353	0.081	4.364	0.000
PBC -> PI	0.375	0.372	0.086	4.368	0.000
SN -> PI	-0.068	-0.064	0.082	0.821	0.412

Source: SMARTPLS test results of the research team

The test results in Table 7 show that with 95% confidence, the factor “Attitude towards vegan food” (ATT) has an influence level of 0.225; the factor “Perceived behavioral control” (PBC)

has an influence level of 0.375; the factor “Media influence” (MI) has an influence level of 0.354 on “Intention to buy vegan food (PI)”. Thus, we have the following regression equation:

$$IP = 0.225*ATT + 0.375*PBC + 0.354*MI$$

Evaluate the overall coefficient of determination) R^2 (R square)

The result of PLS analysis gives R^2 value, reflecting the level of explanation of independent variable for dependent variable. The R^2 index measures the overall coefficient of determination (R-square value), which is an index to measure the model’s fit to the data (the model’s explanatory power). According to Hair & et al (2010), the R-square value is recommended at 0.75, 0.50 or 0.25.

Table 8: Explanation coefficient of independent variables for dependent variables (R Square)

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
PI	0.766	0.754

Source: Test results of the research team

The results from Table 8 show that the R^2 of the factor “intention to purchase vegan food” (PI) is 0.766, and the adjusted R^2 is 0.754, which is suitable in this case study. Thus, the independent variables in the model explain 76.6% of the dependent variable.

5. DISCUSS THE RESULTS

Of the five factors considered, three factors reached a statistical significance level of 5% (95% confidence level), showing that they have an impact on Gen Z’s intention to buy vegan food in Vietnam. Specifically:

(i) “Perceived behavioral control” (PBC)

PBC has the strongest effect with an effect size of 0.375, meaning that when perceived behavioral control increases by 1 unit, Gen Z’s intention to purchase vegan food increases by 0.375 units. Aspects such as affordability (PBC1), ease of access (PBC2), willingness to invest time and money (PBC3), and ability to use or prepare (PBC4) all indicate that Gen Z feels they have control over their vegan food purchasing and consumption behavior. Analysis of the mean values of the scales belonging to the PBC variable shows that Gen Z’s perception of their ability to control their behavior fluctuates between "Agree" and "No opinion", reflecting that despite positive perceptions of some aspects, there are still certain limitations.

Table 9: The mean value of the variable “Perceived behavioral control”

Scale	Encode	Average score	Assessment level
I feel that the price of vegan food is reasonable and I can afford it	PBC1	3.472	Agree
I can easily find vegan food	PBC2	3.698	Agree
I am willing to spend time and money to buy vegan food	PBC3	3.151	Neutral

I can easily use or prepare vegan food in my daily life	PBC4	3.575	Agree
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Source: Compiled from survey data

PBC1 (affordable, 3.472 - Agree) and PBC2 (easy to find, 3.698 - Agree) show that Gen Z has positive perceptions of affordability and accessibility of vegan food. This may reflect the growth of the vegan market in Vietnam, with products increasingly available in supermarkets, convenience stores or online platforms. Gen Z also feels a certain level of confidence when using or preparing vegan foods (PBC4). PBC3 (willingness to spend time, money) is the scale with the lowest mean value, indicating that Gen Z is not really ready to invest a lot of resources (time, money) in vegan food. This can be an important barrier, especially when vegan food is often more expensive or requires time to learn and prepare. This study's results are consistent with the theory of planned behavior (TPB), which asserts that perceptions of ease of performing a behavior strongly promote action intentions. Vegan food businesses should focus on improving perceived behavioral control by ensuring reasonable prices, enhancing distribution channels, and providing products that are easy to prepare or have detailed, convenient preparation instructions.

(ii) Media influence (MI)

With an influence coefficient of 0.354, media is the second strongest factor influencing the intention to purchase vegan food. This reflects the important role that media channels play in shaping perceptions and encouraging Gen Z to experiment with vegan foods. Analysis of the mean values of the MI scales showed that all were at the "Agree" level, reflecting the positive and even impact from media sources.

Table 10: The mean value of the variable "Media influence" (MI)

Scale	Encode	Encode	Assessment level
Information from social media makes me want to try vegan foods	MI1	3.623	Agree
Advertisements about vegan foods influence my purchase decision	MI2	3.443	Agree
Articles or videos about vegan foods increase my understanding of the product	MI3	3.670	Agree

Source: Compiled from survey data

MI3 (educational content) has the highest mean value (3.670 - Agree), indicating that articles, videos or content providing information about vegan food (benefits, uses, recipes) play an important role in raising awareness and stimulating interest among Gen Z. This is consistent with Gen Z's tendency to search for information online before making a purchase decision. The media channels "social media" (MI1) with a mean value of 3.623 and "advertising" (MI2) with a mean value of 3.443 reflect the influence of social media platforms and advertising in inspiring and encouraging Gen Z to try vegan food. This result is consistent with the research subject being Gen Z - the generation born and raised in the technology era, the generation that spends a lot of time on digital platforms and is strongly influenced by online trends. Vegan food businesses need to build effective communication campaigns (including social media,

influencers, advertising on the health and environmental benefits of vegan food), diversify communication channels through videos and articles to raise awareness and stimulate the interest of Gen Z, thereby strongly promoting purchase intention.

(iii) Attitudes towards vegan food (ATT)

ATT had the lowest influence of the three accepted factors (impact coefficient 0.225), but still played an important role in shaping vegan food purchase intention. Analysis of the mean values of the ATT scales showed clear differences between the aspects, with three scales reaching the “Agree” level and one scale reaching the “Neutral” level.

Table 11: Mean value of the variable “Attitude towards vegan food”

Scale	Encode	Average Score	Assessment level
I believe that vegan food is good for my health.	ATT1	4.123	Agree
I enjoy vegan food	ATT 2	3.670	Agree
I feel that consuming vegan food is a popular trend among young people today	ATT 3	3.302	Neutral
I feel like buying vegan food is something Gen Z should experience.	ATT4	4.019	Agree

Source: Compiled from survey data

The scales including health benefits (ATT1) reached 4.123 - Agree) had the highest average value, showing that Gen Z strongly believes in the health benefits of vegan food, has an interest in vegan food (ATT2 reached 3.670). The scale that buying vegan food is something Gen Z should experience (ATT4) reached 4,019 - Agree is also high, reflecting that Gen Z considers buying and using vegan food an experience worth trying, suitable for modern lifestyle and self-discovery. However, the consensus on the view that vegan food consumption is a popular trend among young people today (ATT3) is at the lowest level of 3.302 – neutral). Although it is not considered a popular trend among young people, businesses can still integrate green living values into their messages to attract them to experience vegan food.

(iv) Factors that do not influence vegan food purchase intention

The results of the study showed that subjective norms (SN) and environmental awareness (EA) had no impact on the intention to purchase vegan food. The subjective norm variables including encouragement from family (SN1), friends (SN2) and influence from celebrities (SN3) did not have a significant impact on Gen Z’s intention to purchase vegan food. This may indicate that Gen Z tends to make decisions based on personal perception rather than being influenced by those around them. With the variable of environmental awareness, in theory, Gen Z is the generation that cares about environmental factors. However, the research results show that awareness of the environmental benefits of vegan food (EA1), considering vegan food consumption consistent with ethical values (EA2), or the desire to live green (EA4), but these factors are not strong enough to promote purchase intention. From this result, for Gen Z, practical factors (such as price, convenience) or media impact have a greater influence than environmental protection motivation.

6. CONCLUSION

Gen Z in Vietnam is a consumer group with great potential for the vegan food market, thanks to the combination of high awareness of health and the environment, high-tech consumption habits, and the trend of seeking innovation and creativity. Research results show that “Perceived behavioral control” (PBC) is the most important factor driving Gen Z’s intention to purchase vegan food, with the weakness being the willingness to invest resources (PBC3). Media influence (MI) has a strong impact thanks to educational content and social media, while attitudes towards vegan food (ATT) need to improve awareness of trends (ATT3) to increase influence. Solutions focused on improving access, optimizing communication and reinforcing positive attitudes will help vegan food become a more popular choice among Gen Z in Vietnam. To successfully reach this audience, businesses need to focus on building a personalized, multi-channel shopping experience, harmoniously combining entertainment and educational elements in the brand message. At the same time, taking advantage of social media platforms such as TikTok or livestream will help convey information about vegan products in a more vivid and convincing way, thereby increasing the purchase intention of Gen Z consumers.

The limitation of the study is that it only focused on Gen Z, the results may not be representative of other age groups. The research sample is still limited in scale, there is no specific impact assessment according to gender, income, occupation; there is no assessment of factors related to eating habits and religious views of Gen Z. Therefore, the next research direction needs to expand the study to other age groups to compare vegan food consumption behavior; Explore other factors such as cultural values, eating habits.

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