



Study on Consumer Knowledge About Vegan Products and Its Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

The global transition towards sustainable consumption has accelerated consumer interest in vegan products across food, cosmetics, fashion, and lifestyle categories. Despite the growing availability of vegan alternatives, consumers' purchase decisions remain influenced by multiple psychological and behavioural factors beyond environmental concern alone. This study examines the influence of attitude, product knowledge, behavioural control, self-identity, environmental concern, and consumer knowledge on consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products in India. The research adopts the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) as its theoretical foundation and employs a quantitative research design. Data were collected through an online structured questionnaire from 233 valid respondents and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model confirmed satisfactory reliability and validity of all constructs. The structural model revealed that **attitude** and **environmental concern** significantly and positively influence purchase intention, whereas **consumer knowledge** and **self-identity** showed no statistically significant effect. Product knowledge exhibited a positive but comparatively weaker influence, while behavioural control demonstrated only marginal significance. The findings suggest that consumers are primarily motivated by favourable attitudes and environmental consciousness rather than mere product familiarity. The study contributes to the growing literature on sustainable consumption by extending TPB within the context of vegan products in an emerging economy. Practical implications highlight the importance of strengthening environmental communication, improving consumer awareness, and enhancing product accessibility to encourage wider adoption of vegan products.

Keywords: Vegan Products; Purchase Intention; Consumer Knowledge; Product Knowledge; Theory of Planned Behaviour; Sustainability; Environmental Concern; PLS-SEM.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has emerged as one of the defining challenges of the twenty-first century, significantly influencing consumer lifestyles, production systems, and marketing strategies. Growing awareness of climate change, animal welfare, ethical sourcing, and environmental degradation has encouraged consumers to reconsider their purchasing behaviour and shift towards more sustainable alternatives. Among these alternatives, vegan products have gained remarkable global acceptance due to their perceived environmental, ethical, and health benefits.

The global vegan market has experienced substantial growth during the past decade. Vegan products are no longer limited to food categories but have expanded into cosmetics, personal care, footwear, apparel, accessories, and household products. International brands increasingly integrate cruelty-free materials and environmentally responsible manufacturing practices into their product portfolios, responding to changing consumer expectations.

In India, the vegan market is still at an emerging stage but demonstrates considerable growth potential. Increasing urbanization, rising disposable income, greater exposure to sustainability issues, and digital access have improved consumer awareness regarding ethical consumption. Nevertheless, despite growing awareness, actual purchase behaviour remains relatively limited, suggesting the presence of an intention-behaviour gap.



Consumer purchase intention towards vegan products is influenced by multiple psychological and behavioural factors. Previous research has identified variables such as environmental concern, attitude, product knowledge, perceived behavioural control, subjective norms, self-identity, and ethical beliefs as important determinants of sustainable purchasing behaviour. However, empirical evidence regarding the relative importance of these determinants remains inconsistent, particularly within emerging economies such as India. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) provides an appropriate theoretical framework for understanding consumer intentions by explaining how attitudes, perceived behavioural control, and behavioural beliefs jointly influence purchase decisions. Building upon this theoretical foundation, the present study integrates additional constructs including consumer knowledge, product knowledge, environmental concern, and self-identity to provide a comprehensive explanation of consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products. The study contributes to the literature by empirically examining the determinants of vegan product purchase intention among Indian consumers using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for marketers, retailers, manufacturers, and policymakers promoting sustainable consumption.

Research Gap

Although previous studies have investigated green purchasing behaviour, ethical consumption, and sustainable product adoption, several important research gaps remain.

First, existing studies have largely concentrated on organic food, eco-friendly products, and green consumption while comparatively limited attention has been devoted to vegan products as a broader consumption category encompassing fashion, cosmetics, footwear, and lifestyle products.

Second, earlier research primarily examined the influence of environmental concern and price on purchase intention while giving limited consideration to the combined effects of consumer knowledge, product knowledge, self-identity, attitude, and perceived behavioural control.

Third, empirical evidence from developing economies, particularly India, remains limited despite the country's rapidly expanding sustainable consumer market.

Finally, previous findings regarding the significance of behavioural and psychological constructs remain inconclusive, necessitating further empirical validation using robust analytical techniques such as PLS-SEM. The present study addresses these gaps by developing an integrated framework that examines the influence of six antecedents on consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products within the Indian context.

Research Objectives

The study aims to investigate the determinants of consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the influence of consumers' attitude on purchase intention towards vegan products.
2. To investigate the impact of product knowledge on purchase intention.
3. To analyse the relationship between self-identity and purchase intention.
4. To examine the influence of perceived behavioural control on purchase intention.
5. To evaluate the impact of environmental concern on purchase intention.
6. To investigate the influence of consumer knowledge on purchase intention.

Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded in the **Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)** proposed by **Ajzen (1991)**. TPB posits that behavioural intention is primarily determined by three constructs: attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.



Considering the unique characteristics of vegan consumption, the present research extends TPB by incorporating three additional constructs widely discussed in sustainable consumption literature, namely:

- Product Knowledge
- Consumer Knowledge
- Self-Identity
- Environmental Concern

The integrated framework enables a more comprehensive understanding of consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vegan Products and Sustainable Consumption

The increasing awareness of environmental sustainability, climate change, animal welfare, and personal health has transformed consumer purchasing behaviour worldwide. Consumers are increasingly moving away from conventional products towards environmentally responsible alternatives, resulting in rapid growth in the global vegan products market. Vegan products are manufactured without using animal-derived ingredients or animal testing and encompass food, cosmetics, apparel, footwear, accessories, and household products.

Unlike traditional green products that primarily emphasize environmental sustainability, vegan products simultaneously address ethical consumption, cruelty-free production, environmental preservation, and personal well-being. Consequently, vegan consumption represents both a lifestyle choice and a responsible consumption behaviour.

Recent studies indicate that vegan consumption is driven not only by ethical concerns but also by health consciousness, environmental awareness, product quality perceptions, and social influence. The rapid expansion of vegan product offerings by multinational brands reflects changing consumer preferences toward sustainable lifestyles.

Although vegan consumption has witnessed substantial growth in developed economies, its adoption remains relatively nascent in developing countries such as India. Consumers continue to face challenges related to limited awareness, product availability, affordability, and credibility of vegan claims. These challenges create an intention-behaviour gap that warrants further empirical investigation.

Purchase Intention Towards Vegan Products

Purchase intention refers to an individual's conscious willingness or readiness to purchase a product in the future. It is considered one of the strongest predictors of actual purchasing behaviour and has been extensively applied in consumer behaviour research.

Within sustainable consumption literature, purchase intention reflects consumers' willingness to select environmentally responsible and ethically produced products over conventional alternatives. Previous research demonstrates that purchase intention is influenced by several cognitive and affective factors, including attitudes, perceived behavioural control, environmental concern, trust, product knowledge, social norms, and perceived value.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) explains that consumers develop purchase intentions after evaluating expected outcomes, perceived behavioural control, and social influences. Recent studies extending TPB within vegan product contexts have shown that environmental concern, trust, and perceived knowledge significantly improve consumers' intention to purchase vegan products.



Therefore, purchase intention serves as an appropriate dependent variable for understanding consumers' adoption of vegan products.

Attitude and Purchase Intention

Attitude represents an individual's favourable or unfavourable evaluation of performing a specific behaviour. According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour, attitude is one of the strongest predictors of behavioural intention.

Consumers possessing favourable attitudes towards vegan products generally perceive them as healthier, environmentally responsible, ethical, and socially desirable. Positive attitudes reduce psychological resistance and increase consumers' willingness to purchase sustainable alternatives.

Previous studies consistently report that attitude significantly predicts purchase intention towards organic food, vegan cosmetics, sustainable apparel, and plant-based products. Consumers who believe vegan products contribute positively to environmental conservation and personal health demonstrate stronger purchase intentions than consumers holding neutral or negative attitudes.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Attitude positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

Product Knowledge and Purchase Intention

Product knowledge refers to consumers' understanding of product characteristics, ingredients, certifications, quality attributes, usage, and environmental benefits.

Knowledge reduces uncertainty during purchasing decisions and enables consumers to differentiate genuine vegan products from misleading environmental claims. Consumers possessing greater product knowledge generally demonstrate higher confidence while purchasing sustainable products.

Previous studies indicate that product knowledge positively influences consumers' trust, environmental beliefs, and purchase intention. Familiarity with vegan certification, eco-labels, ingredients, and production processes strengthens consumers' confidence and reduces perceived purchase risk.

However, several studies conducted in emerging economies suggest that consumers often possess only partial knowledge regarding vegan products, limiting the translation of knowledge into actual purchase behaviour.

Therefore,

H2: Product knowledge positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

Self-Identity and Purchase Intention

Self-identity refers to the extent to which individuals perceive themselves as environmentally responsible or ethically conscious consumers.

Consumers frequently express their personal values through purchasing decisions. Individuals who identify themselves as environmentally conscious are more likely to purchase products consistent with their personal beliefs and moral values.

Environmental self-identity has been identified as a significant predictor of sustainable consumption, recycling behaviour, ethical purchasing, and green product adoption. Consumers increasingly use vegan products as symbolic representations of compassion, environmental responsibility, and healthy living.



Nevertheless, empirical findings remain inconsistent, particularly in developing countries where environmental identity has not fully translated into regular purchasing behaviour.

Therefore,

H3: Self-identity positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

Perceived Behavioural Control and Purchase Intention

Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC) represents consumers' perception of their ability to perform a specific behaviour. Within TPB, PBC reflects consumers' assessment of available resources, affordability, accessibility, knowledge, and convenience.

Consumers may possess favourable attitudes towards vegan products but still refrain from purchasing them due to high prices, limited retail availability, insufficient information, or lack of trustworthy certifications.

Previous studies report that higher perceived behavioural control positively influences consumers' purchase intention for sustainable apparel, organic food, and vegan cosmetics. Conversely, limited availability and high product prices reduce consumers' perceived control over purchasing decisions.

Accordingly,

H4: Perceived behavioural control positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

Environmental Concern and Purchase Intention

Environmental concern refers to consumers' awareness of environmental problems and their willingness to contribute towards environmental protection through responsible purchasing behaviour.

Environmental concern has emerged as one of the strongest determinants of green purchasing behaviour. Consumers increasingly recognize that purchasing environmentally sustainable products contributes to reducing pollution, conserving biodiversity, and minimizing carbon emissions.

Numerous empirical studies demonstrate that environmentally concerned consumers exhibit stronger intentions to purchase vegan food, sustainable apparel, and cruelty-free cosmetics. Environmental values often outweigh economic considerations when consumers perceive meaningful ecological benefits.

Consequently,

H5: Environmental concern positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

Consumer Knowledge and Purchase Intention

Consumer knowledge refers to the overall awareness consumers possess regarding vegan products, including availability, environmental benefits, health advantages, ethical aspects, certifications, and market accessibility.

Knowledge enables consumers to evaluate product claims objectively and minimizes uncertainty during purchasing decisions. Consumers possessing greater knowledge generally exhibit stronger confidence in selecting environmentally responsible products.

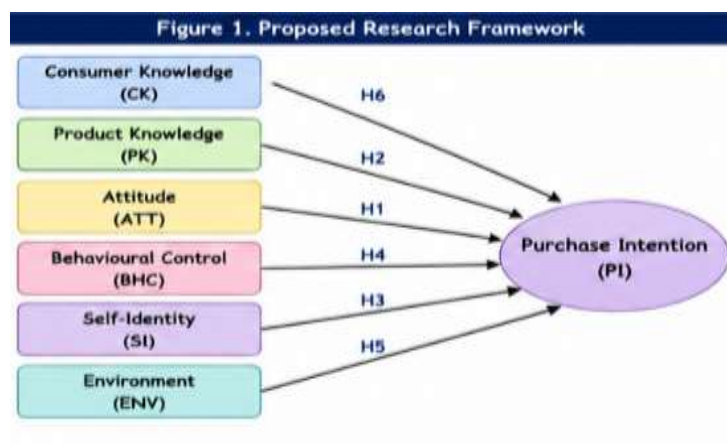
However, previous research also indicates that knowledge alone may not always result in purchasing behaviour unless accompanied by positive attitudes and favourable environmental values. Consumers may understand the benefits of vegan products but still avoid purchasing due to affordability constraints or convenience issues.

Therefore,

H6: Consumer knowledge positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and previous empirical studies, the present research proposes an extended conceptual framework in which six independent variables influence consumers' purchase intention towards vegan products.



Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Relationship	Expected Direction
H1	Attitude → Purchase Intention	Positive
H2	Product Knowledge → Purchase Intention	Positive
H3	Self-Identity → Purchase Intention	Positive
H4	Perceived Behavioural Control → Purchase Intention	Positive
H5	Environmental Concern → Purchase Intention	Positive
H6	Consumer Knowledge → Purchase Intention	Positive

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a **quantitative, cross-sectional research design** to investigate the determinants of consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products. The study was grounded in the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)** and extended by incorporating product knowledge, consumer knowledge, environmental concern, and self-identity as additional explanatory variables. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables the empirical examination of relationships among multiple latent constructs using statistical modelling.

Hypotheses Development

Based on previous literature, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H1: Attitude positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products.



H2: Product knowledge positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products.

H3: Self-identity positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products.

H4: Behavioural control positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products.

H5: Environmental concern positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products.

H6: Consumer knowledge positively influences consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products.

Instrument Development

The research instrument was developed using validated measurement scales adopted from previous studies.

Construct	Number of Items	Source
Consumer Knowledge	4	Kang et al. (2013)
Attitude	4	Kang et al. (2013)
Behavioural Control	5	Kang et al. (2013)
Self-Identity	4	Kang et al. (2013)
Environmental Concern	4	Chen and Deng (2016)
Product Knowledge	3	Chen and Deng (2016)
Purchase Intention	2	Chen and Deng (2016)

Initially, the questionnaire contained **31 measurement items**. Following reliability and validity assessment, **26 items** were retained for the final analysis after eliminating items with factor loadings below the recommended threshold.

All items were measured using a **five-point Likert scale**, ranging from **1 = Strongly Disagree** to **5 = Strongly Agree**.

Sampling and Data Collection

The target population comprised consumers aged 18 years and above, as they are capable of making independent purchasing decisions regarding vegan products.

Data were collected through an **online self-administered questionnaire** distributed via various social media platforms between 10 March and 1 May 2026.

Since respondents were recruited through online platforms, the sampling procedure used was **convenience sampling**.

A total of **266 responses** were collected. After screening for incomplete responses and multivariate outliers, **233 valid questionnaires** were retained for analysis.

Sample Profile

The final sample consisted of **233 respondents**.

Gender



- Female: 56%
- Male: 44%

Age

- Below 20 years: 11%
- 20–30 years: 59%
- 31–40 years: 12%
- Above 40 years: 18%

Education

- Doctorate: 5%
- Postgraduate: 43%
- Graduate: 38%
- Intermediate: 14%

Annual Income

- Below ₹5 lakh: 52%
- ₹5–10 lakh: 26%
- ₹10–15 lakh: 14%
- Above ₹15 lakh: 9%

The demographic profile indicates that the majority of respondents were young adults with undergraduate or postgraduate education, representing the primary consumer segment for sustainable lifestyle products.

Data Analysis Technique

The study employed **Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM)** using **SmartPLS** software.

The analysis followed the **two-step approach** recommended by Hair et al. (2022):

Stage I: Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated using:

- Indicator Reliability (Outer Loadings)
- Internal Consistency Reliability
 - Cronbach's Alpha
 - Composite Reliability (CR)
- Convergent Validity
 - Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
- Discriminant Validity
 - Fornell–Larcker Criterion
 - Cross Loadings

The acceptable thresholds adopted were:

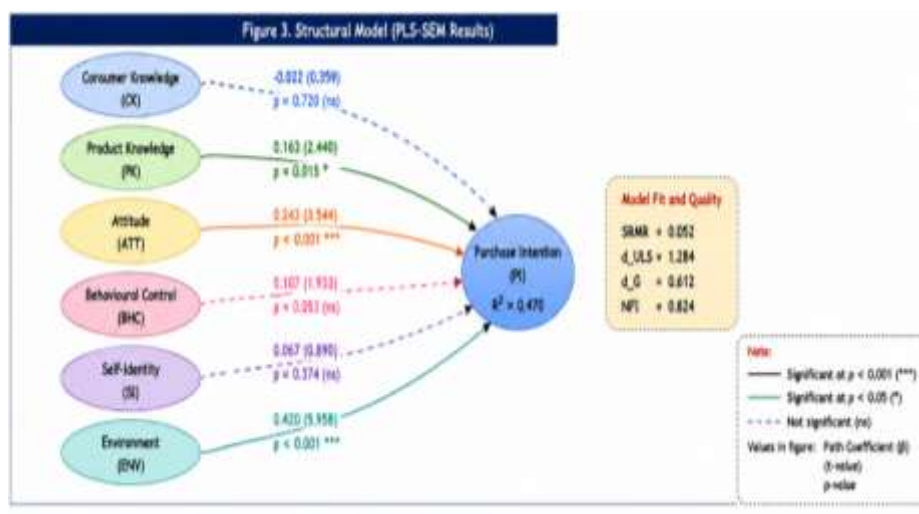
Criterion	Recommended Value
Factor Loading	>0.70 (acceptable >0.50)
Cronbach's Alpha	>0.70

Composite Reliability	>0.70
AVE	>0.50

Stage II: Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated using:

- Path coefficients (β)
- Bootstrapping with **5,000 subsamples**
- t-values
- p-values
- Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
- Coefficient of Determination (R^2)
- Effect Size (f^2)
- A significance level of **p < 0.05** was adopted for hypothesis testing.



Ethical Considerations

Participation in this study was voluntary, and respondents were informed that the survey was conducted solely for academic research purposes. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and anonymous. No personally identifiable information was requested during data collection, and respondents were free to discontinue their participation at any point before submitting the questionnaire. The collected data were used exclusively for research analysis.

Common Method Bias

Since all variables were measured using a single self-administered questionnaire, the possibility of common method bias (CMB) was assessed. Following the recommendations of Kock (2015), the full collinearity Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) approach was employed. The obtained inner VIF values ranged from **1.285 to 1.916**, remaining well below the recommended threshold of **3.3**. These findings indicate that common method bias is unlikely to have influenced the observed relationships among the study constructs.

RESULTS

Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was assessed using SmartPLS 4 by evaluating internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2022), Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were examined.



All constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of **0.70 for Composite Reliability** and **0.50 for AVE**, confirming satisfactory reliability and convergent validity.

Construct	Cronbach's α	Composite Reliability	AVE
Attitude	0.781	0.859	0.604
Behavioural Control	0.686	0.808	0.513
Consumer Knowledge	0.690	0.806	0.512
Environment	0.759	0.847	0.581
Product Knowledge	0.687	0.827	0.614
Purchase Intention	0.753	0.890	0.802
Self-Identity	0.791	0.864	0.615

The indicator loadings ranged between **0.614 and 0.901**, exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.60, thereby supporting indicator reliability.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was examined using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and cross-loading analysis. The square root of the AVE for each construct was greater than its corresponding inter-construct correlations, indicating adequate discriminant validity. Additionally, each measurement indicator exhibited its highest loading on the construct it was intended to measure, further confirming that the latent variables were empirically distinct.

Structural Model Assessment

Before hypothesis testing, multicollinearity was examined through Variance Inflation Factors (VIF).

The VIF values ranged between **1.285 and 1.916**, substantially below the recommended threshold of 3.3, indicating the absence of multicollinearity.

Bootstrapping with **5,000 resamples** was then performed to estimate the significance of structural relationships.

Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.243	3.544	<0.001	Supported
H2	Product Knowledge → Purchase Intention	0.163	2.440	0.015	Supported
H3	Self-Identity → Purchase Intention	0.067	0.890	0.374	Not Supported
H4	Behavioural Control → Purchase Intention	0.107	1.933	0.053	Not Supported*
H5	Environment → Purchase Intention	0.420	5.958	<0.001	Supported
H6	Consumer Knowledge → Purchase Intention	-0.022	0.359	0.720	Not Supported

Behavioural Control was significant only at the 10% level and therefore was treated as statistically non-significant at the conventional 5% significance level.



Hypothesis Testing Summary

The empirical analysis provides support for **three hypotheses (H1, H2, and H5)**.

Specifically,

- Attitude positively influences Purchase Intention.
- Product Knowledge positively influences Purchase Intention.
- Environmental Concern exerts the strongest positive influence on Purchase Intention.

Conversely,

- Self-Identity,
- Behavioural Control, and
- Consumer Knowledge

did not significantly predict purchase intention.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence that consumers' purchase intentions toward vegan products are primarily influenced by environmental concern, favourable attitudes, and product knowledge. Among all explanatory variables, environmental concern emerged as the strongest predictor, suggesting that sustainability considerations play a central role in shaping consumer decisions within the Indian vegan market. This result is consistent with previous studies that identified environmental awareness as a major determinant of green purchasing behaviour.

Attitude also demonstrated a statistically significant positive effect on purchase intention, indicating that consumers who perceive vegan products as beneficial for health, ethics, and environmental protection are more likely to express purchasing intentions. This observation reinforces the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which proposes attitude as one of the principal antecedents of behavioural intention.

Similarly, product knowledge positively influenced purchase intention. Consumers who possess greater familiarity with vegan labels, certifications, ingredients, and product attributes appear to experience lower purchase uncertainty and greater confidence in selecting vegan products. This finding supports earlier research suggesting that product-specific knowledge facilitates informed purchasing decisions.

In contrast, self-identity did not significantly predict purchase intention. Although previous studies have associated environmental self-identity with ethical consumption, the present findings suggest that Indian consumers may currently view vegan purchasing as a practical and environmentally motivated behaviour rather than an expression of personal identity.

Perceived behavioural control also failed to achieve statistical significance at the conventional 5% level. This result indicates that practical constraints, including product availability, affordability, and market accessibility, may continue to limit consumers' ability to translate favourable attitudes into purchasing intentions.

Likewise, consumer knowledge exhibited no significant effect on purchase intention. This suggests that general awareness of veganism alone is insufficient to motivate purchasing behaviour unless accompanied by positive attitudes, environmental concern, and adequate product-specific information. The distinction between general consumer awareness and product-specific knowledge represents an important theoretical contribution of this study.



CONCLUSION

This study investigated the determinants of consumers' purchase intention toward vegan products by extending the Theory of Planned Behaviour with additional cognitive and environmental variables. The empirical results indicate that environmental concern, attitude, and product knowledge significantly enhance consumers' intention to purchase vegan products, whereas behavioural control, self-identity, and consumer knowledge do not exert statistically significant effects.

Among all determinants, environmental concern emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the increasing importance of sustainability in consumer decision-making. These findings indicate that favourable environmental values and positive product perceptions are more influential than general awareness or personal identity in encouraging vegan consumption within the Indian market.

The study contributes to the sustainable consumption literature by providing empirical evidence from an emerging economy and demonstrates the usefulness of an extended TPB framework for explaining vegan purchase intentions.

Managerial Implications

The findings provide several practical implications for marketers, retailers, and policymakers.

First, marketing communication should emphasize the environmental benefits of vegan products because environmental concern emerged as the strongest determinant of purchase intention.

Second, retailers should invest in consumer education through transparent product labeling, certification logos, and awareness campaigns to improve product knowledge and reduce consumer uncertainty.

Third, manufacturers should focus on improving product accessibility and affordability, as perceived behavioural barriers continue to discourage wider adoption.

Fourth, policymakers may encourage sustainable consumption by promoting credible vegan certification systems and public awareness campaigns that increase consumer trust in vegan products.

Finally, businesses should position vegan products as environmentally responsible lifestyle choices rather than relying solely on ethical or identity-based appeals.

LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations.

First, the research employed a cross-sectional design, limiting causal inference.

Second, convenience sampling through online platforms restricts the generalizability of the findings.

Third, the sample primarily consisted of younger respondents from metropolitan areas, which may not adequately represent the broader Indian population.

Fourth, the study examined vegan products collectively without differentiating among product categories such as apparel, cosmetics, food, and footwear.

Finally, the research relied on self-reported responses, making the findings susceptible to common method bias despite the use of validated measurement scales.



Future Research

Future studies should employ longitudinal research designs to better understand changes in vegan purchasing behaviour over time.

Researchers may investigate specific vegan product categories separately, including apparel, cosmetics, footwear, and food products, to identify category-specific determinants.

Future research should incorporate additional constructs such as health consciousness, perceived value, trust, social influence, and moral obligation to improve explanatory power.

Comparative cross-country studies may also provide insights into cultural differences influencing vegan consumption behaviour.

Finally, future research should employ probability sampling techniques and larger sample sizes to improve the external validity of findings.

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