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Determinants of generation Z's organic food purchase intention: A study in urban Vietnam

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Abstract

The increasing interest in sustainable food consumption has garnered significant attention from both scholars and industry practitioners, particularly in understanding the motivations that drive Generation Z to purchase organic products. This study explores the multifaceted factors influencing their purchasing behavior and proposes a conceptual framework encompassing key constructs, including health consciousness, environmental awareness, price perception, social norms, attitudes toward organic products, social influence, and accessibility. A quantitative research approach was employed, with data collected from 300 Generation Z respondents residing in Ho Chi Minh City. The dataset was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4 software. The findings reveal that health consciousness, environmental awareness, perception-related factors, and external influences significantly shape Generation Z's preferences and purchasing behavior regarding organic food. This study contributes to the literature on sustainable consumer behavior by providing insights into the values and motivations of an emerging consumer segment in an urban context. Furthermore, it offers practical implications for enterprises and policymakers aiming to serve a health-conscious and environmentally aware demographic. The results also highlight the importance of addressing economic and societal factors in efforts to promote sustainable food purchasing behaviors in urban environments.

Keywords: Generation Z, Organic food consumption, Purchase intention, Vietnam.

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1. Introduction

The accelerated growth of the global economy has led to various environmental challenges, including shifts in climate patterns, rising global temperatures, and ozone layer depletion, all of which pose significant threats to societal well-being. A significant driver of these environmental issues is the continued reliance on unsustainable consumption behaviors and

production systems [1, 2]. Shifting lifestyles, coupled with increased income levels and heightened awareness of ecological concerns, have profoundly influenced consumer behavior, emphasizing health and environmental sustainability. As a result, consumer interest in organic products has grown significantly [3-5]. Organic foods can be described as agricultural products that are grown and processed without exposure to artificial substances, such as pesticides and synthetic fertilizers [6]. The unique qualities of these products stem from adherence to organic farming standards, superior nutrient content, and efforts to uphold environmental sustainability [7]. The industry of organic food has experienced significant growth worldwide, driven by economic opportunities and environmental concerns. Furthermore, the expansion of this sector has substantially contributed to raising public awareness about health and sustainability, encouraging shifts in purchasing behaviors that favor eco-friendly options [8]. Generation Z, commonly defined as those born between 1997 and 2012, has been profoundly shaped by advancements in digital technology and contemporary communication channels. Their immersion in digital environments has strongly influenced their consumption patterns while fostering a deeper understanding of global issues, including health risks and environmental sustainability. According to Hoxha [9], their widespread access to online resources has fostered a deeper awareness of important topics such as food safety and the impacts of industrial farming practices. This increased knowledge has driven their preference for organic products, which they perceive as vital for maintaining personal well-being and supporting ecological balance. Francis and Hoefel [10] report that over 80% of Generation Z consumers express a preference for supporting businesses that demonstrate a strong concern for social safety and environmental conservation, marking a notable shift in consumer values. In Vietnam, Generation Z has become an influential group shaping the consumer landscape amid rapid economic growth. Despite the country's rich agricultural heritage, the organic farming sector remains relatively small, occupying less than 1% of the total agricultural land [11]. Organic products occupy a niche market, fulfilling daily consumer needs and signaling potential for growth as public awareness of health and environmental concerns continues to increase. However, quality assurance and distinguishing genuine products persist. Organic products are typically priced 20% to 40% higher than conventional alternatives, which contributes to consumer doubts regarding their authenticity Le et al. [12]. Nguyen and Truong [13] stressed that insufficient labeling and certification standards undermine consumer confidence and hinder purchase intentions. In addition, social influences, including peer relationships and family expectations, play a major role in the food preferences of Generation Z. Therefore, it is critical to identify the key drivers behind this generation's decision to buy organic food, as this knowledge is vital for both academic research and for guiding manufacturers and marketers in designing strategies that appeal to this influential consumer group. The purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of key factors that shape the motivation to purchase organic food among Generation Z in Ho Chi Minh City. This study investigates the multifaceted factors influencing purchasing decisions and proposes a conceptual framework, including the influence of health consciousness, environmental consciousness, and price perception on attitudes towards organic food. It also examines the impact of subjective norms, attitudes towards organic food, perceived behavioral control, social influence, and the availability of organic food on purchase intention. The primary hypotheses test how these antecedents individually and collectively shape Generation Z's intention to purchase organic food in an emerging market context. The findings will inform business and marketing strategies within the economic environment of Ho Chi Minh City. Increased awareness is expected to promote more sustainable purchasing behaviors and encourage responsible consumption among this group. Additionally, this research addresses current gaps in the body of knowledge regarding Generation Z's perceptions and attitudes towards organic food. The study aims to provide valuable, actionable insights for industry stakeholders. By aligning marketing strategies with the values and priorities of this generation, businesses will be better positioned to effectively engage Generation Z consumers. This approach has significant potential to stimulate the expansion of the organic food industry while promoting healthier, more environmentally responsible consumption habits.

The increasing interest in organic food consumption has led to a growing body of research focused on consumers' purchasing behaviors regarding organic products [14]. Despite extensive studies over the past two decades, a consistent and unified understanding of the factors that influence consumers' willingness to pay for organic food remains elusive [15].

The global organic food market has been rapidly expanding, particularly in emerging economies facing significant environmental challenges and unsustainable consumption patterns [16, 17]. This shift in demand has sparked further research, as food consumption is recognized for its direct impact on both environmental sustainability and individual health [16]. However, much of the previous research has concentrated on developed economies, such as the US and Western Europe [18-22], leaving a notable gap in understanding consumer behavior in emerging markets, where the organic food sector is still in its infancy and consumer knowledge is limited [16, 17, 23, 24]. In Vietnam, the organic food market is still in its early stages, similar to many other emerging economies. However, with the growing demand and supply of organic food, the topic has attracted increasing research attention [16, 25, 26]. Economic reforms in Vietnam have transformed the marketing landscape, influencing consumer values, attitudes, and behaviors. In Vietnam, as in other Asian emerging economies, there exists a blend of traditional values, norms, and beliefs alongside modern influences imported from more developed countries due to economic transitions [27]. Understanding how this blend impacts consumer behavior is essential for gaining insights into organic food consumption in such contexts [27].

2. Methodology

2.1. Sampling Method and Data Collection

A quantitative research approach has been chosen for this study to evaluate the factors influencing Generation Z's decision to purchase organic food. This approach is especially appropriate, offering a structured framework to examine predefined assumptions and evaluate the relationships among key elements, including health awareness, environmental consciousness, and social influence.

This study used a structured framework for sample selection as proposed by Churchill and Iacobucci [28]. To conduct an effective Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the participant-to-item ratio must be maintained at least 5:1 [29, 30]. This study incorporated 45 items observed in the questionnaires, thus requiring a minimum sample size of 225 respondents. Furthermore, Comrey and Lee [31] provided a scale for assessing sample adequacy, categorizing sample sizes of 50, 100, 200, and 300 as very poor, poor, fair, and good. Therefore, to achieve a sample size classified as "good," this study targeted 300 respondents, facilitating regression analysis. The study focused specifically on individuals in the younger generation. This demographic group is particularly important as it represents a significant consumer segment whose organic food purchasing intention merits investigation. To enrich the data collected, the sample will include a diverse set of demographic variables, including gender, socioeconomic status, and academic major. This comprehensive approach will allow for an in-depth analysis of how these factors influence the purchasing intention process regarding organic food purchases, offering a meaningful understanding of the preferences and driving factors influencing Generation Z consumers.

2.2. Pilot study

A pilot study was initially conducted to ensure the questionnaire's practicality before large-scale implementation. This preliminary phase aimed to assess the questionnaire's feasibility in real-world conditions, evaluate associated costs, identify potential risks, and estimate the minimum time required for survey completion. Following the guidelines provided by Isaac and Michael [32] suggests a pilot sample size was 10 to 30 participants; this study involved 20 respondents. The results of the pilot study were positive: all 20 participants indicated they had no difficulties understanding or completing the survey items. Additionally, there were no reports of ambiguities, confusion, or unforeseen issues that would necessitate further adjustments. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the questionnaire is comprehensible and well-suited to the target audience. The main survey will, therefore, proceed on a larger scale without modification.

2.3. Data Analysis

After data collection, sample characteristics, including response rates, demographic information, and basic descriptive statistics, were analyzed to better understand the key demographic characteristics of the respondents. Data were calculated using the SMARTPLS 4 software. The analysis steps in this study were as follows: First, the validity and reliability of the scales were assessed to ensure that the measurement instruments accurately reflected the research concepts and demonstrated high stability. Next, a common method variance test was conducted to identify and minimize the influence of any unwanted factors during the data collection process. Then, model fit was assessed to test the appropriateness of the research model to the collected data. Finally, regression analysis was performed to explore the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, providing empirical evidence to support or refute the hypotheses proposed in the study.

2.4. Measurement Scale

Table 1.
Measurement Items with some modifications.

Construct and Code	Item code	Items with modification	References
Health consciousness	HC1	"I choose food carefully to ensure good health."	Tarkiainen and Sundqvist [33]
	HC2	"I am concerned about health hazards and try to take action to prevent them"	Guilabert and Wood [34]
	HC3	"I try to prevent health problems before I feel any symptoms."	
	HC4	"I try to protect myself against the health hazards I hear about"	
	HC5	"I am concerned about the nutritional value of foods."	
Environmental consciousness	EC1	"Consuming organic food "reduces soil pollution."	Al-Swidi et al. [35]
	EC2	"Consuming organic food "reduces the use of herbicides and pesticides in agriculture"	
	EC3	"Consuming organic food "reduces the amount of chemicals that run off into lakes and watercourses"	
	EC4	"I practice environmental conservation tasks (environmental conservation) like putting trash in the bin."	Gil et al. [36]
	EC5	"I prefer consuming recycled products (recycled products consumption)"	
Price perception	PP1	"Organic food is considered a good buy."	Petrick [37]
	PP2	"This product is worth the money."	
	PP3	"It is fairly priced."	
	PP4	"At the price shown, the product is economical."	
	PP5	Organic food "appeared to be a good bargain."	

Table 1.
Measurement Items with some modifications (continued).

Construct and Code	Item code	Items with modification	References
Subjective norms	SN1	"The trend of buying organic food among people around me is increasing."	Al-Swidi et al. [35]
	SN2	"People around me generally believe that it is better for health to use organic food."	
	SN3	"My close friends and family members would appreciate it if I bought organic food."	
	SN4	"I would get all the required support (money, time, information related) from friends and family."	
Perceived Behavioral Control	PBC1	"I have the financial capability to buy organic food."	Al-Swidi et al. [35]
	PBC2	"I have the time to go buy organic food."	
	PBC3	"I have complete information and awareness regarding where to buy organic food."	
	PBC4	"Organic food, such as vegetables and meat, is generally available in the shops where I usually purchase food."	
	PBC5	"Buying organic food would require extra Effort."	Dean et al. [38]
	PBC6	"I can make a decision independently to buy organic food."	
Attitudes towards organic food	AT1	Organic foods "have superior quality"	Gil et al. [36]
	AT2	Organic food is tastier	
	AT3	Organic "food is healthier"	
	AT4	Organic food is more expensive."	
	AT5	Organic food is more attractive than conventional food.	
	AT6	Organic food "has minimum or no harmful effects"	
	AT7	Organic food is in "fashion"	
Social influence	SI1	"Most people who are important to me think I should purchase" organic food "products when going to purchase	Mei et al. [39] and Bhukya and Paul [40]
	SI2	"Most people who are important to me would want me to purchase" organic products "when going to purchase"	
	SI3	"I learn so much about environmental issues from people who are important to me."	
	SI4	"I often buy" organic products "with people who are important to me"	
	SI5	"I often share information regarding" organic products "with people who are important to me."	
Availability of organic food	AV1	Organic food "has minimum or no harmful effects"	Slamet et al. [41]
	AV2	"It is not difficult to find and buy organic food products	
	AV3	"I can find stores selling" organic food "in my neighborhood."	
Purchase intention of organic food	PI1	When purchasing organic food in the future, "I will pay more attention to whether or not it has been produced "Greenly."	Müller and Gaus [42]
	PI2	"If I have a choice when purchasing food, I prefer organic products to conventional products."	
	PI3	I will purchase organic food "more often in the future than I do at present"	
	PI4	"I am willing to buy" organic food "on a regular basis."	Al-Swidi et al. [35]
	PI5	"I would look for specialty shops to buy" organic food	

3. Results

3.1. Sample Demographic

The demographic profile of the participants provides a clear and well-balanced representation of Generation Z, aligning with the research's target group. In terms of age, the study focuses on individuals aged 18–27, with the largest portion belonging to the 18–22 age range (55.33%), followed by the 23–27 age range (44.67%). Participants younger than 18 and older than 27 were excluded to ensure the data reflects the intended demographic. Regarding gender, 53.33% of respondents were male, and 46.67% were female, presenting a fairly equal distribution between both sexes. As for income, 43.33% of respondents earn between 5–10 million VND, followed by 36.66% earning below 5 million VND, 16.67% in the 10–20 million VND category, and 3.34% earning more than 20 million VND. This suggests a predominance of low-to middle-income earners within Generation Z. In terms of educational level, 80.67% hold undergraduate degrees, while smaller groups consist of those with high school diplomas (10%), advanced degrees (8%), and below high school education (1.33%).

3.2. Measurement Model Evaluation

Henseler et al. [43] state that Cronbach's alpha index is employed to assess the scales' reliability. The Cronbach's alpha value needs to be higher than 0.7 to guarantee that the measurement indicators are highly dependable. Indicators will be removed from consideration in further analysis phases if this value does not meet the dependability criteria. This ensures that the study's scales accurately represent the variables under examination. The indices PP5 and PBC4 failed to reach this cutoff and were consequently removed. Except for the AV variable, which had a Cronbach's α of 0.719, all other factors had Cronbach's α values above 0.8 after these indices were eliminated from the study. All constructs demonstrated composite reliability (Rho_c) values exceeding 0.7, indicating a high degree of internal consistency. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all components were greater than the required cutoff of 0.5, confirming that convergent validity was adequately satisfied.

Table 2.
Measurement Items with some modifications.

Latent variables	Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Rho_A	CR	AVE
	Threshold			≥ 0.6	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.5
Attitudes towards organic food (AT)	AT1	3.953	0.933	0.891	0.894	0.915	0.606
	AT2	3.903	0.868				
	AT3	3.727	0.934				
	AT4	3.997	0.904				
	AT5	3.963	0.932				
	AT6	4.117	0.885				
	AT7	4.123	0.895				
Availability of organic food (AV)	AV1	4.59	0.713				
	AV2	4.443	0.726				
	AV3	4.33	0.767	0.719	0.73	0.841	0.639
Environmental consciousness (EC)	EC1	4.03	0.866				
	EC2	3.987	0.909				
	EC3	3.89	0.835				
	EC4	3.7	0.971				
	EC5	3.873	0.947	0.854	0.863	0.895	0.632
Health consciousness (HC)	HC1	4.123	0.866				
	HC2	4.103	0.909				
	HC3	4.22	0.835				
	HC4	4.067	0.971				
	HC5	4.057	0.92	0.854	0.863	0.895	0.632
Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)	PBC1	3.997	0.896	0.817	0.822	0.872	0.578
	PBC2	4.03	0.862				
	PBC3	3.983	0.94				
	PBC5	3.89	0.882				
	PBC6	4.13	0.891				
Purchase intention of organic food (PI)	PI1	4.06	0.925	0.864	0.866	0.902	0.647
	PI2	4.183	0.874				
	PI3	4.123	0.935				
	PI4	4.187	0.908				
	PI5	4.153	0.907				

Note: CR: composite reliability; AVE: average variance extracted.

Table 2.
Measurement Items with some modifications (continued).

Latent variables	Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Rho_A	CR	AVE
	Threshold			≥ 0.6	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.5
Price perception (PP)	PP1	4.17	0.906	0.85	0.866	0.898	0.688
	PP2	4.157	0.919				
	PP3	4.117	0.874				
	PP4	4.2	0.891				
Social influence (SI)	SI1	4.113	0.92	0.865	0.881	0.902	0.649
	SI2	4.087	0.894				
	SI3	4.003	0.877				
	SI4	4.113	0.959				
	SI5	4.18	0.868				
Subjective norms (SN)	SN1	3.91	0.946	0.893	0.893	0.925	0.756
	SN2	3.823	0.937				
	SN3	3.707	0.898				
	SN4	3.803	0.915				

Note: CR: composite reliability; AVE: average variance extracted.

To assess discriminant validity, this study follows the HTMT approach proposed by Henseler et al. [44]. The HTMT guideline stipulates that the average correlations between items from different constructs should not exceed 0.85 when compared to the average correlations within a single construct [44]. As shown in the data presented in Table 3, all values are below 0.7, confirming the discriminant validity.

Table 3.
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

	AT	AV	EC	HC	PBC	PI	PP	SI	SN
AT									
AV	0.382								
EC	0.573	0.479							
HC	0.455	0.577	0.56						
PBC	0.886	0.404	0.563	0.459					
PI	0.806	0.519	0.552	0.532	0.788				
PP	0.588	0.481	0.589	0.482	0.62	0.645			
SI	0.819	0.533	0.615	0.531	0.812	0.878	0.708		
SN	0.697	0.289	0.573	0.403	0.777	0.682	0.67	0.718	

3.3. Structural Model Evaluation

After evaluating the structural model, I analyzed the path coefficients using PLS-SEM, based on a sample of 5,000 participants, incorporating bootstrapping to assess the statistical significance of the relationships between constructs. The findings in Table 4 confirm significant relationships for hypotheses H1, H2, H3, H6, H7, and H8, all with significance levels below 1%. For example, the path coefficient for EC and AT (H2) is 0.281, with a t-statistic of 4.57, supporting this hypothesis. However, H4 and H5, examining the effects of SN and PBC on PI of organic food, were not supported. The path coefficients for H4 (0.092, t-statistic = 1.759) and H5 (0.098, t-statistic = 1.454) suggest these relationships were not significant. The path coefficient for SI on PI of organic food (H7) is strong (0.428, t-statistic = 6.872), emphasizing the significant role of social influence in shaping purchasing behavior.

Table 4.
Structural model estimation.

Hypothesised paths	β	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	*ρ*	*Results*
H1: HC -> AT	0.133	0.067	1.975	0.048***	Supported
H2: EC -> AT	0.281	0.061	4.57	0***	Supported
H3: PP -> AT	0.33	0.063	5.208	0***	Supported
H4: SN -> PI	0.092	0.052	1.759	0.079	Unsupported
H5: PBC -> PI	0.098	0.067	1.454	0.146	Unsupported
H6: AT -> PI	0.239	0.075	3.178	0.001***	Supported
H7: SI -> PI	0.428	0.062	6.872	0***	Supported
H8: AV -> PI	0.107	0.039	2.708	0.007***	Supported

3.4. Mediation Effects Analysis

The findings highlight notable indirect effects within specific relationships in the study. Specifically, EC has a positive indirect effect on PI through AT, as shown by a path coefficient of 0.067, a T statistic of 2.514, and a P value of 0.012, supporting the hypothesis of full mediation. In contrast, the role of AT as a bridge between HC and PI is not supported, with a path coefficient of 0.032 and a P value of 0.115, indicating no statistically significant mediating effect. The analysis showed that PP positively influenced PI through AT, with a path coefficient of 0.079, a T statistic of 2.766, and a P value of 0.006, confirming full mediation in this context. These findings underscore the complexity of mediation effects and highlight the essential role of AT in shaping PI, especially in the context of EC and PP.

Table 5.
Indirect effect testing.

Hypothesised paths	**β**	**Standard Deviation**	**T Statistics**	***ρ***	***Results***	***Mediator Type***
EC -> AT -> PI	0.067	0.027	2.514	0.012	Supported	Full mediation
HC -> AT -> PI	0.032	0.02	1.575	0.115	Unsupported	
PP -> AT -> PI	0.079	0.029	2.766	0.006	Supported	Full mediation

4. Discussion

In this research, the results obtained proved several hypotheses, including H1, H2, H3, H6, H7, and H8. They highlight the influence of various factors on the decision-making process of younger consumers when choosing sustainably produced food options in Vietnam. The findings demonstrate that aspects such as awareness of health consciousness, environmental consciousness, perceptions, and external influences play a pivotal role in shaping preferences and behaviors. These results resonate with earlier studies, including those by Tarkiainen and Sundqvist [33] and Kareklas et al. [45], which emphasize the importance of personal and ecological considerations in shaping attitudes toward the consumption of organic products. However, differences in context and demographics reveal notable variations in the strength of these relationships. For example, Tarkiainen and Sundqvist [33] conducted their research in regions where the market for organic goods is well-established, and consumer familiarity with the benefits of such products is high. In contrast, the current study focuses on Vietnam, a market taking steps to develop, where younger generations are only beginning to recognize the importance of sustainable food choices. While ecological and personal well-being factors influence decisions, their impact appears less pronounced compared to findings in more mature markets. This divergence underscores the significance of social, cultural, and economic contexts in shaping the priorities and purchasing behaviors of emerging consumer segments.

Building on findings from the study of Kareklas et al. [45], this research similarly highlights the importance of health and environmental awareness in shaping consumer attitudes toward organic food purchase intentions. However, there are notable distinctions regarding the sample groups. While Kareklas et al. [45] concentrated on adult consumers who exhibit established purchasing habits and consistent food preferences, this study targets younger demographics, particularly Generation Z. This group is typically characterized by lower income levels and a tendency to make decisions influenced by emotions and market trends, resulting in more dynamic and fluctuating purchase behaviors. For Generation Z, factors such as the perceived value of organic products and the impact of social influence appear to hold greater significance compared to the patterns observed in the adult consumer group studied by Kareklas et al. [45].

Additionally, this research underscores two critical factors influencing Generation Z's organic food purchase intentions: perceived value and availability of organic food. These elements represent a departure from the previous findings of Tarkiainen and Sundqvist [33] study, which placed less emphasis on their role in decision-making. The results reveal that from a Generation Z perspective, perceived value and availability of organic food are not just relevant but play a pivotal role in shaping purchasing habits and influencing behavioral intentions. This trend is particularly relevant in a competitive landscape driven by pricing strategies, innovative marketing approaches, and seamless access to products, factors that businesses can leverage to appeal to this demographic's buying intentions.

The findings indicate that a positive attitude plays an important role in bridging how other factors, such as environmental consciousness and price, surrounding customers will affect their perceptions, leading to purchasing intention. The importance of these factors suggests that customers who show a strong awareness of environmental issues and perceive organic products as affordable tend to develop a positive attitude towards these organic products, which aligns with the research of Kriwy and Mecking [46], Ghali-Zinoubi and Toukabri [47], Prakash et al. [48**]** and Hwang and Chung [49]. However, although health consciousness is expected to be a strong influencer of attitude, leading to purchasing intention through attitude, the survey results do not support this, which is also supported by the study of Michaelidou and Hassan [50]. This reflects that health consciousness is not a key factor in creating a positive consumer attitude of Generation Z towards the organic food market in Vietnam. This suggests that, for the factors influencing attitude leading to purchasing intention, marketers should focus on communicating environmental benefits, and price perception should be given more priority. Businesses can cultivate deeper consumer engagement and promote sustainable purchasing practices.

However, the empirical analysis showed that hypotheses H4 and H5 were not supported, which contradicts the theoretical foundations formulated in the Theory of Planned Behavior [51] and the research extended by Irianto [52]. According to Ajzen [51] Subjective Norms and Behavioral Control are considered to be two of the core factors that strongly influence intention. The above theories imply that the influence of social norms, combined with the feeling of personal behavioral control and the perception of health benefits, will form a positive attitude leading to purchase intention. However, the results from this study did not demonstrate similar relationships in the consumption habits of the Vietnamese

market for the Generation Z customer group. These findings show that both factors do not have as strong an impact on purchase intention as expected, suggesting significant differences in cultural aspects as well as the development status of the organic food market in developing economies such as Vietnam. This particularly emphasizes the need to adapt theoretical models when applied to specific cultures and economic contexts.

The difference between hypotheses and the consumption phenomenon in Ho Chi Minh City can be explained through customer habits when choosing food and the socio-cultural characteristics of the locality. In Western cultures, consumers tend to focus on individual decisions. In contrast, in an economic market like Ho Chi Minh City in a developing country like Vietnam, consumer culture is highly collective. Contributions from family, friends, and the media are often considered strong factors in creating shopping trends.

In addition to cultural factors, differences in the way customers approach consumer behavior are also very important factors. Vietnamese customers tend to spend on shopping at traditional markets or through street vendors, where it is easy to negotiate prices and convenience is prioritized. In contrast, in developed countries, shopping mainly takes place at reputable supermarkets, where health assurance and product brands are more important. This consumer behavior reflects the difficulty for organic products in Vietnam to be as easily accessible to consumers as in Western countries. This leads to factors such as food availability and price becoming more important in driving purchase intention, surpassing health awareness or social influence.

4.1. Theoretical Implications

This study provides a valuable contribution to the existing literature on the topic of organic food purchase intention among Generation Z consumers. It differentiates itself from previous research that primarily addresses businesses and stakeholders by focusing on the impact on consumers, specifically Generation Z. The earlier model, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which mainly concentrated on behavioral intentions, has been further expanded and developed by Irianto [52]. This extension highlights the unique motivations of Generation Z, who prioritize sustainability and health when making purchase decisions. Additionally, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on factors influencing Generation Z consumers' intention to purchase organic food. While previous studies have explored various influences, such as health consciousness or perceived behavioral likelihood, the impact of perceived price and product availability on purchase intention has not been fully explored. Our study addresses this gap by examining how these factors interact with purchase intention, contributing to the knowledge base and providing more important considerations in decision-making about future business strategies. Furthermore, our model aligns with recommendations in the literature that advocate for a consumer-centric approach to studying organic food consumption [8]. By including mediating factors such as social influence and perceived value, we present a holistic framework that can inform future research in this field. This alignment with influential works strengthens the relevance and applicability of our findings within the broader scope of consumer behavior research.

Moreover, the theoretical frameworks utilized in this study, including the Theory of Planned Behavior and Irianto's extension, allow for a deeper examination of the relationships among key constructs that influence purchase intentions. By contrasting our model with prior theoretical approaches, we clearly highlight the roles of independent, mediating, and outcome variables. For instance, while traditional models tend to emphasize direct links between attitudes and intentions, our research further elaborates on how health consciousness and environmental consciousness mediate these relationships, providing a richer understanding of the underlying dynamics. Ultimately, this research makes a significant contribution to the existing body of literature by analyzing these dynamics within the specific context of Vietnam, a developing nation facing unique challenges related to organic food production and consumption [11]. This contextual focus allows us to explore how cultural and economic factors shape Generation Z's purchasing behavior, offering a perspective that distinguishes our findings from those conducted in more developed countries.

4.2. Practical Implications

Our research provides four essential practical insights for stakeholders in the organic food market, specifically aimed at enhancing the purchasing intentions of Generation Z.

First, businesses should highlight the benefits they can bring to customers that they care about, such as health and the environment. Our findings show a significant correlation between health promotion and environmental concerns and consumers' intention to use and consume organic products. By adopting transparent marketing strategies that highlight these benefits, companies can build trust with consumers and foster brand loyalty, ultimately driving sales among Generation Z.

In addition, enhancing the distribution and ease of access to organic products is essential. Our research demonstrates that ease of access directly impacts consumer purchasing behavior, making it essential for businesses to invest in expanding distribution networks. Forming collaborations with neighborhood shops, fresh produce markets, and online retail services can significantly contribute to improving the reach and cost-effectiveness of organic food choices for budget-conscious consumers. This strategy is key to stimulating demand and promoting growth in the organic food sector.

Thirdly, it is crucial to involve policymakers in creating a supportive environment for organic food consumption. Advocating policies that encourage organic farming and provide incentives for sustainable agricultural practices can have a significant impact on market dynamics. By offering financial support to organic producers and launching awareness initiatives highlighting the advantages of organic foods, policymakers can enable consumers to make better-informed purchasing choices and stimulate growth within the industry.

Lastly, leveraging social influence is essential for boosting Generation Z's purchasing intentions. Companies should design marketing campaigns that encourage peer recommendations and testimonials; social factors significantly influence consumer behavior, shaping the decisions individuals make in their purchasing journeys. Engaging local influencers and fostering community engagement through workshops or social media campaigns can effectively capitalize on social influence, making organic food more appealing to young consumers.

5. Limitations and Future Research

This study has identified certain limitations that need to be addressed and improved upon when presenting the findings in the paper. First, the sampling method used may limit the scope for generalization of the results. Since the study focused primarily on Generation Z consumers in the Ho Chi Minh City economic area, the findings may not fully capture the impact of attitudes and intentions in other areas or across different demographic groups. Future studies may consider expanding the sample size to include more geographic areas and age groups. Additionally, since organic food consumption is influenced by external factors affecting consumers, including cultural, social, and financial factors, it would be valuable to examine organic food purchase intentions in other regions or countries. This could help develop more comprehensive substantive explorations of the factors shaping consumer decisions in different economic contexts. Furthermore, the use of self-reported data through surveys may introduce biases, as respondents' answers could be influenced by their emotional state, personal opinions, or social desirability bias; thus, future studies might adopt mixed-methods approaches, incorporating qualitative tools such as interviews or focus group discussions. Additionally, this study utilized survey questions that were translated from English to Vietnamese, which may have introduced some limitations in understanding. Certain nuances or meanings may not have been fully captured in translation, potentially affecting participants' interpretations of the questions. Therefore, future studies should ensure that questions are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the target population to improve clarity and relevance. Moreover, this study concentrated exclusively on Generation Z, leaving out insights from older generations. Future research should consider a comparative analysis across different age cohorts, such as Generation Y and Baby Boomers, to identify generational differences in purchasing intentions toward organic food. This broader perspective would provide valuable insights into how various demographics engage with organic products. Lastly, to enhance the precision of measurements, future research should incorporate additional factors that could affect purchasing intentions, including brand loyalty, marketing tactics, and the influence of social media. Broadening the research by including a larger participant pool and prolonging the timeline for gathering data would enhance the reliability and coherence of the findings.

6. Conclusion

This study examines the factors that influence the purchasing intentions of Generation Z regarding organic food products in Ho Chi Minh City. Key aspects analyzed include consumer awareness related to health, environmental consciousness, price perception, and social influence. The findings indicate that environmental consciousness and price perception are significant concerns for the surveyed consumers. However, contrary to initial hypotheses, health consciousness does not demonstrate a strong correlation with purchasing intentions. This discrepancy underscores notable differences in consumer culture and the food consumption market in Vietnam, where price sensitivity and convenience exert a more pronounced influence.

The cultural and economic context in Vietnam plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes that influence purchasing intentions among Generation Z. Variations in consumption habits, such as reliance on traditional markets or purchases from street vendors and supermarkets, significantly impact organic food choices. While Western cultures prioritize individual decision-making and autonomy in consumption, Vietnamese consumers demonstrate greater susceptibility to social influences and adherence to traditional purchasing practices. For businesses seeking to penetrate the organic food market in Vietnam, a tailored approach is essential. Companies should develop advertising campaigns that resonate with local cultural norms and market dynamics. Implementing competitive pricing strategies, alongside enhancing the accessibility of organic products through traditional markets, supermarkets, and e-commerce platforms, can provide a substantial competitive advantage. Furthermore, emphasizing the health benefits of organic food consumption can foster brand trust and incentivize consumers to adopt organic products.

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