

The Roles of Brand Trust and Attitude in Indonesian Gen Z Plant-Based Food Purchases

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyze how perceived value, self-efficacy, and social influences affect attitudes and brand trust, and how these factors impact the online purchase intention for plant-based foods among Generation Z in Batam City.

Research Methodology: This study employs a quantitative approach and purposive sampling. The sample consisted of 223 Generation Z consumers in Batam City who had purchased plant-based food online. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS.

Results: Perceived value significantly influences attitude, and self-efficacy significantly influences brand trust. Furthermore, only attitude has been proven to have a significant effect on online purchase intention. On the other hand, social influence did not affect attitude; perceived value did not affect brand trust; and brand trust did not significantly influence online purchase intention.

Conclusions: These findings indicate that, in the context of plant-based foods, fostering positive internal attitudes among consumers is far more crucial for driving online purchase intent than relying solely on external social influences or brand trust.

Limitations: This study's limitations include the absence of other variables, such as electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), and the research's scope, which remains limited to Batam City.

Contributions: This study contributes to the understanding of digital marketing strategies, particularly in the field of plant-based foods, by targeting Generation Z. This contribution is important for marketers, food companies, and researchers in management and marketing disciplines to develop more effective strategies in building positive attitudes, brand trust, and online purchase intent.

Keywords: *Attitude, Brand Trust, Online Purchase Intent, Perceived Value, Social Influence*

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1. Introduction

Currently, global developments in the digital and healthcare worlds are driving a shift in people's consumption patterns toward more sustainable, healthy lifestyles. One form of such change is the increasing interest in plant-based foods. This trend is seen as a modern and environmentally friendly alternative to a healthy lifestyle (Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024). In addition, it also increases

public awareness of health, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare by encouraging the growth of plant-based food consumption in Indonesia ([Hebbbar, Kamath, Mathew, & Kamath, 2020](#)). On the other hand, the development of digital technology has also brought significant changes in consumer behavior when buying food products ([Watanabe, Alfinito, Curvelo, & Hamza, 2020](#)). However, the increase in interest has not been fully followed by consistent purchasing decisions. Many consumers remain hesitant to make plant-based foods their primary choice in their daily diet, suggesting a gap between their interests and their actual behavior. This problem is influenced by various consumer considerations, both internal and external, as well as the assessment of the products offered. In addition, differences in attitudes towards plant-based foods also affect purchasing decisions.

Therefore, further studies are needed to understand the factors that influence the decision to purchase vegetarian foods ([Chen, 2022](#)). It is because consumers believe that this digital transformation facilitates access, time efficiency, and the availability of various product choices, which ultimately makes this method an easy way to conduct transactions among the public, especially Generation Z ([Inês & Moreira, 2023](#)). One factor that can affect it is consumer self-efficacy. Self-efficacy reflects an individual's confidence in their ability to perform a specific action, such as making online purchasing decisions. Consumers with high self-efficacy tend to be more confident in seeking product information, evaluating available options, and making online purchases ([Wang, Yeh, & Liao, 2013](#)). In addition, the factors that influence the purchase decision are perceived value or the perceived value of a product ([Hartanti, Arinastuti, & Wijayanto, 2025](#)).

Perceived value is the consumer's evaluation of the benefits obtained relative to the sacrifices incurred. The higher the value consumers feel for a product, the more likely they are to have a positive attitude towards it ([Watanabe et al., 2020](#)). Other factors that affect the purchase decision include social influence ([Venter, Cheng, & Truter, 2024](#)). In today's social media era, opinions from friends, family, and influencers can influence consumer perception of a product. Recommendations from the social environment are often an important consideration in shaping consumer attitudes and increasing brand trust ([Tanjung & Keni, 2023](#)).

Trust in the brand is also an important factor in influencing purchasing decisions ([Faber, Rini, Schouteten, & Perez-Cueto, 2024](#)). Brand trust is related to the level of consumer confidence in a product, which is judged by its quality, its advantages, and the brand itself ([Dionita & Albari, 2024](#)). In the context of online purchasing, Attitude or consumer attitudes reflect positive or negative evaluations of a product ([Monaco, Kotz, Allmeta, Purnhagen, & König, 2024](#)). Consumers with a positive attitude and high trust in a brand tend to have a stronger intention to purchase ([Meliana, 2024](#)).

Previous studies have examined several factors related to consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward food products ([Watanabe et al., 2020](#); [Wang et al., 2013](#); [Venter et al., 2024](#); [Faber et al., 2024](#); [Meliana, 2024](#)). Consequently, the relationships among perceived value, self-efficacy, and social influence and their indirect effects through attitude and brand trust in online plant-based food purchasing remain insufficiently explored.

This gap is particularly relevant for Generation Z consumers in Batam City, whose purchasing activities are closely connected to digital platforms. Previous research has not sufficiently examined how these internal and external factors operate together in the context of online plant-based food purchases among Gen Z consumers in Batam. Therefore, this study integrates perceived value, self-efficacy, and social influence into a single PLS-SEM framework and examines attitude and brand trust as mediating variables. This approach provides empirical insight into whether the factors identified in previous studies remain relevant when applied simultaneously to online plant-based food purchasing among Generation Z consumers in Batam City.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Perceived Value has a Significant Effect on Brand Trust

This study is primarily grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which explains the role of attitude and social influence in shaping behavioral intention. In the context of online plant-based food purchases, TPB provides the main theoretical foundation for explaining online purchase intention. Social Cognitive Theory supports the role of self-efficacy, while consumer-behavior perspectives explain perceived value and brand trust. These theoretical perspectives are integrated to explain how personal, social, and cognitive factors influence online purchase intention toward plant-based foods among Generation Z consumers in Batam City. Perceived Value refers to consumers' overall evaluation of the benefits they receive compared with the costs or sacrifices they make when purchasing a product. When consumers perceive that a product provides meaningful benefits, such as good quality, health benefits, or value for money, they are more likely to develop confidence in the brand. Previous research has shown that positive perceptions of value can strengthen Brand Trust because consumers tend to trust brands that consistently provide benefits that meet their expectations ([Zhu, 2013](#)). In the context of online plant-based food purchases, perceived value may be particularly important because consumers cannot directly examine the product before purchasing ([Sukayadnya, Handayani, & Putri, 2026](#)). When the perceived benefits of plant-based food are considered worth the price and effort involved in purchasing it online, consumers may feel more confident about the brand and its offerings. Therefore, this study proposes that higher Perceived Value will lead to stronger Brand Trust. ([Didit, Diansyah, & Kamaruddin, 2025](#)).

2.2 Perceived Value has a Significant Effect on Attitude

Perceived Value reflects how consumers evaluate the benefits of a product in relation to the costs they have to bear. When consumers believe that the benefits of a product are greater than the sacrifices involved, they are more likely to develop a favorable attitude toward the product ([Upamannyu & Rajput, 2017](#)). This evaluation can include functional, emotional, and social benefits that consumers associate with their purchasing decision ([Pardede, Heriyadi, Daud, Juniwati, & Pebrianti, 2026](#)). For plant-based foods, consumers may develop a more positive attitude when they perceive benefits such as health, environmental value, and product quality to be worth the price and effort required to purchase them. In an online purchasing context, these perceptions can become an important basis for evaluating whether plant-based food is a desirable choice. Therefore, consumers who perceive greater value from plant-based foods are expected to develop more favorable attitudes toward purchasing them online ([Chen, 2022](#)). In the context of plant-based food, perceived value may become important because consumers evaluate not only price and convenience but also potential health, environmental, and product-quality benefits. When these perceived benefits are considered worthwhile, consumers may develop a more favorable attitude toward purchasing plant-based food online.

2.3 Perceived Value has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention through Brand Trust Mediation

Perceived Value can influence consumers' purchase intention by strengthening their confidence in the brand. When consumers believe that the benefits of a product are consistent with the price and effort required to obtain it, they are more likely to develop trust in the brand ([Adzharuddin & Xiaomeng, 2023](#)). In online purchasing, this trust becomes particularly important because consumers cannot directly inspect the product before completing the transaction ([Risal et al., 2024](#)). For plant-based foods, consumers may consider factors such as product quality, health benefits, price, and the overall value offered by the brand when deciding whether to purchase online. A positive perception of these benefits can strengthen brand trust, which subsequently reduces uncertainty and encourages consumers to consider purchasing the product. Therefore, brand trust is expected to mediate the relationship between perceived value and online purchase intention ([Alexander & Widjaja, 2024](#)).

2.4 Perceived Value has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention through Attitude Mediation

Consumers' perceptions of product value can shape their attitudes before they decide to make a purchase. When the benefits of a product are perceived to outweigh the costs, consumers are more likely to evaluate the product positively ([Pradana, Mahfud, Hermawan, & Susanti, 2021](#)). A favorable

attitude can then strengthen their intention to purchase because consumers tend to be more willing to engage in behaviors that they evaluate positively ([Chen, 2022](#)). In the context of online plant-based food purchases, consumers may consider the health benefits, product quality, price, convenience, and environmental value when evaluating the product. When these benefits create a favorable attitude, consumers are more likely to develop an intention to purchase plant-based food through digital platforms. Therefore, Attitude is expected to mediate the relationship between Perceived Value and Online Purchase Intention ([Dinanti & Irmawati, 2023](#)).

2.5 Self-Efficacy has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention through Brand Trust Mediation

Self-efficacy refers to consumers' confidence in their ability to successfully perform online purchasing activities, such as searching for product information, comparing alternatives, and completing transactions. Based on social cognitive theory, self-efficacy influences individuals' perceptions and behavioral responses. In the context of online plant-based food purchases, consumers with higher self-efficacy may feel more capable of evaluating product information and managing the purchasing process. Therefore, self-efficacy may contribute to consumers' attitude, brand trust, and online purchase intention. This confidence can reduce uncertainty and make consumers feel more secure during the purchasing process ([Hasan, Fasha, & I, 2025](#)). For online plant-based food purchases, consumers may face uncertainty regarding product information, quality, and transaction procedures. Consumers who feel capable of managing the online purchasing process may therefore have greater confidence in the brand and its ability to provide a reliable purchasing experience. Previous research has also indicated a positive relationship between consumers' digital capabilities and trust in online transactions ([Hartanti et al., 2025](#)). Thus, brand trust is expected to mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and online purchase intention ([Darise, Akbar, & Lina, 2025](#)).

2.6 Self-Efficacy has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention through Attitude Mediation

Consumers' confidence in their ability to use digital platforms can influence how they evaluate online purchasing. When consumers feel capable of searching for information, comparing products, and completing online transactions, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude toward the purchasing process. This is consistent with social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the role of self-efficacy in shaping individuals' perceptions and behavioral responses ([Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024](#)). In the context of online plant-based food purchases, consumers with greater confidence in using digital platforms may feel more comfortable evaluating product information and making purchasing decisions. A positive attitude developed from this confidence can subsequently increase their intention to purchase. Previous research also suggests that self-efficacy can contribute to positive attitudes and online purchasing behavior ([Aparicio, Costa, & Moises, 2021](#)). Therefore, Attitude is expected to mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and online purchase intention ([Wang et al., 2013](#)).

2.7 Self-Efficacy has a Significant Effect on Brand Trust

Self-Efficacy reflects consumers' confidence in their ability to perform online purchasing activities effectively. Consumers with higher self-efficacy are more likely to feel capable of handling the steps involved in online transactions, including searching for information, evaluating products, and managing potential risks. This sense of control can reduce uncertainty and increase consumers' confidence in the online purchasing environment ([Pavlou & Fygenson, 2006](#)). In the context of plant-based food purchases, consumers need to rely on information provided through digital platforms because they cannot directly evaluate the product before purchasing. When consumers feel confident in using these platforms and assessing available information, they may also perceive the brand as more reliable and trustworthy. Therefore, higher self-efficacy is expected to strengthen brand trust ([Novitasari & Cuandra, 2023](#)).

2.8 Self-Efficacy has a Significant Effect on Attitude

Self-efficacy refers to the capacity of internal beliefs and self-assessment of a consumer for his or her ability to adopt a particular behavior, where this high level of confidence will fundamentally stimulate the formation of mindsets and attitudes that are positive in evaluating a purchase decision ([Purwianti,](#)

[2022](#)). Self-efficacy significantly influences the formation of a person's attitude when interacting with digital services. When an individual feels confident that they have the skills to navigate an online shopping platform, this confidence automatically builds a positive perception and attitude towards the system ([Chen, 2022](#)). Conversely, if users feel less competent, they tend to be skeptical or reluctant to engage further. Attitudes have a significant, positive influence on consumer buying interest ([Hasan et al., 2025](#)). Trust in shopping sites online can moderate the positive influence of consumer attitudes on purchase intent. This shows that high or low self-confidence in operating technology is the main determinant of whether a consumer likes or avoids the online shopping experience.

2.9 Social Influence has a Significant Effect on Attitude

Social influence refers to the extent to which consumers' perceptions and decisions are affected by people around them, such as friends, family, or other relevant social groups. Within the theory of planned behavior, social influences are related to subjective norms, where the opinions and expectations of others can shape an individual's evaluation of a particular behavior ([Adzharuddin & Xiaomeng, 2023](#)). In the context of online plant-based food purchases, recommendations, reviews, and experiences shared by friends or social media users can influence how consumers perceive plant-based foods ([Dionita Sabrina & Albari, 2024](#)). Positive information from people considered trustworthy may encourage consumers to view plant-based food as a desirable and acceptable choice. Therefore, stronger positive Social Influence is expected to contribute to a more favorable attitude toward purchasing plant-based foods online ([Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024](#)).

2.10 Social Influence has a Significant Effect on Brand Trust

Social influence can shape consumers' perceptions of a brand through information, recommendations, and experiences shared by people they consider relevant or trustworthy. Positive opinions from friends, family, or social media users can provide additional information that helps consumers assess a brand's credibility and reliability. Previous research suggests that social influence can contribute to the development of consumer trust in digital purchasing environments ([Siamanjuntak & Cuandra, 2023](#)). Trust also helps foster positive attitudes. Trust affects consumer attitudes towards online shopping. Trust affects attitudes towards spending online. Trust was found to have a significant positive effect on attitude ([Aya Celestia, 2026](#)). For online plant-based food purchases, consumers may rely on reviews and recommendations because they cannot directly assess the product before completing a transaction. Positive social information can reduce uncertainty and strengthen consumers' confidence in a plant-based food brand. Therefore, stronger positive social influence is expected to increase brand trust ([Meliana, 2024](#)).

2.11 Social Influence has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention through Attitude Mediation

Social influence can affect consumers' purchase intention by shaping how they evaluate a particular product or purchasing behavior. Positive recommendations, reviews, and experiences shared by friends, family, or social media users may encourage consumers to develop a favorable attitude toward plant-based foods. According to the theory of planned behavior, a positive attitude toward a behavior contributes to stronger behavioral intention ([Wibowo, Chen, Wiangin, Ma, & Ruangkanjanases, 2020](#)). In the context of online plant-based food purchases, consumers who receive positive social support may perceive plant-based food as a more acceptable and desirable choice ([Nurjanah & Limanda, 2024](#)). This favorable evaluation can subsequently increase their willingness to purchase the product through digital platforms. Therefore, attitude is expected to mediate the relationship between Social Influence and Online Purchase Intention ([Nurjanah & Limanda, 2024](#)).

2.12 Social Influence has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention through Brand Trust Mediation

Social Influence can provide consumers with information that helps them evaluate the credibility of a brand. Recommendations, reviews, and experiences shared by people within consumers' social networks may reduce uncertainty and increase confidence in a brand, particularly in online purchasing where direct product evaluation is limited ([Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024](#)). Stronger positive social influence can therefore contribute to the development of brand trust ([Wibowo et al., 2020](#)). For

online plant-based food purchases, consumers may rely on social information to assess whether a brand is reliable and capable of delivering the expected product quality. When this information strengthens Brand Trust, consumers may feel more secure and become more willing to purchase the product online. Therefore, Brand Trust is expected to mediate the relationship between Social influence and online purchase intention ([Tanjung & Keni, 2023](#)).

2.13 Brand Trust has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention

Brand trust reflects consumers' confidence that a brand is reliable and capable of fulfilling its promises. Trust becomes particularly important in online purchasing because consumers face greater uncertainty and cannot directly evaluate the product before making a purchase. When consumers trust a brand, they are more likely to feel secure and reduce the perceived risk associated with online transactions ([Meliana, 2024](#)). For plant-based food purchases, brand trust can help consumers feel more confident about product quality and the reliability of the brand ([Kim, Ferrin, & Rao, 2008](#)). This confidence may encourage consumers to proceed with an online purchase. Therefore, higher brand trust is expected to increase consumers' online purchase intention ([Aya Celestia, 2026](#)).

2.14 Attitude has a Significant Effect on Online Purchase Intention

Attitude represents consumers' overall positive or negative evaluation of a particular behavior. According to the theory of planned behavior, a more favorable attitude toward a behavior is generally associated with a stronger intention to perform that behavior ([Pardede et al., 2026](#)). In online purchasing, consumers who perceive the purchasing process positively are more likely to develop an intention to complete a transaction ([Hebbar et al., 2020](#)). In the context of plant-based foods, consumers who have a favorable attitude toward purchasing these products are more likely to consider them an attractive and suitable choice for their consumption. Positive evaluations of the product and the online purchasing experience can therefore encourage stronger purchase intentions. Previous research has also found that positive attitudes are associated with consumers' intention to purchase online ([Purwianti, 2022](#)). Therefore, attitude is expected to positively influence Online Purchase Intention. The research model developed based on the theoretical foundation and previous studies is presented in Figure 1.

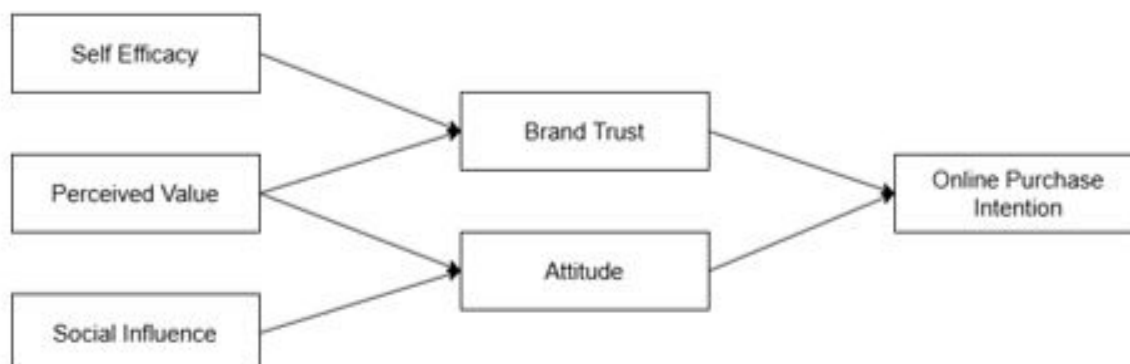


Figure 1. Research model

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design ([Risnita & Asrulla, 2024](#)). The study's population is consumers who have used online services, food delivery platforms, or other online platforms. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, which involves selecting respondents based on specific criteria ([Dubey & Sahu, 2021](#)). The population in this study comprises community consumers living in the city of Batam, specifically Generation Z, individuals aged 17-28 years who use digital technology in their daily lives. Generation Z was chosen as the focus of the research because it is the most adaptable to digital technology and has extensive access to information on healthy and sustainable lifestyles ([Ramadhani & Khoirunisa, 2025](#)). Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed from April to August 2026. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure respondents' agreement with statements related to the research variables ([Hair et al., 2021](#)).

The minimum sample size target set in this study was 220 respondents. A total of 223 responses were collected during the data collection period. The respondents were Generation Z consumers residing in Batam City who met the predetermined screening criteria, including having experience purchasing food products through online food delivery or e-commerce platforms. There are 4 items about the variable *Perceived value* from the researcher ([Wyker & Davison, 2010](#)), 4 items about variables Social influence from researchers ([Hansen, Jensen, & Solgaard, 2004](#)) 3 items about the variables Attitude from the researcher ([Wang et al., 2013](#)) 3 items about *Online purchase intention* from the researcher ([Alam, Yasin, & Yasin, 2010](#)) 5 items about Self efficacy from researchers ([Wyker & Davison, 2010](#)) and 3 items about Brand Trust from the researcher. The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. Bootstrapping was used to assess the significance of the hypothesized relationships. The analysis involved evaluating the measurement model (outer model) to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments and the structural model (inner model) to examine the relationships among the research variables. The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), and predictive relevance (Q^2). Bootstrapping was used to assess the significance of the hypothesized relationships.

4. Results and Discussions

This section outlines the findings from a data collection on purchase intent for plant-based products among Generation Z in Indonesia. The analysis was conducted to evaluate the extent to which the hypothesized variables explain consumer behavior in the digital era ([Nakhonchaigul & Siriyota, 2024](#)). The presentation of these results includes not only descriptive and inferential statistics but also in-depth field research to inform consumer behavior theory and prior research. This aims to validate the research model, as well as provide managerial insights for the plant-based food industry in reaching the youth segment in a more meaningful way:

4.1 Validity Test

Table 1. Outer loading validity test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ATT1 ← Attitude	0.831	0.829	0.030	27.330	0.000
ATT2 ← Attitude	0.768	0.760	0.047	16.247	0.000
ATT3 ← Attitude	0.860	0.861	0.021	41.503	0.000
OBT1 ← Brand trust	0.857	0.856	0.031	27.946	0.000
OBT2 ← Brand trust	0.892	0.891	0.018	48.434	0.000
OBT3 ← Brand trust	0.920	0.918	0.013	69.693	0.000
OPI1 ← Purchase Intention	0.834	0.835	0.023	36.260	0.000
OPI2 ← Purchase Intention	0.851	0.847	0.036	23.706	0.000
OPI3 ← Purchase Intention	0.837	0.831	0.036	23.430	0.000
PV1 ← Perceived value	0.797	0.794	0.040	19.784	0.000
PV2 ← Perceived value	0.849	0.848	0.028	30.650	0.000
PV3 ← Perceived value	0.846	0.848	0.029	29.485	0.000
PV4 ← Perceived value	0.822	0.819	0.037	22.187	0.000
SE1 ← Self-efficacy	0.799	0.798	0.038	20.917	0.000
SE2 ← Self-efficacy	0.860	0.859	0.020	42.129	0.000
SE3 ← Self-efficacy	0.852	0.850	0.029	29.480	0.000
SE4 ← Self-efficacy	0.787	0.787	0.040	19.715	0.000
SE5 ← Self-efficacy	0.813	0.812	0.036	22.666	0.000
SI1 ← Social influence	0.810	0.743	0.180	4.509	0.000
SI2 ← Social influence	0.834	0.779	0.172	4.855	0.000
SI3 ← Social influence	0.842	0.776	0.192	4.372	0.000
SI4 ← Social influence	0.747	0.700	0.181	4.129	0.000

Table 1 presents the results of the outer loading validity test for all measurement indicators. The outer loading values range from 0.747 to 0.920, exceeding the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70. This indicates that all indicators demonstrate adequate convergent validity and are sufficiently correlated with their respective constructs. The highest outer loading was observed for OBT3 (0.920), while the lowest was observed for SI4 (0.747). Furthermore, all indicators showed statistically significant loadings, with p-values of < 0.001 . Therefore, all measurement indicators were retained for subsequent analysis.

Table 2. AVE (Average Variance Extracted) validity test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Attitude	0.673	0.670	0.038	17.915	0.000
Brand trust	0.792	0.791	0.026	30.046	0.000
Perceived value	0.687	0.685	0.030	22.519	0.000
Purchase Intention	0.707	0.702	0.041	17.202	0.000
Self-efficacy	0.677	0.676	0.030	22.472	0.000
Social influence	0.654	0.596	0.117	5.594	0.000

Table 2 presents the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) results for each construct. The AVE values range from 0.654 to 0.792, exceeding the recommended minimum threshold of 0.50. The highest AVE value is found for Brand Trust (0.792), while the lowest is found for Social Influence (0.654). These results indicate that each construct explains more than half of the variance of its respective indicators, confirming adequate convergent validity. All AVE results are statistically significant with p-values of < 0.001 .

4.2 Reliability Test

Table 3. Cronbach alpha reliability test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Attitude	0.759	0.754	0.042	18.223	0.000
Brand trust	0.869	0.867	0.021	40.924	0.000
Perceived value	0.849	0.848	0.021	40.837	0.000
Purchase Intention	0.796	0.790	0.040	19.939	0.000
Self efficacy	0.880	0.880	0.017	51.634	0.000
Social influence	0.827	0.827	0.021	38.890	0.000

Table 3 presents the Cronbach alpha results for the constructs in the study. The Cronbach alpha values range from 0.759 to 0.880, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. The highest value was obtained for Self-Efficacy (0.880), while the lowest was observed for Attitude (0.759). These findings indicate that all constructs demonstrate satisfactory internal consistency and reliability. All results were statistically significant, with p-values of < 0.001 .

Composite Reliability (CR) is a more appropriate measure of reliability for PLS-SEM because it accounts for each indicator's loading weight. The recommended threshold is ≥ 0.70 with an ideal range of 0.70–0.95. Table 4 shows that the CR values for Attitude (0.860), Brand trust (0.919), Perceived value (0.898), Purchase Intention (0.878), Self-efficacy (0.913), and Social influence (0.883) are in the ideal and significant range ($p < .001$). Thus, the reliability of all constructs is declared to be well met. The CR value within this ideal range provides stronger evidence that each indicator makes a proportional contribution to the latent variables. In contrast to conventional reliability, high CR scores indicate that this model can accommodate differences in item weights with high precision. Logically, this reinforces confidence in the model's structure, as it shows that all

variables are free of internal inconsistency problems. This very strong foundation of reliability is the main prerequisite for ensuring that estimates of the influence between variables are highly accurate and accurately represent the true causal relationship in the field.

Table 4. Composite reliability test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Attitude	0.860	0.858	0.021	40.581	0.000
Brand trust	0.919	0.919	0.012	76.135	0.000
Perceived value	0.898	0.896	0.013	66.989	0.000
Purchase Intention	0.878	0.875	0.022	40.402	0.000
Self efficacy	0.913	0.912	0.011	81.406	0.000
Social influence	0.883	0.829	0.141	6.258	0.000

4.3 HTMT (Discriminant Validity)

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) analysis is used to assess discriminant validity, ensuring that each latent construct is empirically distinct from the others. The conservative threshold set for HTMT values is < 0.90 ([Aziz, Ahmed, Haque, Qazi, & Senathirajah, 2024](#)). Table 5 presents the results of the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio for assessing discriminant validity. The HTMT values range from 0.075 to 0.824, with the highest value observed between Purchase Intention and Attitude (0.824). The HTMT values are generally below the recommended threshold of 0.85, indicating adequate discriminant validity among the constructs. Therefore, the results suggest that the constructs are empirically distinct from one another. HTMT is interpreted as an assessment of discriminant validity and is not used to assess structural multicollinearity.

Table 5. HTMT discriminant validity test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	2.5%	97.5%
Brand trust → Attitude	0.082	0.133	0.066	0.248
Perceived value → Attitude	0.480	0.479	0.287	0.634
Perceived value → Brand trust	0.075	0.126	0.051	0.271
Purchase Intention → Attitude	0.824	0.820	0.709	0.924
Purchase Intention → Brand trust	0.107	0.139	0.055	0.259
Purchase Intention → Perceived value	0.541	0.538	0.335	0.688
Self-efficacy → Attitude	0.106	0.147	0.087	0.234
Self-efficacy → Brand trust	0.563	0.566	0.440	0.699
Self-efficacy → Perceived value	0.170	0.184	0.076	0.332
Self-efficacy → Purchase Intention	0.103	0.141	0.083	0.217
Social influence → Attitude	0.135	0.160	0.071	0.304
Social influence → Brand trust	0.350	0.355	0.233	0.487
Social influence → Perceived value	0.123	0.162	0.089	0.281
Social influence → Purchase Intention	0.177	0.202	0.097	0.344
Social influence → Self-efficacy	0.382	0.382	0.236	0.534

In addition, the 95% confidence intervals of the HTMT values do not include 1.00, providing further evidence of discriminant validity among the constructs. These findings confirm that the constructs represent conceptually distinct variables in the proposed model. It should be noted that HTMT assesses discriminant validity rather than structural collinearity; therefore, structural collinearity was assessed separately using the VIF values.

4.4 Path Coefficients

The path coefficient was examined to determine the direction and magnitude of the relationships among the constructs in the proposed model. The significance of each relationship was evaluated based on a T-statistic above 1.96 and a p-value below 0.05. As shown in Table 6, eight of the fourteen proposed hypotheses were supported, while six were not statistically supported. The results indicate that self-efficacy significantly influences brand trust ($\beta = 0.435$, $p < .001$). Social Influence also has a significant relationship with both Attitude ($\beta = 0.541$, $p < .001$) and Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.321$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, Attitude positively affects Purchase Intention ($\beta = 0.665$, $p < .001$), and brand trust also shows a significant effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.042$, $p < .001$).

Table 6. Test results of structural model path coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.665	0.663	0.047	14.231	0
Brand trust → Purchase Intention	0.042	0.042	0.052	0.815	0.415
Perceived value → Attitude	0.387	0.389	0.078	4.97	0
Perceived value → Brand trust	0.017	0.013	0.079	0.217	0.828
Self-efficacy → Brand trust	0.501	0.508	0.058	8.676	0
Social influence → Attitude	0.075	0.095	0.069	1.1	0.272
Perceived Value → Brand Trust → Purchase Intention	0.049	0.047	0.037	1.329	0.184
Perceived Value → Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.08	0.08	0.046	1.734	0.083
Self-Efficacy → Brand Trust → Purchase Intention	0.176	0.172	0.048	3.642	0
Self-Efficacy → Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.051	0.051	0.05	1.023	0.306
Self-Efficacy → Attitude	0.116	0.119	0.115	1.015	0.31
Social Influence → Brand Trust	0.321	0.332	0.088	3.627	0
Social Influence → Attitude → Purchase Intention	0.238	0.237	0.064	3.716	0
Social Influence → Brand Trust → Purchase Intention	0.13	0.136	0.046	2.842	0.004

In contrast, Perceived Value does not show a significant effect on Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.120$, $p = 0.169$) or Attitude ($\beta = 0.182$, $p = 0.056$). The relationship between Self-Efficacy and Attitude is also not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.116$, $p = 0.310$). Regarding the indirect relationships, Self-Efficacy significantly affects Purchase Intention through Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.176$, $p < .001$). Social Influence also demonstrates significant indirect effects on Purchase Intention through Attitude ($\beta = 0.238$, $p < .001$) and Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.130$, $p = 0.004$). Meanwhile, the indirect effects of Perceived Value through Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.049$, $p = 0.184$) and Attitude ($\beta = 0.080$, $p = 0.083$) are not significant. The indirect effect of Self-Efficacy through Attitude is also not significant ($\beta = 0.051$, $p = 0.306$). Overall, the findings suggest that Attitude and Brand Trust are important pathways in explaining consumers' Purchase Intention, particularly in the relationships involving Self-Efficacy and Social Influence.

Structural collinearity was assessed using the inner VIF values. The estimated values ranged from 1.582 to 2.140, which were below the threshold of 5.00. Therefore, no serious multicollinearity problem was identified among the predictor constructs. The effect size results show that Social Influence had the strongest contribution to Attitude ($f^2 = 0.338$). Attitude and Brand Trust also showed moderate effects on Purchase Intention, with f^2 values of 0.286 and 0.244, respectively. Meanwhile, Perceived Value and Self-Efficacy showed relatively small effects on several endogenous constructs.

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 The Influence of Perceived Value on Brand Trust

The results of the statistical test show that the perceived value of plant-based food products does not significantly influence brand trust on digital platforms. Empirically, assessing Generation Z consumers in Batam City regarding the health benefits of plant-based food products does not necessarily increase the credibility or reputation of the e-commerce site where they transact. Consumers clearly separate the evaluation of the product's essential attributes (as a healthy food commodity) from the evaluation of the reliability of the provider's transactional system.

This finding automatically rejects the arguments of [Upamannyu and Rajput \(2017\)](#), which claim that strong product values can foster consumer trust in the brand. The logical reason is that Gen Z considers the health benefits of plant-based foods inherent to plant-based foods, not because of the quality or reliability of the application or e-commerce platform that provides them. So, no matter how high the product's health value is, it will not add to their trust points on the digital platform.

4.5.2 The Effect of Perceived Value on Attitude

Regarding the influence of perceived value on attitude (Attitude), the results indicate a positive, highly significant effect. When Gen Z in Batam sees that this plant-based food offers high utility, such as good nutritional content, and is comparable to the money they spend, this mental evaluation immediately leads them to have a very positive view of the product. The results of this research align with and support the theories of [Watanabe, Alfinito, Curvelo, and Hamza \(2020\)](#), which hold that product value serves as the initial foundation for shaping consumer attitudes. The reason is that Gen Z in Batam is a rational consumer type. They will not like a new diet trend if they do not see real benefits for their bodies. Once they know the benefits are great, their attitudes toward plant-based food will naturally become more supportive (Attitude).

4.5.3 Mediation of Brand Trust on Perceived Value Relationship to Online Purchase Intention

The results of the indirect effects analysis showed that brand trust fails to serve as a bridge or mediator between perceived value and the intention to purchase online (online purchase intention). That is, even though Gen Z consumers perceive these plant-based food products as highly beneficial, these positive feelings cannot be channeled through their trust in digital platform brands to trigger online shopping intentions. This mediation path was cut off halfway. The main reason is that the direct effect of Brand Trust on the intention to buy oneself was indeed found to be insignificant in this study. For consumers, the health value of plant-based foods is a personal matter, so their trust in e-commerce platforms cannot convert product value into real purchase intent.

4.5.4 Attitude Mediation on the Perceived Value Relationship to Online Purchase Intention

Attitude variables (Attitude) have proven to be significant mediators of the relationship between perceived value and online purchase intent. This means that for the benefits of plant-based food to translate into real buying intentions among Gen Z in Batam, these values must first be internalized as attitudes or preferences. Consumers will not buy immediately just because they know the product is healthy; there must be a process of getting to like the product first. The psychological reason is that buying healthy food online requires careful consideration. When Gen Z recognizes a product's benefits, their attitude will initially become positive. This positive attitude, once formed, becomes the main driver of their strong intention to place online orders.

4.5.5 Brand Trust Mediation on the Relationship of Self Efficacy to Online Purchase Intention

The indirect test path shows that Brand Trust also failed to mediate the relationship between self-proficiency (Self-efficacy) and the intention to buy online. The explanation is this: although consumers' confidence in using digital applications has been shown to increase their trust in a brand, that trust is not sufficiently contagious to make them intend to buy plant-based foods. These results support the hypothesis regarding the thought. The reason is that Gen Z's proficiency with digital transactions only makes them feel safe when using the application; it does not make them want to buy special-diet food products. Trust in e-commerce applications cannot be the sole reason for someone to switch to a plant-based diet.

4.5.6 Mediation Attitude on the Relationship of Self-Efficacy to Online Purchase Intention

The statistical results indicate that the attitude variable (Attitude) is not a significant mediator between Self-efficacy and online purchase intent. This means that the expertise or confidence of young people in Batam in operating gadgets cannot be transferred through the formation of a favorable attitude, which, in turn, creates the intention to buy plant-based food. The model data rejected this mediation path. The logical reason is that a person's technical ability with technology is common among Gen Z, as digital natives. However, digital proficiency has no emotional connection at all in changing their outlook on life or their attitude towards healthy food menus, so the mediation effect is automatically paralyzed.

4.5.7 The Effect of Self-Efficacy on Brand Trust

This confirms that consumers' self-confidence in using the digital shopping system is directly proportional to their trust in the platform's reputation and brand security. These empirical results fully support the theory of technological usefulness. The contextual reason is that Gen Z in Batam is very familiar with the digital world; they have a high level of confidence in their ability to manage online transactions and avoid fraud. This sense of ability ultimately leads them to give a high assessment of the shopping platform's brand credibility.

4.5.8 The Effect of Self-Efficacy on Attitude

The results of the live test show that Self-efficacy does not have a significant influence on consumers' attitude formation (Attitude). Simply put, the fact that a young person is very good at, proficient in, and confident with online shopping apps does not guarantee that they will have a supportive or positive attitude towards plant-based food products. These findings differ from the study's initial hypothesis. The reason behind this rejection is that self-efficacy, in this study, focuses on technological prowess, while attitudes (Attitude) focus on healthy food preferences. Being good at using shopping applications does not automatically make someone suddenly like the taste or concept of plant-based food.

4.5.9 The Influence of Social Influence on Attitude

This means that the words of parents, recommendations from close friends, or influencers' posts on social media cannot change or shape Gen Z in Batam's personal attitude towards plant-based products. This fact corrects the TAM2 model of ([Wyker & Davison, 2010](#)). The results of the direct analysis show that social influence (Social Influence) does not have a significant effect on attitude formation (Attitude) among consumers. Interpersonal recommendations from friends and family, and exposure to influencers' content on social media, do not have the power to shift Generation Z's personal preferences in Batam City towards plant-based products. This demographic group tends to be independent and rational when making healthy food choices. Dietary choices are seen as a realm of personal privacy related to physical evaluation, so external social pressures fail to influence their affective and cognitive tendencies.

4.5.10 The Influence of Social Influence on Brand Trust

The test results prove that social influences (Social Influence) also had no significant effect on brand trust (Brand Trust). This means that intensive recommendations from the friend environment or testimonials on social media cannot necessarily increase Gen Z's trust in the reliability of Batam's brand sales platform. The main reason is that Gen Z in Batam is a critical consumer who needs personal proof. They trust their own transaction experiences such as the system's ease of use, response speed, and the platform's digital security assurances rather than simply trusting reviews or what others around them say.

4.5.11 Mediation of Attitudes on Social Influence Relations to Online Purchase Intention

The indirect effects test indicates that attitude (Attitude) fails to mediate the effect of social influence on online buying intent. The explanation is that, because encouragement from the external social environment from the beginning is unable to influence or change consumers' attitudes, this mediation path cannot automatically be activated to give rise to the intention to buy plant-based food products online. The logical reason is that consuming plant-based food requires a pure internal motivational boost. Because public opinion has proven unable to foster a positive attitude among Gen Z Batam,

these external influences do not have the indirect power to drive their actual purchase intentions in the digital world.

4.5.12 Mediation of Brand Trust on Social Influence to Online Purchase Intention

The mediation hypothesis posits that Brand Trust serves as a bridge between social influence and online buying intent, but the data do not support this hypothesis. This relies on the conclusion that external urges, trends, or invitations cannot be channeled through trust in a brand to trigger Gen Z's interest in buying plant-based foods online. The contextual reason is that young people in Batam view the decision to buy healthy food online as a conscious act that requires personal compatibility. Social pressure on social media cannot be translated into trust in e-commerce platforms, which ultimately forces them to consider shopping for plant-based products.

4.5.13 The Influence of Brand Trust on Online Purchase Intention

This shows that consumers' high trust in an online shopping platform's security and reputation does not necessarily lead them to intend to buy plant-based food products on that platform. These empirical results contrast with the theory of digital consumer behavior which posits that brand trust is the main driver of purchase intent. The reason for this phenomenon is that plant-based foods are classified as a healthy lifestyle product, a highly personalized classification. Even though Gen Z strongly believes the app is safe from scams, they still have no intention of buying if there is no real interest or need to eat healthy food.

4.5.14 The Influence of Attitude on Online Purchase Intention

The coefficient of this path is the highest among all variables. The findings indicate that several factors are significantly associated with consumers' online purchase intention, particularly perceived value, self-efficacy, and attitude, depending on the hypothesized relationships in the model. The psychological reason is that the intention to act on functional food products is purely controlled by internal mental readiness. Once Gen Z young people have established in their minds that eating plant-based products in a healthy way online is good, healthy, and profitable, this positive attitude instantly boosts their intention to make online purchases.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

For plant-based food brands, the findings suggest that marketers should emphasize the value offered by plant-based products through clear communication of product quality, health-related benefits, convenience, and price-value considerations. Brands can also strengthen consumers' positive attitudes by providing informative and engaging digital content that helps Generation Z understand the benefits and practical aspects of plant-based food.

For digital food-delivery platforms, the findings suggest the importance of providing accessible product information, clear descriptions, customer reviews, visual content, and convenient purchasing features. These features can help consumers evaluate plant-based food products more easily during the online decision-making process.

For marketers targeting Generation Z, digital communication strategies should focus on creating positive consumer experiences and relevant content rather than relying solely on social influence. Interactive social media content, educational campaigns, user-generated content, and credible product information can be used to encourage favorable attitudes toward plant-based food and support consumers' online purchase decisions.

The findings indicate that perceived value significantly influences attitude, while self-efficacy significantly influences brand trust. Attitude also has a significant positive effect on online purchase intention. Several other hypothesized relationships are not statistically supported. The mediation results further indicate that attitude significantly mediates the relationship between perceived value and online purchase intention, while the other indirect relationships are not significant. These findings provide insights into online plant-based food purchase intention among Generation Z consumers in Batam City and should be interpreted within this specific sample context.

5.2 Research Limitations

While this study has provided useful insights, it has some limitations worth noting. The data collection in this study is exclusively focused on the demographics of Generation Z consumers living in Batam City. As a result, the findings cannot be fully regarded as a complete representation of consumer characteristics across all regions of Indonesia. In addition, the model framework used in this research continues to focus on specific constructs. It has not accommodated digital elements closely related to current trends, for example, the phenomenon of electronic word of mouth.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Future research is strongly recommended to expand the research area's geographical reach. Sampling from other major Indonesia cities will be very helpful in producing more comprehensive and generalizable conclusions for a wider population. Researchers may further consider integrating the electronic Word-Of-Mouth (e-WOM) variable into the research model, given the strong flow of information and reviews on social media that shape modern market perceptions. The use of mixed research methods is highly recommended to delve deeper and confirm the qualitative reasons for the insignificance of social influence factors and brand trust in Generation Z's purchasing decisions for plant-based food products.

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Author Contributions

AF was involved in the conceptualization, methodology, supervision, and critical review of the manuscript. JJ made equal contributions to the study design, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. EYP contributed to data validation, statistical analysis, and manuscript review. All authors have reviewed and approved the final published version of the manuscript.

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