



**EXPLORING VEGAN INFLUENCER'S PURCHASING BEHAVIOURS;
A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON GEN Z**



NAZLICAN BALCI

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ABSTRACT

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BALCI, Nazlıcan

MBA in Business Administration

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Elif AKAGÜN ERGİN

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In this study, the purchasing behaviors of Generation Z, who adopted veganism as a lifestyle in Türkiye, were examined. Vegan lifestyle has been diversified as animal rights, influencers and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) as subheadings by adhering to the literature. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between animal rights, influencers and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) with attitude, motivation, behavioral intention and purchase intention.

In this research, case study (case study), one of the qualitative research methods, was used for the purpose of the research. The research covers people between the ages of 18 and 28 who have adopted a vegan lifestyle. Vegan and young consumers living in Türkiye were taken as a sample. In this study, which was conducted online and face-to-face, these people were reached from vegan groups on social media platforms and with the support of the vegan society.

According to the results of the research, Generation Z has learned about Veganism thanks to vegan influencers. The relationship between attitude and beliefs to become a vegan and influencers developing in a positive way. The motivation to become vegan is linked to animal rights in a positive way. It has been revealed that sustainability has a negative relationship with the motivation to become vegan. The motivation of vegans

to buy vegan or cruelty-free products hinders the motivation to buy sustainable products.

Key Words: Generation Z, Vegan, Lohas, Sustainability, Animal Rights, Environment, Health, Influencer



ÖZET

VEGAN İNFLUENCER'IN SATIN ALMA DAVRANIŞLARINI KEŞFETMEK: Z KUŞAĞI ÜZERİNE NİTEL BİR ARAŞTIRMA

BALCI, Nazlıcan

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Danışman: Prof. Dr. Elif AKAGÜN ERGİN

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Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'deki yaşam tarzı olarak veganlığı benimseyen Z kuşağının satın alma davranışları incelenmiştir. Vegan yaşam tarzı literatüre bağlı kalınarak alt başlıkları olarak hayvan hakları, etkileticiler ve LOHAS (çevre, sürdürülebilirlik, sağlık) olarak çeşitlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı; hayvan haklarının, influencerların ve LOHAS (çevre, sürdürülebilirlik, sağlık)'ın tutum, motivasyon, davranışsal niyet ve satın alma niyeti ile arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi oluşturmaktadır.

Bu araştırmada, araştırmanın amacına yönelik olarak, nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden durum çalışması(vaka çalışması) kullanılmıştır. Araştırma vegan yaşam tarzını benimsemiş olan 18 ve 28 yaş aralığındaki kişileri kapsamaktadır. Türkiye'de yaşayan vegan ve genç tüketiciler örneklem olarak alınmıştır. Online ve yüz yüze yapılan bu çalışmada sosyal medya platformlardaki vegan gruplarından ve vegan derneğinin desteğiyle bu kişilere ulaşılmıştır.

Araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre, Z kuşağı, Veganlığı, vegan influencerlar sayesinde öğrenmiştir.Vegan olma inanç ve tutumları,influencerlar sayesinde olumlu yönde gelişmektedir. Vegan olma motivasyonu hayvan hakları ile olumlu yönde bağlantılıdır.

Sürdürülebilirliğin, vegan olma motivasyonu ile olumsuz yönde bir ilişkisi olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Veganların, vegan veya cruelty-free ürün almak motivasyonu, sürdürülebilir ürün alma motivasyonunu engellemektedir.

Anahtar Kelime: Z Kuşağı, Vegan, Lohas, Sürdürülebilirlik, Hayvan Hakları, Çevre, Sağlık, Etkileyici



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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

EWOM	: Electronic Word of Mouth
LOHAS	: Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability



INTRODUCTION

Veganism is not just a nutritional habit, it is a life and ideology. People who adopt this lifestyle are vegan for different reasons. While some are vegan for animal rights, some are vegan because of health, and some are vegan because of the influencers they are influenced by due to the internet age.

With the development of technology, our access to information has become easier. In this way, we can easily learn new information and listen directly from a single mouth without doing research. Influencers step in here and have the opportunity to experience the product before young consumers and explain the product to them. This is not done for just the product. They can also convey an ideology or lifestyle. Influencers are important resources for vegans to learn knowledge and maintain attitudes and beliefs.

The development of technology and the final point of production have become risky for the environment and health. Access to resources in Türkiye is limited. It affects the attitudes and beliefs of vegans, who do not have many options about environmental problems and sustainability, as well as their motivation. It is very difficult to reach a product that is both vegan and sustainable, and that does not harm the environment in the period from production to consumption.

This study is an investigation of the relationship between animal rights, influencers and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) with attitude, motivation, behavioral intention and purchasing intention. Vegan lifestyle has been diversified as sub-titles animal rights, influencers and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) by adhering to the literature.

The study, which consists of 5 parts in total, includes the literature in three parts, the analysis in the fourth part and the conclusion in the last part.

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Consumer behavior is the study of the processes by which a person or group selects, buys, uses, or consumes products, services, ideas, or experiences to meet their needs and wants (Solomon 1992; Parıltı and Ergin 2015).

1.1.1. Definition and Concept of Consumer Behaviour

A consumer is a person who buys and uses products or services (Ivanovic 2003; Durmaz and Kılıç 2023). Conventionally, an end-user refers to the final purchaser or consumer of products, concepts, and services. However, the term also is used to imply the buyer or decision maker as well as the ultimate consumer (Ama n.d.). A mother who buys a diaper for her baby to use is called a consumer. Consumers buy many goods and services in line with their needs and desires throughout their lives. The consumer may not follow the same decision process for every service or product he buys. Purchasing processes vary from consumer to consumer. The purchasing processes that consumers follow when buying a computer or water are different. The factors affecting each consumer are different. Understanding consumer behavior is important for the strategy, pricing, advertising, and company image that companies will use. It also concerns many groups connected to companies. Consumer behavior information is crucial for marketing managers to analyze the environment, position products, segment markets, conduct research, and improve marketing strategies. For businesses, it is important where, how, and why the consumer buys the goods.

Understanding the buying or not buying behavior of the consumer makes the work of the companies easier.

Consumer behavior is the process of individuals' decisions about which goods and services to buy, from whom, how, where, when, and whether to buy.

Consumer behavior can be defined as the decisions and related activities of individuals, especially in purchasing and using economic products and services (TML n.d.).

The culmination of consumer choices regarding the procurement, utilization, and relinquishment of products, services, activities, experiences, individuals, and notions by decision-making entities (Hoyer and Macinnis 2008).

Consumer behavior indicates the purchasing behavior of final consumers, who are individuals or households that buy products and services for personal consumption. The combination of all these end consumers creates consumer markets (Kotler 2005; Durmaz and Bahar 2011).

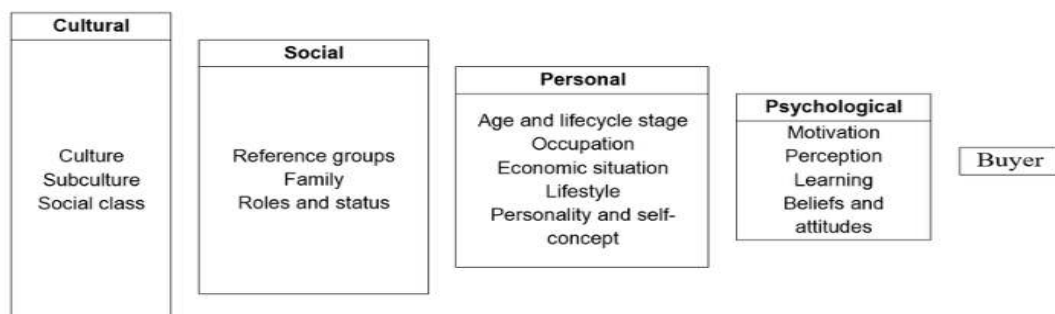
Consumer behavior is the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires (Solomon 1995).

The emotions that consumers feel during the process of purchasing a certain product or service and the impulses that lead them to purchase determine consumer behavior. Consumers' needs, social class and income level, gender, age, problems, and desires affect the purchasing process.

1.1.1.1. The Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior

The buying decisions of consumers are not made in a vacuum; they are shaped and influenced by a variety of external factors. Cultural influences encompass shared beliefs, values, customs, and behaviors of a group or society. For instance, in some cultures, luxury items are highly valued as they may signify status, while in others, simplicity and sustainability might be prioritized.

Figure 1. Factor Influencing Consumer Behaviour



Source: Kotler and Armstrong (2004:271)

1.1.1.1.1. The Cultural Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior

The factors affecting consumer behavior in the literature are grouped under the headings of social, cultural, personal, and psychological. Cultural factors include three subheadings: culture, subculture, and social class. Bourdieu (1984) and Lamont (1992) have shown that cultural tastes and consumption experiences are morally and formally reinforced and take shape among groups of people, varying from country to country, and across different classes and regions (Peterson and Kern 1996; Özsungur and Güven 2016).

1.1.1.1.1.1. Culture

Culture, as first delineated by Tylor (1871), is that complex entirety encompassing knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and other abilities and habits learned by humans as societal members (Palomar Education 2006). A person refines themselves through the knowledge and competencies acquired from their own culture throughout their life. As a child mature within a society, their foundational values, ethical beliefs, and behaviors mold according to the culture of the nation they inhabit and its societal norms. Both family and institutions play a role in this development.

It is not surprising that a person, while engaging in purchasing behavior, is influenced by beliefs and value judgments that are customary in society in order to behave differently and not be surprised (Şahin and Akballı 2019). For instance, in Korea, showing leg cleavage is deemed acceptable, whereas showcasing chest cleavage is taboo. Consequently, there's a diminished market for products like strappy tees or items that show chest cleavage. In contrast, in Western countries, low-cut attire is prevalent and caters to a vast market. Observing Türkiye, cultural practices manifest in events like wedding and engagement preparations, henna ceremonies, holiday observances, circumcision ceremonies, and regional customs. Turkish breakfast stands as a cultural hallmark, while in France, the standard breakfast comprises coffee and croissants. In many European nations, cereals dominate the breakfast table.

1.1.1.1.1.2. Sub-culture

A subculture is a community that has established itself in a certain society, is seen as groups, and has distinct differences from other communities with its unique way of life (Özsungur and Güven 2017). Sub-culture consists of nationalities,

religions, races, geographical regions and lineages that contain common life experiences.

Sub-culture also influence the purchasing behavior of consumers. Various subcultures represent significant market segments, prompting marketers to create products and campaigns specifically catered to their requirements (N and Ali 2016).

As in all countries of the world, there are various subcultures in Türkiye, which are formed due to different factors such as ethnic structure, differences in religious beliefs (Şahin and Akballı 2019).

Veganism can be given as an example of subcultural consumer grouping. Vegans go to newly opened vegan cafes or hang out at places that have vegan products on their menus. Sometimes vegans hold group events around. Considering that each of the group members is a consumer, the activities performed jointly by the groups that make up the subculture also exhibit a separate consumer behavior (Özsungur and Güven 2017).

While eating at a jointly agreed restaurant is the groups own consumer activity that constitutes the subculture, apart from this activity, ordering a drink in addition to the agreed meal by one of the group members is an individual consumer action (Özsungur and Güven 2017).

1.1.1.1.3. Social Classes

Social class is referred to as a large cluster of people who have common and similar behaviors according to their economic strengths, who are separated from each other by the lifestyle they live and the respect they see in society. There are no clear-cut boundaries between social classes; People can move to the upper class or relegate to the lower class (Mucuk 2009; Şahin and Akballı).

These classes were ranked in a certain order from top to bottom and formed the social stratification system. The place of the individual in this system is important because the order of social stratification determines how people live and how they are perceived and treated by others (İnce 2017). To classifying social status is to organize it into hierarchical categories based on factors such as income, occupation, education, cultural heritage, and lifestyle choices. Social class can be likened to a family's hierarchy. Individuals living in the same household have a common income and value judgment. By means of this partnership, they exhibit similar purchasing behaviors. The

first factor that determines the social class of the individual is the family. After the earnings of the father figure in the family, the income of the mother figure determines the consumption behavior of the individual. If we give an example from Türkiye, it will see that the situation of the vegan segment is better. Because Vegan products are both expensive and difficult to access products. That fact is being a vegan child of a working-class family is a luxury consumption in Türkiye.

1.1.1.1.2. The Social Factors Affecting Consumer Behaviors

Social factors include reference groups, family, roles and status. Social factors such as roles, status, reference groups and family play a major role in the formation of consumer behavior (Sümer 2007; Akballı and Şahin 2019).

1.1.1.1.2.1. Reference Groups

Reference groups are a community of people who influence the behavior, attitudes, ideas, value judgments, behavior and decision-making of individuals. This group is the immediate environment where there are family and other face-to-face relationships (friends, neighbors, colleagues, institutions and organizations, etc.) and groups in which the person is not a member, and from people who have no direct relationship (artists, singers, athletes, etc.) occurs (Karaca 2016).

Reference groups are small consumer groups, and people may not be members of the group. Consumers usually act as if they are members of that group. Adopting the norms of reference groups and expressing ourselves gives us a sense of belonging. Developing thoughts that are the opposite of the group and not adopting their norms creates a feeling of exclusion.

Reference groups are important in consumer behavior. Reference groups (advisory groups) are defined as social groups that care about the consumer and shape a person's attitudes and behaviors (Hsu et al. 2006; Karaca 2016). These groups inform and raise consumer awareness about brands and products. They give the consumer a chance to compare their own thoughts and thoughts with the person they are referring to.

Celebrities who act in commercials can be given as examples of reference groups. These celebrities can affect people positively as well as negatively.

1.1.1.1.2.2. Family

Family in a broad sense; connected by marriage, blood or adoption ties, living in the same house, sharing the same income, having social relations such as husband and wife, parents, daughter and son, sister and brother, who are under constant relationship and interaction with each other it is a union formed by people (Ağdemir 1991).

The family is the smallest social structure in which children grow up and shape their behavior. The concept of family has a great impact on consumer spending. The consumption behaviors of a family with children, a newly married family without children, and a person living single are different.

While families with children spend money on the development of children, newly married couples spend more money on white goods, furniture and clothing. People who are single also spend money on travel, drinking and having fun. Habits acquired in the family affect the current and future behavior of family members.

If your family doesn't consume meat and use animal products in the house where you live, you are very likely to adopt a vegan or vegetarian diet. Your purchasing behavior is also shaped accordingly in your future lives. You don't use butter in your meals, instead you use vegetable oil.

Since the family is both a earning and consuming unit, decisions about consumption affect the members (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 2012). The income status of the family, how many people work in the household, whether they are an extended or nuclear family, lifestyles, consumption habits are determined. We can say that the family, whose income status is low, has little interest in luxury brand consumption. A family with a low-income status prefers Dost milk, which is the brand of Bim, while a family with a high income level can choose Pınar milk. Before a consumption decision to be taken within the family, the need problem related to consumption is realized, the necessary information is researched to solve this problem, alternatives of the necessary products or services are evaluated to meet the need, and final decisions regarding consumption are made after all these processes (Green and Cunningham 1975; Özsungur and Güven 2016). The important thing when making a decision is to be aware of the problem. A family whose children are vegan and therefore cannot use regular shampoo becomes aware of this problem. When the family buys shampoo, it first reads the product's ingredients and collects information by conducting price

research. The family buys the product that they think is suitable for the child by making a decision together.

1.1.1.1.2.3. Roles and Statuses

As Solomon mentioned, the whole world is a stage. Just as actors act on stage, consumers take on various roles in their daily lives. Roles are male or female, mom, dad, brother, uncle, etc. as it may be, it may also be related to the work that an individual does. Roles also bring with them various statuses. There are rights and responsibilities that are assigned to roles depending on the status.

Every role requires a status, and therefore product choices are made in accordance with the roles and statuses in society (Demet 2008).

A woman is a mom at home while she is a teacher at school. The bag she uses while going to school should be stylish and high quality, while the bag she uses while spending time with her child should be comfortable.

Culture and gender role alignment affect consumption habits. In masculine-dominated societies such as Türkiye, the consumption habits of the family are determined by the decisions of the man, while in feminine societies such as Sweden, the consumption habits of the family are determined by the consumption trends of the woman. Changes in economic and social life significantly change the roles of family members in purchasing decisions (Çetin 2017).

While women are interested in consumption habits such as kitchen and cleaning materials, we see that men are also interested in these issues of the recent destruction of gender stereotypes. The person who makes the consumption decision in the family varies as male or female depending on whether the income entering the household is low or high. In families with a high-income level, individuals direct their consumption habits on their own, while in families with a low-income level, the father factor determines their consumption habits. The consumption habits of children in families with low income levels are not taken into account. We can say that families with children with a high-income level save more for toys, children's clothing, and education expenses and for later years.

1.1.1.1.3. The Personal Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior

The personal factors affecting the purchasing behavior of consumers are age and life cycle stage, economic situation, occupation, lifestyle and personality.

1.1.1.1.3.1. Age and Life Cycle Period

There are different stages of development in human life. We can classify these developmental stages as childhood, youth, young adulthood, middle age and old age. The products and services that each age group needs and is interested in have distinguishable characteristics (Durmaz et al. 2011). A child between the ages of 4 and 6 is not aware of his/her own needs. Instead, his/her family decides. A young person between the ages of 14-24 is aware of her/his own needs and they consume accordingly.

Although the age factor affects the individual's purchasing behavior, it also determines the way the purchased product or service is used (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı 2012). Young adults between the ages of 25-34 buy more household goods and technological products because they are working and getting married, while young people between the ages of 14-24 buy more clothes and technological products. Middle-aged people aged 35-65 don't buy sustainable products, while the 14-24 age range buys sustainable products. The age of consumer's reveals different needs from period to period and makes them exhibit purchasing behavior in this direction.

1.1.1.1.3.2. Economic Situation

Economic income is important for the purchase to take place. Because, if a person has income, in other words, purchasing power, only then can he/she become a buyer of goods and services (Cemalcilar 1999).

The income obtained by consumers is the most important factor in the purchase of goods and services (Lebe 2006). According to their income, consumers (as in this study) are considered in three groups: high-income, middle-income and low-income. The recent increase in inflation and the increase in product prices due to the depreciation of the Turkish currency have caused many goods to be non-consumed or substituted.

When we look at low-income vegans, we can see that the priority is based on basic needs and they demand substitute goods. Access to products of foreign origin

has become difficult for vegans with low income. Vegans with a high-income level can easily purchase the necessary nutritional supplements and foreign goods over the Internet. When we look at vegans with low-income levels, we can see that they prefer brands with more affordable prices for make-up supplies or that they make them at home in the form of substitutes. We can say that vegans with high incomes prefer vegan make-up products with brand awareness. Vegans of all income levels pay attention to and review labels.

Although local brands have increased, since production is not easy in Türkiye, it has become very difficult and expensive to find substitute goods.

1.1.1.1.3.3. Life Style

Lifestyle reflects the individuals' activities, interests, ideas of individuals, and also includes activities performed in free time (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard 1995; Durmaz et al. 2011). In other words, lifestyle is a special way of life belonging to that person, defined as how a person spends his/her time, his/her activities, his interests in the environment his/her is in, his/her views about himself and the world around him/her (Mentzer and Schwartz 1985).

Factors affecting an individual's lifestyle can be counted as culture, social class, reference and friend groups (Tabel et al. n.d). Consumers' similar ways of thinking and feelings of belonging in society shape consumers' lives and purchasing decisions. Non-Vegan communities go to cafes of their choice and eat, while Vegan communities usually go to Vegan cafes or eat at places with vegan products on their menus. People usually choose their goods, services and activities from among those that are suitable for their lifestyle (Cömert and Durmaz 2006).

1.1.1.1.3.4. Occupation

The occupation of the consumer determines the income of the consumer. The income of the consumer determines the purchasing behavior of the consumer. While workers working with minimum wage spend their holidays in their hometowns, the owner of the same company spends his/her holidays traveling around the world.

The types of consumption also differ according to occupational groups. An architect buys a pen or a tablet, while a doctor buys a comfortable slipper or colorful uniform. A vegan model will buy vegan boots and collaborate with vegan brands.

According to Sürücü (1998:19), as the educational status increases, the needs and desires of a person gradually diversify (Özcan and Akıncı 2017).

1.1.1.1.3.5. Personality

Personality is the way in which the mental, emotional, social and physical characteristics of an individual show continuity (Özdemir et al. 2012).

Personality is related to all the characteristics of the individual and emerges as a distinctive, consistent and structured form of relationship that individuals establish with their internal and external environments (Cüceloğlu 1991; Bengül 2023).

The psychological structure of individuals is considered as their internal characteristics, and environmental factors are considered as external characteristics. The philosophy of life, cultural structure and morality of society, as well as a person's height, weight and beauty affect personality.

Like people, brands have personalities. As suggested by Aaker (1997), brand personality is created in the perspective of a brand as a person (Ariff et al. n.d). Just as a person is creative and adventurous, brands have such features. Consumers buy from brands that represent their personality traits. For example, IBM is an office person, while Apple is creative. Like Nike is the one who takes action with courage and Adidas is the one who achieves the impossible (Eroğlu et al. 2012). Most influencers use and advertise the Apple brand. While producing content, he/she pairs his/her own creative personalities with Apple. Sometimes consumers prefer brand personalities that they don't have. For example, an old man buys a sports car to feel young and brave.

Another accepted theory among the theories of motivation is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. Maslow's theory identifies five basic levels of human needs, which rank in order of importance from low-level (biogenic) needs to higher-level (psychogenic) needs (Eroğlu et al. 2012). According to the theory, individuals must first meet lower-level needs in order to reach higher-level needs.

Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: National Highway Institute (n.d.)

Physiological Needs

Physiological needs, which are situated at the pyramid's base, represent Maslow's fundamental tier of needs. These encompass essential survival prerequisites such as food, water, air, shelter, and rest (Maslow 1943). According to the theory, if these physiological needs are unfulfilled, an individual's sense of deprivation intensifies. Such an individual, grappling with this heightened dissatisfaction, often finds it challenging to contemplate or pursue higher-level needs (Maslow 1954).

Safety Needs

Building upon the hierarchy of needs, once the primary physiological requirements are addressed, an individual's focus transitions to safety needs (Maslow 1943). In this context, the concept of "safety" extends beyond mere physical security, encompassing the desire for stability, predictability in daily life, familial bonds, and the ability to exert control over one's environment and personal experiences. Only after successfully navigating through these first two foundational levels, does an individual progress to the third tier. It's worth noting that the initial two stages are pivotal for an individual's overall well-being and survival.

Social Needs

The third level of needs theory is social needs, or the need for love and belonging. These needs can be a person's need to love, show to love, belonging, compassion. This includes the desire for a romantic partner, to have close friends, and

maybe to get married and have children (Boeree 2006; Piston 2009). When this level is not completed, psychological problems may arise in individuals. Psychological problems can disrupt the basic needs of people in the first step. For example, if a person becomes depressed due to lack of love, her/his sleeping and eating and drinking patterns may be disrupted.

Self-Esteem Needs

It is the fourth step that occurs when the first three steps of the theory are satisfied. This level is related to respect, reputation, and reputation from society. Humans have a need for a stable, firmly based, high level of self-respect, and respect from others (Simons et al. 1987). The need for self-esteem is divided into two parts: internal and external. Internal needs are more related to a person's self-satisfaction. For example, the self-satisfaction of the individual who does his/her job well. External needs are related to the praise and approval of the person by others.

Self Actualization

The apex of Maslow's hierarchy represents the need for self-actualization. This encompasses an individual's pursuit to realize and employ their inherent potential to its fullest. One unique feature of self-actualization is that it looks different for everyone (Hopper 2020). For instance, consider a computer engineer innovating with a groundbreaking application or a vegan entrepreneur pioneering a notebook crafted from apple peels. Such endeavors epitomize the pinnacle of self-actualization.

Maslow's theory, however, suggests a nuanced understanding of human needs. An individual can operate concurrently at various levels of the hierarchy, striving to meet multiple needs simultaneously. Furthermore, the intricate tapestry of human motivation ensures that while different motives might culminate in identical behaviors for some, the very same motives could lead to divergent actions in others.

This intricacy underscores the multifaceted nature of human behavior and its motivations, which marketing and consumer research often aim to decode.

1.1.1.1.4. Psychological Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior

The power that originates from the person himself/herself, from within himself/herself and affects his/her behavior is called the psychological factor (Satıcı

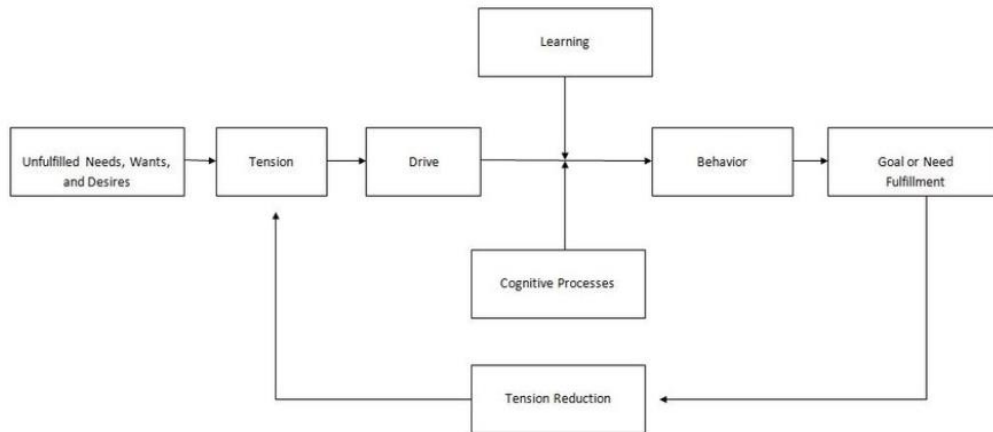
1998). Psychological factors are examined in 4 main headings. These; Motivation, Learning, Perception, Attitudes and Beliefs.

1.1.1.1.4.1 Motivation

Motivation activates a person and determines the aspects of their goals, thoughts, hopes, beliefs, desires, and needs and it is a concept that expresses their fears (Findıkçı 2006; Yeşil 2016). Motives are the forces that mobilize the consumer. People can sometimes feel that a force is directing them to various objects or situations, and sometimes pushing them away. The person who feels thirsty buys water from the nearby grocery store, while the person who feels the urge to be liked can go to the beauty salon.

The initial phase of motivation stems from a strong yearning to fulfill an unfulfilled requirement. Everything that relaxes the individual when it is eliminated and creates tension and distress in individuals when it is not eliminated, is expressed as a need. The hunger of a person and the pain in her/his stomach due to this hunger are caused by the need for hunger. The motive is revealed when he/she realizes that he/she is hungry after his/her stomach starts to hurt. It is caused by the impulse of people to take action in accordance with their needs. Thanks to the impulse, the hungry person makes a choice by evaluating the options. At the last stage, people who satisfy their needs by taking action reach satisfaction. With the final satisfaction stage, the motivation process ends. The motivation process is a cycle. This cycle is repeated one by one when the consumer's every need arises. Not every stimulated need (motive) may turn into action and may not reach satisfaction. For example, a person who is hungry will experience a feeling of dissatisfaction when he/she finds out that the grocery store is closed while he/she wants to order from the grocery store due to a lack of materials at home, or when he/she goes out to eat, he/she can't enter because the restaurant is full. Failure to relieve the need will increase the tension of the individual.

Figure 3. Motivation Process Model



Source: Schiffman and Kanuk (2012)

1.1.1.1.4.2. Learning

Learning plays a pivotal role in shaping behavior. As defined by S.P. Robbins, learning is perceived as any relatively permanent shift in behavior, emerging as a result of experience (Robbins n.d.). This learning process is often reinforced through repetition. For instance, behaviors frequently exhibited or encountered tend to solidify into enduring experiences. These experiences, particularly during the learning phases, coupled with the information assimilated during consumption, steer the trajectory of consumer purchasing behavior. An illustrative example can be drawn from celiac patients. Through learning, they discern the need to eschew gluten-containing foods, subsequently excluding such options from their food choices.

However, the sphere of learning isn't confined solely to consumers. Enterprises too evolve, harnessing insights drawn from consumer experiences to refine their product offerings and marketing tactics. It behooves firms to furnish consumers with opportunities to engage with their products be it through dispensing trial products to potential buyers or offering taste tests if the merchandise is edible.

Through such encounters, consumers crystallize their purchase inclinations, either opting for or against a product. This interaction, enriched by consumer feedback, empowers companies to innovate and better position their offerings in the marketplace.

1.1.1.1.4.3. Attitudes and Beliefs

Beliefs are continuous emotions created by individuals' perceptions and definitions about their inner world. Beliefs are a psychological phenomenon that encompasses knowledge, conviction, and religious feelings (Çöllü and Öztürk n.d). Attitude is an relatively global and enduring evaluation of an object, issue, person or action (Hoyer and MacInnis 1997; Jespersen 2017). Individuals live by developing positive or negative attitudes towards eating or not eating meat, drinking animal-based milk, or consuming plant-based milks. Attitudes demonstrate continuity. An individual can't be a vegan one day and a meat eater the next. Beliefs shape attitudes. The attitudes of the consumer affect the purchasing behavior. The individuals who are raised in households that consume animal products tend to carry this mindset into their adulthood.

Companies look for a way to develop a better marketing mix. Consumers who have positive or negative reviews about their attitudes can switch from one brand to another. In order for a consumer to be able to evaluate, he or she must have some information, ideas, and basic values that can be associated with the object, the marketing mix (4P). That's why today many companies work with influencers. Companies convey their brands, products and services to consumers through influencers. In this way, consumers evaluate their attitudes towards brands positively or negatively. The motivations and subjective norms to conform to reference groups shape individuals' attitudes. For example, an individual who follows a Vegan influencer may exhibit a positive attitude towards veganism due to the motivation to follow the influencer. Consumer Subjective norms may be shaped by what Instagram sources think about veganism and motivation to comply with those sources endorsing pro-veganism messages (Phua et al. 2020) .

1.1.1.1.4.4. Perception

Perception encompasses the process by which individuals observe or sense their surroundings, including people, objects, scents, and sounds, movements, flavors, and colors. Broadly, perception can be understood as an individual's cognizance of both their internal and external environments (Çömert and Durmaz 2011). This awareness is largely cultivated through stimuli from the external world. In the realm of marketing, myriad elements serve as stimulants - from brands, products, and

advertisements to salespersons, retail environments, celebrities, and display shelves. For instance, moviegoers are often subjected to commercials prior to the main screening, offering a direct example of consumer stimulus. These external stimuli are then processed through our sensory organs like the eyes, ears, tongue, skin, and nose. On a daily commute, for example, we might encounter numerous advertisements and brands, but our unique perceptual filters mean we'll each register different stimuli. This filtering process is often influenced by past experiences, motivations, beliefs, attitudes, and even our learning capacities (Çömert and Durmaz 2011).

1.1.1.1.5. The Age Factor in Consumer Decision-Making Styles

1.1.1.1.5.1. Generation Z

Oxford Learner's Dictionaries describes Generation Z as "a group of people born between the late 90s and early 2010s" (Oxford n.d). The number of members of this generation, the youngest of whom is 8 and the oldest is 22 years old, in our country is more than 22 million (Tuik n.d). Most members of generation Z are children of generation X. According to McCrindle (2010), Generation Z is the generation that was born to older mothers, lives in smaller families and has the fewest siblings according to ages (Karadoğan 2019). This generation, whose parents work, started school at the earliest age and received the most formal education. Although they have parents who grew up in traditional families, they are open-minded about having different family structures and adopting the life views of people from different cultures. Those in this generation, in their childhood and early youth stages, have witnessed negative events such as global crises, environmental problems, terrorist incidents (Kartal and Tatlı 2020).

Generation Z has grown up in times of uncertainty and change, affected by the explosion of technology and digital devices, economic instability and security insecurity (Rickes 2016; Seemiller and Grace 2016; Turner 2015; Twenge 2017; Wiedmer 2015; Karadoğan 2019).

Generation Z, the first social generation with early access to the Internet and portable digital technology, are called "digital natives". In addition, Generation Z is also called "Zoomer", "Internet Generation", "I-Generation" and "Crystal Generation". This generation spends their lives constantly in front of the screen.

They switch between smartphones, tablets and computer screens throughout the day. That's why they are also known as "screenagers".

Generation Z has never known a time without the Internet, which has made them real digital natives (Chicca and Shellenbarger 2018; Igel and Urquhart 2012; Loveland 2017; Rickes 2016; Seemiller and Grace 2016; Shatto and Erwin 2016; Spears et al.2015; Turner 2015; Twenge 2017; Wiedmer 2015; Karadoğan 2019). Unlike previous generations, generation Z, who was born into social media, uses social media channels more for maintaining communication, conducting research and entertainment purposes. The generation Z, which is so exposed to technology, has also reflected this language in the language of communication. Csobanka (2016:66) states that generation Z can make quick decisions, although they are intelligent, their emotional intelligence is not very developed, social networking sites are indispensable for them when it comes to communicating, they cannot understand the world without the Internet, they are very influenced by celebrities thanks to media tools, they attach great importance to the ideas of their peers (İnce and Bozyiğit 2018).

Generation Z is more sensitive than previous generations, open to innovations and changes, and is the first global generation. It is observed that they grow up more knowledgeable, more equipped and more curious than other generations. This pushes them to be more free, inquisitive and curious (Kartal and Tatlı 2020). This generation, which breaks down gender stereotypes, is more sensitive to the environment, fond of their rights and freedoms, is breaking down existing consumer patterns. In addition, this generation has low brand loyalty. Theories of marketing and consumption behavior have undergone significant changes.

Generation Z individuals draw a profile that can be described as a pure consumer by turning to a consumption that is personalized, unique and image-based in every subject (Gümüş 2020). This generation is affected by consumption because it is surrounded by discourses such as "it should be mine instantly", "I should buy instantly" due to the influence of the Internet and speed, but they also affect consumer trends. Generation Z, which has a say in purchasing decisions, also uses the Internet to get information about products and services, research prices, maintain relationships and collaborate. The generation Z, who is growing up without economic problems, wants to buy and consume the product they want to buy immediately. Generation Z, who has a say in consumption decisions, affects their parents' purchasing decisions,

thus attracting attention from marketers. For example, generation Z has a say in the selection of a holiday village to go to. This generation, which is growing up intertwined with technology, has a say in the purchase of technology, digital games and applications. As we mentioned in the literature, this generation, who spends certain times alone and takes responsibility because their parents work, also has a say in the purchase of food and beverage consumed at home.

Many businesses advertise and campaign on social media to make consumers aware of their products and services. These advertisements have a positive or negative effect on consumers. Generation Z is especially exposed to advertising by media such as Instagram, Youtube. One of the most important factors affecting the consumption of generation Z is the social media phenomena they follow on Instagram. Che and others (2017), in their studies investigating how Instagram affects consumers' purchasing decisions, state that perceived helpfulness, perceived honesty, approval of other users or famous people are important factors that affect consumers' trust in Instagram, and the trust factor also affects consumer purchasing intention (İnce and Bozyiğit 2018). Influenced by the advertisements of influencers they trust, love and support, this generation makes their purchases accordingly. Before and after the purchase, they conduct research on the Internet, ask questions to influencers, and take into account the comments of users who have used products and services before. After the purchase, they also share positive or negative comments about the product or service with their friends, followers and influencers.

Generation Z places high value on honesty and transparency in brands' social media presence, and strongly criticizes those that fall short.

Generation Z has great concerns about the future of the world. Therefore, generation Z, which has a high social responsibility consciousness, is very sensitive to the environment. For this reason, they use green products and encourage the people around them to use these products as well (Grail Research 2011). The process from the packaging of the products they use to the production stage is important for gen Z. It is possible to explain the environmental sensitivity of generation Z with the teaching of “reduce, reuse and transform” (Stillman and Stillman 2018). Through the developing applications, they know whether the products or services they receive are green products and whether they are used in animal experiments. Brands and companies targeting Generation Z should take into account the environmental impact

and carbon footprint of their products and consider offering eco-friendly options. It is important to protect the environment and to have knowledge values in this field for this generation that uses more thermos, carries home-made food and does not adopt the disposable style. In addition, this generation, which has a high social responsibility consciousness, is ready to pay extra money for products with a purpose.

Z's exhibit an open-minded attitude towards differences and diversity in regards to ethnicity, sexuality, and social issues. They don't adopt gender stereotypes. This has recently affected brands and businesses. According to Z's, make-up is now not only for women but also for men. Many brands have started to produce beauty products for male consumers. This generation, which has destroyed gender stereotypes, has also destroyed perceptions and attitudes towards colors. Many brands have started to produce and sell pink colored products in the men's category.

CHAPTER II

VEGANS AND THEIR LIFE STYLE

2.1. VEGANISM

The term “Vegan” was first used by Donald Watson, the founder of the Vegan Community, in 1944. He came up with the word vegan using the first three letters and the last two letters of the word "vegetarian." In this way, he also explained the connection of veganism with vegetarianism.

Veganism is a type of vegetarian in which meat (red meat, chicken, seafood), animal products such as honey, milk, eggs, yogurt, kefir are not consumed in any way and clothing made of animal products such as wool, silk, leather is also not used (Tunçay 2016). Veganism is the practice of consuming only plant-based foods and avoiding all animal products. Vegans are distinct from vegetarians because vegetarians may consume animal-derived products, such as eggs and dairy, which vegans strictly refrain from (Phua et al. 2020).

We can briefly define veganism as a philosophy and way of life that avoids as much as possible all kinds of exploitation and cruelty that animals are subjected to for the sake of food, clothing, cosmetics and other purposes. Vegans are against the consumption of all animal products. It also supports the development of alternatives to animal foods and is a choice that strives to be a sustainable world. Veganism is a way of life and nutrition, animal rights, the climate crisis, a choice we make to live in a more hopeful world (Ernalbant and Yılmaz 2021). Environmental vegetarians are concerned about the impact of meat production and consumption (Reijnders and Sabate 2001; Mohr 2005) on the environment and ecosystem. Veganism is not to participate as much as possible in the enslavement of sentient beings, their ill-treatment, and the act of killing them.

It is known that the origin of the word vegan extends to the word vegetarian. The word vegetarian was not derive from the Latin word “vegetabile”

(vegetable/plant). The origin of the word vegetarian comes from the Latin word "vegetus". "Vegetus" means alive, healthy, and full of life in Latin. In 2015, the word "veganism" entered the French dictionary Le Petit Robert as a "way of life based on respect for animals" (Giroux and Larue 2019).

2.2. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VEGANISM AND VEGETARIANISM

Vegetarianism was a form of nutrition that, in its most general terms, completely eliminates certain foods. Vegetarianism is the continuation of life without eating any kind of meat, including fish and birds, based on various motifs (Altaş 2017).

According to another definition, vegetarianism is a type of diet that involves the consumption of animal products (red meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs, etc.) in limited quantities or not at all (Tunçay 2016). Veganism is a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals (Vegan Society 2023).

A vegetarian nutrition can include vegetables and fruits grains and pulses, nuts and seeds, eggs, dairy products, honey. A vegetarian nutrition does not include meat or poultry fish or seafood, insects, gelatin or animal rennet, stock or fat from animals. Vegetarians use products derived from animals, while vegans do not.

The reason of choosing vegetarian/vegan diet differs according to people's preferences. These reasons may be respect to living things' life, being against to exploitation of animals, reducing ecological damage, being healthy and religious purposes (Tunçay Son and Bulut 2016).

There are several types of nutrition for vegetarianism/veganism. This is how people can decide what to eat and what not to eat. It is possible to explain them as follows:

- Lacto-ovo Vegetarians: Diets contain herbal foods, dairy products and eggs (Özcan and Baysal 2016).
- Lacto-vegetarians: Except for vegetable foods, only milk is a form of nutrition consumed.

- Ovo-vegetarians: Meat and dairy products are not included in the diet; however, there are vegetable-derived foods and eggs (Özcan and Baysal 2016).
- Semi-vegetarians: It is a part-time vegetarian diet. Usually, plant-based foods are consumed. Occasionally, milk, dairy products, chicken, fish are consumed. Meat is not consumed in this diet
- Pesco-vegetarians: Fish and seafood are included in this diet. Eggs, milk and dairy products can also be included in the menu. Meat and chicken are not consumed.
- Polo-vegetarians: It is a form of nutrition in which poultry such as chicken and turkey are consumed in addition to vegetable foods.
- Fruitarians / Fruitists / Fruit-fed: This nutrition plan only includes fruits, dried nuts and vegetables that are botanically classified as fruits, such as zucchini, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes.
- Rawists: These people do not believe that food is cooked. They believe that the nutritional value of the food will be lost with cooking (Altaş 2017).
- Vegan diet: All animal products, meat products, milk and dairy products, eggs, honey, etc. foods are not consumed.

2.2.1. Vegan Nutrition

Vegans do not consume meat, milk and dairy products, as well as products derived from animals. These include honey, cheese, milk and eggs.

Bees make honey by collecting nectar from flowers. During the nectar collection process, it also performs the pollination process and plays an important role in keeping the flowers alive (Balpamak n.d.). At the same time, it fertilizes numerous plants and provides the formation of food sources of animals and humans. That is why it is so important for the world. Bees collect nectar from an average of 1500 flowers to meet the needs of the hive (Ernalbant and Yılmaz 2021).

It is worth noting that bees have the remarkable ability to utilize enzymes in their bodies to convert the nectar they collect from flowers into the delicious and highly prized substance known as honey. It is honey that gives bees the necessary energy and nutrients. It can be said that the availability of this honey greatly contributes to their ability to endure the winter season. People shorten the life expectancy of bees by taking the honey they produce for themselves and replacing it with sugar-based products.

They also decapitate the queen bee's wings, ensuring that she does not leave the hive. They ensure that diseases caused by bees fed artificially pass to thousands of bees. That's why vegans don't consume honey.

Vegans don't consume milk and dairy products because they think that milk belongs to calves. Milk is formed as a result of artificial insemination of cows. Newborn calves are separated from their mothers immediately, without sucking their mother's milk. If the calf is a male, it will be slaughtered as a calf or killed immediately. Also Cheese is obtained from milk, so it is not consumed by vegans. And the cows are taken to the factories and immediately connected to the machines. Cows are used until they run out of milk. During this time, cows begin to live in a section reserved for them in factories where they cannot move. Calves separated from their mothers are fed through formula. Cows that have run out of milk are artificially inseminated again after a while. The situation is the same with chickens. Chickens spend their lives in a small cage. They increase the number of offspring by feeding chickens fertilized by a single rooster with GMO foods.

Chicks born into the world are divided according to their gender, if they are male, they are killed, if they are female and healthy, they are sent to various factories. Many chicks who set out to go to the factories die because of unfavorable conditions.

Half of the chicks that go on top of each other in small boxes die from lack of air, half from not providing the right temperature, and the others from hunger and thirst. One of the main goals of veganism is the right of animals to life. That's why they don't consume eggs either.

2.2.1.1. What Do Vegans Eat

It is the position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that appropriately planned vegetarian, including vegan, diets are healthful, nutritionally adequate and may provide health benefits for the prevention and treatment of certain diseases (Go Vegan World n.d.). These nutrients and nutrition are suitable for individuals of all ages, including pregnant and lactating women, infants, children, adolescents, older adults, and athletes.

Vegans have found substitute products to adapt to their eating patterns and provide the necessary healthy nutrients. There are substitutes for many products such as honey, meat, eggs etc. The Plant Based Attisan brand produces Honea as an

alternative to honey (Ernalbant and Yılmaz 2021). Again, instead of honey, jam, grape molasses, maple syrup, etc. can be used. As a substitute for meat, mushrooms, meatless meats with vegetable protein, soy protein and tofu are used. Vegans are fed with various legumes, fruits, seeds. Beyond Meat in California is developing plant-based burger meats as an alternative voice in the animal meat industry. As a protein in these meats; peas, mung beans and rice protein combinations are used (Log 2008).

These plant-based meats are seen as a tasty and healthy alternative. Beyond Meat company has started to provide services in the Turkish market. Beyond Meat just partnered with McDonald's, KFC, Taco Bell, and Pizza Hut to take its vegan meat to fast-food restaurants around the world (Live Kindly 2023).

Abbot's Butcher is another Californian company. For vegans, it produces chicken, chorizo (a spicy Spanish sausage made from pork), and beef.

It uses mushrooms, pea protein, wheat protein, garlic, chipotle peppers and a Spanish smoked paprika, various spices and herbs in its products. The Eat Vappy brand in Türkiye produces plant-based bologna sausages, meatballs and meat. Veggy, the largest vegan brand in Türkiye, produces vegetable-based meat, chicken, meatballs, tofu kebabs, pea protein.

Fomilk is the brand that produces substitute products for cheese and milk in Türkiye. It produces completely vegan milk from almonds, hazelnuts, soy, coconut, oats and peanuts. It also produces a variety of vegan cheeses from corn and potato starch. There are cheddar, mozzarella, dill and zahter varieties. It produces pate from hazelnuts, almonds, pistachios and coconuts.

Acquired by France-based Danone S. A. in 2017, the Alpro brand is the world's leading producer of plant-based milk, barista and cream. Milk consists of almonds, soy, coconut, hazelnuts, and oats. It also produces cream for food from soy and coconut.

Vegans mix tofu with seaweed flakes and fry it as a fish substitute. Also, when the mushroom is pounded, it acquires a squid texture. It can be a substitute for squid with various spices.

In 2022, consumers in Türkiye can reach many vegan brands. Consumers can find many vegan cafes and many cafes add vegan options to their menus. It will be appropriate to provide information about the studies conducted on this issue in Türkiye.

- The world-famous coffee chain Starbucks has added almonds, soy and coconut milk to its menu for vegan consumers. Starbucks added mini vegetable dumplings ciabatta, crispy pane ciabatta and 3 delicious Focaccias to its menu. It consists of plant-based meat, chicken and cheese. This year it was offered for sale in certain stores in Istanbul.
- Food producer Ülker launched “Ülker Chocolate Vegan Dark Chocolate”, which is special for those who eat vegan.
- Calve, owned by the Unilever brand, and launched Vegan Mayonnaise.
- Trakya Çiftliği, which entered the market in 1985 by bringing the cheeses it brought from abroad to the Turkish consumer, started producing its own cheeses since 1995. Trakya Çiftliği, a Turkish brand, and produces a variety of vegan cheeses, yogurts and milk.
- Turkish brand Veggy announced in 2012 that it will launch meat products with vegetable protein. It produces hamburger patties, schnitzel, tofu kebab etc.
- Established in 1979, Orkide Yağ launched Türkiye's first vegan margarine. Margarine is V-Label EU certified.

2.3. WHAT DO VEGANS WEAR

Vegan people adopt a stricter diet avoiding all animal products not only for food, but also for clothing or other purposes (McDonald 2000; Larsson et al. 2001; Mortara 2013).

Vegan fashion means not using any products obtained from animals or obtained through animals. Vegans refuse to use products derived from animals. They aim not only for animals to live, but for them to live without suffering. That's why they don't use products derived from animals. Vegans do not use substances such as leather, fur, bones, gelatin, wool (sheep's wool, cashmere, angora), silk obtained from animals. They use synthetic fabrics such as cotton and linen, as well as vegetable or acrylic in their clothing.

Vegans do not use animal leather in their shoe preferences. Consumers who turn to artificial leather know that this does not correspond to the philosophy of veganism. Because artificial leather is made of 100% plastic and does not dissolve in nature for very many years. It prevents the feet from getting air. Fungus causes odor and sweating. Vegans use plant-based leathers, which have recently become popular

in shoe preferences. These leathers are obtained from pineapples, cacti, corn, grapes and bananas. Recently, plant-based shoes made of apples have become fashionable in Türkiye. PrevShop, founded by Elif Taştekné in 2021, has introduced plant-based shoes consisting of 3 different apple varieties to vegan consumers. These different varieties of apples are used on the sole of the shoe, on the surface of the shoe and in the cargo boxes.

Recently, sustainable and vegan fashion has become popular in Türkiye. Tuba Ergin, the pioneer of this fashion, uses only 90% natural and recycled materials in its designs. She uses organic cotton, tree-friendly viscose, recycled fibers, vegan leather, and organic silk in her designs.

Looking around the world, Italy decided to ban fur production and farms by voting on the bill at the budget meeting, which provides for the closure of all remaining fur farms in the country within the next six months. In 2018, Gucci announced that it would not use fur in its collections (Ernalbant and Yılmaz 2021). This was followed by Burberry, Coach, Michael Kors, Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Giorgio Armani, and Diane von Furstenberg.

2.4. ANIMAL RIGHTS

Animal rights advocates believe that non-human animals should be free to live as they wish, without being used, exploited, or otherwise interfered with by humans (The Human League 2020). The animal rights view holds that human utilization of nonhuman animals, whether in the laboratory, on the farm, or in the wild, is wrong in principle and should be abolished in practice (Bekoff et al. 1998).

Animal rights refer to the ethical and legal principles that advocate for the fair and humane treatment of animals. The concept of animal rights revolves around the idea that animals have intrinsic value and should be afforded certain fundamental rights, similar to human rights.

Advocates for animal rights argue that animals have a basic right to live free from unnecessary harm and killing. Animals should be protected from cruel treatment, abuse, and unnecessary suffering. This includes humane treatment in captivity, such as in laboratories, farms, and zoos. Animals should not be used for entertainment, sport, or other purposes that cause them harm or distress. This encompasses the opposition to practices like animal testing, using animals in circuses, and cockfighting.

Wild animals have the right to live in their natural environments without unnecessary disruption or destruction of their habitats.

2.5. VEGANS, CIRCUSES AND ZOOS

Until the beginning of the 19th century, zoos were places of entertainment that were opened to symbolize the power of royalty. The oldest zoo in the world is the Tiergarten Schönbrunn in Vienna, which was started in 1752 as an animal collection for the viewing pleasure of the imperial family, then opened to the public and continues to operate today (Ernalbant and Yılmaz 2021).

In zoos, animals are separated from family members, they are left away from all kinds of natural behavioral activities. Animals living here cannot be hunted, they cannot choose the appropriate nest for themselves. Cheetahs who is living in zoos, cannot run for many kilometers, whales can only circle on the floor like the bathtub, elephants cannot walk, while bears have to cope with the temperature to which they are not accustomed at all. They also feed in small, unhealthy cages. The lifespan of animals living in zoos is shorter than the lifespan of animals living in nature. Because animals don't have privacy. They are constantly dealing with the noise of incoming customers. This creates psychological problems in animals.

This negative psychological state of animals kept in captivity is observed so often that there is also a scientific term that meets the meaning of this condition: zoochosis. Animals suffering from zoochosis may experience strange behaviors such as shaking, excessive vomiting, biting, abnormally meaning relationships, and self-harm (Vegan Gazete 2023).

Animals are becoming depressed and obsessive. At the same time, they use torture methods to train animals in circuses. They beat animals, chain them and starve them. They enslave animals in circuses. So vegans do not participate in circus, bullfighting, zoo, horse racing, etc., where animals are used. Vegans are against this kind of entertainment because it enslaves animals and trains them using force.

2.6. VEGAN BEAUTY AND ANIMAL TESTING

More than 100 million animals suffer and die in the U.S. every year in cruel chemical, drug, food, and cosmetics tests as well as in medical training exercises and curiosity-driven medical experiments at universities (Peta n.d.). Thousands of mice,

rats, rabbits, primates, cats, dogs and other animals are fighting for life in small cages. The skulls of the animals used in the experiment are punctured, their skin is irritated, their psychology is impaired, they are starved, the vertebrae or various bones of the animals trying to escape the test are broken and serious burns occur on their skin.

Human clinical studies between animal testing alternatives, human cell and tissue cultures, stem cell and genetic testing methods, in vitro (test tube) techniques, MRI and cat scans, epidemiology studies, micro dosing is located (DeneyeHayır 2020).

The British animal protection organization PETA and its affiliates fund the development of many of these alternatives to animal testing, encourage governments and companies around the world to use these methods, and publish research that proves their superiority over conventional animal testing (Ernalbant and Yılmaz 2021).

Animal experiments contradict vegan ideology and morality. The right to choose moral thus helps presents veganism as a philosophy built on respect, inclusivity and kindness– being kind to animals, being kind to others and being kind to one-self.

Vegans do not believe that this system of inflicting pain on animals will bring them beauty. That is why brands that do not conduct animal experiments have become popular recently. Especially in makeup products. Vegan Cosmetic is all products that do not conduct experiments on animals, do not use substances or additives of animal origin in the manufacture or composition. Vegetarian cosmetics may contain products derived indirectly from animals (such as milk, eggs, honey). Animal experiments are not performed on both types of cosmetics.

Brands that do not conduct animal experiments use the Cruelty Free label or the rabbit logo. Cruelty Free refers to the fact that at no stage of the production process of products are experiments performed on animals. Using this label does not mean that the products are vegan. The Cruelty Free logo only means that animals are produced without cruelty. In the animal rights movement, "cruelty-free" refers to products and activities that avoid causing harm or death to animals worldwide.

2.7. VEGAN LABEL

The V-Label is an internationally recognized, registered symbol for labeling vegan and vegetarian products and services. For consumers, it is a simple and reliable

guide to help them when they are shopping. With the V-Label, companies help to promote transparency.

Standardized criteria and inspections ensure that the V-Label is a unique seal of quality for vegan and vegetarian products and services all across Europe (V-Label n.d.). It is a licensed symbol developed by the European Vegetarian Union (EVU). It is designed differently for vegans and vegetarians.

The number of vegans in the world is increasing every day. Consumers adopt a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle for environmental, religious, health and ethical reasons. The certificate acts as an intermediary in the decision-making of the end consumers.

This standardization system, which will increase the competitiveness of Turkish Food Exporters in the world market, was taken by the Vegan and Vegetarian Association of Türkiye in 2014. V-Label's sole legal representative and certification right belongs to the Vegan and Vegetarian Association of Türkiye.

The V-Label is divided into two categories: "vegan" and "vegetarian". On the relevant label, there is the letter "V" in the circle and the definition of the relevant category (V-Label n.d.).

Figure 4. V-Label



Source: Vegan and Vegetarian Association of Türkiye (n.d)

The first certificate in Türkiye was given to the Nudo brand. It was followed by Komagene, Eriş Flour, Gloria Jean's Coffees, Upper West Side Falafel, Kurme, Vegan Cheese, Oses and Entabi Çiğköfte brands (Haberler 2006).

It will be appropriate to provide information about Vegan Label certified products and brands in Türkiye.

- Eriş Un, which is under Erişler Gıda, was selected as Türkiye's first V-Label certified flour.
- Eyüp Sabri Tuncer was the first brand to receive a V-Label in the field of cosmetics. The 99-year-old brand received international vegan certification in categories such as shampoo, toothpaste, shower gel and soap. It has registered that the brand products are not tested on animals and do not contain animal components.
- The Turkish cleaning brand Viking has released a Premium series for vegans. Premium series dishwashing detergent, liquid hand soap, bathroom cleaners, wc cleaners etc. consists of.
- The Pınar brand, which is part of Yaşar Holding, has launched Türkiye's first vegan drinks. V-Label certified includes Lemonade, Pınar Frii beverages, Bağışıklık Pınarım, Güzellik Pınarım, Zindelik Pınarım, Rahatlık Pınarım.

- Gloria Jean's, Türkiye's chain coffee shop, has started offering vegan and lacto vegan products to its customers. While no animal-based products are used in the menus offered to vegans, milk and milk-based products are used in the menus prepared for Lacto vegans.

2.8. VEGANISM IN TÜRKİYE

Türkiye, officially the Republic of Türkiye, is a country located mainly in Anatolia in Western Asia, with a small portion of the Balkans in Southeast Europe (Wikipedia 2023).

Türkiye, as a secular state, guarantees freedom of religion and conscience in its constitution. According to the 2012 report published by Pew Research Foundation, the ratio of Muslims to the population is 98%. According to the Pew Research Foundation, as of 2010, Christians living in Türkiye constitute 0.4% of the population (Pew Research Center 2015).

Türkiye, which is divided into 7 different geographical regions, has different food cultures. Turkish cuisine has been influenced by Mesopotamia and Balkan cuisines, with the Ottoman Palace cuisine also being a significant component of Turkish cuisine.

Ottoman Palace Cuisine boasts an extensive selection of delectable dishes, ranging from savory soups and vegetable plates prepared with premium olive oil to succulent meat and fish entrees, followed by an array of mouth-watering pastries and desserts. A wide variety of dishes prepared in Turkish cuisine are especially the sheep meat, including goat, lamb and beef meat (Altaş 2017).

Religion is usually defined as a social-cultural system of designated behaviors and practices, morals, beliefs, worldviews, texts, sanctified places, prophecies, ethics, or organizations, that generally relates humanity to supernatural, transcendental, and spiritual elements (Merriam 2021). The holy book has been revealed to 3 religions. These are Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Muslims believe in the religion of Islam. Muslims constitute 98% of Türkiye. Each religion has its own worship, rituals and prohibitions. It is forbidden to eat some animals in the Islamic religion. According to the Islamic religion, the first prohibited animal is pork.

There are 4 different sects affiliated to the religion of Islam. Those who adhere to the Shiite sect do not consume rabbit meat. Some of those belonging to the Hanafi

sect eat horse meat, while others do not consume it. According to the Hanafi's, only fish is halal from aquatic animals, and all other marine animals, including frogs, are forbidden. According to the Maliki, all marine animals are halal, except for sea pigs. Among the Shafi is, on the other hand, the ones that are unclean by nature are haram, and the clean ones are halal.

Camel meat is extensively consumed in the Islamic world. The camel is also sacrificed for meat. But camel meat is not consumed by non-Muslim people of the Middle East. In the Far East, camel meat is avoided. In Mongolia, camel meat is not consumed while camel milk is consumed (Altaş 2017).

Various causes of plant-based nutrition can be caused by health for some, ethics and moral values for others. For some, it may cover religion. Assessing the morality of whether meat is a necessity or not, comes down to your morals and beliefs.

One of the countries where veganism is developing is Türkiye. Every person living in Türkiye belongs to almost one class. The vegan and vegetarian nutrition style, which has developed especially among young people, gives a sense of belonging to young people. The vegan and vegetarian eating style in Türkiye gives an identity to the person. Consumers who have chosen this style of nutrition defend their animal rights together and take actions together. They collectively give feedback to brands. At the same time, if the brand is not located in Türkiye, they apply for it.

There are about 80,000 vegans in Türkiye. The results of a study conducted on nutrition in Türkiye in 2019 also show that 5% of the population follows a vegan, 4% a vegetarian, and 4% a pescetarian diet (which does not consume meat except fish) (Tüketimde Vegan Tercihler Artıyor 2015) .

Table 1. Vegetarian Population by Country

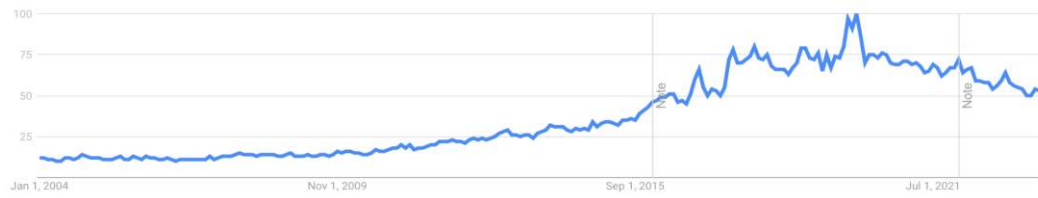
Vegetarian Population by Country Vegetarians (Per Thousand People)	
Nigeria	1.426
Pakistan	1.190
Indonesia	270
The Philippines	238
Germany	212
Brazil	166
Türkiye	163
Kenya	99
Thailand	90
Italy	86

Source: Tüketimde Vegan Tercihler Artıyor (2019)

In examining the impact of vegan influencers' purchasing behaviors on Generation Z, it is pivotal to have a broader understanding of the vegetarian landscape worldwide. Table 1. "Vegetarian Population by Country: Vegetarians (Per Thousand People)" provides some insightful data in this regard. Nigeria and Pakistan stand out with notably high numbers, 1,426 and 1,190 per thousand people respectively, suggesting that these nations have a significant vegetarian demographic. On the other hand, European countries like Germany and Italy exhibit a modest vegetarian populace with 212 and 86 per thousand people, respectively. This is particularly interesting when juxtaposed against Asian countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines. The disparity in these figures might be influenced by cultural, economic, and societal factors that vary from one region to another.

For vegan influencers targeting Generation Z, understanding these global vegetarian demographics can provide a clearer picture of where their influence might be most potent. As they strategize to engage with Gen Z, acknowledging such population nuances can help in tailoring their content and campaigns to resonate more profoundly with their audience.

Figure 5. Searching Vegan Term Interest Over Time



Source: Research Gate (2021)

Within the context of investigating the impact of vegan influencers on Generation Z's purchasing behaviors, understanding the global search trends of the term "vegan" offers crucial insights. From the data provided, between January 1, 2004, and August 27, 2023, there's a noticeable interest in veganism in countries such as Iceland, Jersey, Cayman Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, United Kingdom, Australia, and Bermuda. Particularly, Iceland tops the list with the highest search interest in the term "vegan," suggesting a highly progressive and possibly environmentally conscious population (Figure 5).

The prominence of these regions in vegan-related searches could imply a few things. Firstly, influencers targeting Generation Z in these areas might find a more receptive audience due to pre-existing interest in veganism.

Secondly, the cultural, economic, and social conditions of these countries could be more conducive to vegan lifestyles, making them ideal case studies for understanding how and why vegan influencers can effectively shape the purchasing behaviors of their younger audience. Additionally, the inclusion of multiple island territories and smaller nations in this list might hint at a heightened environmental consciousness, given the direct threats many islands face from climate change.

For marketers and influencers aiming to tap into the Generation Z market within these countries, these insights could be invaluable. It would be beneficial to delve deeper into the specific content preferences, online behaviors, and consumption patterns of Generation Z in these regions to craft effective marketing strategies. In the table above, the frequency of searching for the words "Vegan" and "Vegetarian" in Türkiye is given.

When a search was made on the HappyCow site in 2021, a total of 117 vegan and vegetarian restaurants were seen. 52 of them are in Istanbul and 11 are in Ankara (Map of Türkiye Vegan/Vegetarian n.d.).

2.9. VEGAN CITY OF TÜRKİYE

VegFest was organized for the first time in our country in 2017 with the joint organization of Vegan Society Türkiye (TVD) and hosted by Didim Municipality. VegFest, organized in Didim-Aydın, aims to raise public awareness about the animal rights and ethics of veganism, its environmental, health and sustainability effects.

Various exhibitions, various workshops, vegan product tastings, book launches and concerts are organized within the scope of VegFest. Interviews are held with different guests and subjects in the national and international arena.

Vegfest started in Didim in 2017 and moved to Istanbul in 2018 under the name of International Istanbul Vegfest.

The event, which attracted great attention by both vegan and non-vegan, but curious about this way of life, those who want to get to know and have information about it, was held online for the first time through the free video conferencing application Zoom Webinar in June 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic (İstanbul Vegfest 2020).

Due to the pandemic, Vegfest 2021 was held for the second time online via the free video conferencing application Zoom Webinar.

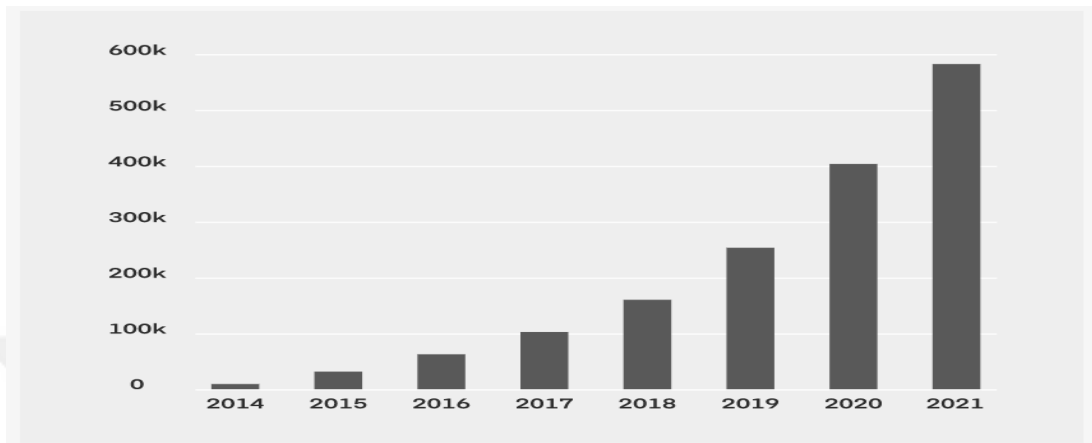
2.10. VEGANISM IN THE WORLD

Looking at the data for 2020, the number of vegans in the world has increased to approximately 78 million as of September (K2 2020).

One of the biggest effects of this growth is the campaign launched by the Veganuary Foundation. Veganuary is a non-profit organization that encourages people worldwide to try vegan for January and beyond. During the 2021 campaign, more than 500,000 people took our pledge to try a vegan diet, while more than 825 new vegan products and menu options were launched in our key campaign countries (What We Do 2023). The organization inspires people to adopt a vegan diet, and encourages brands, restaurants and supermarkets to create, launch and promote vegan products and menus. The organization reaches people through influencers and brand

ambassadors. One of the ambassadors we know is Joaquin Phoenix. In this way, the number of participants has been increasing day by day since January 2014. People from all over the world participated.

Figure 6. Veganuary Growth As of 2014.



Source: Veganuary (2014)

In 2019, the term "veganism" was searched 5 times more on Google than the words "vegetarian" and "cruelty-free".

In 2015, 3.4% of Americans were vegetarians and 0.4% were vegans (Simple Happy Kitchen 2019). The number of Vegans in America was about 4 million in 2014. This number increased by 600% to 20 million in 2018.

72% of Americans oppose testing cosmetic products on animals (Güney 2020).

There were 150,000 vegans in the UK in 2014. In 2020, this number has increased to 720,000. It accounts for 1.2% of the United Kingdom. A new survey conducted in the UK found that 470,000 Britons switched to a meat-free diet in 2020, which means a 100 percent increase (235,000 Britons) over those who gave up meat in 2019. Meatless food sales in the UK increased by 22% between 2013 and 2018.

British retail giant Tesco launched its plant-based range of products at more than 600 stores across the UK on 8 January (Blogager 2019). As we mentioned in the section on Veganism in Türkiye, religion has an impact on veganism. Meat consumption is the lowest in India, thanks to their adoption of Hinduism. In 2020, about 500 million vegetarians and 5 million vegans live in India.

According to an "ABC Australia Talks" National Survey, only 1% of Australians declare that they are vegan (Ent Dergi 2020). 3% of the participants in the

study stated that they were vegetarian. In a study conducted in Canada in 2018, 2.1% of Canadian adults stated that they consider themselves vegan. In 2016, a study conducted by the German Nutrition Society calculated that about 1% of the population of Germany is vegan. Italy had the fastest growing vegetarian population over 2011-2016 with a growth of 94.4% (SineaFoods 2020). Sweden saw its largest decrease in meat consumption for 30 years with a 2.6% drop in people eating meat in 2017 (SineaFoods 2020).

If the world becomes vegan, it could save the lives of 8 million people by 2050, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by two-thirds and lead to health-related savings, while also preventing \$1.5 trillion in climate damage (Güney 2020.)

Chef's Pencil has determined the 15 countries and cities where veganism is the most popular with Google data (Türk Vegan Derneği 2020). The United Kingdom, Australia and Israel make up the top three places in the country category. The United States is ranked 12th from last. In terms of cities, Bristol in the United Kingdom is rising to the first place. Edinburgh is in third place. London, on the other hand, takes the fourth place.

2.11. LOHAS

LOHAS is introduced as an acronym for “Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability”, a market segment focused on health and fitness, the environment, personal development, sustainable living, and social justice (LOHAS 2012; Vuruşkan and Fröhlich n.d). LOHAS (Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability) is presented as a perceptual, attitudinal, and behavioral lifestyle that emphasizes personal health and well-being as well as environmental and social sustainability in the pursuit of balanced prosperity between the individual, the environment, and society (Choi and Feinberg 2021).

It is defined as a lifestyle or market segment that is focused on green or ecological initiatives, and is made up of a group of people who are generally well-educated and will to spend a bit more on products or services that align with their values (Cyberclick 2021).

The concept of LOHAS was defined by a study conducted by the social scientist Paul Ray in the 1990s and 2000s. Paul Ray, during sociological research he discovered that 25% of the American population examined by him identified the idea

of moving towards health, balance and social justice as the main element forming their way of the world perception and decisions on how they want to live (Wiacek 2019).

Paul defined this group as “cultural creatives” (cultural creators), who are defined as leaders and innovators of cultural change. Lohas are interpreted as conscious consumers who adopt a sustainable lifestyle, care about health, environment and social issues. Lohas has an above-average education and an above-average income, which makes them a very interesting target group for companies (Güney 2020).

In the marketing segment, Lohas consumers are not divided according to demographic characteristics and genders. They are defined by their values: concern for the planet, authenticity, personal fulfillment, holistic health, and social conscience (Spa Wellness 2021).

Consumers of LOHAS, for example, nature and outdoor vacationers, are customers of organic stores or organic supermarkets (Springer Gabler n.d.).

LOHAS is concerned about the environmental impact of a product throughout the entire period of its life cycle—how the product is made, sold, consumed, and discarded, and if the process is done without harm or depletion to the environment (Choi and Feinerg 2021). Consumers with environmental concerns try to buy more green products and consume organic food. Consumers who adopt Lohas attach importance to sustainable consumption and organic food in particular. Lohasians tend to pay more money for organic menus and products that take part in social responsibility projects. It is important where these products are produced, how they are produced and by whom.

Zentner (2016) argued that the people committed to a LOHAS tend to live as vegetarians or vegans because these food products need less energy and produce less harmful by-products than meat or fish during the production process (Avramov 20116: Choi and Feinerg 2021).

Sustainability, environment and health issues, which are the components of Lohas, are examined respectively.

2.11.1. Sustainability

The concept of sustainability first appeared in the Brundtland Report, ‘Our Common Future’ report prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1987.

According to the report, sustainability is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”. Sustainability is the fact that one does not usurp the needs of future generations while meeting one's own current needs. Sustainability can be expressed as the ability to be permanent, to stay for tomorrow and to continue its existence (Akay and Demir 2020). The concept of sustainability is a holistic approach that includes ecological, economic and social dimensions (Ekolojist.com 2019). There are 3 main components of sustainability that are intertwined. These are; Environmental Protection, Economic Growth and Social development.

2.11.2. Economic Growth

An economically sustainable system must be able to continuously produce goods and services, maintain manageable levels of government and external debt, and avoid excessive sectoral imbalances that damage agricultural or industrial production (Gedik 2020). Production processes are related to efficiency and investment. It is important to use resources correctly in order to increase productivity in production. There is a possibility of depletion of resources that are not used correctly. This can put production at risk. The main purpose is to increase the consumption of goods and services, while increasing human welfare.

2.11.3. Environmental Protection

An environmentally sustainable system should maintain a stable resource base by avoiding overexploitation of renewable resource systems and consuming non-renewable resources only to the extent that investment is made as an adequate substitute (Gedik 2020). The main goal is to protect the environment and the continuity of natural habitats.

2.11.4. Social Development

A socially sustainable system refers to ensuring equality of distribution, adequate provision of social services, including health and education, gender equality, and political accountability and participation (Tiltay et al. 2021). Changes in economic growth and environmental protection affect social development.

Veganism is an ecologically sustainable way of eating and living for our planet (Türk Vegan Derneği 2020). Veganism is protective and respectful towards biodiversity and the ecosystem. Sustainable diets contribute to nutrient and nutritional security, have low environmental impacts, and promote healthy living for current and future generations (Akay and Demir 2020). Vegans are against animal husbandry, the biggest reason for this is due to water and food inequality. 1 in 3 of the plants that will be enough to feed the whole world are grown for the livestock industry. The study, published in August 2013, revealed that if people consumed the crops they feed the animals themselves, instead of feeding the animals, the available calories would increase by 70%, which could feed an additional 4 billion people (Türk Vegan Derneği 2020). The term "water footprint" refers to the amount of fresh water needed to produce a product or service throughout its entire supply chain. This includes everything from processing raw materials to the product's use by consumers (Panda.org 2014). The water consumed for the animal industry is one of the biggest causes of depletion of water resources. The water footprint of any animal product is larger than the water footprint of crop products with equivalent nutritional value (Mekonnen and Hoekstra 2012). The usable water is not distributed evenly. Some 2.2 billion people around the world do not have safely managed drinking water services, 4.2 billion people do not have safely managed sanitation services, and 3 billion lack basic handwashing facilities (Unicef 2023).

On the other hand, an average of 15.3 tons of clean water is used for every 1 kg of meat (Türk Vegan Derneği 2020). The cycle of animal food production, including processing, storage, transportation, distribution and waste, harms the environment. The biggest harm of this cycle is greenhouse gasses. It is seen that the production of animal foods has a higher greenhouse gas emission effect than the production of plant-based foods.

The consumption and production of animal products both harm the environment. Vegan consumers think that all the negativities in nature are caused by animal production and that animal foods are not correct in terms of sustainability. Vegan nutrition, which provides sustainability, also provides positive results in environmental protection and sustainability of the ecosystem.

2.11.5. Environment

The environment is defined as the place where living and inanimate beings live in harmony (Çokadar et al. 2009; Sağsöz and Doğanay 2019). The consumption of fossil fuels, the gasses arising from the consumption and production of animal foods, industrialization, natural disasters, etc. it damages the environment. Unplanned urbanization, rapid industrialization, nuclear tests, and the widespread use of chemicals, artificial fertilizers, and cleaning products are causing ecological imbalances and threatening species worldwide due to the increasing world population. Companies, government agencies and environmentalists take precautions to reduce environmental damage. The purpose of these measures is to protect and improve future generations. Many companies adopt environmental sustainability policies. Sustainable management of the environment and natural resources; In order to reduce and manage the effects of unplanned consumption, it aims to manage natural resources by providing a balance between long-term economic, social and environmental development factors and to protect the environment in this way (T.C Kalkınma Bakanlığı 2018). However, it is aimed for companies to make profits.

Sustainable diets contribute to nutrient and nutritional security, have low environmental impacts, and promote healthy living for current and future generations (Akay and Demir 2020).

The methods used in the production process of plant-based products, gasses generated in production and environmental wastes are less than animal-based foods.

2.11.6. Health

According to research, the health of vegan/vegetarian individuals is in a better condition than other individuals. It has been found that vegan/vegetarian individuals have lower blood cholesterol levels, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes mellitus, arteriosclerosis and hypertension are less common diseases such as (Tunçay 2018). However, attention should be paid to getting enough protein, vitamin B (especially B12) and calcium in a Vegan diet (Bozok 2019). As expected, B12 deficiency is not very common in vegans. Humans take B12 supplements from animals. Animals get this vitamin B12 from the bacteria in the areas where they graze. Today, animals cannot take this bacteria through natural ways because it doesn't wander and graze in open areas. People inject vitamin B12 into animals with their

hands. Vegans who do not consume animal products can take vitamin B12 from the outside in the form of a sublingual pill or spray. With the observation of the positive effects of plant-based nutrition on health, its popularity and adoption rate has increased in western societies in recent years (Medawar et al. 2019; İpekçi and Toktaş 2021). It is important for consumers that the foods they consume are healthy and the clothes they wear are healthy. Health has an impact on the purchasing behavior of consumers. This effort for health is evident at LOHAS in all aspects of consumption (Güney 2020).



CHAPTER III

SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCER MARKETING

3.1. Concept and Definition of Social Media

These applications, which are defined as social media and contain mixed formations of photos, videos, texts, and media among people, have brought a new dimension to virtual communication as well as attracting the attention of users (Vural and Bat 2010). Other definitions made about social media in the literature include ;

Social media is a set of internet-based applications based on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and modification of user-generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; Tezci and İçer 2017).

Social media encompasses a wide range of online, word-of-mouth forums including blogs, company sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer-to-consumer e-mail, consumer product or service ratings websites and forums, Internet discussion boards and forums, mob logs (sites containing digital audio, images, movies, or photographs), and social networking websites, to name a few (Mangold and Faulds 2009).

Social media consists of virtual communities whose content is created and shared by users (Kim et al.2010; Koçyiğit 2015).

Social media is a participatory online media in which individuals present their news, photos, and videos created by individuals through social media sites (Evans 2008).

In social media, users can't only access daily news, but also access information about the products and innovations of companies. For this reason, in the

field of marketing, social media is also called “consumer-generated media”, due to the fact that its users are active (Mangold and Faulds 2009).

Social media in its most general form without the limitation of time and space of individuals it is also possible to define it as a form of internet-based communication in which they can be found in sharing and discussion (Vural and Bat 2010).

What sets social media apart from traditional media is its unique feature of allowing individuals to express themselves in various ways online. For this reason, it is predicted that social media will be an important factor in the marketing world in the future. We can also refer to social media as the interaction between communities of people who gather to share information and opinions online.

3.1.1. Social Media Tools

Through social media tools, users can create their own profiles on websites, connect with friends, share content and communicate. In general, social media tools can be classified into different categories: social networks, blogs, microblogs, content sharing sites, social marking sites, and podcasts.

3.1.1.1. Blogs

The word blog is formed from the words web and log, which means "web log". They are web pages on the Internet, accessible to everyone, where the author shares and publishes his views on a particular topic. Blogs are perhaps the most well-known social media platforms (Mayfield 2008). Blogs, which provide convenience when compared to websites in terms of use, are interactive, which can be easily edited by the person at any time, and are compatible with other tools in social media, thanks to its integrated features (Sevinç 2012).

Although blogs are managed by the use themselves, they have a feature that allows other users to comment. This feature provides interaction.

3.1.1.2. Mikroblog

Microblogs, another small size of blogs, are people's instant events. It is one of the social media tools that allows you to publish it via text message on the web. In other words, microblogging is a kind of self-specific blog. It includes text messages on the Web that allow people to share the moment they live immediately.

Twitter: The most widely known microblog is Twitter. Users can easily write their short and concise thoughts in this free application. From the point of view of businesses, a medium such as Twitter is an ideal tool for listening to audiences, two-way communication, content sharing, relationship development, and maintenance (Yavuz and Haseki 2012). Content shared here is limited to 140 characters. It also has a story feature. In this way, the instant situation is shared.

Facebook: Facebook was established in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. Facebook is primarily designed for connecting and interacting with friends, family, and acquaintances online. It allows users to create personal profiles, share text, photos, videos, and links, and engage in various forms of communication. Facebook provides many features, including the News Feed, where users see updates from people and pages they follow. Users can also join and create groups, post on their timelines, chat through Messenger, and like or react to content with emoji's. Users can create and find events in their local area and also use the marketplace to buy and sell products. The business owner also uses Facebook to exist on social media. To be more visible, to spread information about the business, to be more with customers to establish strong relationships, to increase sales, to strengthen the image and reputation of the enterprise and in order to cope with the competition, businesses need to open corporate business pages on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter (Emeksiz and Simsek 2018).

3.1.1.3. Content Sharing Sites

Users can register on these sites, create their own profile and interact with their friends. These sites allow their users to share and store content such as videos and photos, in addition to producing content.

Instagram: Today, Instagram is a social media tool based on photo sharing that allows people to easily import, store, and save images in the fastest and easiest way (Anlı et al. 2020). Brands have had the opportunity to reach consumers easily thanks to the new product label application and direct connection features. Instagram also has a feature called instagram story. Thanks to this feature, users can share photos, videos and music that remain in their stories for 24 hours. Influencers can create links, advertise and sell to this feature.

Youtube: YouTube is a popular online video-sharing platform that allows users to upload, view, share, and comment on videos. Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim began YouTube in 2004 as a way to post and share video material (Soukup 2014). YouTube has become one of the most prominent and widely used video platforms on the internet, with a vast and diverse collection of videos covering a wide range of topics and interests.

Users can find videos on YouTube related to music, entertainment, educational content, vlogs, tutorials, and much more. Many individuals and organizations use YouTube to share their creative work, express their ideas, or reach a global audience. Viewers can subscribe to channels, like and comment on videos, and create their playlists. YouTube also offers monetization options for content creators, allowing them to earn revenue from ads, channel memberships, and merchandise shelf integration.

3.2. INFLUENCER DEFINITION AND CONCEPT

Paid ads or sponsored shares on personal pages are now essential for brands to successfully engage with their desired audience on social media. Social media is a platform where brands can interact with consumers, implement low-cost marketing strategies.

Influencer marketing is a rapidly growing industry that attempts to promote products or increase brand awareness through content spread by social media users who are considered to be influential (Carter 2016) . It is an ambience in which a consumer-brand relationship based on trust can be established.

Social media has become a powerful platform for brands to showcase their products and reach a wider audience. In recent times, many brands have turned to social media influencers to promote their products and make a significant impact. Influencers are individuals who have the power to affect decisions of others because of their (real or perceived) authority, knowledge, position, or relationship (Businessdictionary.com 2017; Gretzel 2018). These influencers, with their large following and persuasive abilities, have become an essential part of modern-day marketing strategies. The marketing component is completed by the influencers who share their daily lives with their followers by using the products belonging to the brands they have signed an agreement with, sharing their thoughts about these products

and directing people to the product or service (Ekşi et al. 2022) . They help brands connect with potential customers and build brand awareness more organic and authentic. We can define social media influencers as people who are followed by large audiences through social media. The large audience that the influencer has by users also represents the trust in him/her. For certain groups, it is considered a dependable influence on their preferences.

Brands now aim to reach an even wider audience by collaborating with influencers instead of continuing with traditional marketing methods. Influencer marketing develops relationships with personal, warm, sincere, and interactive communication in order to reach the target markets of enterprises with the emergence of digitalization, new media, and communication channels. Influencers frequently utilize social media, particularly Instagram, to engage with their followers. They may divulge intimate details about their daily experiences in order to foster a closer bond with their audience. However, some customers may perceive sponsored posts as less reliable than other content created by the influencer. Nevertheless, influencer marketing remains a prevalent and powerful tool for brands to target their desired audience.

Influencer marketing can also be defined as a process in which a brand takes action to increase sales and is carried out with people who have the ability to influence their target audience. Hence, it is evident that influencers possess the ability to sway their audience and, in turn, impact a wider range of individuals through their content.

Influencer means the person who affects. They are also people who have large followers and produce creative content. Brands collaborate with influencers to promote their products. In this way, they cooperate effectively. These offers can include an influencer testing a product, organizing a special event, or just paying for them.

Unlike celebrities, influencers are relatable and authentic. They connect with followers by sharing personal, usually private aspects of their lives.

Influencers can also be called people who have the ability to influence consumers' attitudes and purchasing decisions by taking part in different social media channels with their opinions about the brand.

Building trust between consumers and brands is crucial, and one effective way to achieve this is through the sharing of content that showcases how products

seamlessly fit into their daily lifestyles. By demonstrating this connection, consumers can establish a deeper connection and sense of loyalty towards the brand.

The micro-celebrity practitioner may have a very small audience, but is able to inhabit the celebrity subject position through the use of technologies also popular with superstar musicians, athletes, and actors (Marwick 2015). Common features that influencers have include an improved sense of humor and a reflection of their own point of view. Influencers show their followers products and brands they don't own. At the same time, they predict the products and brands that the followers want to have and show them. Their shares also consist of the latest fashion products, holidays in exotic locations, their interactions with celebrities and advertising, dinners at famous restaurants and special invitations. Building trust between consumers and brands is crucial, and one effective way to achieve this is through the sharing of content that showcases how products seamlessly fit into their daily lifestyles.

By demonstrating this connection, consumers can establish a deeper connection and sense of loyalty towards the brand (Marwick 2015).

3.3. EFFECTS OF INFLUENCER MARKETING ON THE CONSUMER

In the marketing and consumer behavior literature, it is stated that EWOM or the information that consumers acquire through other people is more effective in consumer decision-making than traditional advertising techniques (Goldsmith and Clark 2008). A message delivered through the consumer is perceived as more original and reliable than a message delivered through an ad. Consumers have always valued the opinions of others. With the development of social media, it has increased the impact of personal experiences and suggestions by enabling consumers to share their ideas and experiences one-on-one.

Today, consumers can freely write and share their thoughts about brands on social media. Digital influencers have the power to shape their audience's attitudes, decisions, and behavior through social media features. Messages can spread quickly and easily so a viral effect occurs. Message sharing can attract the attention of different audiences.

Influencers are crucial third-party individuals who must share their authentic thoughts about a brand with consumers and provide explicit consent. Because when consumers want to buy a service or product, they often perform the buying behavior

by consulting family members, friends, and influencers. In this context, Influencers are considered as people who can strongly influence the consumer purchasing decision. Brands can increase their potential consumers by using "Influencer marketing" in their processes.

3.3.1. Types of Influencers

3.3.1.1. Celebrity Endorsement

A celebrity endorser could be assumed to be someone who is well-known, popular, famous, and enjoy public recognition who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement (McCracken 1989).

Using a celebrity in advertisements (celebrity endorsement) can be defined as an agreement between a publicly known person (celebrity) and an entity (for example, a brand) in order to promote this entity (Bergkvist and Zhou 2016; Özbilen et al.2022).

Celebrity endorsement is a widely recognized marketing strategy that involves enlisting the help of a famous or notable person, typically a celebrity, to promote a product, service or brand. Besides, celebrity endorsement strategy is not only used for consumer goods, but also in consumer services, business to business products and services, in non-profit organizations and in non-commercial services (Kantarcioğlu 2022). This technique leverages the popularity, influence, and recognition of the celebrity to create a positive connection between the product or brand and the target audience. It is a commonly used method to increase brand awareness and credibility, and can be an effective way to differentiate a product from its competitors. When implemented thoughtfully, celebrity endorsement can be a valuable addition to a company's marketing toolkit.

Among those who carry the title "famous", there are actors, athletes, models, as well as people who contribute to the promotion of any product and succeed in their field.

When marketers want to launch a new product, celebrities are used in positioning or creating a good brand image. Because it becomes even more valuable when the product or brand is presented by the celebrity. While celebrity endorsements can be highly effective, there are risks involved. If the celebrity's personal reputation is tarnished, it can negatively affect the product or brand they endorsed. There's also the risk of overexposure or the celebrity being associated with too many products,

diluting the impact of their endorsement. As the biggest example of this, we can give Burberry's cancellation of its contract with Kate Moss. Kate, who was a favorite of young girls, was caught taking drugs at that time, damaging the brand's reputation. Burberry canceled the brand agreement on the grounds that it was a bad example for young girls and those who use the brand.

It adds various meanings to the marketing process with its gender, marital status, class and age, as well as personality and lifestyle differences (McCracken 1989). Celebrities often have a strong fan following, and their endorsement can lend credibility to a product or brand. Consumers may trust a product more if they see a celebrity they admire using or endorsing it. Celebrities can evoke strong emotions and feelings in consumers. When a beloved celebrity endorses a product, consumers may transfer their positive feelings for the celebrity to the product. Especially in a period when competition is indispensable, the personal characteristics of the celebrity used to differentiate a product from others and attract consumers. This increases the perception of reliability.

The choice of a celebrity should align with the brand's image and values. For example, a vegan celebrity endorsing a cruelty-free brand makes sense, but the same endorsement for a milk commercial might not.

Celebrities can endorse products in various ways, such as appearing in commercials, print ads, social media posts, or even through personal appearances at events. They may also provide testimonials or act as spokespeople.

Therefore, according to (McCracken 1989), celebrity usage is one of the important features of today's integrated marketing. Therefore, the use of celebrity is used as an advertising campaign or advertising tactic that is introduced to the market in order to ensure that any brand is recognized, remembered and differentiated. Celebrity endorsement strategy has been used by major companies and these companies invest in their brand equity to align endorsers' public identity with their brand identity (Erdogan 1999; Kantarcioğlu 2022).

3.3.1.2. Macro-Influencer

According to Scott (2014), if an influencer has more followers the influencer will be deemed more trustworthy, which will result in more engagement by the followers (Klijnsma 2020).

Macro influencers are individuals who have a substantial following on social media platforms, typically in the range of hundreds of thousands to millions of followers. These influencers are considered "macro" because of the large scale of their reach and impact within their respective niches or industries. They use their online presence to share content related to various topics, including fashion, beauty, fitness, travel, technology, and more.

Macro influencers often collaborate with brands and businesses to promote products or services to their extensive audience. Due to their wide reach, macro influencers are considered valuable assets for marketing campaigns, and many businesses partner with them to increase brand visibility and reach a larger audience. These influencers may have built their following through a variety of means, such as creating engaging content, sharing their expertise, or gaining fame in the entertainment industry. To gain a broad and loyal following, macro celebrities create interesting and engaging content (Rios Marques et al. 2020).

Macro influencers are distinct from micro-influencers (those with smaller but still engaged followings) and celebrity endorsement. The distinction is often made based on the number of followers and the influence they can exert within their niche.

3.3.1.3. Micro-Influencer

Micro-influencers are individuals on social media who have a relatively small but highly engaged and dedicated following. Unlike macro-influencers, who typically have hundreds of thousands or millions of followers, micro-influencers typically have follower counts in the range of a few thousand to tens of thousands. What sets micro-influencers apart is the close and authentic relationship they have with their audience. According to Dhanik (2016), micro-influencers can be more effective as their personal connection is greater with their followers and because they have a higher engagement rate (Klijnsma 2020). Due to their smaller, more targeted following, micro-influencers can provide a more personal and relatable connection with their audience.

According to Chen (2017) micro-influencers get an average of two-to-five times more organic engagement per Instagram post compared to macro-influencers (Klijnsma 2020). Micro-influencer marketing campaigns are often characterized by a more genuine and personalized approach, making them a popular choice for businesses

looking to tap into specific markets and generate high-quality leads or sales. They are benefiting of several lucrative opportunities that were made widely available through different social media (Djafarova and Rushworth 2017; Rios Marques et al. 2020).



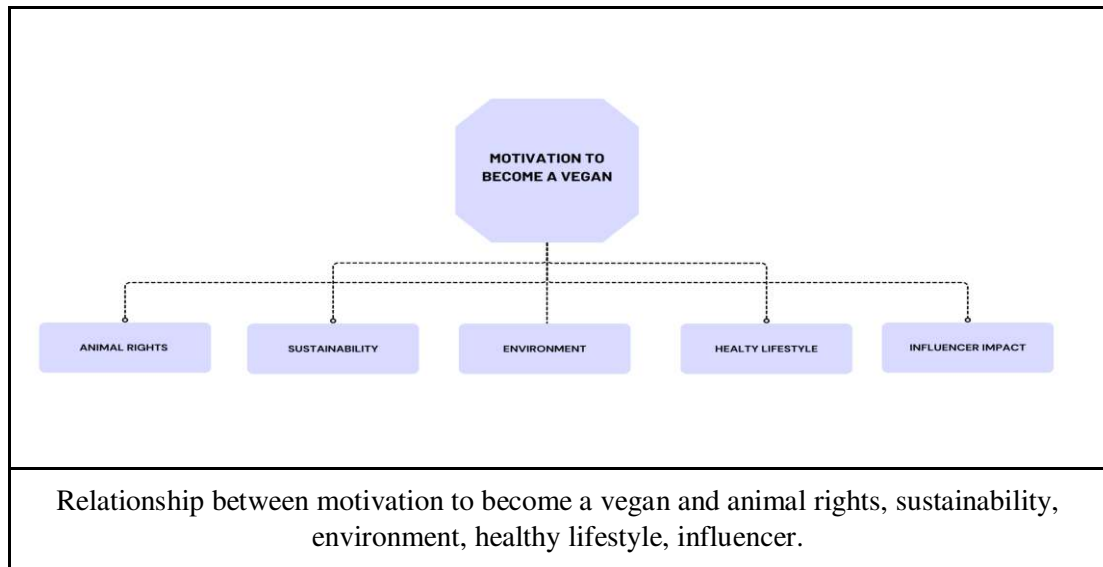
CHAPTER IV

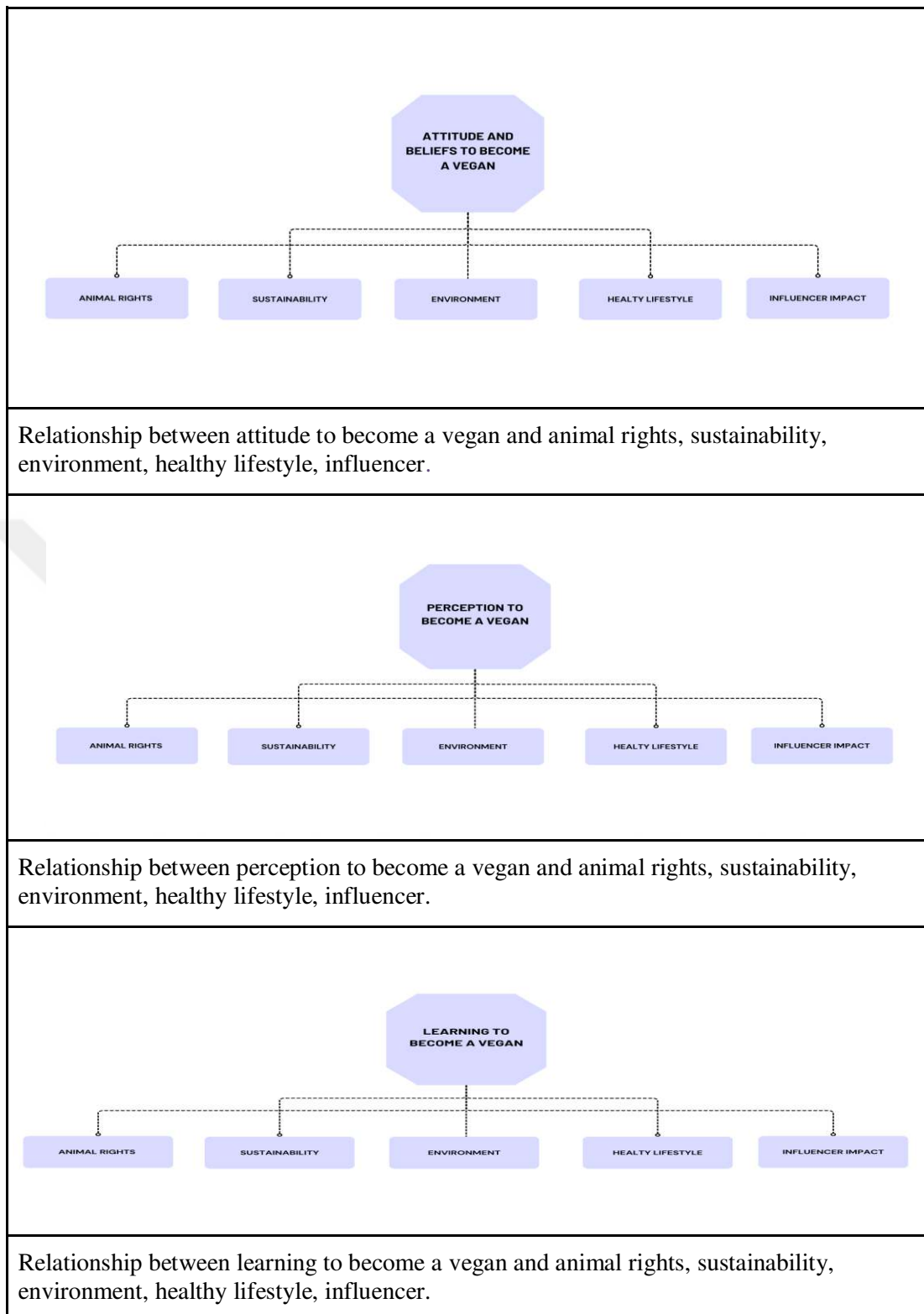
4.1. THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

In this study, the purchasing behaviors of Generation Z, who adopted veganism as a lifestyle in Türkiye, were examined. Vegan lifestyle has been diversified as animal rights, influencers and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) as subheadings by adhering to the literature. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between animal rights, influencers and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) with attitude, motivation, behavioral intention and purchase intention. As a result of this aim, it has been tried to determine the variables in the purchasing behavior processes of Generation Z, who have adopted veganism as a lifestyle.

4.2. THE MODEL OF THE RESEARCH

Figure 7. Model of Research





4.3. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In-depth interviews are focused interactions in which the interviewer tries to find out what others know about a topic, learning and documenting what the person has been through, thinking, and feeling about the topic, and the meaning or importance

of that topic (Mears 2012). The objective is to establish an atmosphere that is conducive to interviewees expressing their views through the use of semi-structured questions. In this way, human behavioral processes and patterns that can be difficult to measure are explained. Phenomena such as experiences, attitudes, and behaviors can be captured accurately, allowing participants to explain themselves. In addition, qualitative research examines the problems it deals with in its own context, with an interpretive approach; when interpreting events and phenomena, it focuses on the meanings that people attribute to them (Baltacı 2019).

The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and made available for content analysis using the MAXQDA 20.4.0 package program. All data is coded line by line. The coding process was carried out considering the literature and interview questions.. The data were read repeatedly throughout the coding process. Finally, the visuals of the codes and themes were created using MAXQDA and made ready for reporting.

The research covers people between the ages of 18 and 28 who have adopted a vegan lifestyle. Vegan and young consumers living in Türkiye were taken as a sample. In this study, which was conducted online and face-to-face, these people were reached from vegan groups on social media platforms and with the support of the vegan society.

Instagram pages (Türkiye): vegan_sanat , ankaraveganplatformu ,odtuvegan

4.3.1. Finding of the Research

4.3.1.1. Characteristics of Participants

The characteristics of the participants are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Participants

Age	Frequency
20	1
21	1
23	3
28	2
22	1
24	1
27	1
Occupation	
Student	4
Teacher	2
New graduate	1
Volleyball Federation Officer	1
Mechanical Engineer-PhD Student	1
Research Assistant	1
The time to become vegan	
Six month	1
Two years	4
Two and a half years	1
Three years	2
Three and a half years	2

According to Table 2, three of the participants are 23 years old and two are 28 years old. The other participants are 20, 21, 22, 24 and 27 years old.

Four participating students; two participating teachers; one participant is a recent graduate; one is an employee of the Volleyball Federation; one is a mechanical engineer and one is a research assistant. Four participants said they had been vegan for

two years; two for three years; two for three and a half years; one for two and a half years and one for six months.

4.3.1.2. Findings

4.3.1.2.1. Place Where You Heard the Word Vegan, the Reason and Process of Becoming Vegan

The participants told about where they heard the word vegan, their reasons for becoming vegan and how the process of becoming vegan took place. Their responses are given in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Place Where You Heard The Word Vegan, The Reason and Process of Becoming Vegan



According to Figure 8, five participants expressed that they had heard the word vegan from social media, three from a friend; two expressed that they did not know/did not remember where they had heard it.

“As I mentioned above, I heard the word vegan from Işıl Bayraktar, who I have been following for years.” (Elbi)

“I had an acquaintance that I followed on social media, I heard this doctor from him, Doctor Murat Kınikoğlu, in the vegan community, there is no one who does not know. She tagged him, I knew that veganism was really a herbal thing before, and there was something like a logo in detergents. With the tagging of a doctor, I began to understand the real face of the business. And then it felt like I should follow other vegans, too...” (Duygu)

"I heard the word of vegan for the first time from my roommates in Germany. Some of the people in the house I was in when I was doing my master's degree were vegan and some vegetarians. I heard the concept in detail for the first time there, probably before at school, university or on the news. I've probably heard of vegetarian not vegan. But as I clearly remember, I learned in 2014 that my roommates were vegan. And it actually came as a shock to me when I learned for the first time that they survived without consuming anything animal. " (Can)

"I don't remember exactly where I heard the word vegan. But I've been taking a moderate approach to vegetarianism since high school. I had friends who were vegetarians, I had heard from them... And when I heard it, I started researching on the internet. And that's how I came across veganism when I started researching them." (Hande)

Participants explained their reasons for being vegan in detail. Eight participants stated that they were vegan because of the desire to protect animals; two because of the desire to protect the environment; one because of the desire to protect their own body and health, and finally one participant wanted to respect the rights of all living beings.

"In fact, the most basic answer is to respect the rights of others. Of course, what do we mean by this right, we consider it as the most basic right, the right to live. Who are the others? Others are actually all living beings with consciousness. In fact, conscious living beings, not people. It is conscious in animals of other species. Cats, dogs, cows, pigs, sheep are all these. Because there are conscious beings, it actually becomes the subject of life. Therefore, I claim that I am vegan in order to recognize their rights I describe myself as vegan both because I recognize its rights and because I fight for its rights." (Can)

"I continue to eat vegan food both for my own body and health, as well as for our ecosystem, animal friends." (Hazel Selin)

"After 2 years of being vegetarian, I became vegan. When I became vegan, yes, animals had a great contribution here. But I can say that the main contribution was influenced by environmental factors, the damage I caused to the world." (Berkay)

"Continuing to use animals as resources is not something I can accept. In fact, we may have made it easier to use because animals cannot defend themselves. Maybe it would have been different if they could have defended themselves. Because we are

more cunning than them and we consider ourselves superior to them, we can use them like a machine in the industrial environment. The more I think about it, the harder it gets for me. That's why I became vegan.” (Recep)

The participants shared their stories about how they became vegan. Eight participants stated that they became vegan through their own research and questioning; two through a vegan influencer's post; two through documentaries they watched; one through hearing about the use of animals as a resource from a friend; one through courses he took on ethics, and one participation was after a decision he made with friends at the beginning of the year.

“I came across a video on social media about the reason I'm vegan. It's about the livestock industry. I saw a video about a factory with cows. After seeing the video, I started to examine what it was. There is a vegan named Elif Taştekné on the account where I saw the video, it was a video she shared. I saw this video 3-3, 5 years ago. After seeing that video, I started researching what the livestock industry is and how they use animals. And as I started researching, I saw other vegans on social media and started following them. I got information from there. I also researched the information I received. Then I became a vegetarian a few months later. After I became a vegetarian, of course, I continued my research. A few months after becoming a vegetarian, I became a ovo-vegetarian. I was just consuming eggs. I did not consume or use any other animal products. Then a few months after that, okay, now I completely embrace veganism with all its everything, every detail, it fit into my logic, and yes, I really thought that I could not be a partner in the consumption of animals in any way after this time I became vegan. My process of becoming vegan took about 1 year.” (Hilal)

“After entering the research process thanks to the book I read, “What is veganism?” I remember searching. After further research, I decided to become a vegan. The name of the book was also Harari-Sapiens.” (Elif)

“Before becoming a vegan, my feeling towards animals had become even more. One day, Işık Bayraktar, whom I have been following for years, shared a post one night and wrote, ‘why don't you become a vegan now? They are no different from a dog and a cat!’ and there was a picture of a cow in the picture. I slept that night, saying that I would be vegan. But I didn't know anything about veganism. In short, I became vegan for the rights of animals.” (Elbi)

“I questioned, questioned, questioned over the years and one day I said I would watch a documentary. I think someone suggested it to me. It's called a documentary called “Forks over Knives”. Now after watching that document, i have already get it. We really don't need to eat our animals. Then I watched another documentary. It's called”Dominion”. There are also videos of killing animals directly there. When I see the direct killing videos, the missing referent in my mind is already beginning to be revealed. After that, when I watched a few more videos, I said, no, I definitely don't eat meat, I don't consume milk. After that, I also took lessons at school. Lessons on ethics. I learned animal rights theories. Especially someone named Tom Regan. The first time I said I don't eat, I wasn't calling to myself vegan. It was actually when I learned about the beginning of the vegan movement, its goals, that I learned about these theories that I called to myself a vegan. I became vegan after that, actually, when I learned about that theory.” (Can)

“My story of being a bit vegan is strange, but I realized these things and I wanted to become a vegan. As we approached New Year's, it was a special day and we said, “Today we will make a decision and we will implement it until New Year's Eve, and then, if it happens, we will continue to do so after New Year's Eve”. We would also give a very serious punishment to the person who lost. Of course, I was a vegetarian at that time. And we all started something we wanted. It was veganism for me too. That's how I started and continued as a vegan. It has been a process that has started for me through an allegation. It was easier to hear the word vegan because I was a vegetarian before. But maybe because it was progressing in the form of a process, I was also seeing vegetarianism on social media. Then I did some research on social media and the Internet. It was not a word that came from a book I had read before, or from a person I knew.” (Berkay)

4.3.1.2.2. Vegan Influencers

The participants shared the names of the vegan influencers they follow. These are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Vegan Influencers

Vegan Influencers	Frequency
Elif Taştekné	4
Murat Kınıkoğlu	3
Melike Dirikoç-Vegan Earth	2
Türkiye Vegan Derneği	2
Suat Erus	2
Abolisyonist Vegan Hareket	1
Veganoteacher	1
Fitgreenmind	1
Madeleine Olivia	1
Sustainably Vegan	1
Power of Pea	1
Etik seçimler	1
Earth in act	1
Kozmik Skeptik	1
Vegan Sanat	1
Effective Altruism Yaklaşımını Benimseyenler	1
Malebie Joy	1
Robbie Lockey	1
Body Builder	1
Melike Dede	1
Oğulcan Kınıklioğlu	1
Abolisyonist Vegan Hareketi	1
Ayşegül Uçar-Raw Thysself	1
Fikrivegan	1
Anıl Ercan	1
Peta	1
Nutrition fat	1
Zülal Kalkandelen	1

According to Table 3, the most shared vegan influencers are Elif Taştekné, Murat Kınıkoğlu, Melike Dirikoç, the Vegan Society of Türkiye and Suat Erus.

"I follow Elif Taştekné. Apart from that, I follow "ethical choices". She also shares things about cosmetics. I follow vegan athletes. One of them is Power of Pea. There is no one else that I can call such an influencer." (Hande)

"I follow too much. So it's like I know almost all vegans in Türkiye. Some from social media, some face to face. But the main things I can say are. In Türkiye, Suat Erus, as the association, the vegan society of Türkiye, Elif Taştekné is a vegan that we respect and like very much. There is a vegan group called the Abolitionist Vegan Movement. I go to their picnics and follow them. Murat Kinikoglu, Ogulcan Kinikoglu. We have another vegan friend named Melike Dede... She's also a reliable person. I also follow bodybuilder vegans in Global. There's a British vegan named Robbie Lockey. He is the founder of the channel named "Can't Base New ". We have a psychologist named Melanie Joy. She lives in Germany. Vegans have great theories and lessons on how to communicate well among themselves and with non-vegans. Apart from that, there is an approach called Effective Altruism. I follow some people who take this approach." (Can)

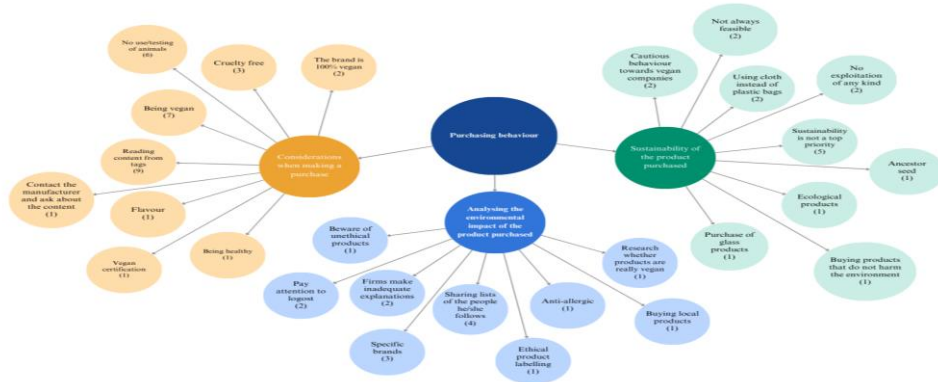
"There is an Abolitionist Vegan Movement page. I like to follow his/her work on behalf of veganism. I am following the vegan page. I like the Vegan Earth posts. I follow the "Yeni Nesil Mutfağı" recipes. I also follow the Vegan Society of Türkiye's own page. I'm happy with them too." (Recep)

"Zülal Kalkandelen is a journalist, writer and Murat Kınıkoğlu who is a vegan doctor, I'd say. Suat Erus. Nutritionist Kevser Başkara. There are many people. There are Onur and Alper from Vegan Art. I can say that they are the people I had the chance to be in contact with from the very beginning and who explained to me what veganism really means. There are so many vegans, I can't finish counting them. These are the main ones. These are the first things that come to my mind." (Duygu)

4.3.1.2.3. Purchasing Behavior

The participants explained what they paid attention to when realizing the products they bought, their impact on the environment, whether they paid attention to whether it was sustainable, and how they did it. These responses are given in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Purchasing Behavior



According to Figure 9, nine participants read content while purchasing products; seven participants paid attention to the fact that it is vegan, six participants paid attention not to use or test animals on them, three of them paid attention to cruelty-free, two of them were 100% vegan of the brand.

One participating manufacturer had contacted and received detailed information about the product, one had stated that he was paying attention to whether it was healthy, one paid attention to the taste, and finally, one participant paid attention to a vegan certificate.

“When buying, I pay attention to whether it has been tested on animals and whether it has an animal content. Not only in nutrition, should we know this now that animals are systematically exploited in both cosmetics, clothing and detergents, in the cleaning sector. I try to raise awareness about this issue and to examine when there are labels that I cannot read...” (Duygu)

“I was obviously paying a lot of attention to this palm oil at first. Even before I became a vegan, I considered it as an unnecessary cause of death, an invasion. After I became vegan, I continued to read content. I’ve always had a habit of reading content, obviously.” (Ahsen)

“First of all, I pay attention to whether it is Vegan or not. Being vegan equals no animal use. The fact that the animal has not been used means that it does not directly neglect the rights of that animal.” (Can)

“I make sure it's vegan and not tested on animals. I will make sure it's Cruelty free.” (Elbi)

“Third, I look at the brand. I'm looking to see if that brand is 100% vegan or a capitalist, a global company launched to make money from it. I prefer a 100% vegan brand.

In Türkiye, for example, there is LT that is a vegan brand sausage. For example, Trakya Çiftlik produces vegan products, but they do it in animal husbandry. I don't like the brand's products, and I find it ethical that 100% vegan brands make money instead of that company making money. I take care of my health. The less processed, the better.” (Can)

Participants shared their situations of examining the environmental impact of the products they purchased. For this purpose, four participants stated that they follow the sharing lists of the people they follow, three of them shop from certain brands, three of them consume according to needs, and two participants pay attention to the logos on the products. Two participants stated that the companies made inadequate explanations. Other points of attention are given in Figure 9.

“There are logos I've been looking at. I do not research each product individually. There are lists shared by people I follow. Here these products are informed as cruelty free and vegan. According to him/her, I am making a purchase. I even do very little or I motivate myself because that's what I have to do.” (Elif)

“Actually, I'm a little lazy to research it myself. Besides, I can't find the time. That's why I usually try to get information about it from people who have already researched it. And when those people gave the information, they also introduced a product and talked about the environmental impact of this product, and since, because I'm not completely sure, I go and look at it myself again and then buy it. But I can't look at all the stages of products in such a specific way myself. So it's not an ethical thing to eat it or consume it, use it. Actually, I'm taking it with the idea that I shouldn't use it because it's unethical. I am motivated by the urge not to do something bad.” (Hande)

“I pay attention as much as possible. I try not to buy an unnecessary product. Of course, there are products that I research, but for brands and products that I know are natural and how they are made, I buy and use them with peace of mind. It is not easy to learn the construction stage of each product, unfortunately there are some things that I do not know. I think that what I do is a benefit, not a harm of any kind, and I always feel comfortable about it, and that motivates me.” (Hilal)

"I try to keep consumption low because when I consume too much, there is too much waste. I will pay attention from time to time. 'Cause sometimes I get mad at myself. The more waste generated, the more damage it causes to the environment. Not all vegan products may be vegan. That's why I'm researching the company on the internet before buying it. They make comments about them on vegan form pages. There is also a vegan group running on Facebook.

They also do reviews about the products there. I'm looking there too. I am not happy when I buy a vegan product. I consider this normal. This is my normal." (Recep)

"I try to directly prefer products with less environmental damage. But we cannot always reach this information. Having become vegan once already means that the damage to the environment is minimal. Comparatively speaking, of course. It does not mean zero damage." (Can)

The participants shared their case of paying attention to whether the products they buy are sustainable or not. Accordingly, five participants stated that sustainable is not their first priority; two participants stated that it is not feasible to always pay attention to sustainable products; two participants showed that no exploitation should be included in the production of products; two participants used cloth bags instead of plastic; two participants paid attention to sustainability in packaging; one participant purchased products that do not harm nature; one participant turned to ancestral seeds; one participant purchased ecological products and finally one participant purchased glass products.

"Sustainability is not something that is my first priority. Sustainability is something that is usually used with green washing, and I think the effects of such packaged products on nature may be overestimated and more important things may be put on the back burner at some moments. So I definitely prefer it if there is such a product, but it's not something that's my first priority right now." (Elif)

"Yes, the packaging is not sustainable, but I buy it vegan. So it's important for me to be sustainable, but it's not my first priority. I think that there is such a responsibility attributed to us, in fact, in all matters, rather than in environmental matters, rather than being ethical or not. And I think this is actually a misconception. That's why I'm not careful about the environment. I don't act with the perception that this is unethical and I shouldn't do this. But if I have two options and one is more sustainable, I try to choose it." (Hande)

“For example, not using bags when buying fruit. Put it in a cloth bag. But when I buy vegan sausage, I buy it again in a plastic bag. Because there is not much I can do. There are also sausage sellers who do not use plastic bags. It's nice when I buy it from him/her, but it depends on my budget.

It also changes according to the accessibility that day. But unfortunately, zero packaging can never be. So we can't escape. But being vegan for applicable reasons becomes a moral imperative to be viable. If it were not feasible, we would not tell you not to eat animals at the expense of dying. It's the same with packaging. So if you have no other choice, you have to use the packaging.” (Can)

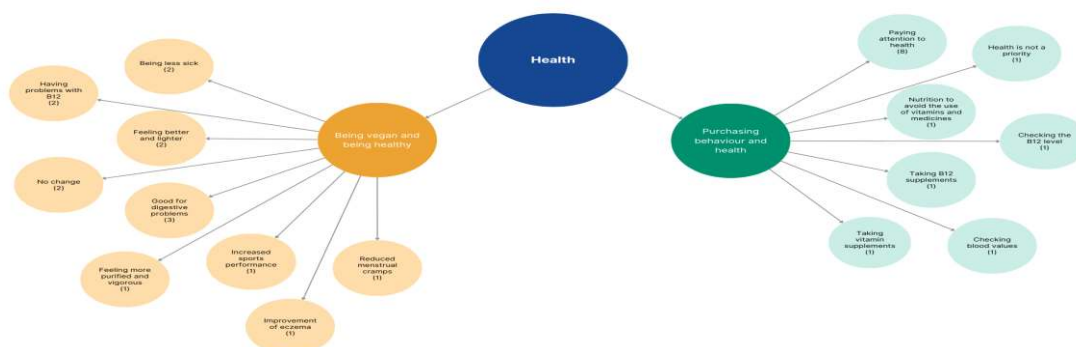
“In fact, I pay attention to the fact that it is both sustainable and does not contain any exploitation, vegan and cruelty free. But let's just say I had to. If you ask me if I prefer the one with animal ingredients that I have to, or if I prefer the one that is not ecological, if I have to, I prefer the one that does not harm any living thing to animals. In fact, when we look at it naturally, when it damages the ecological system, it actually damages all living things. But let's say I try to prefer the non-direct rather than direct. But my priority is that both have content. . I am also in the ancestral seed movement. I support him too. I think that ancestral seeds, domestic production, domestic production like pesticide production, and harmless production should be supported. Because we, animals, think that plant-based nutrition should be healthy, yes, but when I eat plant-based, I can't think that I am eating completely healthy, unfortunately.” (Duygu)

“Actually, I pay a lot of attention to the packaging. I don't buy every vegan product either. But I also have a motivation that they have just entered the market, vegan company, vegan product, I should buy them as well, let it be a support, let me try and maybe they will improve themselves in the future. They will be able to build the capital for the future. But if there is a noticeable discrepancy in the packaging, it's because this vegan thing has also turned into a commercial event. It has also turned into a manhunt tactic. If there is a packaging policy contrary to this philosophy, you know, it should not be this much anymore. But I take it to support.” (Ahsen)

4.3.1.2.4. Health

Participants expressed their thoughts about veganism and being healthy, as well as their opinions about purchasing behaviors and health. Their responses are presented in Figure 10.

Figure 10. Health



Participants expressed what they paid attention to about their health in their purchasing behaviors (Figure 10). Accordingly, eight participants stated that they take care of their health, one participant health is not a priority, one participant has their B12 level checked, one participant takes B12 supplements; one participant takes vitamin supplements; and one participant takes care of her diet so as not to use vitamins and medications.

“I mean, of course I care about my health, but I feel a little like veganism is a separate responsibility for me. Because there is a pressure brought by the external environment here. You know, the one that originates from my environment. I don't have it in my immediate environment, but there is such pressure from people outside. When I meet someone and I say I'm vegan, there are questions, reactions or behavioral changes, just because the first thing people ask is why, after I can't do it or something, and so on, they ask my health, and so I feel like I have to take care of my health. Because veganism is something that I think is healthier, and I can definitely say that I'm healthier after becoming vegan. Because I get my blood values checked more often, and you know, changes in my blood values make me happier.

But I'm also trying to eat healthier out of spite of people. I want to eat healthier.” (Berkay)

“I was thinking a lot about my health. I was thinking more in the first 2 years of my veganism. I have been thinking less about the last 1 year saw a lot of benefits in the first two years. But vegan nutrition is not equal to a healthy diet. There is such a misunderstanding. I was consuming both vegan and healthy products. But being vegan, it was relatively healthy anyway. The critical point there is to consume as little

processed food as possible. It is necessary to eat mainly vegetables, fruits, and legumes. When I came to Istanbul, I had to put my health into the background a little more. But of course, this has nothing to do with veganism. If I come to a point where I can order less from the outside, I will eat healthier again.” (Can)

“I never think about my health. Because I also don't think Veganism can be related to health. Because there are people who started veganism as a diet and later became ethical vegans. I was consuming unhealthy vegan foods at the beginning, and I'm still consuming them. Health is not my priority.” (Recep)

“I want a quality and healthy life, so it is important for me that my body is vigorous and healthy. I take vitamin supplements, but I also consume junk food, which of course is vegan.” (Hazal Selin)

“Yes, it affects, but it's not something I overly prioritize. If a chip is vegan, I'll buy it. But in general, I try to prefer healthier products. I am using a B12 supplement. For example, my grandfather consumes meat for 3 meals a day, but his B12 is worse than mine.” (Elif)

“I think about being healthy like this; I try to eat according to it, so as not to use some vitamins medications. But I also eat unhealthy things.”(Elbi)

The participants expressed their views on being healthy by being vegan. Three participants stated that veganism was good for digestive problems; two participants felt better and lighter; two participants positively affected mental health; two participants had problems with B12; two participants were less sick and two participants were less sick. The other answers are given in Figure 11.

“It affected me positively. I haven't seen any negative effects for 2.5 years. It has made my digestive problems better overall. Other than that, I feel better and lighter.” (Hande)

“The change was like this. There was a period when I quit smoking before. When I quit smoking, I felt a lightness in my body. When I became vegan, I also felt a lightness in my body. I move more easily and get less tired. In terms of health, I get less sick. In fact, I only got the flu this year, and that's because of the epidemic.” (Recep)

“It has not had a very positive effect on my health. There was also no negative effect. I was eating healthy before I became vegan. I was trying to get it from every food group. That's what happened after I became vegan. It has not had a positive or

negative effect on me. But what happened is that there are too many hormones and antibiotics in the animal-based products we buy, which helped me not to consume this group and not to introduce it into my body. I use a B12 supplement and I use a vegan supplement. But before I became a vegan, my B12 deficiency was on the limit. Maybe it may have a negative effect on vitamin B12 and vitamin D, but I'm closing it with supplements.” (Hilal)

“Psychologically, it affected him so much in such a good way. Because when I was na-vegan, my psychology was not good. After becoming vegan, I felt very good both physically and mentally. In fact, we eat things that we have been taught since we were little. There are healthier people who are vegan. This is a prejudice.” (Elbi)

“I had no health problems other than B12 during my vegan period. On the contrary, my blood values have become better than before. My iron ratio has increased. In B12, from period to period, my B12 was not higher than before, there may be more decreases. Especially if I go to a different place. Or if I can't find a proper vegan product in my own location. Maybe it's related to the differentiation of the products I eat, or maybe it's related to my focus on healthy products. My previous life maybe worse. I started getting less sick.

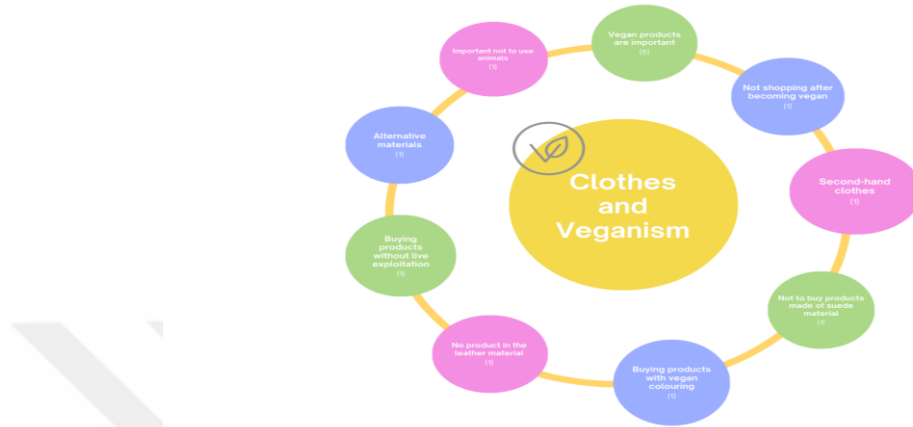
While I used to be sicker, I can usually get through the winter without getting sick. Or I'm facing very little illness. I think I'm feel better.” (Berkay)

“When I was vegan and consumed unprocessed food, I saw that my allergies to fruits, vegetables, legumes and grains were reduced. So my sleep is a little bit relieved. I can easily say that my allergies have decreased. I can say that my grandfather's cholesterol has dropped, and his blood pressure has gone down. Because they both became vegan. After eating, my stomach was very relieved. My intestinal flora has developed very positively. Because I'm eating a lot more fibrous food. And when I eat, my intestines still feel healthy. Bad breath, rashes on the skin. My rash, which I thought was due to stress, was actually due to nutrition. My skin has become even more beautiful. Apart from that, of course, the risk of heart diseases and cancer also has an effect on them. But it is difficult for us to observe the effect of someone's heart disease at a young age. It has been developing for many more years.” (Can)

4.3.1.2.5. Clothes and Veganism

The participants expressed their opinions about veganism during the clothing purchasing process; their responses are presented in Figure 11.

Figure 11. Clothes and Veganism



According to Figure 11, five participants stated that when they bought clothes, it was important that these products were vegan; one that it was important not to use animals; one that the use of alternative materials such as apple skin was important; one that it was important not to exploit any living thing; one participant did not buy products in leather materials; one paid attention to whether the dyes were vegan; one did not buy suede products. One participant stated that she turned to second-hand clothes; another stated that he never shopped after becoming vegan.

"Yes, it's important. For example, my purse, wallet are vegan and made of mushrooms. I love such products very much. As soon as I find it, I also buy and support." (Elbi)

"I especially like to support innovative things, such as apple skin. It's like being made from alternative materials. It is very important for me because I want to make an initiative in this field. It especially attracts me." (Elif)

"I'm not looking at it at all. I'm not looking for healthy material. It is important to me that there have been no experiments on animals. Something like this is happening, for example, I saw that Elif Taştekné has apple leather boots.

I'm looking at what apple skin is and it's very healthy. It was healthier than all other materials. I'm trying to buy as much as my budget allows. But if it happens by coincidence, if I see it and get this information, I do it. Or I'm not looking specifically to see if this is healthy or what the material is." (Hilal)

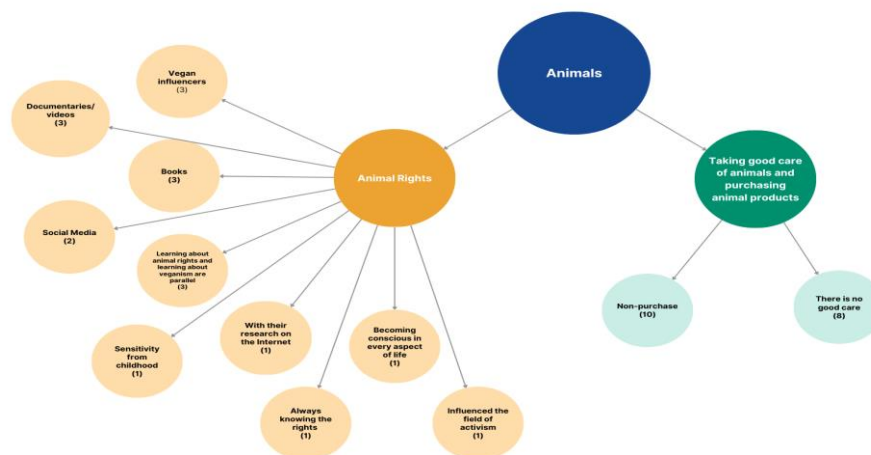
“Just because clothes are vegan doesn't mean they're healthy. It may be full of chemicals but in a jacket made with chemicals that are not animal-based, for example, but it is vegan. But both the healthier option and the vegan one, without animal exploitation. For example, I don't buy stone-wash jeans. I know that in its production, how much people are out from their health, etc. I can say that I am trying to prefer those who do not have any human or animal exploitation of any living being as far as possible.” (Duygu)

“After I became vegan, I hardly did any shopping. But I continued to use products such as animal skin boots that I had bought in the past. If I buy from now on, I will definitely buy vegan. The shoes I bought for my girlfriend are already vegan leather. It was made of vegetable leather. But I've done a lot of shopping before, so I didn't need to buy it yet. If I buy it, I will also buy vegan. This is also an important thing for me.” (Can)

4.3.1.2.6. Animals

Participants expressed where they learned about animal rights and whether they would buy animal products if they were well cared for. Their answers are given in Figure 12.

Figure 12. Animals



According to Figure 12, three participants expressed that they learned about animal rights from vegan influencers, three from documentaries/ videos, three from books, two from social media, two in parallel with being vegan; two with a sensitivity

from childhood; one through research on the Internet. One participant stated that he/she had always known about animal rights.

Finally, knowing these animal rights has expressed to a participant that he/she has started to become conscious at every point of his/her life and has influenced someone in the field of activism.

“My first awakening was with a book. I started researching. I've read some articles, I've read other books written in this field. The more I researched in detail, the more I learned, it impressed. It affected not only my buying behavior, but also in the areas of activism.” (Elif)

“Thanks to documentaries, articles ,social media, the environment and YouTube videos, I have gained knowledge and I am still being. My buying attitudes are the same because I was a supporter and concerned about animal rights before.” (Hazel)

“I would definitely recommend you to read Zülal Kalkandelen's latest book, "Animal Liberation and Veganism". Again, vegan art shares many videos on this subject. And that's in the name of awareness. There are many vegans like Vegan Earth. Melike Dirikoc if I'm not mistaken. She also has very nice videos. She talks about animal rights. There is Barış on Instagram. He also touches on a lot of things related to animal rights. There is an "Elegant Kirpi".It touches on a lot of things about animal rights.I'm learning a lot from him too. Being in contact also gives you strength. It makes you feel good about the information you've received and that you're on the right path, maybe at first, human, what am I doing? You know. Will I be able to do it ? Can't I do it? Something like that is happening. What we don't know can be terribly difficult for us. But knowledge adds strength to a person on that path. I learned a lot about animal rights from those friends I counted, and maybe from many people I didn't think about. Both documentaries and books and things like that.” (Duygu)

“Actually, it's a parallel process for me to learn animal rights and learn veganism. So, the more I saw veganism, the more my interest in animal rights increased. And I wasn't thinking specifically about animal rights before. Or I was thinking too superficially. It's like feeding cats on the street. But I was being unconscious of the things I was eating, the things on my plate. Or the clothes I use, etc. But as I started to become so conscious at every point of life, my relationship with animal rights began to increase in this regard. I'm not very active in the field, the issue

of shelters, etc. like, but I want to be active.” (Hande)

10 of the participants stated that they would not buy animal products even if they were well cared for, and eight of them stated that animals would not be well cared for.

“I honestly don't believe in good care since I'm focusing on the consent thing here. Because I will take good care of you and you will not get an answer when you ask the animal if you want to come, and I am even against the concept of pets in this context. I had a dog until last year, of course, because I had adopted it long ago, but it could not have the fruits of its labor for my ideas that developed later on its own. It is not appropriate to look at it at home.

I also observe from the animals I have been looking at for years. I also observe the animals that my friends look at. When it is restricted, it becomes unhappy in some way. Provide as good care as you want, after all, it can't be subject to consent. That's why I wouldn't buy it either.” (Ahsen)

“No I wouldn't. Whether the animal is well cared for or not is different from the context of the issue. It's like this comparison: if you thought slaves were well taken care of would you buy African slaves who worked to death? It becomes equivalent to this. No matter how well they are cared for, they are killing all kinds of these animals. We can think like, well. I bought my cat and now I have fed it well, it has lived a very happy life, and then I have set a sacrifice feast for myself. I sacrificed my cat on this feast of sacrifice to my god, but it lived a very happy life. It's like there's nothing wrong with killing it, actually.” (Can)

“Now I used to say yes to this when I first became vegan. In fact, I was saying that because I am a Muslim, because I live my faith, because I believe, I was completely saying that if animals were treated as in Islam or if they were cared for that way, yes, I would use it. I haven't thought about it for a long time when you asked the question right now. I think I couldn't. Because now this event has started emotionally for me, it has turned into an ethical thing. It's both ethical and emotional right now. If it was just ethical or if it was just emotional, maybe I would answer yes. But I'm thinking right now, if it had been treated well, I still wouldn't have used it. I would continue my cage-free chicken, organic chicken shopping.

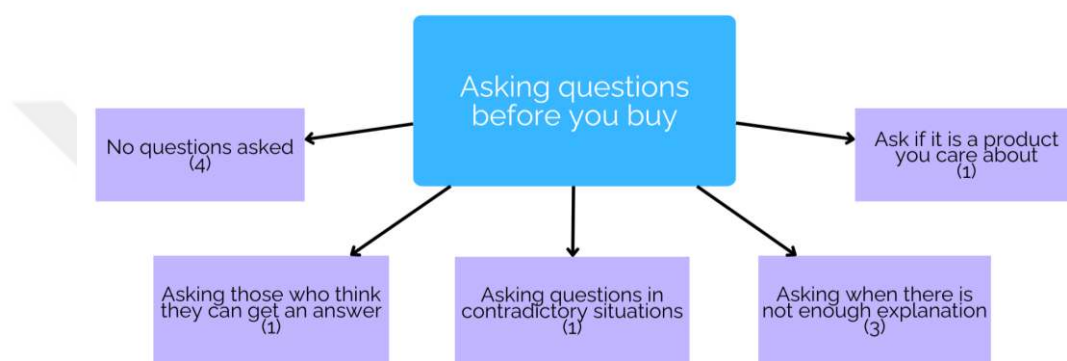
But when I see animals, I no longer see them as different as or lower than human beings. I can't see. When I see the cat in my house, I think of my mother. When

I see a dog on the street, it looks no different from a cow. I can't distinguish. I couldn't do it again because all living things have come to an equal level for me. It would be like a crime for me, this is what I'm going to do.” (Hilal)

4.3.1.2.7. Asking Questions Before Buying

The participants expressed their situation of asking questions before purchasing a product. Their answers are given in Figure 13.

Figure 13. Asking Questions Before You Buying



According to Figure 13, four participants stated that they did not ask questions; three participants asked questions when there was insufficient explanation; one participant asked questions when there was a contradictory situation; one participant asked questions when he could get an answer, and finally, one participant asked questions if it was a product he cared about.

“I don't usually ask. I'm already reviewing the product, so I don't ask.” (Recep)

“I've asked a lot. For example, he/she shared something. There were many times that I asked and received additional information, but I can say 30%. Other than that, I ask if any of the vegans I know use the product used by that vegan influencer. Or I search for that product on google or something. If I'm confirming, I'm getting it from somewhere, but I've also bought it without confirming.” (Can)

“I very rarely ask. For example, I recently saw a link to a necklace on an influencer. The necklace was steel. As far as I know, the steel necklace is not vegan, I wrote. Steel is kneaded with animal fat while it is being crushed. And that animal fat helps not to tarnish the steel. It helps to use it for a longer life. That's how I know, I asked if it's not like that. Influencer, she said, 'I didn't know, I'll research it and get

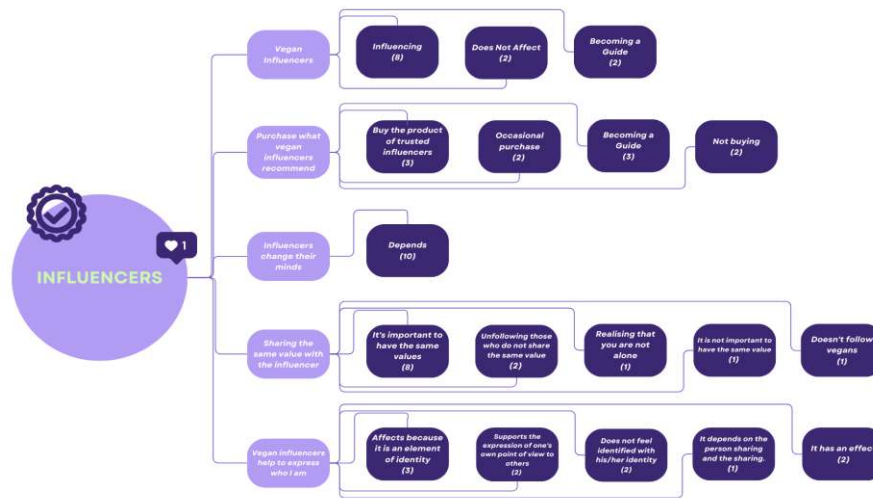
back to you. I don't ask a lot, I rarely ask. Because I learned this information from a friend who has been vegan for many years and has been researching a lot. And I'm already as sure as if I knew myself that this information is true. Vegan influencer and when I look at my friend, I feel conflicted. That's how I asked. I don't ask if I don't conflict.” (Hilal)

“I have a question. If I think I can get an answer, I especially ask them .For example, the last time a product related to eczema did something, there was a couple called Bade Canlar, very sweet. They also have their own local productions. They make such cream vs production. I asked them, for example. I keep asking. There are some things that I get stuck on. Which product should I buy, I have a complaint like this and that. I want something, which product can be for the under eye circles or for my lines, in terms of price and performance? I've been asking.” (Duygu)

4.3.1.2.8. Influencers

The participants expressed whether vegan influencers influenced them, whether they bought the product they recommended, whether influencers changed their minds, whether it is important to share the same value with influencers, and whether vegan influencers contribute to expressing who they are, and their responses are given in Figure 14.

Figure 14. Influencers



According to Figure 14, eight participants stated that vegan influencers influenced them; two participants stated that they were guides and two participants stated that they did not have any effect.

“Yes, they were very impressed. As I keep saying, they were very impressed. Not only in learning information, not in exactly thinking it fits my logic, not in being permanent, or still learning something new, for example. I am learning more advanced information. And even more ethically, the foundations of veganism are solid in me, but it makes them take root even more. I've been vegan for two years, and it happens that people show new information. I'm still learning something new. Last year I learned about Apple skin and how healthy apple skin is with Elif Taştekné. I am learning more permanent information.” (Hilal)

“People like this definitely do not exercise domination over you, there is no question of adopting an ideology. Even if it was, it wouldn't be sustainable if I became vegan in such a situation.

What is happening is that I can access information more easily. Social media actually did a study on the impact of social media on veganism, 1-2 academic friends I also met with in recent weeks. You know, it's not actually an individual, it made it easier for me to reach those individuals on social media, yes.

You know, thanks to them, I didn't become anything from scratch, what I am going to do now on my own, what are the options, what will I choose in nutrition or clothes, what I will buy. By the way, I like Elif Taştekné. They are really guiding you.

Influencers become a guide. Their influence is, of course, in a positive direction. It would be unfair if I said it didn't happen.” (Duygu)

“I guess not. As I said at the beginning, I don't follow that many people. You know, after I became vegan, there started to be people like that, and when I went to a place like this, people would say how do you not know this? Then I follow these people.” (Berkay)

Five of the participants said that the products recommended by vegan influencers guide their purchasing behavior; four of them bought products recommended by their trusted influencer; two stated that they occasionally buy the products they recommend and one does not buy the recommended ones.

“I buy it, but what they recommend, and as I said, it makes it easier for me, and even when they share it on their pages, I go to Rossman. What happens immediately is that there are ”Etik Seçimler”. I also benefit from it in cosmetics. I'm going in right now, I'm saying this, this, this. I'm saying, ha or something. There are one or two accounts, for example, people who share cleaning products. If it's where I stick around when I go right away, you can see if it's vegan or something. The products they share and the products they recommend guide me and save time. You don't go online and deal with labels one by one. You don't bother with research. Of course, if you've decided that there are people you trust like this. It makes more sense to buy something with their reference.” (Duygu)

“I'm buying. I can't give a time or date range for frequency, but if I need something, I look to vegan influencers. And I buy according to the products they recommend. When he/she recommends a product, I take notes in case I need it. Or let's say I'm going to buy something and I haven't seen a product related to that subject, I haven't received a note about my need. I immediately log in and look at Elif Taştekné or the ”Etik Seçimler” account. The ”Etik Seçimler” account is most effective. She has her own website. She researches all the products, makes a content review and adds them to her site.

The category goes into the category. I can easily find both brands and products. It usually affects me. If I don't know what to buy.” (Hilal)

“I try to prefer products from vegan influencers. But not every vegan influencer. I follow a little. If that vegan influencer is a reliable person, I start to question a little less. I'm more likely to buy the product he recommends. In summary,

yes I try to buy the products they recommend. Because it looks like it's been through a preliminary check-up. (Can)

"I buy it sometimes, but obviously I don't necessarily go after the product that the influencer advertises on a very regular basis. So I don't have a regular regime for this." (Ahsen)

"So I'm not taking it. I've probably bought it a few times, but in general, no, I don't buy it. I buy more products that people around me say more. I do very little." (Berkay)

10 participants stated that vegan influencers changed their minds. However, they specifically stated that this change could happen with influencers they trust.

"They also help me change my mind. The vegan influencers I already follow are people whose knowledge I trust. Since there are people who have been vegan for many years and have a strong literature, they can easily change my mind. There are some products that are vegan and have a vegan label. But for example, there is a sale in China. Even if it has a vegan label, we don't buy it because it is sold in China. I looked, he's telling the truth. Even if it's a vegan label, I don't buy it." (Hilal)

"If it's someone I trust, it can affect me." (Hazel Selin)

"If it's someone you trust, I'm a little picky about it. And if it's someone I've been following for a long time and whose values I think match up with me, he or she changes ideas significantly." (Elif)

"If it's someone I've followed and trusted for a long time; yes, it affects me. But for him/her, I need to confirm his/her ideas for a long time." (Elbi)

The participants expressed their opinions that are about to carry the same values as the influencers Accordingly, eight participants stated that it is important to have the same values, two participants came out of following influencers who do not have the same value, one participant supported them to realize that these influencers are not alone, one participant did not follow vegan influencers, and one participant stated that it is not important to have the same values.

"Of course yes, I trust because we share the same value, but there is a situation like this, just sharing the same value is not enough. Whether that person is really dogmatic or not becomes important at some point. Sometimes you share the same value with that person, but that person's judgment can be a bit of a problem. I actually eliminate them over time. But it certainly matters." (Can)

“All the influencers I usually follow are vegan. I rarely follow non-vegans. There were previously ones that I followed. I had also stopped following them because I found some of their views on veganism disrespectful. And now I am in a situation where this person does not have the same thoughts and beliefs as me. Then if there is disrespect, exploitation of a life in the middle, and they support it, or if that exploitation glorifies the situation and irreverently humiliates the right to life that we defend, I don't follow it.” (Hilal)

“No it doesn't matter.” (Hande)

“I may be following more non-vegan people than vegan people.” (Berkay)

Participants expressed their views on how vegan influencers help express who they are. Accordingly, three participants expressed that it affected them because it contained elements of their identity, two participants supported explaining their point of view to others, and one said that it would vary depending on the person sharing and the sharing. Two participants stated that it only had no effect.

“Since this is an element included in the identity, we can say that when we use these products, it also has an effect in this context, if it is not wrong.” (Ahsen)

“What am I doing after I put on my vegan identity, what am I in, what kind of path am I following, is it helping me with this issue like in my life or not? Yes it is happening. I'm going to buy a vegan necklace, for example, when I buy my friend one for myself. Vegan Sanat also makes jewelry clasps. I'm going to buy myself a necklace, I bought it and it even has a vegan inscription. It's something that really represents me and I wear it to my heart. Just because there is no animal exploitation, I'm more into it. When buying it for someone, I also try to buy vegan and unexperienced things. Raising awareness and I can't take the other way anymore. Now I agree in that sense.” (Duygu)

“It helps me to convey my point of view towards those who are interested in vegan life and nutrition, and even especially towards those who know wrong and judgmental people.” (Hazel Selin)

“It definitely depends on the person who shared it and what they shared. Sometimes it definitely does. I would even say that most of the time it is. There are things that I define with the sharing of the product made, with the promotion of a product made with an article written by someone, there are things that I say to myself, oh yes, I am like that too. But sometimes, let me say 40% of the time, I disagree with

this idea, you know, if I were I would think this way, I would introduce it differently, it happens in the things I said. (Recep)

“I mean, not a lot, I guess. Because I don't think like these are things that are very identified with my identity. Based on the products I bought. The food I eat, the cosmetics or clothes I use, etc. i don't think it defines me.” (Hande)



CONCLUSION

Veganism is a way of life. Although there are many vegans abroad, the number of vegans adopting this lifestyle in Türkiye is not certain. We can say that this niche market is growing day by day. We can see that almost every brand produces products for this niche market and meets them with Vegans. We can say that it cooperated with influencers for the marketing of these products, thus affecting many vegans. This study aims to examine the relationship between Z-Generation Vegans' animal rights, influencers, and LOHAS (environment, sustainability, health) with their attitude, motivation, behavioral intention, and purchase intention.

In this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with vegans between the ages of 18-28. Vegan and young consumers living in Türkiye were taken as a sample. The aim of the research is to investigate the effects of animal rights, health, and the environment on attitude, motivation, behavioral intention, and purchasing intention.

It has been observed that social media is the most common platform where individuals first learn about veganism. People choose to adopt a vegan lifestyle due to various factors, including their desire to protect animals, respect the environment, and pursue a healthy lifestyle. It is worth noting that there is a positive correlation between the motivation to be a vegan and concerns about animal rights, environmental sustainability, and personal health.

Many vegans are influenced by vegan influencers they follow on social media, such as Elif Taştekné, Murat Kınıkoğlu, Melike Dirikoç, Vegan Association of Türkiye, and Suat Erus. These influencers have a positive impact on their followers' learning about veganism. It is important for the influencer to be reliable, as vegans are motivated to make purchases based on the recommendations of trustworthy reference groups.

Another crucial factor is that the influencer should share the same values as the participants. Participants believe that they are following influencers who are vegan like themselves and that these influencers have changed their minds.

The research indicates that many vegans prefer to obtain information from trusted influencers rather than conducting extensive research on their own. They often rely on pre-packaged information from influencers and user-friendly applications to access information quickly. Given their busy schedules, this audience tends to place a great deal of trust in influencers when making purchasing decisions.

According to previous research, it is apparent that vegans in Türkiye show a great deal of concern for the environment and often choose to buy environmentally friendly products. In contrast, individuals in Germany exhibit a heightened level of environmental awareness, and believe that the use of eco-friendly products can make a positive contribution to preserving the environment. It can be inferred that German consumers have a favorable influence on both behavioral and purchasing intentions. But according to this research, Even though veganism is in direct proportion with sustainability, as a result of the research, it was seen that the vegan consumers who participated did not look at sustainability and their priority was vegan, cruelty-free products when purchasing. It has been revealed that sustainability has a negative relationship with the motivation to become vegan. Sustainable packaging is not possible in every product line. Vegans stated that they read the content while purchasing, pay attention to the fact that it is vegan and that it is important that it is cruelty-free. The perception of each vegan is different because of the influencers they follow. It can be said that the relationship between the perception of being a vegan and influencer impact is in a positive direction.

It has been suggested that adopting a vegan lifestyle can have positive effects on both digestive problems and mental health. However, it is important to note that some vegans may experience vitamin B12 deficiency, for which they often take medication and supplements to maintain good health.

Those who choose to embrace veganism as a way to promote their well-being make purchasing decisions accordingly. It can be said that the relationship between the attitude and beliefs of being a vegan and health is in a positive direction.

After analyzing a domestic study that compares Germany and Türkiye, it can be observed that Germans tend to prioritize their health and well-being compared to Turks. It is noted that Germans often opt for a vegan diet as a way of promoting a healthier lifestyle. In common between previous studies and this thesis, it can be said

that the relationship between the attitudes and beliefs of being vegan and health is positive.

Although the newly developing vegan clothing market in Türkiye is small, consumers pay close attention to the fact that the product they use is vegan. Consumers who are open to innovations in this market and are against animal experiments are influenced by influencers and their products when making purchases. Elif Taştekné and the apple leather shoes she produces have inspired many vegans in this regard. Being vegan does not necessarily mean being healthy. Vegan products full of chemicals are not healthy. This is where the consumer's attitude comes into play. There are those who are vegan and use the products produced with vegan chemicals, as well as those who are vegan and use completely clean products.

However, the biggest negative attitude towards vegan products is the price of the products. The perception that the products are expensive affects the consumer and the purchase of vegan products. Considering the socio-economic situation of the country, consumers may act price-consciously.

Vegans, who learned about animal rights from influencers, documentaries and friends, have developed their purchasing attitudes positively in this direction. They have shown that they will not exploit animals that have rights, feel and live like themselves, even if they are well cared for. It can be said that the relationship between the attitude and beliefs of being a vegan and animal rights is in a positive direction. Based on the analysis of previous thesis studies, people in Türkiye want to believe that animals are well cared for. The correlation between animal rights and attitude/environmental discourse is undeniably strong.

As for future studies and recommendations to the sector, the issue can be addressed from different aspects.

Due to the difficulty of transportation for generation Z vegans in Türkiye, it is possible to work with demographically different vegan groups. The fact that the number of vegans in Germany is higher than the number of vegans in Türkiye, it can be studied between countries due to the fact that their purchasing behaviors are more different. Different studies can be organized in the field of marketing for the insufficient literature that has emerged due to the fact that veganism is studied only in the field of gastronomy. In addition, the newly developing fashion sector in Türkiye and vegan leather can be studied. No matter how widespread vegan leather has become

in the world, it is still not widespread in Türkiye due to the cost of production. Marketers can work on this sector.

Lohas states that vegans who adopt a sustainable lifestyle and care about health, environment and social issues cannot perceive the "Environment" issue, they only see the environmental issue as waste. Generation Z vegans need to raise awareness about the "Environment" issue that not only the products should be vegan, but also the production line should be vegan, should lead to less environmental destruction in this area. For this, brands or businesses can organize social responsibility projects.

Businesses need to examine the purchasing behavior of generation Z vegans, especially sustainable packaging. It has been observed that vegans, who are the Z generation, are influenced by influencers, change their minds and make their sales accordingly. For this niche audience, brands can ask for help in sustainability from influencers with whom they share the same values.

Based on the interviews, it became evident that not all participants possess a comprehensive understanding of animal rights, veganism, and sustainability. Within the scope of the research, they can collaborate with more knowledgeable and conscious individuals on these issues or take initiatives to increase awareness and knowledge among participants.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: Question Set

APPENDIX 2: Tables Set

Appendix 1

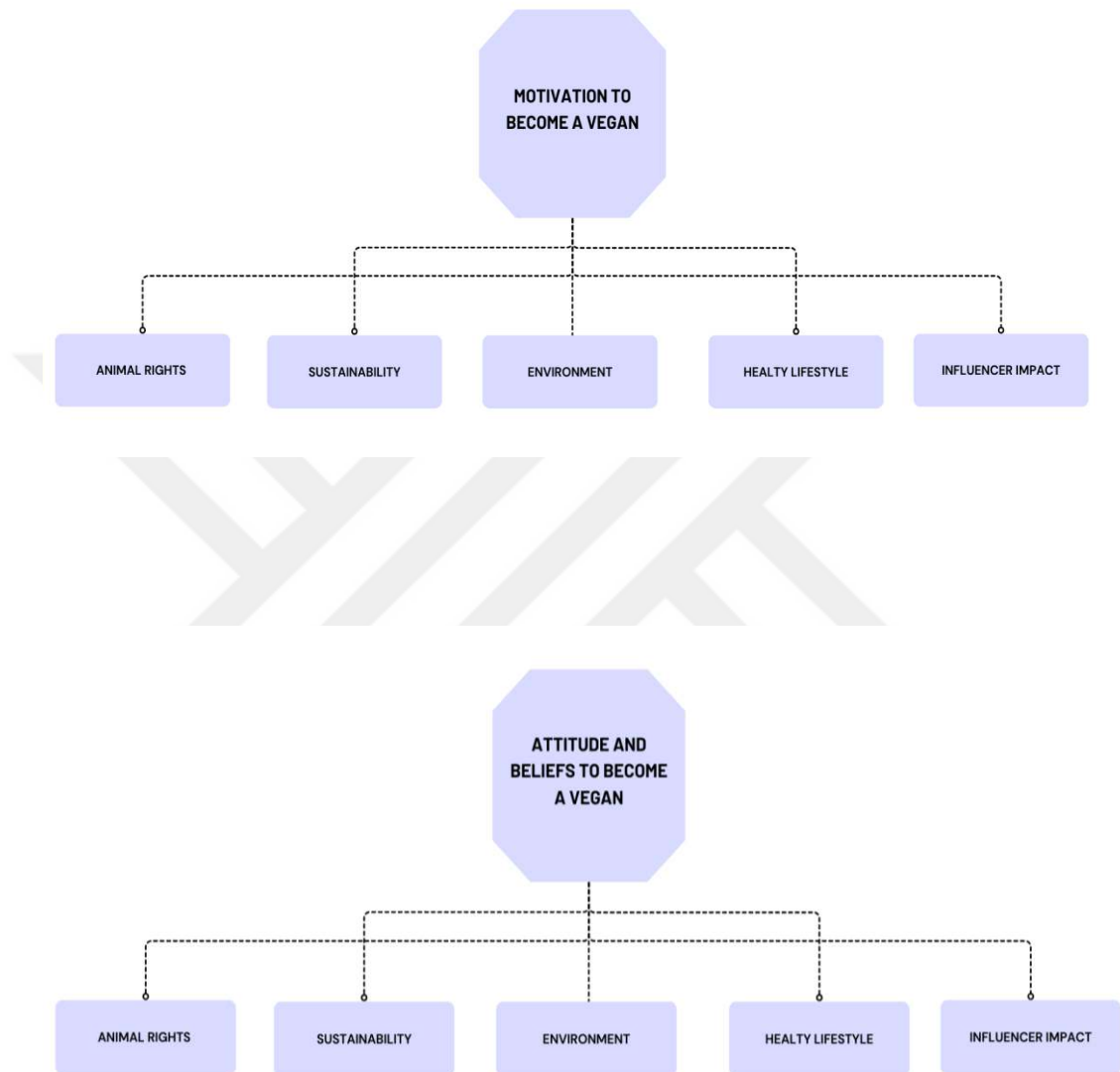
Question Set

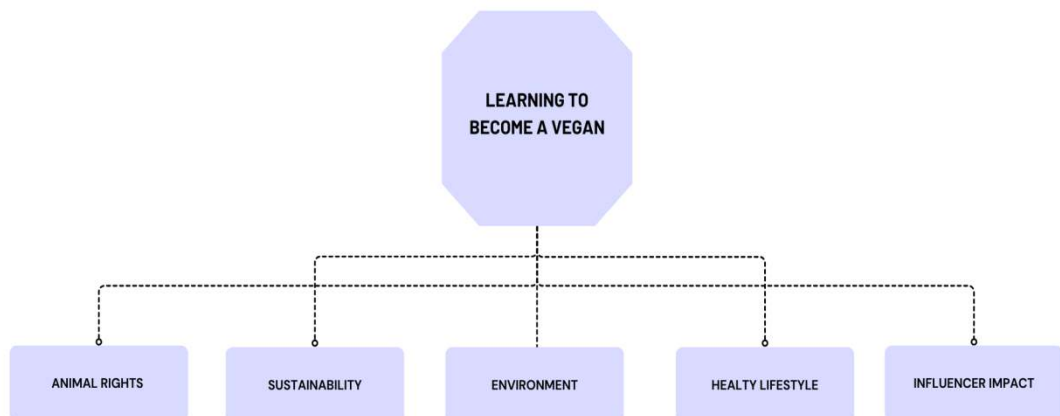
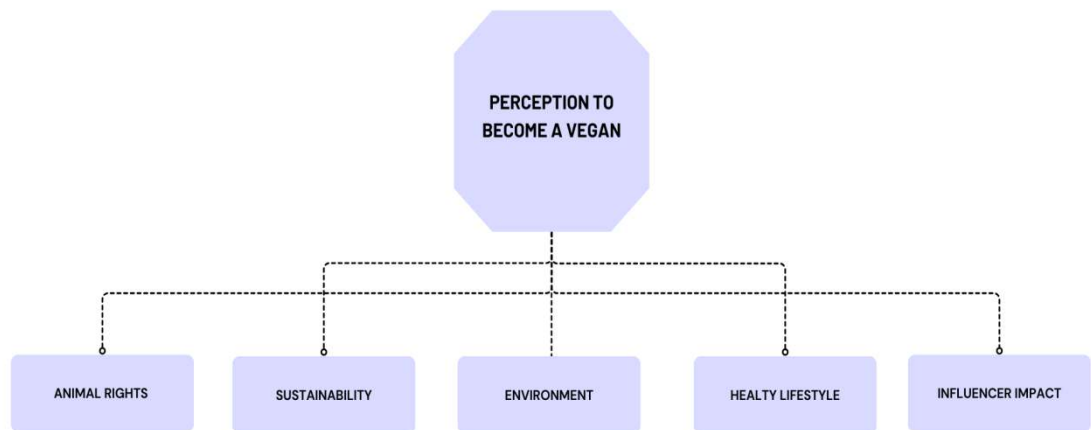
1. Vegan olma sebebiniz nedir? Ne kadar süredir vegansınız?(Hayvanları koruma isteği, Sağlıklı olma isteği ,Çevreyi koruma isteği,Influncerlar)
2. Nasıl Vegan oldunuz?Vegan kelimesini nereden duydunuz?
3. Takip ettiğiniz Vegan etkileyiciler kimlerdir?
4. Satın alım gerçekleştirirken neye dikkat ediyorsunuz? (Hayvanlar üzerinde test edilmemesi, yeşil ürün olması , etiket vs.)
5. Satın aldığınız ürünlerin çevreye verdiği zararı araştırıyor musunuz? Satın aldığınız ürünün üretiminden tüketimine kadar olan süreci araştırıyor musunuz? Ve bu satın alım sizi nasıl motive ediyor?
6. Satın aldığınız ürünlerin sürdürülebilir ve çevreci olması sizin için ne kadar önemli? Ambalajlanması sürdürülebilir değil ama vegansa satın alıyor musunuz?
7. Sağlığınızı ne kadar düşünüyorsunuz? Sağlıklı olma düşüncesi satın alım davranışlarınızı etkiliyor mu?
8. Veganlığın sağlığınızı nasıl etkilediğini düşünüyorsunuz?
9. Tükettiğiniz ve giydiğiniz kıyafetlerin sağlıklı(vegan) olması sizin için önemli midir?
10. Hayvan haklarını nasıl, nereden öğrendiniz? Hayvanların haklarını öğrendikten sonra mı satın alma tutumlarınız değişti? Ve bu sizi nasıl etkiledi?

11. Hayvanlara iyi bakıldığını düşünseydiniz hayvansal ürün alırmıydınız?
12. Vegan etkileyiciler,Veganlık konusunda sizi etkiledi mi?
13. Vegan etkileyicilerin kullandığı veya önerdiği ürünleri satın alıyormusunuz? Ne sıklıkla satın alım gerçekleştiriyorsunuz?
14. Takip ettiğiniz etkileyicilerin tanıtımını yaptığı ürünler kim olduğunuzu ifade etme konusunda sizlere yardımcı oluyor mu?
15. Satın almadan önce etkileyiciye soru sorar mısınız?
16. Etkileyicilerin reklamını yaptığı ürün hakkında söyledikleri fikirlerinizi değiştirir mi?
17. Takip ettiğiniz etkileyicilerin sizinle aynı değeri paylaşması sizin için önemli midir?

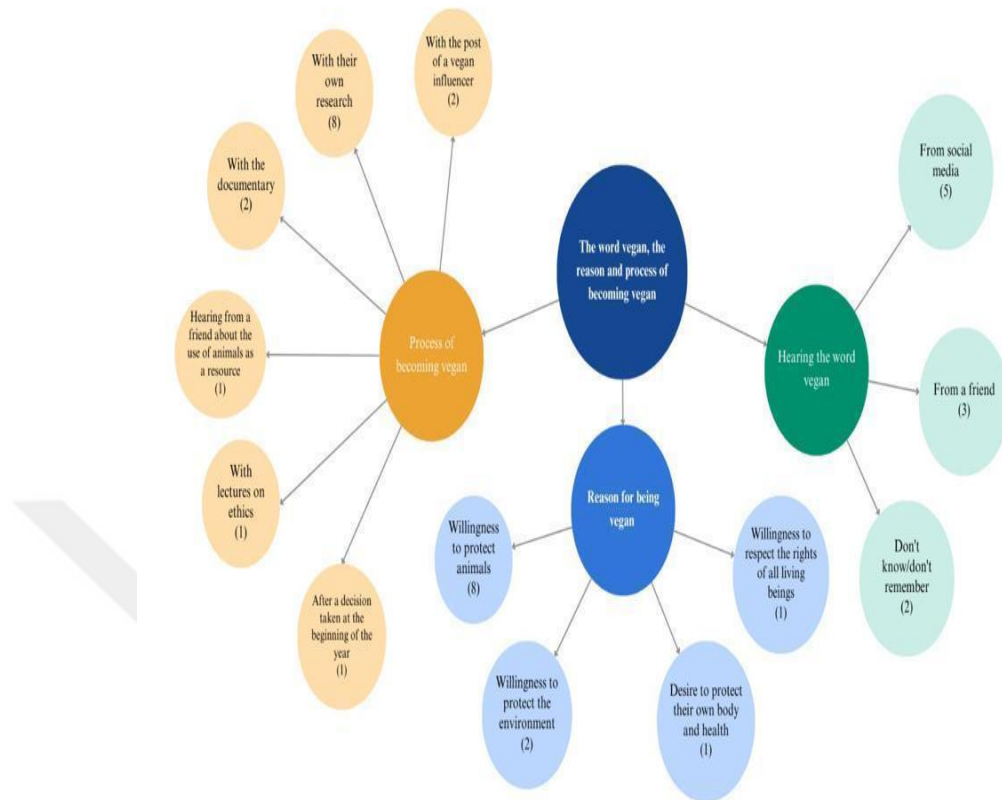
APPENDIX 2: Tables Set

The Model of The Research





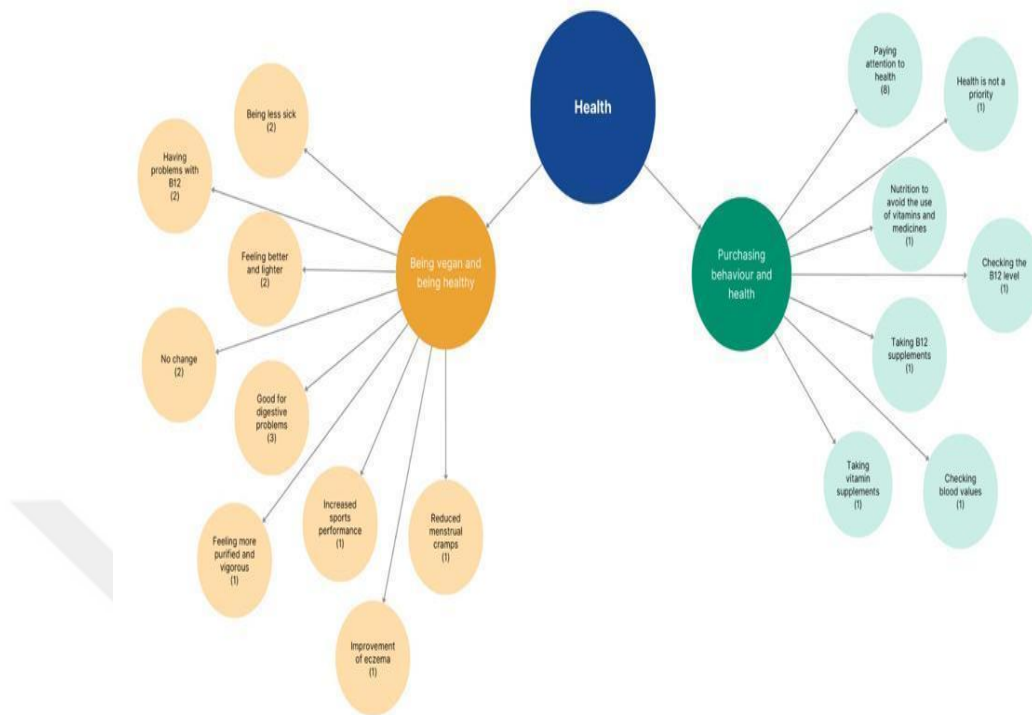
Place Where You Heard The Word Vegan, The Reason and Process of Becoming Vegan



Purchasing Behavior



Health



Clothes and Veganism



Animals



Asking Questions Before Buying



Influencers

