

The role of social media in consumers' intentions to buy green food: evidence from Türkiye

Consumers'
intentions to
buy green food

1923

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Received 21 November 2022

Revised 18 January 2023

12 March 2023

Accepted 13 March 2023

Abstract

Purpose – There is limited research examining the relationship between social media and green food purchasing behaviour. In the current study, we examine the factors that affect consumers' green food purchasing behaviour in Türkiye.

Design/methodology/approach – Data collected from the participants by survey method were analysed using Smart PLS 4.0 with IBM SPSS 26 and PLS to run SEM.

Findings – Our findings have revealed that from all the structural elements in the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), only attitude and perceived behavioural control contribute to consumers' green food purchasing behaviour, while subjective norms do not contribute to consumers' green food purchasing behaviour. Additionally, it was found that social media usage (SMU) and digital marketing interactions (DMI) have a positive and significant effect on green food purchasing behaviour. More information, experiences, opinions and recommendations on green foods in social media channels can encourage consumers to buy more green food.

Originality/value – This study first evaluates the applicability of the TPB model in explaining green food purchasing behaviour. This study is extended with two new factors included in the original framework of the TPB model, namely, SMU and DMI.

Keywords Green food, Social media, Consumer behaviour, Sustainable marketing, Theory of planned behaviour, Smart PLS, Türkiye

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

With the globalisation experienced throughout the world, environmental pollution is increasing with each day and endangers the future of humanity and the world (Fotopoulos and Krystallis, 2002). Undoubtedly, the basis of this is the food industry, which accounts for more than a quarter of the world's greenhouse gases (IPCC, 2019). In order to minimise the environmental damage of this situation, a sustainable green food system is needed (Bajzelj *et al.*, 2014).

Today, in many countries, the demands of consumers for organic, that is, green food, are increasing day by day due to the debates and concerns about food safety and environmental pollution (Vossenaar and Wynen, 2004). When evaluated from this perspective, the increasing health (Pino *et al.*, 2012) and environmental awareness of consumers are seen as important factors in purchasing green foods (Rana and Paul, 2017). In addition, the purchase of healthy and naturally grown green foods is important for the protection of future generations

This paper forms part of a special section "Digitization and innovation of the food and beverage industry in the post-pandemic era: challenges, drivers and opportunities", guest edited by Vincenzo Corvello, Ciro Troise, Alberto Michele Felicetti and Paul Jones.

Note: Based on the official Ankara's request, The United Nations has changed the country name from "Turkey" to "Türkiye".



British Food Journal
Vol. 126 No. 5, 2024
pp. 1923-1940

© Emerald Publishing Limited
0007-070X
DOI 10.1108/BFJ-11-2022-0988

(Żakowska-Biemans, 2011). Thus, consumers' attitudes (ATTs) towards the environment (Beckford *et al.*, 2010) have a positive effect on their purchasing behaviour for healthy and natural products (Cornelissen *et al.*, 2008; Laroche *et al.*, 2001; Magistris and Gracia, 2008). The main reasons for consumers' green food purchasing behaviour are to be protected from harmful chemical wastes, to consume fresh products, to have a healthy and natural diet, and to avoid the consumption of genetically modified products (Winter and Davis, 2006).

In today's world, Internet, social media, mobile applications and other communication technologies have become a part of daily life and billions of people shop using these technologies (Stephen, 2016). In Türkiye, the number of Internet users reached 69.9 million in 2022. In 2022, 80.7% of the population uses the Internet, and people who use the Internet spend an average of 8 h a day online. The number of social media users reaching 69.9 million people in 2022 covers approximately 80% of population in 2022. When the number of social media users in Türkiye is compared with the population ratio, it can be easily stated that approximately every Internet user actively uses social media applications. Approximately 93.2% of those who use social media in Türkiye provide communication with WhatsApp application, while 92.5% use Instagram, 78.1% Facebook and 69.6% Twitter applications to follow information and news flows. Approximately 93.2% of those who use social media in Türkiye provide communication with WhatsApp application, while 92.5% use Instagram, 78.1% Facebook and 69.6% Twitter applications to follow information and news flows. Another important finding is that 38.5% of Internet users use the Internet to share their personal opinions (TÜİK, 2022; *We Are Social*, 2022; www.tuik.gov.tr). Consumer experiences in digital marketing channels influence individuals to perform purchasing behaviour by exercising less self-control (Wilcox and Stephen, 2013; Lamberton *et al.*, 2013; Norton *et al.*, 2013). This shows that social media has a great influence on consumers' decision-making in terms of marketing (Stefan, 2016).

There has been a significant increase in consumers' demands for green (organic) products in the last ten years (Qi *et al.*, 2020), and this reveals very important results in terms of the environment (Oana, 2014). These trends have led many companies to produce green (organic) products (D'Souza *et al.*, 2006; Qi *et al.*, 2021) and green production-oriented transformations (Braimah, 2015). As the research on the ever-increasing use of green products has shown limited interest in the green food category, special attention has been paid to the purchasing behaviour of green food products in this study. In addition, the perspective on environmental problems and green food consumption differs from society to society. This study was conducted to address the limited research on green food purchasing in Türkiye, a multicultural country with diverse consumption habits. Therefore, Türkiye was selected as the universe of this study.

In addition, it has been determined in the relevant literature that most studies on green food have been done on western cultures (Mohsen and Dacko, 2015), and studies in the context of eastern culture have been insufficient. For this reason, this study aims to investigate the green food purchasing behaviours of consumers living in Türkiye by focusing on Türkiye, which is open to green food consumption, in order to contribute to the gap in the relevant literature. In this way, we try to understand what are the purchasing precursors of green food that will provide a deep understanding of green food consumer behaviour in Türkiye and reduce environmental degradation regionally. However, this study is the first study to examine the effect of social media usage (SMU) and digital marketing interactions (DMI) on consumers' intention to buy green foods in Türkiye.

Therefore, this article focuses on consumers' digital consumption experiences and behaviours and measures the effect of increasing technology use on green food purchasing behaviour. This paper also identifies how consumers in Türkiye are influenced by digital environments that have become part of their daily lives and how this influence sheds light on their purchasing behaviour from a marketing perspective. In this respect, within the scope of the study, the planned behaviour theory, which is frequently preferred in the literature, has been used by expanding it with DMI and SMU factors to determine consumer purchasing behaviours. Related variables have been

examined from different perspectives (Gunawan *et al.*, 2015; Amaro *et al.*, 2016; Pop *et al.*, 2020; Nekmahmud *et al.*, 2022; Xie and Rasool, 2023), but their effect on consumers' green food purchasing behaviour has been ignored. At this point, filling the gap in the existing literature on consumers' green food purchasing behaviour has encouraged this study to be done. For this reason, this study aims to investigate the green food purchasing behaviours of consumers living in Türkiye by focusing on Türkiye, which is open to green food consumption, in order to contribute to the gap in the relevant literature.

In this context, this study not only offers important implications for producers or policymakers but also makes important contributions by raising awareness about reducing environmental pollution on a global scale by changing the perceptions of consumers because consumers' conscious buying behaviour of green food products enables producers to transform their production activities in an environment-friendly way and encourages policymakers to come up with incentives and legal regulations for the production of environment-friendly products. In this respect, it becomes even more important to identify and investigate the factors that are the driving force in the green food purchasing behaviour of consumers. At this point, this study is the first comprehensive study that makes important contributions to both the current literature and the development of green food production and marketing studies by identifying the factors that are the driving force in the green food purchasing behaviour of consumers.

In this connection, this study first evaluates the applicability of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) model in explaining green food purchasing behaviour. In addition, in this study, the TPB models were extended and used with the addition of SMU and DMI, which are two new variables added to the original TPB model.

2. Literature review

2.1 Green food and TPB

When the relevant literature is reviewed, it is seen that the current literature is generally focused on different subjects such as green products (Moser, 2016; Kumar *et al.*, 2017), green cosmetic products (Hsu *et al.*, 2017) and green apparel (Tewari *et al.*, 2022), and that the area of green food purchasing has been overlooked. Seen from this perspective, the current study provides important contributions to the green food literature. In addition, another important contribution of this study is to identify and reveal the factors that are the driving force affecting the green food purchasing behaviour in Türkiye, which has the consumption characteristics of the Middle East society. Specifically, the current literature is lacking in research investigating exactly how and to what extent social media influences consumer decision-making and behaviour in green food purchasing. Moreover, this study places SMU and interactions in a comprehensive framework for green food consumer behaviour and contributes to the understanding of the importance of social media for the green food market (Yakubu *et al.*, 2022).

Increasing health concerns in recent years have led consumers to buy environment-friendly green food products and have caused radical changes that support consumers' green food purchasing behaviour (Lin *et al.*, 2010). The purchase of organic, also known as green food, is considered a sustainable consumption behaviour that is increasingly preferred by consumers day by day (Scalco *et al.*, 2017). Finnveden *et al.* (2009) state that green foods should be consumed first in order to minimise the environmental damage of consumers. It is known that the environmental impact of green food production and consumption is much less as compared to traditional foods (Boggia *et al.*, 2010) and that green food has the least gas emission (Litskas *et al.*, 2011) resulting in decreasing negative impact on the environment. Motives of Turkish consumers for green purchasing are presented in Figure 1, based on Dindar (2020).

TPB (proposed by Ajzen, 1991) is one of the most preferred theories in the current literature (Ajzen, 1991; Wang and Wang, 2016; Tewari *et al.*, 2022) to detect green product purchasing behaviour of consumers. In this study, we test for the first time in Türkiye the

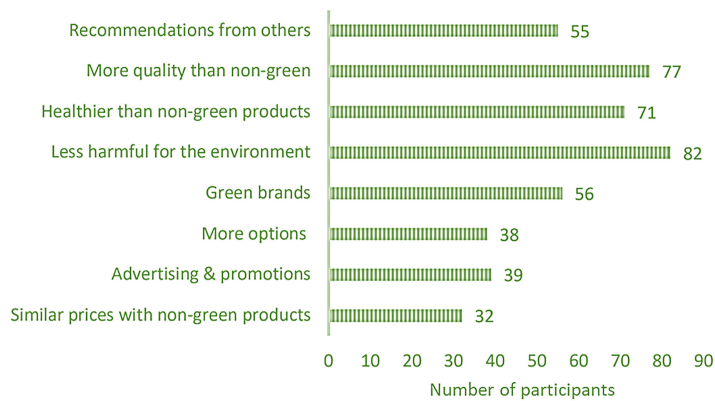


Figure 1.
Motives for green
purchasing in Türkiye

Source(s): Authors work, based on Dindar (2020)

applicability of the TPB in predicting the intention of consumers to purchase green food. In addition, the current study has expanded the original framework of the TPB (ATT, subjective norms [SN], perceived behaviour control and intention) by adding the SMU and DMI factor to predict the intention of consumers to purchase green food in Türkiye (Figure 2).

Although the TPB has been used in many studies in the literature to determine consumers' purchasing behaviours and intentions (Paul *et al.*, 2016; Yadav and Pathak, 2016), it has been used in a limited number of studies on the green food purchasing behaviour of consumers. In this direction, this study extended the original framework of the TPB (ATT, SN, perceived behaviour control and intention) by adding SMU and DMI to predict the intention of consumers in Türkiye to purchase green food. Thus, it attempted to create a new integrated model. In this study, we test for the first time in Türkiye the applicability of the TPB in predicting the intention of consumers to purchase green food. It is known in the existing literature that the TPB model, SMU and DMI have a positive effect on green behaviour, but this study is the first to predict the intention of consumers to purchase green food in Türkiye.

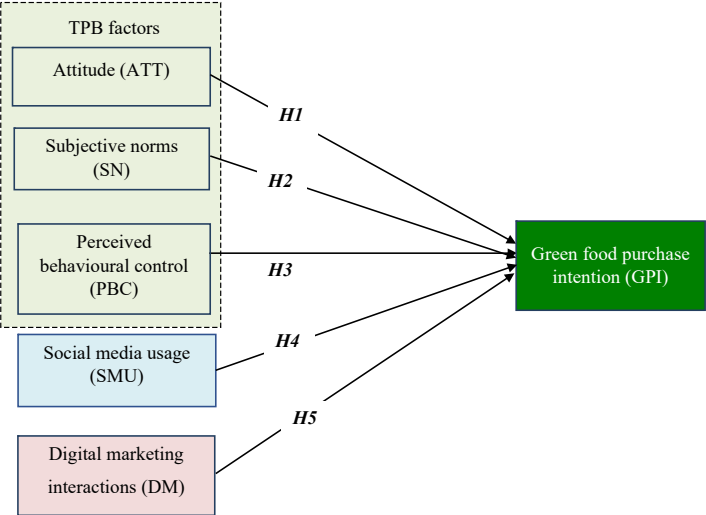


Figure 2.
Conceptual
research model

Source(s): Authors work

The increasing rate of Internet usage with the developing communication technologies in recent years has opened a new era in information search methods (Arsal *et al.*, 2008). Social media applications (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.) that are frequently used between DMI encourage consumers to support green purchasing (Bailey *et al.*, 2016). Features of digital media such as interaction power, speed, scope, ability to represent information and scope of access have a significant impact on consumer behaviour (Dholakia and Bagozzi, 2001). Searching for information in digital environments and examining interactions about a product (i.e. minimising risk) reinforces consumers' decision-making behaviour (Bettman, 1979). Green promotion through digital marketing channels improves consumers' environmental awareness (Alamsyah *et al.*, 2020), their adoption of green products (Zubair *et al.*, 2020) and their purchasing behaviour (doPaço *et al.*, 2019).

2.2 Hypotheses development

2.2.1 Attitude and green food. Ajzen (1991) defines ATT as "the degree to which an individual has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of a given behaviour". The ATT is also described as the first construct that forms the main premise of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). The ATT is defined as the behaviour of individuals or consumers to perform an action, and it is also an important construct that represents the probability of purchasing a product or service (Fabrigar and Wegener, 2010). Yadav and Patlak (2016) found in their study on Indian consumers that ATTs do have a positive effect on consumers' green purchasing behaviour. Qi and Ploeger (2021), in their study on Chinese consumers, found that ATT significantly affects their green food purchasing behaviour. Based on this information in the existing literature, a positive relationship is expected between consumers' ATTs and green food purchasing behaviour.

H1. ATT positively influences consumers' purchase intention (GPI) towards green food.

2.2.2 Subjective norms and green food. SN are defined as social influences perceived by individuals or consumers that affect their decision to perform or abandon a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). These social influences come from consumers' families, friends, colleagues and reference groups (Scalco *et al.*, 2017). SN represent behavioural intentions of individuals or consumers (Nguyen *et al.*, 2019). Qi and Ploeger (2021) state that SN are not always a perfect representative of intention to purchase green food. Likewise, Yadav and Patlak (2016) found that SN have no effect on the representation of consumers' green purchasing intentions. Along with all these findings, Stranieri *et al.* (2017) and Qi and Ploeger (2021) state that the SN used to represent consumers' intentions regarding their food purchasing behaviour need to be investigated further. Thus, a definite judgement cannot be made on the effect of SN on consumers' green buying behaviour. Therefore, it is necessary to determine to what extent people who can create social pressure on consumers affect their green food purchase intentions.

H2. SN positively influence consumers' purchase intentions (GPI) towards green food.

2.2.3 Perceived behavioural control and green food. Perceived behavioural control (PBC) states whether individuals can independently perform the behaviours they want to perform (Ajzen (1991). The effect and power of the behaviours that individuals want to perform increase or decrease in direct proportion to the PBC value of consumers (Ajzen and Madden, 1986). Al-Swidi *et al.* (2014) found in their study on Pakistani consumers that the construct of PBC has a significant effect on organic food purchasing behaviour of consumers. Likewise, Yadav and Patlak (2017) emphasise that PBC has a positive effect on consumers' green food purchasing behaviour. Qi and Ploeger (2021) found that the construct of PBC used to represent consumers' intentions regarding their green food purchasing behaviour has a

significant and positive effect. Considering the available literature mentioned above, PBC is expected to have a positive effect on consumers' green food purchasing behaviour.

H3. PBC positively influences consumers' purchase intention (GPI) towards green food.

2.2.4 Social media usage and green food. SMU is a construct that has a significant impact on consumers' SN, purchasing decision, ATTs, awareness of environmental problems, intention mechanisms and sustainable product consumption behaviours (Pop *et al.*, 2020; Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Ward *et al.*, 2012). SMU has an important role in influencing purchasing intentions, as well as helping to inform consumers about green products (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Zhao *et al.*, 2019). Huang (2016) emphasises that the use of media is of vital importance in terms of the environmental behaviour of consumers. Ho *et al.* (2015) state that social media applications have a positive effect on consumers' green purchasing behaviour. Bedard and Tolmie (2018) showed that SMU has significant and positive relationships with consumers' green purchasing intentions. Nekk Mahmud *et al.* (2022) found that SMU has a positive effect on consumers' purchasing behaviour for green products. Based on the current literature, it can be stated that SMU may influence consumers' green food purchasing behaviour.

H4. SMU positively influences consumers' purchase intentions (GPI) towards green food.

2.2.5 Digital marketing interactions and green food. Before individuals or consumers buy or use a product or service, they first consider the ideas and thoughts of those who have used this product and service before, and make their purchasing decisions accordingly (Kim *et al.*, 2007). Lee (2008) and Dewnarain *et al.* (2019) state that the interaction power of the media is the most effective factor in increasing consumers' green product purchase intentions and behaviours. doPaço *et al.* (2019), Bailey *et al.* (2016) and Chang *et al.* (2015) found that activities related to green communication positively affect consumers' green product or service purchasing behaviour. Sun *et al.* (2021) emphasise that green advertising-related activities can explain consumers' intention to purchase green or environment-friendly products. Gustavo *et al.* (2021) argue that using digital marketing channels is one of the most successful ways to reduce green food waste. The DMI mentioned above are expected to have a positive effect on green food purchasing behaviour.

H5. DMI positively influence consumers' purchase intention (GPI) towards green food.

3. Method

3.1 Setting and data collection

The aim of this study was to examine the green food purchasing behaviour of consumers living in Gaziantep, Türkiye, and the connection of this behaviour with social media. The data for this study were collected through convenience sampling. To reduce the effects of common method bias, we conducted a pilot study as well. A structured questionnaire was sent to consumers in Türkiye concerning their buying behaviour to green food. The questionnaire was administered both online and face-to-face, resulting in 220 completed questionnaires. In the method developed by Soper (2022) to calculate the sampling size for A-priori structural equation modelling (SEM), it was determined that 150 samples would be sufficient. The calculation method developed by Soper (2022) is accepted and used in the related literature (Cohen, 1988; Westland, 2010). In addition, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest $8 + 50 (19 \times 8 + 50 = 202)$ participants per variable. According to Kline (2011), an acceptable sample size for transmission should be at least ten cases per measurement. According to this assumption, the number of samples used in the study ($n = 220$) is sufficient. To obtain more accurate responses, the questionnaire (19 questions) was translated into Türkiye's from English, and respondents were asked to answer with a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 = strongly

disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The data were analysed using Smart PLS4 and IBM SPSS 26 to assess the measurement model and conduct SEM. The respondents were informed that the study will be used only for scientific purposes, and the data were secured.

3.2 Variable definitions

We next describe our model variables. The survey administered to participants, containing the questions underlying the construct is provided in [Appendix](#).

3.2.1 Dependent variable. Purchase intention (GPI) is our dependent variable used in the study. Our GPI dependent variable represents consumer purchase intention as measured by the three questions in [Appendix](#) taken from [Muça and Zeqiri \(2020\)](#), [Cheung et al. \(2017\)](#), [Wang et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Ajzen \(1991\)](#).

3.2.2 Independent variables. In addition to demographic questions, the independent variables used in the study were developed as five constructs, which are ATT, SN, PBC, SMU and DMI. Four items of the consumer ATT construct were adapted from [Cheung et al. \(2017\)](#), [Wang et al. \(2018\)](#), [Wu and Chen \(2014\)](#) and [Ajzen \(1991\)](#). Four items of the SN construct were adapted from [Cheung et al. \(2017\)](#), [Wang et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Ajzen \(1991\)](#). Five items of the PBC construct were adapted from [Cheung et al. \(2017\)](#), [Wang et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Ajzen \(1991\)](#). Five items of the SMU construct were adapted from [Gunawan et al. \(2015\)](#), [Pop et al. \(2020\)](#), [Nekmahmud et al. \(2022\)](#), and [Xie and Rasool \(2023\)](#). Four items of the digital marketing integrations construct were adapted from [Amaro et al. \(2016\)](#). Detailed information about the independent variables is included in [Appendix](#).

3.3 Reliability and validity

Internal consistency reliability and validity were evaluated by using Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in [Table 1](#), CA values range from 0.894 to 0.926 and all these values are above the threshold (0.60–0.70) accepted for research in social sciences ([Ursachi et al., 2015](#); [Hair et al., 2017](#)). CR value varies between 0.934 and 0.943, and these values are above the accepted threshold value ([Hair et al., 2017](#)). In addition, AVE values range from 0.826 to 0.81, and it is shown in [Table 1](#) that all of these values are above the threshold (0.50) recommended by [Fornell and Locker \(1981\)](#).

The discriminant validity test was used to assess how close the constructs were to each other in the model or how different they were in the model ([Richard et al., 1991](#)). As can be seen in [Table 1](#), square root of the AVE values exceeds the 0.5 loading threshold value, and discriminant validity was obtained for the construct ([Fornell and Lacker, 1981](#)). [Hair et al. \(2017\)](#) state that the correlation values in any construct should not exceed square root of the AVE values in a single construct. According to all these evaluations, the results in [Table 1](#) show that all constructs have reached discriminant validity.

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE	ATT	DMI	GPI	PBC	SMU	SN
ATT	0.918	0.948	0.858	<i>0.927</i>					
DMI	0.909	0.943	0.846	0.800	<i>0.929</i>				
GPI	0.894	0.934	0.826	0.762	0.776	<i>0.903</i>			
PBC	0.907	0.942	0.843	0.870	0.848	0.795	<i>0.918</i>		
SMU	0.926	0.953	0.871	0.842	0.848	0.778	0.876	<i>0.933</i>	
SN	0.917	0.947	0.857	0.897	0.826	0.749	0.891	0.890	<i>0.926</i>

Note(s): Values (italic) on the diagonal represent the square root of the AVE while the off-diagonals are correlations

Source(s): Authors work

Table 1.
Construct reliability,
AVE and discriminant
validity

3.4 Descriptive data

The demographic characteristics of the participants who participated in the survey in the current study are given in Table 2. As can be seen in Table 3, 49.5% of the participants are females and 50.5% are males. Of the participants, 106 (48.2%) are high school graduates, 47 (21.4%) hold an associate degree, 40 (18.2%) hold a bachelor's degree, 18 (8.2%) hold a master's degree and 9 (4.1%) hold a doctoral degree. Most of the participants (55.0%) who participated in the survey have more than 3,001–7,000 TL monthly income. In addition, it is shown in Table 2 that 14.1% of the participants are in the age group of 18–24, 37.3% are in the age group of 25–34, 30.5% are in the age group of 35–44, 13.2% are in the age group of 45–55, and 5.0% are in the age group of 55 and above. Of the participants, 121 (55.0%) are employees, 31 (14.1%) are officers and 31 (14.1%) are students.

4. Results

Table 3 shows the factor loadings, variance inflation factor (VIF) and model fit, means, standard deviations, *t*-statistics and results of VIF values for all the items. To assess the convergent validity for reflective constructs, external loads and external mean variance are evaluated (Zeqiri et al., 2022). Hair et al. (2017) recommend external loadings of all items to be 0.708 or higher. Also, VIF values should be reported to check for linearity, and if VIF values are greater than 5, it indicates a linearity problem (Hair et al., 2011). When Table 3 is examined according to all these evaluations, it is seen that there is no linearity since VIF values are below the threshold value of 5.

Variables		Frequency	Per cent
Gender	Male	111	50.5
	Female	109	49.5
	Total	220	100
Education	High school	106	48.2
	Associate degree	47	21.4
	Bachelor	40	18.2
	Master	18	8.2
	Doctorate	9	4.1
	Total	220	100
Age	18–24	31	14.1
	25–34	82	37.3
	35–44	67	30.5
	45–55	29	13.2
	55 and above	11	5.0
	Total	220	100.0
Income	1,000 TL and under	4	1.8
	1,001–3,000 TL	27	12.3
	3,001–7,000 TL	121	55.0
	7,000–10,000 TL	36	16.4
	10,000 TL and above	32	14.5
	Total	220	100
Job	Housewife	18	8.2
	Employee	121	55.0
	Officer	31	14.1
	Self-employment	18	8.2
	Student	31	14.1
	Not working	1	0.5
	Total	220	100.0

Table 2.
Demographic profile

Source(s): Authors work

Table 3.
Factor loadings, VIF
and model fit

	Loadings	Mean	STDEV	T-values	VIF	SRMR	NFI
ATT1	0.922	0.921	0.020	45.232	3.251	0.044	0.848
ATT2	0.928	0.928	0.014	66.480	3.300		
ATT3	0.929	0.929	0.014	65.652	3.264		
DMI1	0.924	0.923	0.017	53.381	3.426		
DMI2	0.921	0.920	0.014	66.080	3.041		
DMI3	0.941	0.941	0.011	84.063	3.910		
PBC1	0.909	0.908	0.024	38.058	2.942		
PBC2	0.906	0.905	0.018	51.622	2.717		
PBC3	0.939	0.939	0.011	84.863	3.700		
SMU1	0.927	0.927	0.013	68.916	3.644		
SMU2	0.954	0.954	0.007	141.230	4.826		
SMU3	0.918	0.917	0.012	76.677	3.179		
SN1	0.921	0.920	0.021	43.740	3.097		
SN2	0.931	0.931	0.009	101.973	3.387		
SN3	0.925	0.924	0.017	54.294	3.271		
GPI1	0.899	0.898	0.018	51.266	3.535		
GPI2	0.912	0.911	0.017	53.774	3.804		
GPI3	0.917	0.917	0.012	78.421	3.728		
GPI4	0.883	0.882	0.028	32.038	3.132		

Source(s): Authors work

It is shown in Table 3, the goodness-of-fit values for the research model are given. When the goodness-of-fit values for the research model are examined, it is seen that the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is lower than the threshold value of 0.08 (0.044) (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Schumacker and Lomax (1996) consider the SRMR value, which has a value between 0.05 and 0.08, as a good fit model. The Normed Fix Index (NFI) value should take a value between 0 and 1 and values close to 1 are good fit values (Schermelele-Engel *et al.*, 2003). The NFI value for the structural model of this study was calculated to be 0.848.

The bootstrapping technique was used to assess the structural model, yielding the model *R*-square (R^2), β -coefficients and *t*-statistics (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Table 4 and Figure 3 show the results of the analyses performed. Table 4 reveals that ATT does affect the green food purchase intention positively (path coefficient = 0.220, $p > 0.031$), and therefore the hypothesis H1 was supported. However, it was affecting that SN have not a positive and significant effect on green food purchase intention (path coefficient = -0.143, $p < 0.130$). This result shows that the H2 hypothesis was not supported.

In addition, according to Table 4, PBC (path coefficient = 0.309, $p > 0.009$), SMU (path coefficient = 0.222, $p > 0.048$) and DMI (path coefficient = 0.267, $p > 0.016$) do have a significant effect on green food purchase intention. Therefore, hypotheses H3, H4 and H5 were supported according to Table 4.

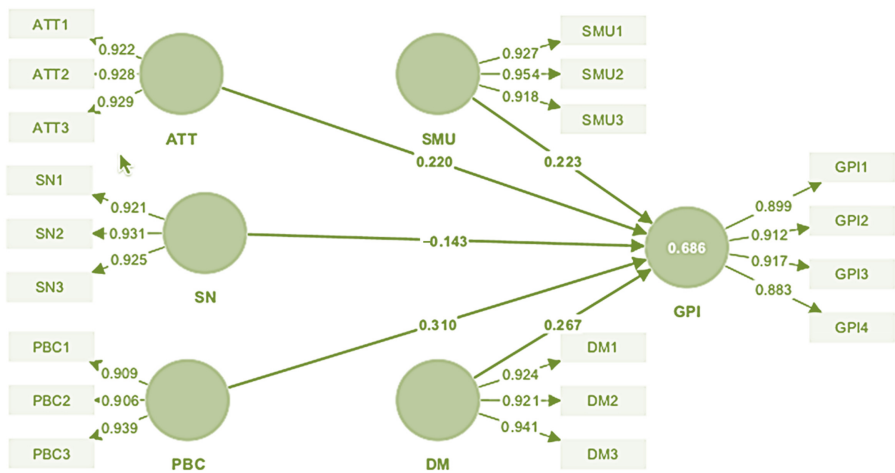
Table 4.
Regression results and
hypothesis testing

	Path coefficients	STDEV	t-statistics	p Values
H1. ATT $\Rightarrow$ Green purchase intention	0.220	0.118	1.865	0.031**
H2. SN $\Rightarrow$ Green purchase intention	-0.143	0.128	1.124	0.130
H3. PBC $\Rightarrow$ Green purchase intention	0.309	0.130	2.381	0.009**
H4. SMU $\Rightarrow$ Purchase intention	0.222	0.134	1.664	0.048**
H5. DMI $\Rightarrow$ Green purchase intention	0.267	0.125	2.140	0.016**

Note(s): **denotes significance at the 5% level

Source(s): Authors work

Figure 3.
Structural
equation model



Source(s): Authors work

5. Discussion

This study presented a model that explores the antecedents of consumers' green food purchasing behaviour in Türkiye. Also, it is extended with two new factors included in the original framework of the TPB model, namely, SMU and DMI.

It was determined that the ATT significantly and positively affected the purchasing behaviour of green food amongst consumers. This finding of the current study concurs with findings reported in the literature ([Vazifehdoust et al., 2013](#); [Yadav and Patlak, 2016](#); [Lai and Cheng, 2016](#); [Qi and Ploeger, 2021](#)). This means that consumers who have a positive ATT towards purchasing green food through social media are highly likely to purchase these products. As a result, it can be stated that consumers' own evaluations (ATTs) do have a determining power on their purchasing behaviour for green products.

SN are an essential element used in the TPB model to predict individuals' behavioural intentions ([Nguyen et al., 2019](#)). But surprisingly, SN were found to have no positive effect on consumers' purchasing behaviour for green food in Türkiye. This finding of the current study concurs with the findings reported by [Qi and Ploeger \(2021\)](#) and [Yadav and Patlak \(2016\)](#). [Qi and Ploeger \(2021\)](#) found in their study that SN do not have a significant effect on consumers' green food purchasing behaviour. Also, [Yadav and Patlak \(2016\)](#) found in their study on Indian consumers that SN do not have a positive effect on consumers' green purchasing behaviour. This means that consumers who have a negative SN towards purchasing green food through social media are less likely to purchase these products. As a result, it can be said that the lesser the SN are, the weaker the consumers' intention to purchase green food.

According to [Ajzen and Madden \(1986\)](#), PBC refers to an individual's perception of whether he or she can perform a certain behaviour and the greater the individual's perception of PBC is, the greater and stronger his/her intention to perform a behaviour will be. In the current study, PBC was found to have a positive effect on the intention of consumers to purchase green food. This finding of the current study concurs with some findings in the literature ([Richards, 2013](#); [Al-Swidi et al., 2014](#); [Yadav and Patlak, 2016](#); [Scalco et al., 2017](#); [Qi and Ploeger, 2021](#)). As a result, it can be easily stated that the existing resources (PBC) have a decisive power on the intention of consumers to purchase green food.

There are very few studies investigating the effect of SMU on green food purchasing behaviour. SMU was found to have positive effect on the purchasing behaviour of consumers

in Türkiye for green food. This finding of the current study concurs with findings reported in the literature (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Zhao *et al.*, 2019; Huang, 2016; Bedard and Tolmie, 2018; Nekomahmud *et al.*, 2022). As a result, it can be easily stated according to the research findings that consumers' social media use significantly affects their green food behaviours. From this point of view, it is seen that the availability of more reliable and convincing products for green foods on social media will increase green consumption behaviour.

There are very few studies investigating the effect of DMI on green food purchasing behaviour. With increasing communication technology, social media use is increasing every day. Consumers share their experience with a product through social media channels. Also, purchase decisions change significantly when consumers are exposed to experiences shared by others. It is seen that DMI have a significant positive effect on the green food purchasing behaviour of consumers in Türkiye. Previous research has revealed a significant relationship between DMI and consumer purchasing behaviour (Lee, 2008; Bailey *et al.*, 2016; doPaço *et al.*, 2019; Dewnarain *et al.*, 2019; doPaço *et al.*, 2019; Sun *et al.*, 2021; Gustavo *et al.*, 2021). With digital marketing channels, consumers have the opportunity to openly share their experiences with others. This type of behaviour makes it easier for consumers to make a decision about a product and to purchase. Consumers' sharing their experiences about green food through social media results in purchasing of more green food through social media.

5.1 Implications

This study makes important contributions to the existing literature on green food purchasing behaviour. Although there are very few studies investigating consumers' purchasing behaviours towards purchasing green food, there is limited empirical evidence regarding variables investigating the SMU and DMI context. This study is extended with two new factors included in the original framework of the TPB model, namely, SMU and DMI (DM). In addition, studies in this field generally reflect western culture. In this respect, since there is no comprehensive study on eastern culture (Türkiye), this study is a first in this field.

The findings from this research beside enriching the literature on the impact of social media on green consumption behaviour, it also provides some practical implications to policymakers and to the green food industry. It provides policymakers and business customer insights regarding marketing strategies implementations in order to increase the perceived values of green consumption. Moreover, companies are provided with some evidence on the role that social media marketing plays on intention of consumer to purchase green products. Therefore, such analyses and findings from the context of food consumption provides businesses in this industry with ample evidence that eventually might improve their performance in such industries.

Additionally, the empirical findings evidence the ATTs of consumers and their readiness to purchase green food. This implies that companies need to promote green food and provide more information on green food, for example, using eco-labels in order to promote green food characteristics, henceforth, positioning the benefits from such green purchasing behaviour.

Finally, marketers can launch campaigns to inform and educate consumers to increase their awareness and emphasise the advantages of purchasing green food items using digital devices such as social media.

5.2 Limitations and future research directions

This study is limited to measuring just green food purchasing behaviours of consumers in Türkiye. Future researchers in this field should expand this model by applying it to different age groups, countries and re-examine its effects on consumers' purchasing behaviour for green food. These findings determined within the scope of the study may show differences for different countries and age groups.

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Appendix

Consumers'
intentions to
buy green food

1939

Construct	Code	Items	Source
ATT	ATT1	It is smart to buy green food through social media channels	Ajzen (1991), Cheung <i>et al.</i> (2017), Wang <i>et al.</i> (2018), Wu and Chen (2014)
	ATT2	Buying green food through social media channels is a good idea	
	ATT3	I like the idea of buying green food through social media channels	
SN	SN1	People who are important to me think that I should buy green food through social media	Ajzen (1991), Cheung <i>et al.</i> (2017), Wang <i>et al.</i> (2018)
	SN2	Most people I care about buy green food through social media channels	
	SN3	I use social media channels when I need to buy green food	
PBC	PBC1	I have enough time, resources, money and willingness to buy green food through social media channels	Ajzen (1991), Cheung <i>et al.</i> (2017), Wang <i>et al.</i> (2018)
	PBC2	I know where to purchase green food on the social media channels	
	PBC3	I can decide whether to purchase green food or not through social media channels	
SMU	SMU1	My engagement on social media channels influences my green food purchase	Gunawan <i>et al.</i> (2015), Pop <i>et al.</i> (2020), Nekmahmud <i>et al.</i> (2022), Xie and Rasool (2023)
	SMU2	Contents about green food on social media channels are trustworthy	
	SMU3	Contents about green food on social media channels are believable	
DMI (DM)	DM1	I use social media channels to search for information about green food	Amaro <i>et al.</i> (2016), Nekmahmud <i>et al.</i> (2022)
	DM2	I use social media channels to look up people's comments about green food	
	DM3	I use social media channels to find and discover people's recommendations about green food	
Purchase decision (GPI)	GPI1	I plan to purchase green food in the future	Muça and Zeqiri (2020), Cheung <i>et al.</i> (2017), Wang <i>et al.</i> (2018), Ajzen (1991)
	GPI2	I am willing to purchase green food	
	GPI3	I intend to pay more for green food	
	GPI4	I will recommend green food to other people	

Source(s): Authors work

Table A1.
Research instrument
description

About the authors

Bariş Armutcu is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at Institute of Social Sciences, Business and Marketing Administration, Iğdır University, Türkiye. He graduated from Eskişehir University Faculty of Business Administration as a High Honor Student and Honor Student. He completed his Master's with Thesis in Tourism Management (93.2/100) and his Ph.D Faculty of Business Administration at Gaziantep University. He has many national and international articles, book chapters and published books on consumer behavior, digital marketing, social media, sustainable consumption behavior, purchasing behavior, political marketing, voter behavior and tourism. He has presented and published papers in many national and international congresses. He also serves as session chair in national and international congresses and as a referee in many journals. Currently, he has worked in the publication stage in journals such as SSCI, Scopus, ABCD, TR Index.

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