

Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study regarding gender comparison in plant-based milk (PBM) purchase behavior among Gen Z. It includes the research background, objectives, and hypotheses.

1.1 Background

In Indonesia, plant-based milk (PBM) demand has increased in the past few years and is often used as a dairy milk alternative (Insani et al., 2024). PBM is intentionally designed to have similar visual characteristics to dairy milk, however, there are still slight differences due to different raw materials used (Reyes-Jurado et al., 2021). On the nutrition aspect, dairy milk has higher nutritional value compared to PBM, especially for its calcium and protein content, however, nowadays PBM has been fortified to match dairy milk nutrition value (Xie et al., 2023). Therefore, PBM is suitable for the one who has lactose intolerance, cow protein allergy, and the one who is interested in a vegan diet (Merritt, 2023). In Indonesia, there are about 2 million vegetarians or vegans among 260 million people, which is considered a small number. However, among the health-conscious Indonesians, the popularity of vegan diets has grown (Arwanto et al., 2022). Moreover, most Asians are lactose intolerant, thus creating a potential market (Patra et al., 2021). PBM is forecasted to reach Compound Annual Growth Rate of 13.1% by 2030, reaching 71.83 billion USD (Grand View Research, 2023). Also, according to DuPont Nutrition and Bioscience and IPSOS, for the next five years, all plant-based products (including PBM) consumption are expected to increase continuously (Arwanto et al., 2022). Therefore, analyzing how purchasing behavior is created is crucial to understand PBM consumption.

Customer decision-making might be influenced by many factors, one of the most important factors is gender (Kraus et al., 2017). Between females and males, they have different preferences and views towards products which are highly affected by social relationships, responsibilities, expectations,

needs, life-style, and many more (Akturan, 2009, as cited in, Bakshi, 2012). These factors might affect their consumption behavior, which in turn affect their purchase behavior. In the world of shopping, females act as if it's their social need while males focus more on the function of the product. Females involve their emotions when choosing products while males prioritize the quality and efficiency (Bednarska-Wnuk & Noga, 2023). People view females to be more positive compared to males due to them being understanding, warm, expressive, and compassionate (Bakshi, 2012). The characteristics difference seen between females and males lead to a product being designed specifically to meet the needs of each gender. According to Solomon et al. (2010), as cited in Adekoya & Laksitamas (2024). Products are often designed to a specific gender, it can be either masculine or feminine characteristics, and this strategy has been applied by the marketers over time. Therefore, it can be seen that gender is one of the major factors and careful consideration needs to be made, so that market segmentation and strategies can be made accordingly.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is usually adopted to analyze purchase behavior, however, it relies only on intention as the main predictor of behavior. According to Rahman & Noor (2016), not all intentions will end up with an actual behavior. Thus, Integrated Behavioral Model (IBM) is adopted in this study to fill the gap, by adding 4 additional variables that can directly influence behavior. IBM further divides the main construct of TPB into 2 more specific sub-components for a stronger predictive power. Attitude is divided into experiential and instrumental attitudes, subjective norm into injunctive and descriptive norms, and personal agency into perceived control and self-efficacy (Siddique et al., 2020). Since the main focus of the research is to differentiate purchase behavior between females and males, PLS-MGA (Partial Least Square - Multi Group Analysis) will be used as the methodology. PLS-MGA is used to examine differences between groups in a structural relationship influencing PBM purchase behavior. It does not only compare mean differences but conducts PLS-SEM for each group and compares its path coefficients, hence showing which group has stronger relationship.

1.2 Objectives

Research objectives are needed to ensure clear direction on the research. It is expected to contribute both theoretical and practical implications. Thus, the objectives of the research is:

- To analyze the factors driving PBM purchase intention and behavior among Gen Z consumers using the framework of the Integrated Behavioral Model (IBM)
- To evaluate the significant difference between male and female consumers regarding their PBM purchase intention and behavior

1.3 Hypotheses

Hypotheses are developed to examine the relationship between different gender and PBM purchase behavior. Thus, there are 10 hypotheses where each define the comparison between male and female Gen Z consumer on the structural relationships included in Integrated Behavioral Model (IBM):

- H1 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of experiential attitude on purchase intention toward PBM
- H2 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of instrumental attitude on purchase intention toward PBM
- H3 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of injunctive norm on purchase intention toward PBM
- H4 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of descriptive norm on purchase intention toward PBM
- H5 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of self-efficacy on purchase intention toward PBM
- H6 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of knowledge and skills on purchase behavior toward PBM

- H7 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of environmental constraint on purchase behavior toward PBM
- H8 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of habit on purchase behavior toward PBM
- H9 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of purchase intention on purchase behavior toward PBM
- H10 = There is a significant difference between male and female consumers regarding the effect of purchase behavior on recommendation intention toward PBM