

# Veganism and Vegan Consumption: A Brief Review on how Vegan Products are Conquering the World

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## ABSTRACT

Veganism has meaningfully increased over the last few years. Veganism is a lifestyle that chooses only non-animal products and it's by products, since animal farming harms the environment. Moral antecedents, rather than personal antecedents impact attitudes concerning veganism and commitment with vegan products, impacting consumer behavior and purchase intention. Individuals, vegan or non-vegan, are ecologically motivated and are driven to raise animal welfare, and protect environment. This review shows recent research on vegan consumption, contributions and future research paths.

**Keywords:** Vegan products; Attitudes; Involvement; Vegan lifestyle; Consumption

## INTRODUCTION

There is a demand, in the past decades, to understand how Veganism is seen, approached, and understood by physicians, companies, and the non-vegan population. A considerable growth in the number of people on vegan diets is increasing, including the Americas, Europe and different regions of Asia. Veganism has been on an increasing trend in recent years. The increase in the consumption of vegan products has been more significant; however the weight of the vegetarian lifestyle has been dominant, often relegating veganism to the background. Veganbits.com mention that there are over 75,300,000 vegans in the world [1] and 2019 was considered "Year of the vegan" [2]. So although vegetarianism has been a dominant lifestyle, veganism has become a trendy lifestyle and marketers are now turning goals and products towards veganism [3]. Based on this, a study was developed to verify the motivations for following a vegan lifestyle, as well as the motivations for consuming vegan products. The impact that this routine has on the buyers and seller will need to be valued and studied. Having this in mind, companies must enhance marketing strategies for their environmentally friendly products.

Veganism is a very firm way of life where all animal products are banded [4,5]. Studies have been concentrating on why someone becomes vegan and not what it means to follow this lifestyle as a consumer [6]. Knowing that being vegan does not only limit

what is eaten, but involves changes in customer behavior, purchase intentions and social identity [7]. Research has displayed what means to be vegan, but not on attitude, consumption and social situations [8,9]. Being vegan requires from individuals an endless monetarization of their doings and care regarding purchase of food, clothing, products or activities. There is a profound need to rethink the way vegans stand in the world, how they interact with it, considering that this lifestyle can be almost philosophical.

Many studies concerning veganism, research on vegan individuals as consumers and also consumer behavior are still infrequent. Studies on veganism typically discuss health and environmental benefits [7,10-12]. Also research mentions that meat reduction leads to sustainably [13]. Consequently, the up and coming interest in investigating veganism related to consumption allows a better understanding of this way of life [5,11]. Although research on veganism has increased in recent years, there are insufficient studies focusing on vegan consumers [14].

## VEGANISM

In recent years concerns regarding environment and animals have been growing. Individuals, nowadays, aim to live without using products made of animals, turning into a lifestyle that is more than just a trend [5]. Veganism is not only a way of life, but

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a 'lifestyle movement' [15]. The Vegan life-style is conscious of not purchasing any animal products, or animal tested products. A substantial growth of people following this life-style is rapidly increasing, all over the world. However, the Vegan Society [16], mentions that many people have difficulties keeping this way of life. Veganism means to follow a strict diet by avoiding animal products, from food, to clothing and also beauty and hygiene products [17]. Also being vegan is much more than a diet, it is a philosophy of life. According to a study conducted by The Vegan Society and the ecologist platform The Ecologist in 2019 [16,18], indicated the popularity of Veganism, even though being vegan is a challenging resolution. Consequently, ensuing a vegan diet appears to safeguard the environment, as non-plant-based diets have been confirmed to be damaging to the environment. Although being vegan is seen as healthy, the distress with the environment and society is vital to consumers who participate in a more ecologically aware behavior concerning the environment. Vegans select products that respect equally the environment and animals. However individuals, whether vegan or not, when they choose to purchase eco-friendly products, due to their concerns with the environment, usually a growing eco-friendly behavior is manifested through the purchase of more ecologically friendly products.

Veganism aims to stop animal exploitation [19] and avoid damaging consequences towards the environment and animals. However, preferences, taste and stereotypes can limit individuals from going fully vegan [16,19,20]. As vegans are pro-animal rights [21,22], vegans usually do not keep pets since they consider that animals are not properties [22], but as having feelings and emotions [23], and must be respected [24]

Following a vegan lifestyle helps not only protect animals but also the environment. Non plant based diets are damaging to the environment [25]. The environmental benefits that veganism carries goes beyond the reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions [26]. Overall vegan diets are beneficial for the environment. Also environmental matters are significant for vegan consumers [27], environmental concerns lead customer behavior towards eco-friendly purchases [28], and veganism is connected to ethical consumption behavior [29].

## VEGAN CONSUMPTION

Vegan individuals elect products that respect environment and animals [30]. Vegans purchase ecological [29,31,32], and as environmental concerns are strengthened [33], the eco friendlier are the purchases [34]. Veganism infers different attitudes concerning environment, nutrition, and health, shifting attitudes from a traditional lifestyle to an ethical and eco-friendly life [22]. Taking up a vegan lifestyle requires not consuming animal products, but choosing ethically and sustainably produced products [35].

Whereas vegans are seen as having a healthy lifestyle, their concerns regarding the environment and society are also main reasons to become vegan [36]. Vegan consumers are involved in a conservational behavior due to their environmental concerns [37]. Vegan individuals can show ethical behavior over consumption [38], therefore this rise of vegan consumption

influences and will change the food sector [29]. The search of vegan products is changing consumer needs, demands and businesses, so it is essential for marketers to adapt their perspectives to this rising of vegan consumption [39]. The vegan market is growing yearly and turning into a lucrative business [29]. As vegan consumption is linked to animal well-being, ecological concerns, personal preferences and health matters [32], the vegan market is rising and becoming lucrative. Vegan consumption is related not only to food articles, but cloths and entertainment also [40]. Ethically stirred vegans live their life following these guidelines, spreading it to all sectors of their life [40].

Around 2050, there will be over 120 billion animals raised for food [41], and according to Stănescu, et al. [42] there will be no space to raise these animals for consumption.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

The vegan movement will gain from studies that try to understand intentions of this way of life, so, this research seeks to look into the vegan individual as a consumer, taking into account their beliefs and intentions. Vegan lifestyle entails not using animal products or animal-tested products. Individuals who choose this lifestyle are growing all over the world. Nevertheless, literature shows that not enough research has been written on how veganism impacts attitudes towards the consumption of vegan products. Aiming to add to the awareness and dissemination of vegan products, our studies provide 8 key contributions [1]: Apart from academic contributions, our investigations show that vegan products are not only used by vegans [2]; Though vegan values are related to restricting ingestion of animal products, so that animal rights are safeguarded as well as the environment, our research presents also non-vegans as using vegan products [3]; We present ideological issues as major influence in vegans to purchase vegan products [4]; These investigations help marketers and marketing directors to understand how to reach consumers of vegan products and adapt businesses for consumers who choose these products [5]; Besides, these studies provide a wide ranging view on attitudes and involvement, by investigating antecedents and consequents and forming a chain of effects between determinants and outcomes of vegan attitudes [6]; Our studies also present an assessment between personal and moral variables, showing that moral variables are more significant than personal antecedents [7]; Our research presented effects of national culture by comparing Brazilian and Portuguese vegans, and Pfeiler, et al. [8] also the importance of vegan products for individuals, whether they follow the vegan lifestyle or not.

## DISCUSSION

Development of vegan products is rising yearly and there are still few products that can fulfill the lifestyle of new vegans, vegans and non-vegans, our studies can motivate the growth of economically viable and ecologically efficient products and services [43]. Veganism has knowingly increased, vegan goods, vegan recipe books and online information, consequently it is significant to understand veganism and what being vegan entails. In this way, studies involving the consumption of vegan

products are urgently needed, since with the growth in the consumption of these products, the constant dissemination of this way of life, companies can improve, adapt and update their services and products. The talent to inspire consumption of products and services that are organic, environmental and ecologically friendly is a competitive improvement, leading company to success in this particular business field.

## CONCLUSION

### Future research directions

Individuals become vegans mostly because they are concerned about animal welfare, the environment, and their health, even though in the past, veganism could help surpass food deprivation caused by World War II. The United Nations claimed this type of regime would benefit the environment. As mentioned previously, there are few studies aiming consumer behavior regarding vegan products and the marketing field in veganism. The marketing area would gain from this understanding and be able to analyze and aim products and services to these increased consumers, stimulating the development of new products and realize the existence of the ones that the market already has. Vegans are worried about moral aspects, linking their truth to attitudes, connecting principles and the use of vegan products. Research concentrating only on veganism, defining this lifestyle, studying attitudes and involvement with vegan products is rare. As a result of our studies, publications linked to veganism and the vegan individual as a consumer should be worked on. Also more studies should mention problems associated to being a vegan in social situations and when purchasing products acceptable for vegan lifestyle. Moreover, as for recommendations for future research, effects of gender, variables like ethical consumption, personality traits, sensitivity, and religion, should be introduced since these could be relevant drivers of vegan attitudes.

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