


# Chapter 20

## Impact of Social Media Advertising and Influencer Marketing on Plant– Based Dairy Alternative Purchase Intention: A Case of Highly Vegetarian Indian States

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to understand the relationship between social media advertising, influencer marketing, and key motivational factors such as health motivation, environmental consciousness, and animal welfare in the adoption of plant-based dairy alternatives by consumers from the four highest Indian vegetarian states i.e. Haryana,*

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*Rajasthan, Gujrat and Punjab. The study utilises SmartPLS-SEM 4.0 to analyse the data where, reliability and validity of constructs were measured through factor loading, cronbach alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) assessments. Social media advertising emerges as a potent influencer, positively impacting health motivation, environmental consciousness, and purchase intention. Conversely, influencer marketing exhibits a comprehensive influence, affecting health motivation, environmental consciousness, animal welfare, and purchase intention. Mediation analysis divulges the nuanced roles of health motivation, environmental consciousness, and animal welfare in shaping the relationships.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

A rapid increase is being observed in the number of ethical consumers who base their dietary choices on environmental concerns, such as greenhouse gas emissions and the exploitation and cruelty of animals, as well as social inequality issues regarding access to environmental resources by future and current generations (Vermeir et al., 2020). Consumers are becoming more familiar with natural ingredients, and the increased importance of naturalness for consumers has had significant implications for the food sector (Román et al., 2017; Saraiva et al., 2020). Plant-based food consumption is regularly advocated to help lessen the negative effects of modern food supply while also improving human and global health (Alcorta et al., 2021; McClements & Grossmann, 2021). Environmental and ethical issues can explain the growing public interest in restricting the consumption of animal-based foods (Alcorta et al., 2021; Pointke et al., 2022; Vu et al., 2022). Hence, the food industry is developing products such as plant-based dairy alternatives (PBDAs) for milk, cheese, yoghurt, meat, and fish in response to rising customer demand for plant-based goods (Moss et al., 2023). Over the last decade, reintroducing underutilised (minor, neglected, or orphan) crops has been discovered to be a good technique for improving global food security (Massawe et al., 2016). Food trends are also a market phenomena, with diets centred on so-called superfoods including chia seeds, spirulina, goji berries, walnuts, linseed, and kale (Nestorowicz et al., 2022).

Plant-based dairy alternatives (PBDAs) are classified into five groups: “cereal-based (oat and rice), legume-based (soy and pea), vegetable-based (potatoes), seed-based (flax and hemp), and nut-based (almond, cashew, and coconut)” (Bridges, 2018). They are liquids made from the decomposition (size reduction) of these plant materials extracted in water. These fluids are then further homogenised to produce a particle size distribution in the 5–20 m range that has the consistency and appearance of cow’s milk (Sethi et al., 2016). They include alternatives to milk, yoghurt, cheese, ice cream, butter, and cream, which are made out of water extracts

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