GENERATION Z TOURIST AND PURCHASE INTENTION FOR LOCAL FOOD: A VALUE-ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOUR APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

While several studies had already examined the association among local food, consumer behaviour and buying intentions, few have investigated whether Gen-Z foreign tourists intend to Purchase local food. This research aims to understand better what drives Gen-Z tourists to purchase local food. This study integrates two major consumer behaviour theories, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), using Value-Attitude-Behaviour (VAB) hierarchy to provide a more detailed understanding of tourist food choices. The study also identified a significant mediator, tourist attitude towards local food, on the relationship between consumption values and tourists' purchase intentions. The survey instrument was distributed to budding international tourists who visited the state of Uttarakhand for studies and spiritual learning. The paper also discusses significant managerial and theoretical implications.

Keywords: Generation z, Local food, Theory of consumption values, Theory of planned behaviour, Value-Attitude-Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable eating habits are becoming increasingly popular among modern consumers. They are switching to a healthier diet, eating less or no junk food, buying items with less packaging, and shopping locally and organically. The term "local products" refers to products produced close to the source and area of consumption (20-100 miles) (Jensen *et al.*, 2019). In their research, Yan et al (2020) and M. F. Chen (2020) revealed that the demand for local food safeguards regions' economic and social stability by bringing income to their rural populations. According to Akgiş İlhan, Özoğul Balyalı and Günay Aktaş (2022), in the future, Gen-Z will have an essential role in shaping future market segmentation since they will define typical consumption behaviour. According to the findings of Matharu et al. (2022) , demand has been on the rise for locally farmed novel food in India, especially among younger clientele. Similarly, Isa et al. (2020) found that compared to other generations, Gen-Z are the most likely to make a purchase for online products, organic and new foods.

Previous studies applied TPB to analyse consumers' intentions towards local food (Wenzig and Gruchmann, 2018) (Chamoli, Verma, Rana et al., 2021). Researchers Zhang et al (2018); A. Kumar & Smith (2018) adopted TPB as the underpinning theory because of its edge in understanding behavioural patterns. Although, TPB is a behavioural theory that relies mostly on causal processes and ignores other essential elements (Shin *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, dissimilarities exist between consumer CV and behavioural intentions. However, the factors that cause this disparity have yet to be thoroughly investigated; the research done by Chu (2018) and F. C. Hsu et al (2018) pave the way for a more in-depth examination.

Homer and Kahle (1988) established causative association in the Value–Attitude–Behaviour (VAB) and explained that internal and external values influence individual behaviour where attitude mediates this relationship. The VAB hierarchy has often been employed to measure consumer attitudes and intentions toward behaviour or actual behaviours (Činjarević, Kapo and Turulja, 2023) (Kwon and Namkung, 2022) (Ma and Chang, 2022) (Tajeddini *et al.*, 2021) (Kim, Hall and Bonn, 2021). The VAB hierarchy is employed in this study to amalgamate the TCV and TPB frameworks in order to assess the relationship between their components, and intent to purchase. This study helps fill this gap by looking at the role of a variable and a sample group that has not been looked at much when studying how tourists act towards novel products like local food

Furthermore, Nardi et al. (2019) indicate that attitude (ATT), subjective norms (SN), and perceived behaviour control (PBC) are associated with consumers' intentions to purchase local food. This study states that the components of TCV can have implied effect on purchase intention through ATT. While the TPB model also identifies ATT as an essential factor in shaping future purchases, Chu (2018) indicates that the possible mediation effect of ATT between components of consumption values and local food buying intention has been underexplored. This research is however first to examine the potential indirect impact of attitude on purchasing decisions among gen z tourists (Bianchi and Mortimer, 2015).

The research site, Uttarakhand, a Himalayan state and home to numerous pilgrimages, is commonly referred as Devbhoomi (land of the Gods). Consequently, spiritual, yoga, and wellness tourism is a significant source of revenue for the province. Further, local food like finger millet has therapeutic properties because it grows at high altitudes with an extraordinary topography that attracts tourists for pilgrimage, spirituality, and cultural experiences. Uttarakhand Vision 2030, the government identifies hill agriculture and tourism as sustainable growth drivers and insists on promoting local food with tourism and other sectors (GoUK, 2018). Further, the province is also known for quality schools, which date back to the colonial era (Kalra, 2021), attracting many young tourists.

The findings of this study contribute to the tourism literature by focusing on an unexplored facet of a critical variable that helps explain the propensity of the next generation to purchase local food. Meanwhile, this research also provides evidence for policymakers on how they promote local food for sustainable development. This study practically adds in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting locally grown food and establishing a stronger theoretical foundation to create behavioural interventions that will trigger pro-environmental behaviours among future tourists in order to achieve SDG-2-3-12 and 13 which focuses on hunger, optimal health and wellbeing, Sustainable Production/Consumption practices and Climate Change Observations

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Consumption Values

The TCV provides an important framework for analysing consumer behaviour, especially in the context of goods and services. In this theory, functional, social, emotional, conditional, and epistemic values determine consumer choices (Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991), which evaluates in this study. TCV provides a robust theoretical foundation to examine consumption values (Badu-Baiden *et al.*, 2022), (Truong, Lang and Conroy, 2021) and provides a diverse perspective encompassing both consumption's cognitive and affective dimensions which comprehend the intricacy of tourist services (Jamrozy and Lawonk, 2017). TCV facilitates assessing consumer values, which is the need of the hour in the hospitality

and tourism industries, as building and sustaining values is vital due to the rapid rise in global competition and the escalating expectations of tourists (Choe and Kim, 2018).

Functional Value (FV)

FV refers to the value that consumers place on a product or service as a result of its qualities and operational efficiency. Studies by Choe and Kim (2019) investigated the variable in relevance to tourist food choice intentions, while numerous studies (Kushwah, Dhir and Sagar, 2019) (Kim, Tang and Bosselman, 2018) found an optimal correlation between FV and BI.

In the similar research pattern Nekmahmud, Ramkissoon and Fekete-Farkas (2022) confirmed knowledge and price as critical FV determinants when it comes to green product purchases. Similarly, food-related research has used FV as a quality, price, and health metric, concentrating primarily on organic foods (Hong *et al.*, 2021); (Lin *et al.*, 2020). As per, (van Bussel *et al.*, 2022), benefits of using locally produced foods in terms of flavour, culture, health, and morality influence consumer purchasing decisions more than organic foods. Furthermore, Uttarakhand has mostly high-hill vegetation, making local products organic by default (Maikhuri *et al.*, 2015). As a result, this study assesses the quality, flavour, nutrition, knowledge, and affordability of local foods regarding their functional value.
Consequently, propose the underlying hypothesis:

> H_1: *Functional Value positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Social Value (SV)

SV contributes significantly to tourism.(Vecchio *et al.*, 2018) (Altinay, Sigala and Waligo, 2016). A buyer's SV reflects the image they wish to project in their social grouping by choosing goods and services. Researchers (Verain *et al.*, 2022) (Kim, 2016) revealed that social influences positively affect tourists' food choice intentions. Researchers (Hogreve *et al.*, 2021) indicate that SV factors affect parental food choices for their children. Further, the status and recognition people get through their tourism through local food intake (Zou, Meng and Li, 2021) and sharing their trip experiences (Su, Tang and Nawijn, 2021). Tourists also perceive prestige in dining at featured restaurants as a source of SV (Hernandez-Rojas, Folgado-Fernandez and Palos-Sanchez, 2021). Therefore, in the context of tourist and local food consumption, SV indicates the prestige, reputation, and self-image lift buyers' avail while purchasing local food. Moreover, this research foresees that using local products will provide consumers with a sense of pride, which will encourage them to make more purchases. Hence, we postulate the following hypothesis:

> H_2: *Social Value positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Emotional Value (EMV)

EMV is usefulness generated from emotive sentiments or sensations created by goods or service (Jabreel, Moreno and Huertas, 2017). It tries to fulfil a person's psychological or emotional needs (Su, Yang and Huang, 2022). EMV is the most significant indicator of behavioural intention since individuals may not intentionally strive emotional gains from consumption experiences, but are likely to experience positive or negative emotions unintentionally, which play a significant part in framing decision thereafter (YQ Low *et al.*, 2022). In the similar context Rasoolimanesh et al. (2020), categorised hedonic orientation

and novelty as two important segments of EMV. Hence, local food has a novelty feature for travellers, so local food and EMV are closely correlated.

Environmentally conscious tourists may feel optimistic about choosing local food over regular commercial food (Park et al., 2022). In a similar context, Asshidin, Abidin and Borhan (2016) argued that consumers are more probable to buy local foods if they feel emotionally connected to them, in addition Gu, Li and Kim (2021) found that emotional and nostalgia-seeking inclinations boost consumption value, which in turn increases post-purchase behavioural intention. Researchers, Joshi, Uniyal and Sangroya (2021) indicate that EMV is a decisive predictor of consumers' opinions about green products, such as local and organic products, which further impacts their subsequent green purchasing aspirations. However, Ismael and Ploeger (2020) believe that emotions are a primary driver of consumer behaviour, thus determining an individual's intention to purchase sustainable goods such as local products. Consequently, the following hypothesis is put forward.

> **H₃:**   *Emotional Value positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Conditional Value (CV)

CV corresponds to product selection based on a particular set of conditions confronting the decision maker (Sheth, Newman and Gross, 1991). CV is also looked as an amalgamation of situational variables (time, place, and conditions) which influences individual behavioural traits in a particular context (Truong, Lang and Conroy, 2021). Apart from these, in today's world, having children, media exposure, reducing carbon footprints, and caring for one's health are a few of the most prevalent conditions (Cao et al., 2022) (Lin et al., 2020). Change in any of these conditioned factors may have an effect on the decision-making behaviour of the consumer. (Hsu, Agyeiwaah and Scott, 2022) further stresses upon the importance of tourists related CV in hospitality and tourism. Thus, a consumer's tourism-related CV is formed from a specific occurrence, situation, convenience, or availability. Therefore, on the basis of the aforementioned research, it can be concluded that:

> **H₄:**   *Conditional Value positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Epistemic Value (EPV)

EPV of a commodity or service is its ability to stimulate interest and offer novelty (Kaur *et al.*, 2021). Several Studies have established a substantial association between EPV and food choice behaviour in domains like food and health (Talwar et al., 2020) (Thomé et al., 2019). Studies by Saragih, Surya and B (2022) concluded that EPV significantly influenced tourist satisfaction and propensity to return. In the present investigation, EPV is measured by compiling information about various products, promotions, and discounts on local food. Further, since the EPV of local food information is strongly related to consumer behaviour in tourism and hospitality, its impact on purchase intentions is likely positive. Hence, this leads to the following hypothesis:

> **H₅:**   *Epistemic Value positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Theory of Planned Behaviour

Numerous research work on tourism and food have made extensive use of the TPB (Khajehshahkoohi, Davoodi and Shaaban, 2022) (Wang and Scrimgeour, 2021), (Ulker-Demirel and Ciftci, 2020). As per TPB, the primary predictor of a specific behaviour is behavioural intention (a sincere intention to react), which is influenced by attitudes toward

the behaviour (performance assessments that can be positive or negative), subjective norms (acceptance or disapproval of behaviour by reference group), and PBC (an assessment of manageability and efficiency). The same variables are explored in this study (de Bruijn, Rhodes and van Osch, 2012) (Ajzen, 1991).

Attitude (ATT)

Attitude determines a person's overt behaviour or action. Attitude can only be extrapolated from an inclination to respond positively or negatively to particular stimuli (Brouwer *et al.*, 2022). It is a persistent behavioural or physiological tendency resulting from experiences (Levitt *et al.*, 2017). Further, purchase intent is often affected by a lack of awareness or a negative attitude toward a commodity (Ferrari *et al.*, 2021). In addition to one's dietary preferences, Roy and Ballantine (2020) research indicated that an Individuals attitude is a significant factor in determining one's behaviour. The results also indicate that most attitude characteristics have an impact on food purchasing decisions (Memon *et al.*, 2020) (Ueasangkomsate and Santiteerakul, 2016). Thus, keeping the rationale mentioned above the following hypothesis is proposed

H₆: *Attitude positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Subjective Norm (SN)

SN denotes the conscious societal pressure to conduct or refrain from performing a particular conduct (Ajzen, 1991). SN significantly influences tourists' food purchasing intentions (PI) (Ahmad *et al.*, 2020) and substantially impacts consumer decision-making (Utami, 2017). Studies concentrating on similar problems (Meng *et al.*, 2022) (Shen and Shen, 2021) identified a significant correlation between SN and consumer behavioural intention. Furthermore, It is evident from various studies that SN directly or indirectly influences consumers' food purchase decisions (Ahmad *et al.*, 2020) (Ting *et al.*, 2016) (Shin and Hancer, 2016) The following hypothesis is thus subsequently proposed:

H7:   *Subjective Norm positively influences Uttarakhand's local food purchase intention.*

Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC)

PBC is the impression of a person's inclination to participate in a specific activity.(Ajzen, 1991). It has also been shown that PBC impacts both intentions and behaviour related to buying (Balıkçıoğlu Dedeoğlu *et al.*, 2022). As per Singh et al.(2021), there is also statistical evidence that PBC is a strong indicator of buying intentions. In contrast, PBC has been demonstrated in a few studies to impact intentions to purchase significantly and actual purchasing behaviour (Giampietri et al., 2018). Moreover, PBC is regarded as one of the most excellent drivers of purchasing intent and a significant influencer in the purchase intention framework, mainly concerning local and ethnic foods (Conoly, von Massow and Lee, 2021). Consequently, the following theory is advanced:

H₈: *Perceived behaviour control positively influences Uttarakhand's local food Purchase intention.*

Attitude: The Mediator

According to Homer and Kahle (1988), In the VAB hierarchy, consumers realise values that transform into their attitude, which in turn motivates their intentions to conduct or

actual behaviours. The findings of the recent studies on sustainability goals   indicate that values of sustainable development shape Gen-Z attitudes towards sustainable consumption practices (Kwon and Namkung, 2022) (Činjarević, Kapo and Turulja, 2023). Moreover Ma and Chang (2022) finds attitude as a vital variable influencing young consumers PI. Researchers Verma and Sinha (2017) indicate that attitude is the most influential variable in assessing consumer buying psychology. Furthermore, this study aims to investigates the role of attitude as a mediator on the relationship between values and PI.

FV as affordability and durability are frequently crucial when customers make buying decisions (Popescu and Ciurlău, 2019). As per Kamalavani, Singh and Rajkumar (2021), rounded pricing has a detrimental effect on people's attitude toward the price unless it is tied to the quality of the goods. While Putra, Hartoyo and Simanjuntak (2017) consumer-perceived product quality is the only dominant factor which influences retail customers' attitudes Thus, from the above literature, one can conclude the following hypothesis:

H9:   Attitude mediates the relationship between functional Value and Uttarakhand local food buying intention.

SV enables people to judge whether a specific action or thing is right or wrong, pleasant or unpleasant. In addition, numerous studies confirm the correlation between social influence and attitude on individuals' purchase intentions (Wasaya, Prentice and Hsiao, 2022) (Tjokrosaputro and Cokki, 2020). However, contemporary literature also argues that people with a positive attitude are less influenced than people with high social values (Sun, Li and Wang, 2022) (Singh *et al.*, 2021). Thus, in lieu with the above discussion the following hypothesis is posited:

H10: Attitude mediates the relationship between social Value and Uttarakhand's local food Purchase intention.

EMV often governs attitudes when considering individual purchasing behaviour (Lavuri, 2022). The psychological mechanism of positive and negative emotions differs: positive emotions influence attitude and behaviour, while negative emotions affect both. Emotions are among the fundamental forces influencing consumer behaviour after attitude (Thomé, Pinho and Hoppe, 2019). On the other hand, attitude is the most important predictor of buying intention (Kumar and Smith, 2017). Strong emotions and varying attitudes deeply influence food choice decisions (Truong, Lang and Conroy, 2021), and a positive attitude is more likely to be emotionally motivated when purchasing novel foods (Barrena, García and Sánchez, 2017). To the best of the author's knowledge, only a few studies (Huang and Liu, 2022) (Nagaraj, 2021) have examined the impact of attitude on emotions and purchasing intentions up to this point. Thus, proposing the following hypothesis:

H11: Attitude mediates the relationship between Emotional Value and Uttarakhand's local food Purchase intention.

Many features or characteristics qualify as CV, notably discounted selling prices, merchandise accessibility, and government regulation (Tanrikulu, 2021). Moreover, these factors directly or indirectly affect consumer attitudes for example, discounted price (Teng, 2009), product accessibility commodity (Shi *et al.*, 2021) (Del Missier, Ranyard and Bonini, 2016), and strategic changes (Naatu *et al.*, 2022) (Sahoo *et al.*, 2022). In addition, Rahnama and Rajabpour (2017) found conditional elements such as location, time, and situation to influence consumer choices and purchases. Thus, it is apparent that CV contributes to the impression of the product's overall attributes and can influence consumer purchasing attitudes. Hence, based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is put forth:

H12: Attitude mediates the relationship between Conditional Value and Uttarakhand local food Purchase intention.

Experiencing food from a distinct culture brings EPV, most western tourists view regional food intake as a novel experience and a way of improving their cultural knowledge and local awareness (Shin, Kim and Severt, 2021). Accordingly, EPV generates purchase intention when it comes to local food. However, the literature (Landa-Blanco and Cortés-Ramos, 2021) indicates that attitude is one of the most potent predictors of PI and found that EV impact consumer attitudes. Thus, in light of relevant literature, this study advances with an investigation, evaluating the mediating impact of attitude on EPV and local food PI. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H13: Attitude mediates the relationship between epistemic Value and Uttarakhand local food Purchase intention.

Considering the aforementioned, literature review, this study extracts five consumption variables: FV, SV, EMV, CV, and EPV from the baseline model of TCV and three variables: ATT, SN, and PBC from TPB. Further, the study has one dependent variable: local food purchase intention (PI). A proposed model includes all variables in the VAB hierarchy (Figure1).
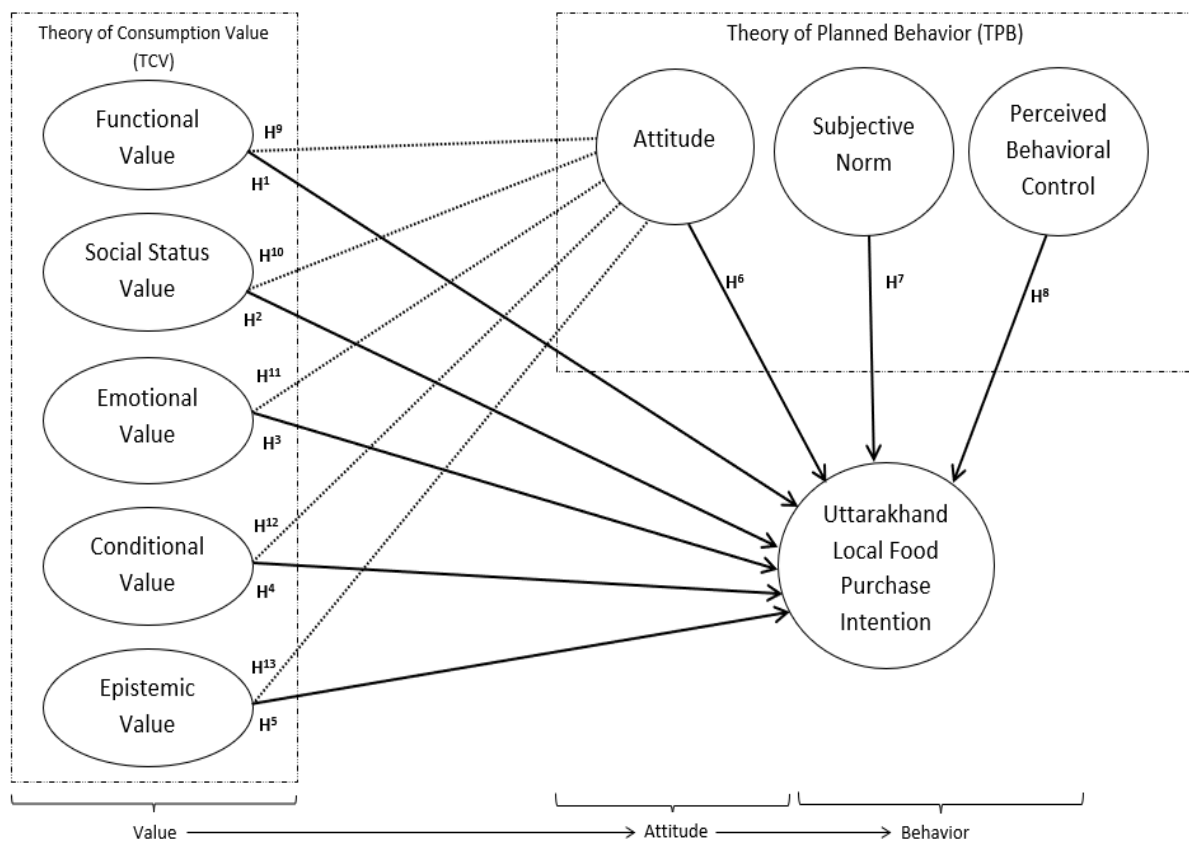

FIGURE 1
PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL

Development of Survey Instrument

The measurement items for all consumption values were derived from prior studies, drawing on the works of Liu et al. (2021) and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2020). The variables related to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) were adjusted according to the study's specific needs, following the framework outlined by Wang and Scrimgeour, 2021). The scale assessing purchase intention (PI) was adapted from Iwaya et al. (2020). All measurement items were evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, spanning from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." A total of thirteen hypotheses will be examined utilizing a self-administered

questionnaire as the primary research tool. The questionnaire underwent finalization after conducting a pilot survey involving 150 participants.

Sampling & Data Collection

The study employed a dual sampling approach, commencing with purposive sampling and transitioning to snowball sampling to augment the sample size. Conducted between July and December 2023, the survey encompassed major tourist destinations in the province. The primary focus of this research was on Gen-Z foreign tourists in Uttarakhand, catering to diverse tourism needs. Additionally, a supplementary sample of Food Business Operators, including owners, chefs, and restaurant managers specializing in local cuisine, was incorporated, acknowledging their significant influence on customer preferences.
A total of 632 questionnaires were initially distributed among food operators and handlers. These respondents facilitated the expansion of the sample size through snowball sampling. Ultimately, 550 valid responses were obtained, meeting the fundamental criterion of at least ten cases per item, an essential prerequisite for conducting structural equation modeling in this study (Wolf *et al.*, 2013).

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Sample Representation

Table 1 presents an overview of participant demographics. Among respondents, 63.8% identified as male while 35.09% identified as female. The data further delineates the nationality distribution, with Russian tourists comprising 35.86% of participants, closely followed by Israeli tourists at 28.50%. Additionally, 61.64% of tourists reported a monthly expenditure ranging between $350 to $400.

Table 1 SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION			
Items	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	351	63.8
	Female	199	36.2
Education	Fresh man	91	16.54
	Sophomore	125	22.72
	Junior	141	25.63
	Senior	193	35.09
Nationality	Israel	157	28.50
	Australasians	112	20.36
	Russians	125	35.86
	Southeast Asians	105	22.72
	Canada	51	9.27
Monthly expenses ($)	Below 350	79	14.36
	350– 400	339	61.64
	Above 450	132	24.00
Age	Below 18	81	14.73
	18 -20	167	30.36
	21-23	302	54.90

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

In the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), a total of nine components were extracted using varimax, rotated component matrix, and principal component analysis techniques.

Table 2 provides detailed insights, demonstrating that all the assumptions essential for conducting EFA were satisfied.

Table 2 **ASSUMPTIONS FOR EFA**			
Assumptions of EFA	**Conditions**	**Reference:** (Chamoli et al, 2023)	**Assumptions**
The sample size is 550	n>200	(Fan, Thompson and Wang, 1999)	Met
Barlett's test of sphericity is significant	p < 0.001	(Williams, Onsman and Brown, 2010)	Met
KMO value is 0.911 measure of sampling adequacy	> 0.70	(Nkansah, 2011)	Met
Satisfactory communalities values	> 0.50	Field (2013)	Met
The total variance explained is 81.128 %	> 50%	(Howe, 1999)	Met
The variance for the first factor is 13.498%	< 50%	(Howe, 1999)	Met

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

CFA is essential to validate the study model's convergent and discriminant validity before commencing path analysis. Table 3 shows that each variable's composite reliability (CR) is above the threshold of 0.7, and the AVE values are greater than the threshold of 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2010), which indicates that the model has convergent validity. Further, the Heterotrait–Monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT) was performed for discriminate validity assessment, and Table 4 shows that discriminant values are all less than the HTMT baseline value of 0.85 (Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015), hence the measurement model has discriminant validity. The model fit indices demonstrated that the measurement model adequately fit the data: χ^2 =1254.316, DF=459, p < 0.001, CMIN/DF=2.732, RMR=0.029, CFI=0.949, IFI=0.942, TLI=0.942, PGFI=0.717, PNFI=0.802, PCFI=0.825, RMSEA=0.056.

Table 3 **CONVERGENT VALIDITY**				
Variables (Cronbach's alpha)	**Items**	**Item Loadings**	**CR**	**AVE**
Social Status Value (α=0.905)	Purchasing and consuming local food of Uttarakhand enables me to impress others	0.865	0.904	0.702
	Purchasing and consuming local food of Uttarakhand makes me feel more socially acceptable.	0.828		
	Purchasing and consuming local food of Uttarakhand was an intelligent choice	0.84		
	Purchasing and consuming the local food of Uttarakhand makes me feel proud	0.816		
Functional Value (α=0.910)	Local food of Uttarakhand was accessible	0.792	0.907	0.709
	The overall Local food of Uttarakhand experience is Value for money	0.86		
	The prices of local food in Uttarakhand are affordable	0.87		
	The local food of Uttarakhand is nutritive and good for health	0.842		
Conditional Value (α=0.889)	If local food is available in subsidized rates, I would prefer local food over conventional products	0.701	0.875	0.638
	If local food is organically available, I would prefer local food over conventional products	0.855		

	If local food is available with discounted rates as part of promotion, I would prefer local food over conventional products	0.862		
Epistemic Value (α=0.884)	I'm interested in learning more about the local food of Uttarakhand.	0.866	0.863	0.680
	In Uttarakhand, eating local food is an excellent way to grasp new knowledge.	0.884		
	My knowledge of the Local food of Uttarakhand culture has increased.	0.712		
Emotional Value (α=0.979)	There is a feeling of individuality about consuming the local food of Uttarakhand	0.918	0.966	0.905
	Consuming local food of Uttarakhand makes me satisfied and enjoyable	0.984		
	Consuming the local food of Uttarakhand was something new and different	0.95		
Subjective Norm (α=0.925)	I would try Uttarakhand local food because I have heard a lot about Uttarakhand local food from family members and friends	0.917	0.911	0.775
	Local food of Uttarakhand is highly recommended by people whose opinions I value the most	0.916		
	I will definitely try Uttarakhand Local food because it is popular among my friends and family	0.803		
Perceived Behavioural Control (α=0.958)	The decision to purchase local food of Uttarakhand rests solely on me.	0.917	0.952	0.869
	I believe procuring Uttarakhand local food will be easy	0.961		
	I believe that no external sources prevent me from trying Uttarakhand local food but my own decision.	0.917		
Attitude (α=0.960)	After trying Uttarakhand's local food, I found it good	0.893	0.948	0.859
	After trying Uttarakhand local food, I found it very healthy and safe	0.968		
	After trying Uttarakhand local food, I felt very positive	0.917		
Purchase Intention (α=0.921)	I am intended to buy local food from Uttarakhand during this visit.	0.847	0.920	0.659
	I am planning to buy local food from Uttarakhand during this visit.	0.807		
	I will include the local food of Uttarakhand in my daily consumption during this visit.	0.791		
	I want to include the local food of Uttarakhand in my diet during this visit.	0.807		
	I hope to incorporate the local food of Uttarakhand into my menu during this visit.	0.816		

Table 4 DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY (HTMT < 0.85)									
Items	SV	FV	CV	EPV	EMV	SN	PBC	ATT	PI
SV	**1.000**								
FV	0.470	**1.000**							
CV	0.551	0.632	**1.000**						
EPV	0.400	0.463	0.468	**1.000**					
EMV	0.334	0.423	0.409	0.319	**1.000**				
SN	0.241	0.339	0.331	0.315	0.443	**1.000**			
PBC	0.323	0.403	0.414	0.315	0.546	0.477	**1.000**		
ATT	0.380	0.361	0.391	0.355	0.374	0.335	0.541	**1.000**	

PI	0.458	0.566	0.563	0.451	0.473	0.416	0.476	0.454	**1.000**

Structural Model Estimation

This study evaluated the hypotheses using structural equation modelling (SEM). For the mediation test, the bootstrapping method was conducted through AMOS. Consequently, the results of mediational links will be assessed using direct and indirect values from two-tailed significance with bootstrap confidence.; The test was statistically significant at p 0.05 level. The results of the model fit are $\chi 2$ =1327.484, DF=461, p < 0.001, CMIN/DF=2.880, CFI=0.945, IFI=0.945, TLI=0.937, PGFI=0.715, PNFI=0.802, PCFI=0.825, RMSEA=0.059. Figure 2 depicts the regression weight of the structural model.
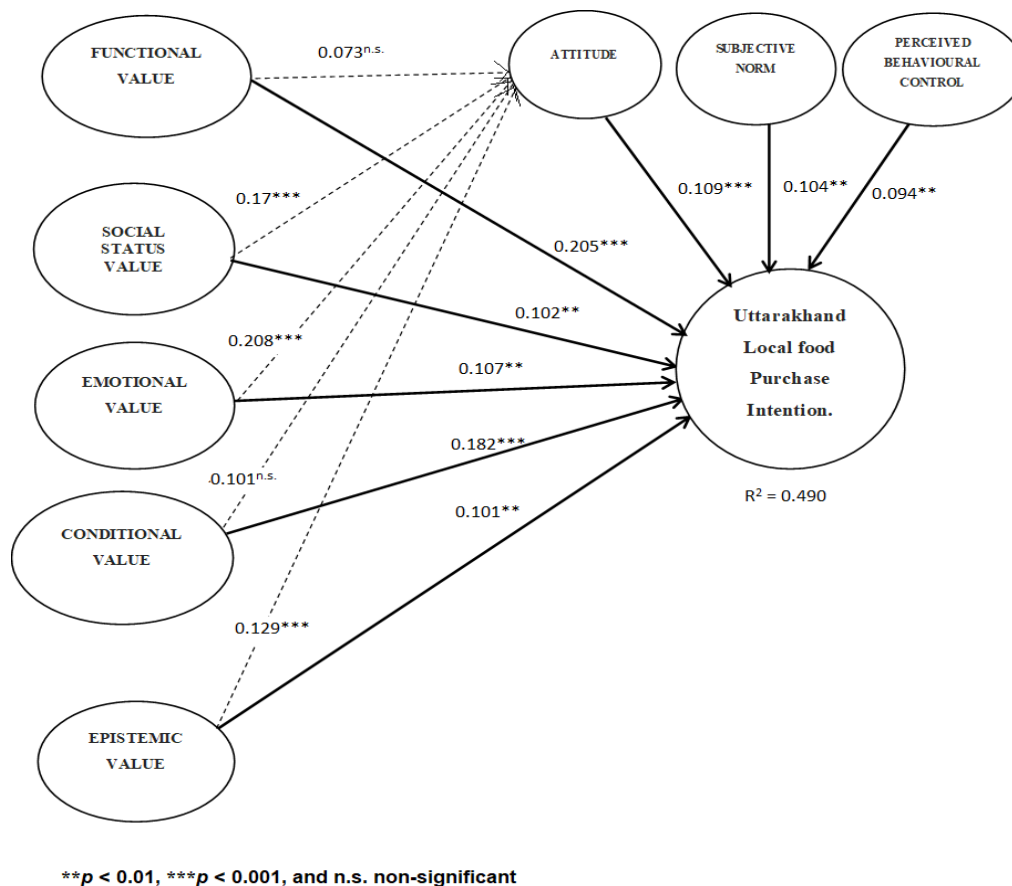

FIGURE 2
STRUCTURAL MODEL RESULTS

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes on the determinants of purchase behaviour and the consumption value components to examine Gen-Z foreign tourists' purchase behaviour toward local food. Using the VAB hierarchy, the study integrated five determinants of TCV and the three behavioural components of TPB. The model was further developed and empirically tested. Table 5 displays the structural model's results.

Table 5 RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL						
Hypotheses	Hypothesised Paths	β	SE.	CR.	Sig.	Decision
H1	FV ⟶ PI	0.205	0.049	4.036	***	Accepted
H2	SV ⟶ PI	0.102	0.039	2.225	**	Accepted
H3	EMV ⟶ PI	0.107	0.028	2.408	**	Accepted
H4	CV ⟶ PI	0.182	0.053	3.426	***	Accepted
H5	EPV ⟶ PI	0.101	0.047	2.337	**	Accepted
H6	ATT ⟶ PI	0.109	0.039	2.728	***	Accepted
H7	SN ⟶ PI	0.104	0.041	2.464	**	Accepted
H8	PBC ⟶ PI	0.094	0.034	2.089	**	Accepted

The results show that H1 (β=0.205, $p < 0.01$) was accepted and consistent with the literature of (Hong *et al.*, 2021) (Lin *et al.*, 2020) (Kushwah, Dhir and Sagar, 2019). Therefore, the study concluded that tourists have some positive perceptions of local food, indicating that the greater the FV of shopping, the more excellent consumers' propensity to buy.

Furthermore, H2 (β=0.102, $p < 0.05$) was accepted, this corresponds with the outcomes of (Verain *et al.*, 2022) and (Zou, Meng and Li, 2021). The results also indicate that SV significantly impacts local agro-food consumption (Chakraborty, Siddiqui and Siddiqui, 2022). Accordingly, this study indicates that SV has a negligible influence on tourists purchasing local food.

Similarly, H3 (β=0.107, $p < 0.05$) and H5 (β=0.101, $p < 0.05$) were accepted and indicated that EMV and EPV had minimal impact on food purchase intention, which is consistent with literature (Saragih, Surya and B., 2022) (Su, Yang and Huang, 2022) (YQ Low *et al.*, 2022) (Gu, Li and Kim, 2021) (Joshi, Uniyal and Sangroya, 2021) (Ismael and Ploeger, 2020). In other words, Gen-Z foreign tourists do not emotionally invest in the local food, and this is due to the pre-trip research done today by tourists, which helps them better understand what is going on practically. Furthermore, EPV also mildly impacted local food purchase intentions since establishing a belief system is a continuous process in every destination. While education, spirituality, and pilgrimage are the primary pullers in Uttarakhand, food does not create a clear EPV and thus lacks marketing information among tourists (Chamoli, Verma, Pandey, *et al.*, 2021).

H4 (β=0.182, $p < 0.01$) was accepted and consistent with ((Cao *et al.*, 2022) (Hsu, Agyeiwaah and Scott, 2022) (Lin *et al.*, 2020) as CV significantly impacts PI. The results indicate that product availability concerns impact local food buying (Chamoli, Verma, Pandey, *et al.*, 2021). Thus, it can be concluded that even though Uttarakhand's local food is therapeutic and organic and thus ideally suited to young tourists' spiritual and pilgrimage motivations, alternative conditions still play a vital role in buying decisions. (Maji and Meena, 2017).

H6 (β=0.109, $p < 0.01$) was accepted and indicated that ATT significantly influenced tourist purchases of local food (Roy and Ballantine, 2020) (Kumar and Smith, 2017). The result indicates that most attitude attributes significantly impact buying intention (Ueasangkomsate and Santiteerakul, 2016). Therefore, attitude is also one of the critical determinants influencing the consumer's buying intention regarding local food (Memon *et al.*, 2020).

H7 (β=0.104, $p < 0.01$) was accepted and explained that SN has a mild significance on the PI of local food and reflects the tourists' intent to purchase local foods was motivated by a minimal consideration of its purchase's benefits to others. In other words, purchasing local food may be driven more by self-interest than a desire to consider its benefits to others.

The results of this analysis are similar with those with Meng et al (2022) and Brouwer & Mosack (2015). The results show that H8 (β=0.094, P < 0.01) was accepted and show that PBC has a significant but negligible impact on PI, which consists of (Lin *et al.*, 2020). The more significant consumers' conviction in overcoming obstacles (such as ignorance, uncertainty, and lack of understanding) in their pursuit of local food, the more probable it is that they will indulge in such purchases.

Hypothesis	Hypothesised Paths	Total Effect		Indirect Effect		Direct Effect		Decision
H9	**FV ➡ ATT ➡ PI**	0.213	0.001 SIG	0.008	0.23 NON-SIG	0.205	0.001 SIG	DIRECT RELATIONSHIP (NO MEDIATION)
H10	**SV ➡ ATT ➡ PI**	0.120	0.032 SIG	0.019	0.007 SIG	0.102	0.062 NON-SIG	FULL MEDIATION
H11	**EMV ➡ ATT ➡ PI**	0.129	0.014 SIG	0.023	0.006 SIG	0.107	0.027 SIG	PARTIAL MEDIATION
H12	**CV ➡ ATT ➡ PI**	0.193	0.006 SIG	0.011	0.165 NON-SIG	0.182	0.009 SIG	DIRECT RELATIONSHIP (NO MEDIATION)
H13	**EPV ➡ ATT ➡ PI**	0.115	0.071 NON-SIG	0.014	0.024 SIG	0.101	0.113 NON-SIG	FULL MEDIATION

Table 6
RESULTS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL (MEDIATION)

Table 6 shows that the mediation results of the study interestingly came distinct from the direct relationship analysis. Furthermore, this study observed a substantial direct relationship among FV and PI as well as CV and PI (p<0.01), contrary to the indirect relationship between both the relationships via attitude (p>0.05) were found to be statistically insignificant. It is consistent with earlier results where only a small percentage of consumers (2 percent of all Gen-Z) effectively converted their positive attitudes toward local food into buying behaviour (Schäufele and Janssen, 2021) (Chen et al., 2019). Such results probably arise due to Uttarakhand's food's unique qualities (high nutritional content and organic nature). Despite a change in attitude, concern about the availability of these products is a significant factor in determining whether tourists will buy them (Maikhuri et al., 2019).

There are three primary explanations for the results. To begin, young people do not typically consider Uttarakhand a prime destination for culinary travel (Nam and Nga, 2020). Second, health, quality, and price values directly affected local purchasing behaviour (Nagaraj, 2021), although when these elements were mediated, they did not affect cognitively generated attitudes toward local foods. Findings also show that consumers, although having developed favourable impressions about locally produced products, are prone to make routine and possibly impulsive selections when making actual purchases. Lastly, In diverse contexts, tourists respond differently to things like free food samples, promotional events, food festivals, incentives, and prizes for buying local goods, as well as to the value-added topographical and cultural attractions aimed at young travellers. In previous studies (Bharadwaj & Bezborah, 2022), when given the opportunity, young consumers eagerly seek out such conditions, and their attitudes rarely alter their decisions, thus rejecting H9 and H12. The results, however, show that attitudes mediate the relationship of SV and PI (p < 0.01). Simply put, it can be said that the social inclination towards organic buying and promoting natural resources through local food led Gen-Z consumers to purchase high-nutritive local

food. This is in line with earlier studies revealing an important connection between SV and ATT; hence H10 was accepted.

Furthermore, the findings are in sync with those of earlier investigations (Nop, 2020) (Yanitskiy, 2020), which confirms that Gen-Z consumers have the instinct to gain new knowledge and relevant information about the novelty aspect, ultimately leading to buying behaviour. The results also confirmed that tourists purchasing local food become more aggressive when their attitude towards the commodity is positive. This analysis, therefore, confirms that ATT mediates the relationship between EPV and PI significantly ($p < 0.001$). As a result, H13 was supported.

Nevertheless, Results demonstrated that ATT partially mediated the relationship of EMV and PI.. It indicates that Gen-Z's intention to purchase local food in Uttarakhand is also governed by their positive and negative emotions. As discussed earlier, powerful emotions and diverse attitudes profoundly influence food choices. The results witness a considerable mediating role of attitude when analysing the emotional impact on local food Purchase intention ($p < 0.001$). Consequently, H11 was accepted.

Practical and Theoretical Implications

This study indicates that Gen-Z foreign tourists are interested in local products' health benefits, quality, and price. In addition, they are intrigued by the add-ons that destination marketers offer, such as activities, free samples, and discounts. Moreover, they are profoundly affected by the attitudes and perspectives of influential persons in their social circles. The purchase of local food also gives them a social standing in their social grouping when portraying their choice of food and beverage.

According to (Berg and Preston, 2017), many buyers believe the quality and authenticity of local food acquired directly from farmers are superior. So, the study's findings give a pathway for Numerous restaurants that source their food directly from local farmers, in the hopes of inspiring farmers to grow specific crops. and to stress direct links with farmers in their marketing campaigns. In their menu descriptions, restaurants should also underline local food's exceptional quality and freshness (e.g., Pudding prepared with organic Barnyard Millet cultivated from a local "XYZ" farm, Certification No. "NNNN").

Thus, to sum up, the local food marketers in Uttarakhand should pay more attention to their products; for instance, local foods can be promoted for their therapeutic properties or save money over other cuisines. In addition, they can share information about a few innovative products they have produced using locally farmed ingredients. (Such as cookies and noodles made from Ragi, risotto from locally grown red rice, and affordable and nutritious mocktails made with Himalayan rhododendrons). At the same time, they need to advertise more about protecting the environment by purchasing locally grown food and encouraging organic hill farming, which leads to socio-economic benefits and ecosystem diversity.

Meanwhile, with the help of social media and other advertising campaigns, nutritive locally-sourced food can gain a new social significance, elevating it beyond its nutritional value as they are a viable option for individuals with a weak emotional connection to the local community. However, since attitude indirectly impacts EPV, it is easier for marketers and policymakers to create an environment where tourists can buy local food with a positive attitude. However, in the current study, where ATT indirectly impacts the EPV of respondents, it becomes easy for marketers and policymakers to create a favourable atmosphere for young consumers where tourists can buy local food with a positive attitude. In addition, consuming local food may provide EPV to many Gen-Z college students, especially those from out-of-state or international backgrounds (Shin, Kim and Severt, 2021). However,

the EMV aspect among international Gen-Z students has always been low (Wahyuningsih et al., 2022), which can influence by the promotion of local food through local food events, such as cooking programmes and tastings. Additionally, other elements concerned with physical environment attributes such as music, ambience, architecture, décor, and theme.) may influence the moods and emotions of consumers (Kala, 2020).

For instance, local food shops and eateries that serve food grown nearby can be ornamented with items from the area's cultural heritage. The stores and restaurants could also use the music of local musicians as background music. According to research, emotions could be influenced by adding local art effects to the dinner plate (Li, Kong and Yang, 2021). Therefore, choosing non-food-related details is vital for local food businesses to develop a holistic dining experience in order to encourage the positive opinions of their consumers.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

This research sample comprised Gen-Z foreign tourists who visited the province for educational or spiritual purposes; consequently, the results cannot be extrapolated to all of the people who travel to Uttarakhand from across the world. Prior research has suggested that food-related personality traits, personal norms and self-identity, influence consumers' intentions to buy locally sourced foods (Sivrikaya and Pekerşen, 2020) (Saleki, Quoquab and Mohammad, 2019) (Wenzig and Gruchmann, 2018). Furthermore, future studies could benefit by including these variables to elucidate the connection between consumption values and consumer behaviour.

Furthermore, this study examined local food consumption intentions as a behavioural outcome from a TPB approach Local food researchers may be interested in incorporating other outcome-based variables, such as word-of-mouth and destination image aspirations. Hence, integrating consumers' actual purchase behaviour within these parameters could have interesting implications. Finally, since this was a cross-sectional study conducted at a single point, future studies should adopt a longitudinal research approach to control variables that fluctuate over time.

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