

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague
Faculty of Economics and Management
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Master's Thesis

**Vegan Diet in Turkey and Turkish University
Students**

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2023 CZU Prague

DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

Bc. Beritan Dumanli, BA

Business Administration

Thesis title

Vegan Diet in Turkey and University Students

Objectives of thesis

The thesis aims to develop recommendations regarding marketing communication about the vegan diet aimed at Turkish university students, based on own research.

Methodology

A diploma thesis consists of two parts theoretical and empirical. The literature review will focus on marketing communication and modern trends in this area. The empirical part will present the vegan diet market in Turkey. Recommendations for the marketing communication about the vegan diet will be based on the analysis of data obtained by own research among Turkish university students.

The proposed extent of the thesis

60-80 p.

Keywords

marketing, marketing communication, communication mix, vegan diet, Turkish university students

Recommended information sources

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KINNEAR, T C. – TAYLOR, J R. *Marketing research : an applied approach*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991. ISBN 0-07-034757-3.

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Expected date of thesis defence

2022/23 SS – FEM

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my master's thesis titled "Vegan diet in Turkey and Turkish university students" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the master's thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on March 2023

Beritan Dumanlı

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Chalupová Martina, my thesis supervisor for their unwavering guidance, support, and encouragement throughout the entire process of writing this thesis.

Vegan Diet in Turkey and Turkish University Students

Abstract

In this thesis, In this thesis study, it is aimed to examine veganism and the vegan market in Turkey. In this context, 101 university students studying at university in Turkey were surveyed and the results obtained from the survey were analyzed. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that university students in Turkey generally buy vegan products from big shopping malls, find it difficult to find vegan products and find the products expensive. In the literature review, conceptual studies were drawn from the studies on vegan types and vegan lifestyle. It has been seen that there are basic motivations such as ethics, health, environmental and Sustainability in veganism. As a result of the survey study, it was seen that university students in Turkey mostly preferred to be vegan for ethical reasons. After ethical reasons, environmental issues and sustainability also motivate Turkish university students to become vegan.

Keywords: Vegan, Veganism, Turkey, University, Students, Ethical.

Veganská Strava v Turecku a Studenti Turecké Univerzity

Abstrakt

Tato diplomová práce je zaměřena na zkoumání veganství a veganského trhu v Turecku. V této souvislosti bylo dotazováno 101 vysokoškoláků studujících na univerzitě v Turecku a výsledky průzkumu byly analyzovány. Výsledkem analýzy bylo, že univerzitní studenti v Turecku obecně nakupují veganské produkty z velkých nákupních center, je pro ně obtížné najít veganské produkty a produkty jsou drahé. V přehledu literatury byly koncepční studie čerpány ze studií o veganských typech a veganském životním stylu. Bylo vidět, že ve veganství existují základní motivace, jako je etika, zdraví, životní prostředí a udržitelnost. Z průzkumu vyplynulo, že univerzitní studenti v Turecku většinou dávají přednost veganství z etických důvodů. Po etických důvodech motivují turecké univerzitní studenty k tomu, aby se stali vegany, také otázky životního prostředí a udržitelnosti.

Klíčová slova: Vegan, Veganství, Turecko, Univerzita, Studenti, Etický.

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1 Introduction

People who remove some or all foods of animal origin from their diet are called vegetarians. Vegetarians are divided into subclasses according to the types of animal foods they consume. Individuals consuming milk and dairy products are called lacto-vegetarian, individuals consuming eggs are called ovo-vegetarian, individuals consuming both milk and dairy products and eggs are lacto-ovo-vegetarian, individuals consuming fish are pescovegetarian, and individuals consuming poultry are pollo-vegetarian. People who do not consume any foods of animal origin are called vegans. Vegan individuals also refuse to use different products such as animal-derived cosmetics and clothes (Larsson et al., 2003).

Among the reasons for individuals to switch to a vegan or vegetarian diet may be ethical and religious views and the effect of diet on the environment, as well as the positive effects of plant-based nutrition on health affect individuals' preferences in this direction. Individuals who prefer to be vegan or vegetarian due to their ethical views care less about the relationship of these preferences with nutrition compared to individuals who are vegan or vegetarian for health reasons. In survey studies conducted in the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, the United States (USA), Canada and the European Union, it has been reported that the ratio of vegetarian individuals to the total population is between 1-10% (Griffin, 2017).

With the spread of scientific studies proving that animal foods are not actually beneficial, as well as the spread of vegan activists, who argue that animals are living organisms just like humans, they can feel pain, and that no food or resource obtained through their bodies should be seen as a "commodity" element, A consumer group has formed that adopts veganism as an identity (Petti et al., 2017).

There is an idealized dream of life in the vegan lifestyle. The idea of people living with animals and nature to live a healthy and long life away from the risks around them; It is desired to be replaced by a feared polluted environment, conventional foods with fabricated ingredients and stress. The fact that the amount of nitrate residue used during conventional production is higher than that of organic foods can also cause health problems such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases in individuals. Chemicals used as inputs in conventional agriculture cause pollution of water resources and the environment, and infertility of the soil (Griffin, 2017).

In this thesis study, it is aimed to examine veganism and the vegan market in Turkey. In the first part of the thesis, a literature review will be made about types of veganism, veganism and vegan markets. In the third chapter, after the practical part carried out for the purpose of the thesis, the discussion and conclusion part will be given with the findings obtained as a result of the practical part.

2 Objectives and Methodology

2.1 Objectives

Individuals with a vegan lifestyle, who do not harm any part of nature, express a sustainable lifestyle and the philosophy behind this lifestyle, prefer products or services that have zero animal content both in their food consumption preferences and in other consumption areas.

When purchasing a product or service, consumers who are vegan or prone to a vegan lifestyle demand to learn all kinds of information from the production process to the presentation stage of this product, and they perform very sensitive and careful purchasing behavior about animal content.

Vegan consumers have important expectations from companies and organizations that introduce new vegan foods to the market, not just with the introduction of vegan foods to the market. Global sustainability, ecological, health etc. A consumer profile that becomes conscious about the issues, shares the information with its social environment, reads content about products and services, which is the element of purchasing behavior, or researches the way the service is presented, is the mainstay of today's businesses to turn to green consumption.

This research aims to examine the factors that are effective in the process of evaluating the food purchase decision by revealing the priority variables of people who have adopted a vegan lifestyle.

Individuals who prefer vegan and vegetarian diets refuse to use animal foods and animal products for many different reasons. Some adopt these dietary regimens for reasons such as an ethical stance, while others for reasons such as religion and health (Griffin, 2017). The nutritional options of individuals who prefer these dietary regimens are more restrictive than those who do not follow any diet. This situation raises some questions. Despite the possibility of a nutritional deficit, vegan and vegetarian individuals pay more attention to food quality and have more information about foods compared to omnivorous individuals (Petti et al., 2017).

This research was conducted to examine the food purchasing behaviour of consumers who have knowledge about the vegan lifestyle. The problems of the research are as follows:

- What are the food purchasing preferences of university students who have chosen a vegan lifestyle in Turkey?
- What is the effect of university students' views on animal rights, who have chosen a vegan lifestyle in Turkey, on their food purchase decision?
- What is the level of influence of vegans' views on the environment on their food purchasing behaviour?

2.2 Methodology

The universe of the research is uncertain, as the exact number of vegans living in Turkey is not known. Snowball sampling method was used to reach the participants of the study. First, a participant known to be a vegan consumer was reached, and then another participant was contacted in line with the information and recommendations obtained from this person. Each participant found also ensured that other participants were included in the sample. The most important reason for using this method is that the potential participants are not well known and it is very useful in terms of including hard-to-reach participants in the sample (Moser & Kalton, 2017).

This research is applied research and is designed to be exploratory. Moser and Kalton (2017) states that exploratory studies, which tend to be more qualitative, are aimed at revealing the problem and its dimensions, and are generally used in cases where there is not sufficient number of previous studies. The researches also states that qualitative research is carried out in order to understand a certain event or phenomenon in its entirety and in its natural environment, down to the last detail, while quantitative researches produce relatively more superficial information, while qualitative ones produce more in-depth information. This method was used to gather detailed information about the subject and to deal with the subject from different angles. As the data collection method of the research, in-depth interviews were used as the opinions of those who have knowledge about the subject could be consulted. In this method, it is possible to reach more detailed information about the people interviewed. This method was preferred in the research because unobservable

situations such as experiences, attitudes, thoughts, intentions, mental perceptions and reactions can be understood through interviews.

The interview form was created by the researcher. While creating the interview form, studies on the subject in the literature and news about the consumption of vegans were used. In the first part of the interview form, the participants were asked why and how many years they have been vegan, in which sector they prefer vegan products, the attitudes of the participants towards the product, price, distribution and promotion dimensions of the vegan market, what problems they have experienced in this process, whether there are solutions for the problems or not. They were asked questions about whether they took supplements or not. The questions were supported with sub-questions in order to get detailed information. In the second part, demographic questions were included. Descriptive and content analysis methods were used in the analysis of the data. Since the purpose of the descriptive analysis is to present the findings to the reader in an organized and interpreted form, the data are summarized and interpreted according to the previously determined themes (Moser & Kalton, 2017)

In the research, the data were organized on the basis of participant responses, and while descriptive analysis was conducted, quotations were also made from the participants in order to better reflect the views of the participants. In content analysis, which is one of the most frequently used methods among qualitative data analysis types, the researcher first develops categories related to the research topic and then counts the words, sentences or pictures that fall into these categories in the data set he has examined (Özdemir, 2010). The answers given by the participants in the study were tabulated according to the questions asked and written in numbers and percentages on the tables.

Survey questions were asked to 101 participants in the study. The questions were sent to the participants online via Google Form. The answers obtained as a result of the research were analysed through the IBM SPSS package program. In the analysis, first of all, the data on the demographic structures of the participants were statistically extracted, and then the motivation of the participants to be vegan was analysed. As the motivation to be vegan, questions were asked on four main vegan motivations based on ethics, health, environmental and sustainability. The questions asked in this context were asked with a Likert scale. The questions asked to the participants are given below.

- I am a vegan because of the ethic values
- I am a vegan because of health concerns
- I am a vegan because of the environmental issues (e.g. organic waste, air pollution, water usage..)
- I am a vegan because of global sustainability (e.g. world hunger, non-optimal allocation of food, unsustainability of keeping “humanely raised” grass-fed animals)

After these questions, some questions were asked in order to understand the problems experienced by vegans in Turkey regarding the products and to measure how much the vegan market can serve vegans. All the questions asked to the participants are listed below.

- Your gender?
- Your marital status?
- You Income Status (Monthly)?
- What kind of degree are you studying in university?
- What year are you in university?
- How many years have you been vegan?
- I am a vegan because of the ethical values
- I am a vegan because of health concerns
- I am a vegan because of the environmental issues (e.g. organic waste, air pollution, water usage.)
- I am a vegan because of global sustainability (e.g. world hunger, non-optimal allocation of food, unsustainability of keeping “humanely raised” grass-fed animals)
- Are there any vegan products you are looking for but cannot find?
- Do you think vegan products are more expensive than the alternatives?
- Which channels do you buy vegan products?
- Do you have difficulties in finding the vegan products?
- Where do you get information about vegan products?
- Do you take nutritional supplements because you are vegan?

At the last stage of the analysis, it was tried to determine the relations between some variables formed from the questions asked to the job. The hypotheses created for these relationships are presented below.

- There is a positive relationship between the gender of the participants and the duration of being vegan.
- There is a positive relationship between the gender of the participants and the channels they buy vegan products.
- There is a positive relationship between the income levels of the participants and the fact that they find vegan products expensive.
- There is a positive relationship between the income status of the participants and taking nutritional supplements.

The measurement of the hypotheses given above was analysed with the Chi-Square method using the SPSS package program.

3 Literature Review

3.1 Veganism

Veganism is one of the cultures that argue that people should change their consumption habits against exploitation and persecution towards animals and consciously avoid meat consumption. The concept of primary veganism, in 1806 William Lambe and Percy Bysshe Shelley were created by showing why the contradiction of animal food consumption to the morality. The word vegan obtained from the first and last syllables of the word Vegetarian was brought to the literature in 1944 by Donald Watson, one of the founders of The Vegan Society, to indicate a lifestyle without the use of animal products. According to The Vegan Society's definition in 1979, veganism ;

“It is a philosophy and way of life that avoids all kinds of exploitation and abuse that animals are exposed to for food, clothing and other purposes and encourages the development and use of alternatives that do not contain animal -based products for the benefit of people, animals and environment. Veganism means rejecting the products obtained from animals completely or partly.”

Vegetarian Society defines veganism, as the lack of consumption of animal -based food product, not being used for any purpose, a product obtained from animals is not worn and the use of animals on issues such as entertainment and sports. Veganism is a social movement that criticizes the food sector and tries to change the sector (Beck & Ladwig, 2021). There are different reasons for adopting the vegan lifestyle. Some prefer this lifestyle for ethical reasons such as animal rights and environmental impacts, while others are vegan for health benefits and religious reasons. In a study conducted with 245 Vegan in Turkey in Turkey, it was found that 89 %of the individuals were caused by ethical reasons (McPherson, 2018).

“Vegans” are not only consumed of animal based foods, but also against the use of products tested on animals (cosmetics, detergents, soap, toothpaste, etc.). Due to the use of animals, it is known that vegans did not go to circuses, zoos and do not watch films using live animals. In recent years, vegan lifestyle has gained momentum(Katz & McPherson, 2020). According to Google Trends, between 2015 and 2020, the data that the term vegan

was searched by people on Google by 155 % more. According to the United Nations data, 78 million of the world's population of 7.8 billion in 2020 consists of vegan population. The UK has 720,000 vegan, which constitutes approximately 1.2 % of the population. It is one of the countries with minimum meat consumption due to the religion of India, so approximately 5 million of its population is vegans. According to a study, it is estimated that 1 % of the population in Australia, which has a population of 25 million, is formed by vegans. The number of vegans in the United States increased from 0.4 % to 3.5 % in the last two years (Sarıkaya et al., 2023). In the Great Britain, the number of vegans, which was 150,000 in 2006, reached 542,000 people in 2016 and about 120,000 of these people lived in London. In Turkey, no data on vegan population was found. Although the share of vegans in the world population seems to be limited, vegan lifestyle is increasing day by day (Altaş, 2017).

Vegans' diets include legumes, root plants, oil seeds, plenty of fruit and vegetables, plant-based foodstuffs such as nuts and mushrooms (Pilis et al., 2014). While changes occur in the diet and lifestyle of consumers in the world, many sectors keep up with these changes with new products. The opening of restaurants serving only vegan/vegetarian menus in some cities in Turkey shows that the number of vegans in the country is increasing. The number of vegan restaurants in Germany, which was 75 in 2013, increased to 122 in 2015. Likewise, the number of vegan cookbooks, which was 12 in 2011, reached 77 in 2014 (Bruers, 2015).

The increase in awareness of the damage to the environment and animals in the world and the health concerns of consumers due to their food preferences affect the vegan market to a large extent. Food manufacturer Nellson, in a study conducted in 2017 on consumers' dietary habits, reported that people's consumption of vegan food increased by 140% and the size of the vegan market increased to 5 billion dollars (Akkan & Bozyigit, 2020). According to the news of The Weekly Times, while almond milk consumption in Australia was 7.7 million liters in 2013, this rate increased to 25.2 million liters in 2017. While 83 million liters of plant-based milk were sold in 2017, the economic dimension of this sale increased to 212 million dollars. Market research organization Technavio, in its research in 2016, predicted that the market share of ready vegan foods in the USA will increase by 11% between 2016 and 2020 (Sarıkaya et al., 2023)

While the total sales of plant-based foods and beverages in Europe in 2018 were 2.4 billion Euros, the total sales increased to 3.6 billion Euros in 2020. Accordingly, the

investments made for these products increased from 667 million dollars in 2019 to 2.1 billion dollars in 2020 (Tapınç, 2021). In many countries, festivals are organized by groups that adopt the vegan lifestyle. Barcelona is the world's first vegan city (Altas and Acar, 2017). Selected as the "Vegan Friendly City" in the world after Barcelona, Didim held Turkey's first vegan festival under the name "Didim Vegfest" between 29 and 30 April 2017. During the festival, various studies were carried out on the preparation of vegan-friendly menus and businesses providing services based on vegan nutrition (Altaş, 2017)

There are important studies on veganism in the literature. For example, Petti et al. (2017) consider veganism as a way of life in their research, while Griffin (2017) emphasizes that veganism goes far beyond being "a diet". Beck and Ladwig (2021) pointed out that veganism should be considered in the context of identity, unlike a diet. Cherry (2006) expresses veganism as a cultural movement and argues that veganism can change personal and collective identity. Today, vegans use social media platforms effectively and carry out various studies for the mass dissemination of veganism. Twitter is a channel mostly used by communities that advocate veganism and try to spread this idea. Communities such as The Vegan Society, Vegan, Your Daily Vegan, Vegan Outreach and Finding Vegan use Twitter effectively. Communities such as Vegan Turkey, Turkish Vegan and Vegetarians Association are also pages that use Twitter effectively (Cherry, 2006)

3.2 Vegetarianism

Although vegetarianism has come to the fore more in recent years, it is a concept that has existed since ancient times. The history of vegetarianism dates back to the 6th century BC. One of the most important thinkers of antiquity, Pythagoras (580 BC) is the first known vegetarian in the world (Vegetarian Society, 2018). Pythagoras defended the view that killing animals brutalized the human spirit, therefore he believed that vegetarianism was a key factor in peaceful human societies (Vegetarian Society, 2018). Until the first vegetarianism union was established, vegetarians in the world were known as 'Pythagoreans' (Sexton et al., 2022). The Pythagoreans believed that all beings in the world have a common origin and natural ties, and that all souls are made up of the same components. According to the Pythagoreans, everything is interconnected, so living beings must be respected. According to the diet they adopt, it is forbidden to consume foods that result from the killing

of animals and plants. For this reason, pulses and many other plant foods are not consumed as well as meat. In terms of nutrition; Foods that can be consumed without killing an organism such as milk, cheese, honey, oil, fruit and leafy vegetables are allowed (Sneijder & Te Molder, 2004).

The Ancient Greeks, who came after Pythagoras, are also among those who prefer a vegetarian diet. These include Hesiod, Theophrastus, Aristotle, the famous historian Homer, the Roman statesman Cicero, and the Greek poet Euripides. In addition, among the world-famous vegetarians; Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Isaac Newton, Darwin, Shakespeare, Tolstoy, Voltaire and Wagner. The effectiveness of vegetarian diets declined during the medieval period in Europe until the 13th century. In the 15th century, Europeans in the Renaissance and Enlightenment era rediscovered vegetarianism. Leonardo da Vinci, one of the famous artists of this period, went down in history as a vegetarian (Ciocchetti, 2012).

In the 18th century, some Christian groups started to practice the vegetarian diet in their lives, and the first 'Vegetarian Association' was established in England in 1847 with the influence of these groups. The current name of the association is 'Vegetarian Society of the United Kingdom'. In 1850, vegetarian nutrition advocate Sylvester Graham, inventor of Graham crackers, founded the American Vegetarian Society (Greenebaum, 2012). The International Vegetarian Union was established in 1908. Until the 20th century, vegetarian communities continued to spread. There are many vegetarian societies today. Various studies have been carried out to make vegetarianism heard around the world and to raise awareness in people. World Vegan/Vegetarian Day was celebrated for the first time in 1977 by the North American Vegetarian Association (Espinosa & Treich, 2021).

The Vegetarian Club made a press release in 2009 and brought this issue to the fore. In 2010, with the Vegetarian Club organization, 'Vegetarian Day' started to be celebrated in Turkey. Turkish Vegetarians Association was established in 2012. This association is the first and only official organization that gathers vegetarians and vegans in Turkey under one roof (Dinçer, 2022).

The origin of the word vegetarian comes from the Latin word 'vegetus'. Vegetus means lively, healthy, and full of life in Latin. Vegetarianism is a diet that includes more consumption of plant-based foods than animal-based foods. If vegetarian, it is defined as people who consume foods of plant origin and who do not consume foods of animal origin

in small amounts or at all. In 2011, the International Vegetarian Union (IVU) developed a new definition. According to the International Vegetarian Association, vegetarianism is “a diet that is completely plant-based, and it is a diet in which products of animal origin such as milk, eggs and honey are optionally consumed or not consumed”(Ciocchetti, 2012).

In many religions and belief systems, killing animals is prohibited. Therefore, vegetarianism is a common dietary habit among communities that believe in religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The basis of this diet is that it is possible to have an adequate and balanced diet without eating meat and by consuming foods of plant origin. There are different reasons for choosing a vegetarian diet. These can be ecology, personal health, animal welfare, and food beliefs, ethnic and religious reasons. Studies have shown that ethnic influence on nutrition is more determinant than health. ((Pendergrast, 2016). In a study conducted by the University of Oregon and Texas A&M University with 726 participants in Australia in 2016, it was concluded that 80% of the participants were vegetarian for ethical reasons (Altaş, 2017).

Although vegetarians are perceived as a single group, they actually consist of various species within themselves. Vegetarians differ in the foods they include and exclude from their diet. Some vegetarians do not consume only red meat, while others do not consume any products derived from animals, including meat. The International Vegetarian Association classifies vegetarian diets as follows(Altaş, 2017).

Lacto-Ovo Vegetarianism; It does not consume any type of meat, but consumes products such as eggs and milk obtained from animals.

Lacto-Vegetarianism; It is a diet in which meat, fish and eggs are not consumed, but milk and dairy products are consumed.

Ovo Vegetarianism; It is a diet in which no animal products are consumed but only eggs are consumed.

Apart from these vegetarian diet types, there are also different vegetarian classifications in the literature. For example, semi-vegetarianism (flexitarian) is a diet that does not consume red meat and consumes limited amounts of poultry and seafood. Semi-vegetarians also consume eggs, milk and dairy products. Polo-vegetarianism is a diet in which only poultry is consumed. Pesco-vegetarianism is a vegetarian diet in which only

seafood is consumed. Pesco-vegetarians consume eggs, milk and dairy products (Altas, 2017). The Vegetarian Society does not consider individuals who prefer these diets vegetarian. Because, according to the Vegetarian Society, vegetarians should not consume meat in any way (Altaş, 2017).

The number of vegetarians in the world is increasing day by day. It is not only a way of eating, but also a lifestyle, a philosophy of life. According to The Economist, in 2014, 4.7% of the population in Japan was vegetarian, while in 2015 only 3.4% of Americans were vegetarian. The number of vegetarians in Australia is 5.5% of the total population. 5% of the Irish population, 9% of the population of Germany and Austria are vegetarian. 8% of Brazil's population are middle-or high-income vegetarians living in the Central-South half of the country. In Italy, which has one of the highest rates of vegetarianism in Europe, 10% of the population is vegetarian. In India, one of the top vegetarian countries in the world, 38% of the population is vegetarian. 10% of the population of Italy, 13% of the population of Taiwan and Israel are vegetarian. After the Second World War, a vegetarian lifestyle began to be adopted in England. While it was estimated that 0.2% of the population in 1940s and 3-7% of the population in 2000 was vegetarian; today, there are data showing that approximately 9% of the country's population is vegetarian (Griffin, 2017).

3.3 Types of Veganism

3.3.1 Ethical Veganism

Ethics is a form of system that limits and regulates human actions with certain rules. It is a field that philosophically examines the relationship of the individual in question with his environment. Ethical approach, on the other hand, is a tendency that can change according to the society. For example, the effect of the society in question is in the evaluation of an approach brought to an event or phenomenon as right or wrong. In this case, while ethical rules can be considered as norms, not all norms are ethical rules (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

While ethical rules are only considered for the society and human framework in some cases, the elements of nature are also included in the ethical rules. Roderick Frazier Nash (1989) in his book "The rights of nature"; states that ethics consists of four stages. The first

stage is the "Pre-Ethical Past", in which people act entirely on behalf of their own interests. The second stage is the period when the individual begins to be affected by the social relations around him and enters the field of totem and religion. The third part is "Today's Ethics", which is the part that is desired to be achieved today, where every living thing is considered equal regardless of race, age, gender. In this period, it is seen that domestic animals were tried to be taken among living beings, but the desired success could not be achieved. The last stage is the "Future Ethical Approach". At this stage, it is foreseen that plants, animals and other beings in the ecosystem will be included in the field of ethics along with humans (Sexton et al., 2022).

In line with the realization of this purpose, it is seen that ethics is divided into many sub-titles and the problems are tried to be solved by listing under these titles. Animal ethics, environmental ethics, etc. As seen in the title examples, it is possible to see the reflection of ethics on the individual and social level in lifestyles. As a matter of fact, the ethical understanding of the vegan lifestyle is related to the subheadings of ethics. However, one of the factors that constitute the moral understanding of the vegan lifestyle, which protects the right to life of living things, is the concept expressed as bioethics(Sexton et al., 2022).

Bioethics is a concept that is not only related to human health, but also related to the life of all beings in the ecosystem. Bioethics includes the studies carried out in order for all species to live in peace, to protect the endangered species, and to have peace in nature . Thus, the main goal is to protect the sustainability of the society, thanks to a healthy environment that will last for generations (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

The first book on the concept of bioethics was written by V.R. "The Bridge to the Future" by Potter. Potter states that when we deal with bioethics by associating it with soil, natural life, population, and universal ethics, it will help us understand why it is needed (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

The area of interest in bioethics has increased gradually after the 20th century. Studies have been made on moral issues in many branches such as politics, education, law and science. Environmental ethics argues that the ecosystem is not only for people, so people should not use it for their own benefit. Likewise, since all living things are considered valuable in themselves, bioethics examines the structure of living things and the norms

concerning living things, makes evaluations and brings solutions to the problems that arise (McPherson, 2018).

Vegans also cross paths with the understanding of bioethics, as they stand against any living creature other than human, for ethical reasons, to suffer in the name of human interests, and because they are concerned about the protection of animal rights and unconscious destruction of nature while undertaking this mission. Accepting animals as property and using them as guinea pigs, keeping them at home, closing them in zoos, killing them for food is incompatible with the requirements of ethical responsibility (McPherson, 2018).

Despite the problem caused by the idea that human beings exist in order to be considered superior to other creatures as a product of a speciesism approach and that other living things exist to serve humans, the view that accepts that humans cannot be superior to other living things and that every living thing that comes into the world has the right to live rejects the anthropocentric hierarchy. Focusing on life-centered ethics, vegans argue that eating plants for a living is more acceptable than eating animals (Sneijder & Te Molder, 2004).

It is thought that animals are sensitive to pain or pleasure, although animals are killed for the sake of feeding, sport or entertainment with the thought that animals do not suffer. The fact that animals do not have the ability to think like humans does not constitute a sufficient reason for us to use them for our own interests. Because, just because the thinking abilities of mentally disabled individuals or babies are not the same as an adult individual, using them in experiments constitutes an objectionable behavior pattern. It is considered ethically correct to accept that they have intrinsic value and to protect their right to life. Vegans advocate the decision not to consume any animal's meat or products, as both protecting the right to life and consuming them as food are logically contradictory. Arguing that the thought that does not consider them valuable on their own, does not see black and white, men and women as equal, he predicts that by accepting the irregularity done to animals and opposing this irregularity, the injustices suffered in daily life may end by decreasing (Katz & McPherson, 2020).

In this context, it is necessary to talk about Abolitionist Veganism. Abolitionist veganism is an approach developed by Gary L. Francione in 1996. The word abolitionist has

been named after anti-slavery movements throughout history. According to the abolitionist approach, the common right of all living things is not to be seen as property. Abolitionist Vegans also reject speciesism and other forms of discrimination (such as male-female, rich-poor) applied to animals. The abolitionist approach is not interested in single-themed campaigns, but envisages that the impact of this approach can be increased by raising the public's awareness about veganism. Abolitionist Vegans see violence as part of the problem. They argue that violence against all non-human beings should be rejected. Apart from that, Abolitionist Vegans do not directly associate veganism with ecological problems. They argue that the source of ecological problems is political and that this should be addressed separately. According to them, the only reason to be vegan is ethical (Katz & McPherson, 2020).

Vegan individuals argue that animals should not be used as subjects for drugs, except for eating and drinking practices. They also refuse to consume non-plant-based products in other cosmetics and personal items. They are against the abuse of animals in order to ensure the well-being of people, and they state that no justification for this is logical (Abolitionist Vegan Movement, 2022).

However, vegans do not agree with all plants. Because they are against the use of these plants because of the attack on animal rights in the production of some plants and oils. For example, many vegans are against the consumption of palm oil. Palm oil produced in Indonesia and Malaysia for more than 30 years threatens the habitat and lives of the orangutan species. Therefore, although it is a herbal product, vegans also take a stance against palm oil (Altas, 2017).

One of the approaches vegans oppose is the Carnist approach. With the carnist approach, it is expressed that people maintain their order by ignoring the mistreatment and cruelty of animals. It is thought that the carnist thought is imposed on individuals through "presentations" through capitalist markets. The biggest example of this situation is that this approach prevents us from questioning previous transactions when purchasing by presenting and normalizing the body of animals in parts (Foer, 2015). However, vegan ideologies oppose such normalizations. Veganism not only opposes the exploitation and violence of animals as a positive biopolitical form, but also opposes the epistemological and cultural points that legitimize this situation (Bruers, 2015).

3.3.2 Environmental Veganism

The science of ecology provides a systematic collection of ideas that examine the interaction of living things with their environment, classify animals, climate and plants, and reveal what needs to be done to ensure the continuity of the order they create together. Ecology is an idea that sees the relationship between human and nature as a whole and opposes the secondary positioning of nature against humans in order to support this unity (Giraud, 2021).

Based on ecology, human and nature are not considered as opposites, but as a complementary whole. In order to support this idea, it wants to eliminate the ambivalence of nature and humans. Ecology is to create a society perception, instead of the idea that the basic building block of society is only human, instead of thinking that animals, trees and water are the elements that make up society. Human societies and human problems are subject to the same ecology studies as other animal societies. Because the content of ecology always includes sociality. Since the beginning of humanity, the oppression of nature and animals is also reflected in the relationship between men and women, the relationship between young and old. An ecological problem that will be encountered as a result will affect all living species on earth (Gruen & Jones, 2015).

Ecological destruction and natural disasters are frequently encountered problems in the period we live in. Maintaining human-centered lifestyles and adopting this system of thought take place in the formation of this order. The contribution and importance of the advancement of technology is great in the environmental destruction caused by cultural factors. The rapid increase in the population, the pesticides that people use recklessly to obtain a surplus in order not to face the danger of hunger, the continuity of the production of animal products and the ignoring of wastes cause the ecological balance to remain at risk (Alvaro, 2017).

The deterioration of the ecological balance affects not only certain regions, but also the whole world globally if necessary precautions are not taken early. In the technological dimension of ecological problems that can be classified in technological, historical and social dimensions, there is the depletion of natural resources as a result of human intervention in nature and the accompanying climate change; The ongoing historical developments in the

historical dimension and the moral and educational deficiencies in the social dimension can be counted. Population growth, oil leakage into the sea and soil, chemical and agricultural pesticides, fossil fuel use and the depletion of the ozone layer play a role in the pollution of the environment. It is predicted that a new and dangerous period will begin in the world if the ecological and climate change experienced cannot be slowed down (Gruen & Jones, 2015).

Recognizing the right to life of animals, which are deemed necessary to make moral inquiries, and preventing animals from being seen as food, preventing environmental pollution caused by animal production and consumption is an important step to be taken in ensuring ecological balance. The definition of animal here includes not only farm animals, but also animals that are in danger of extinction and that are often given priority to be hunted. According to a study conducted at the University of Chicago, it has been determined that our food choices affect global warming at least as much as our transportation choices (TVD, 2016). The livestock sector is responsible for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions, 40% more than transportation. Animal husbandry is responsible for 37% of anthropogenic methane gas. In other words, carnivores contribute 7% more to the greenhouse gas volume than vegans (Tunçay & Bulut, 2019).

Mankind has fought hunger, one of its greatest fears, since its existence. Throughout his life, he was engaged in gathering, hunting and fishing; He wanted to survive by trying to obtain safe food. With the increase in population, the search for more food has gained a racing dimension with technological progress. This dangerous race with irrigation, use of animal power, heredity and gene modification, and use of pesticides in agriculture has caused problems both in the human body and in the environment (Cherry, 2006).

The area that is desired to be created in order to provide animal industry, which is the return of animal nutrition, causes the destruction of forests and productive agricultural areas (Masson, 2015). For this reason, erosion and landslides affect the environmental balance negatively. Failure to monitor the cleanliness of the cages where the animals are fed or the mixing of animal wastes into the water also causes water pollution. Due to the methods that do not allow the animal to move in the industrial environment, the biological integrity of the animal is changed. The presence of unsanitary conditions behind the packaged animal products puts the health of the individual at risk (Masson, 2015). The inability to prevent

greenhouse gas emissions and the use of nitrogen fertilizers in feeds used in animal husbandry cause a vicious cycle. However, the frequency of use of non-renewable energy and the traditional methods used to obtain animal products increase carbon dioxide emissions (Masson, 2015).

It forms an indispensable part of every living world system. Bycatch or not releasing the creature caught outside of the desired species causes the extinction of the living species that are in danger of extinction. Troll hunting is an example of this type of hunting. Seeing trawling as a method that allows fishermen to save time and energy causes the non-consumed species to be killed recklessly and endanger their extinction (Foer, 2015). Every living thing has a task in the ecological cycle. For example, some animals take a role in the nutrition of the stronger animal in the food system, ensuring that it stays full for a longer time with less predation, while preventing the increase of pests harmful to weak animals or plants. It is predicted that the extinction of a generation may disrupt this order and accelerate the reproduction of animals that display aggressive behavior to agricultural products and humans. It is predicted that the rate of encountering these risks increases in regions where consumption of animal products is high (Cherry, 2006).

Accepting a vegan lifestyle is also replacing the anthropocentric approach with an ecologically centered approach. According to this idea, it is important not only for human well-being, but also for the well-being of all living things on earth. It is thought that the tendency towards veganism will increase in the coming years. The introduction of the concepts of Nutrition Ecology and New Nutrition Science into the literature with the Giessen Declaration (the declaration created as a result of a workshop held at the University of Giessen) and the planning of projects on this subject are an indication that there will be positive developments in the future. Although vegan nutrition is not accepted as a complete solution to ecological problems, it is seen as a contribution to ensuring ecological balance with the responsibility imposed on the individual (Pendergrast, 2016).

3.3.3 Veganism for Health

It is seen that ideal body forms are imposed on today's consumer society through various communication tools. While creating a new lifestyle for people with the cooperation of medicine and media, "being healthy" is chosen as the target. When we look at the details

about this, what individuals should eat in the daily time period and what activities they should do in order to stay healthy are presented to the masses through the media (Çiçekoğlu & Tunçay, 2018).

Today, it is seen that the concepts of health and disease go beyond the scope of medicine. Many substances defined as diseases in the old literature have not been updated today. Within the framework of modernity and post-modernity, all deviations that make the body meaningful in daily functions and push it out of function are included in the concept of "disease" (Adak, 2015). In order not to catch the disease, people try to take maximum care, that is, to stay healthy. According to the definition of health adopted by WHO in 1947, the absence of a physical or mental integrity is the state of not being sick (Tunçay & Bulut, 2019).

Disease is a medical issue and is the state of the body's inability to function as a result of some physical signs and symptoms. Illness, on the other hand, has a subjective point of view and is defined as the perception of feeling uneasy and not happy. While disease is an imbalance of the body and organs, illness has a slightly broader meaning. This situation, which affects social life, is a situation that can change from society to society and goes beyond its normal perception (Çiçekoğlu & Tunçay, 2018).

It has created harmony between medicine and culture and has equipped our environment with topics such as healthy nutrition, living, diet, sports, cosmetics and aesthetics in social life. Thus, the healthy body was also presented as a privileged body and transformed into a museum of signs. The desire to make the body visible has found a place for itself in the field of medicine and health in late modernity. These changing thoughts about the body paved the way for the transition to health that is consumed over the body in accordance with the consumption spirit (Dinçer, 2022).

The effort to shape the body in the consumption culture has entered people's lives as a recipe or program with the concept of "diet" to organize their daily lives. (Timur, 2013) Diets have become a social norm in which the body is disciplined. Obesity means staying out of control, moving away from the consumption chain. Although Turner distinguishes between the physical world and the spiritual world in his description of the inner body and the outer body, these two areas are not independent of each other. Although the historical

basis of the concept of diet is religion, it has become a tool that serves the interests of power and other authorities today (Pendergrast, 2016).

It has been observed that expert discourses are used in presenting veganism as a diet type. The information given to individuals about the vegan diet through the media is effective in the preference of veganism. Media discourses are a tool used to shape ongoing actions. As a result of the strategic use of discourses in the reproduction of existing concepts, it is ensured that the mass desired by the power and the system is formed. The inclusion of new discourses such as ethical reasons and continuity as well as the concepts of health and beauty in creating the perceptual understanding of the consumer society is effective in the formation of new objects to be consumed and the markets that will produce them (Foucault, 2011).

The vegan diet is a diet that prohibits eating all kinds of animal meat and includes the consumption of products derived from animal products from the daily diet. In addition, the vegan diet, which is shown as the way to have a healthy and long life by aiming to minimize the use of trans fat and sunflower oil in the vegetable dishes that the individual will prepare, is offered for the use of individuals of all ages (Gruen & Jones, 2015).

According to the Australian nutrition organization, vegan diets prepared by experts are thought to be healthy and sufficient for children. According to dietitians in America and Canada, it is argued that there is no harm in having a pregnancy period with a properly prepared vegan diet (Espinosa & Treich, 2021).

Culture has a great role in the formation of the understanding of health and disease. With the effect of the period and geographical location, it causes the government's understanding of treatment and illness to change. As a result of the researches and trials conducted in the health sector, the vegan diet is seen to be beneficial in the recovery of the patient; it has played an important role in the vegan diet being preferred by both patients and physicians. The increase in its visibility in the media has made the vegan diet a curious eating style. It is seen that commercial concerns and political decisions intersect on human health. Nutrition practice has also taken its share from the changes arising from this intersection. Within the consumption culture, the diet types offered for bodily health sometimes contain aesthetic and sometimes moral concerns, and daily diets and lifestyles are regulated not only for sick individuals but also for healthy individuals. Vegan diet and lifestyle are accepted as the condition of living a healthy and ethical life. For this reason, it is one of the examples to

be given to the direct medicalization and politicization of nutrition(Beardsworth & Keil, 1991).

3.3.4 Religious Vegetarianism

Millions of people have experienced vegetarianism in their lives, partially or completely, temporarily or permanently, due to their religious beliefs. The relationship between nutrition and religion is present in most developed countries as well as developing countries. Most religious elements have specific norms or instructions on nutrition. In fact, the nutritional practices of many individuals reflect their religious beliefs. Avoiding meat consumption has been a persistent source of controversy among religious communities. The vegetarian diet has become inherently restrictive, as most, if not all, religious diets prohibit certain foods temporarily or permanently (Page, 2004).

Throughout history, there have been groups of people who generally chose not to eat meat due to certain ideologies, and religious reasons for being vegetarian are still an important source of motivation today. All religions in the world make broad reference to eating habits, and most have dietary norms or guidelines. In addition, every religion has addressed the consumption of animal products to some extent in meeting human needs, including culinary needs (Stephens Griffin & Stephens Griffin, 2017).

Religious structure is effective on individuals' production, trade and consumption of foodstuffs. Which plants and animals can be foodstuffs and which can not, and accordingly, what can be produced and how they can be marketed takes place within the framework of these rules. The spread of vegetarianism has been associated with religions such as Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, the Hare Krishna movement, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church that preach respect for all living beings and adopt non-violent principles. Therefore, it is strictly forbidden to eat an animal (Raggiotto et al., 2018).

The strict prohibition of animal consumption in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, which are determined as eastern religions, is related to the perception of animals as human spirits in different bodily form. By contrast, Hinduism promoted belief in reincarnation such that an animal's "soul" could once have been a human soul, whereas Hindu vegetarianism was primarily concerned with asceticism and purity. Accordingly, the purpose of vegetarianism in Hinduism is not to promote animal welfare, but rather to keep the body free

from meat-related pollution. Even in ancient sources, Hinduism regarded vegetarian nutrition as a positive phenomenon. Because Hindus defined vegetarianism as a moral way of life in ancient times and accepted meat as a product of slaughter. For this reason, the number of vegetarians in India is higher than in other countries (Martinelli & Berkmaniené, 2018).

Buddhism is a religion that emerged in the 6th century BC and is mostly associated with a vegetarian diet. Buddhist belief also prohibits bird meat and chicken consumption. The suppression of religiosity and avoidance of meat during mourning in Chinese rituals led Chinese Buddhist clergy to adopt vegetarianism en masse. Another Asian religion that includes an absolute rejection of meat is Jainism. Most of the Jainists, who believe in my Jainism and try not to harm any living thing, are vegetarians. According to this vegetarianism, which rises on the basis of non-violence and nonviolence, any food obtained through unnecessary violence or cruelty is considered inedible (Ho-Pham et al., 2009).

While the Bible, the holy book of Christians, touched on the subject of being vegetarian, it shed light on the subject without being partial and with a moderate approach. Although the main tendency of Christianity is to allow the consumption of meat, the Greek Orthodox Church abstains from animal foods such as meat, dairy products and eggs during the fasting period of up to 180 days a year. Judaism and Islam have a similar approach to the consumption of animals. Both allow the slaughter of animals (except pork) when needed for food, but follow rituals designed to minimize suffering. A small minority of Orthodox Jews adopt vegetarianism out of compassion for animals. In addition, if there is no kosher restaurant while traveling, Jews are required to eat only in vegetarian restaurants (Johnson, 2015).

In terms of Islam, food laws and approaches to animal products are regulated in the Qur'an. There are 5 food groups that the Qur'an directly or indirectly points to. This food group; Bread and cereals, fruits and vegetables, meats, fish and halal seafood are miscellaneous foods such as milk and dairy products, oil and sugar. In addition to these foods, the consumption of foods such as honey and olives can be added to use for therapeutic purposes during diseases. The foods prohibited by the Qur'an are alcohol, pork, carnivores and birds of prey. Animal products such as milk are strongly indicated to man as revelation. Therefore, not using animal meat and milk is not in line with the Qur'an and its Hadiths. In

the Qur'an, it is halal to consume meat, chicken, fish and poultry, but wiping them out or using them excessively is considered wasteful and is one of the elements considered a sin (Ali, 2015). Vegetarianism is not popular in Islam, even negative attitudes are developed from important theological leaders. On the other hand, it was determined that some poets and mystic-sufi figures were fed with vegan and vegetarian diets. The poet Al-Ma'arri, who refused to eat meat in the 10th century, was accused of "being more compassionate than God" (Ali, 2015).

It has been determined that the Prophet Abraham prepared fatty beef for his guests, and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) consumed meat, milk and honey as animal food. Within the hierarchy of Creation, which is accepted as the highest ranking human being, the Qur'an and Sunnah strongly order Muslims to treat animals with compassion and not to mistreat them. However, compassion towards non-human creatures from human health, social justice and ecological perspectives also shows that a vegetarian lifestyle may actually be preferable for Muslims. But such a lifestyle is incompatible with the teachings of the Islamic tradition. Because ethical questions about the consumption of animal products have not been raised in the classical Islamic legal literature and it is difficult to find serious statements about the viability of an Islamic vegetarianism today (Johnson, 2015).

3.3.5 Vegetarianism by Gender

Gender is a form of social identity based on roles related to masculinity and femininity, and violating one's gender roles can make a person susceptible to social rejection and identity threat. Gender appears to be an important regulator of attitudes towards vegetarianism, animal rights, and consumption of animal products . Meat consumption is also associated with traditional values that include the superiority of humans over animals and men over women. This shows that gender has a strong effect especially on meat consumption (Rosenfeld, 2020).

In recent years, gender-based differences in consumers' attitudes, beliefs, practices and life preferences regarding food have been the focus. "Meat", which has been a symbol of man's power and dominance over the world for many years, has been primarily a man's food in many cultures from Africa and Southeast Asia to North America and Europe. However, some criteria have emerged that determine which foods are more suitable for

which genders in the society. The things that "real" men do or do are associated with the idiom "being a man". This is both a matter of privilege and of symbolism. As a cultural reflection, meat consumption is shown as a masculine behavior, while vegetable consumption is attributed to women (Rosenfeld, 2020).

In modern societies, lighter meats and herbal products have been accepted as healthier and more feminine. Because of Western European, African and Asian cultures, meat has been the symbol of patriarchy due to its long association with masculinity, power and virginity (Rosenfeld & Tomiyama, 2021). This symbolic value, which plays a role in the construction of meat as a masculine performance; The expression "valuable" associated with masculinity establishes a hierarchical relationship with meat, while the expression "worthless" associated with women establishes a hierarchical relationship with foods such as vegetables, fruits and grains (Rosenfeld, 2018).

In many societies, one way to achieve a healthy male image appears to be related to consuming meat. Based on these beliefs, the way to have a male body close to the hegemonic ideal (the man's being healthy, strong, muscular and sexually capable) is to eat meat (Browarnik, 2012). According to a study by the vegetarian resource group; Women aged 18-34 were found to be more likely to be vegetarian than other gender-age groups, this situation feeds sexism, which suggests that women are weak beings, in different ways. In a study, it was claimed that vegetarian men were less masculine because they avoided eating meat, and vegetarian men were reacted to in the societies they lived in (Ruby, 2012).

The act of cooking attributed to women can turn into an "advantage" in terms of masculinity constructions by cooking the meat, which is known as the most "valuable" of foods, with techniques such as barbecue. By using the barbecue (the comfort of distributing meat rather than eating meat), men will be able to protect their masculinity strategies from women and vegan/vegetarian men whom they encode as other, and to reproduce their position in the field (Rosenfeld, 2018). Ecofeminism, which is a political, social and academic theory in which patriarchal domination over women and domination over nature is associated, is an intellectual structure formed by feminist and ecologist circles (Tunçay, 2020).

The feminist-vegetarian movement declares that there is another worldview, and that worldview blesses life instead of consuming death, and it counts on liberated people, not on

resurrected animals. Ecofeminists insist on a reciprocal link between the dominance of women in patriarchal society and the dominance of nature. Vegetarian ecofeminism also suggests expressing feelings towards others through concrete actions through vegetarianism and vegan practices, such as refusing to eat meat (Rosenfeld & Tomiyama, 2021).

3.3.6 Social and Cultural Vegetarianism

In daily life, "vegetarianism" and "veganism" include issues about what a person can eat, on the other hand, it is also about what one should not eat in terms of animal products. People instinctively know which foods to eat and which to avoid. People can reach information on this subject mostly through cultural transfer from the past to the present. Because culture is the whole of knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, traditions, habits and abilities that a person acquires as a member of society. All these elements have a common value in society and these values are transmitted to the next generations by reflecting on the behavior of living people (Cherry, 2006).

Food, which is an important part of the identities of societies, is related to cultural differences in production and consumption. The relationship of man with nature and animals and the habits of whether or not to consume meat develop with the influence of the nutritional culture of the society in which the person lives. To explore the ways in which culture guides food choices, "meat" is a suitable type of food. While meat is among the most valuable foods in a wide range of cultures, it is also among the foods that are widely seen as taboo (Gheihman, 2021).

Being a vegetarian goes beyond the choice of a diet, as it gives individuals a new social identity that affects the way they think, behave and socialize (Hargreaves et al., 2021: 9). Studies show that vegetarians/vegans can be successful in inspiring family members and friends to accept their diet and even change their diet. This situation provides evidence that the social relations of vegetarian individuals are related to their diet (Simons et al., 2021: 4). On the other hand, many of those who decide to adopt vegetarianism may be rejected by others and become victims of stereotyping and discrimination. Such negative attitudes towards vegetarians and vegans are known as "vegaphobia" or "veganophobia" in the scientific literature. One possible explanation for the discrimination against vegetarians and vegans relates to the cognitive dissonance experienced by meat-eaters (Oliver, 2021).

Socialization is defined as the process of an individual's belonging to a group or community, adopting the cultural norms of the society, and accepting himself as a value in a community. Social relations are divided into two groups as primary and secondary social relations according to the nature of the interaction. Primary social relationships are relationships with high emotional bonds, such as family and friendship relationships, while secondary social relationships are relationships that occur when people interact for a short time with a specific purpose. Vegetarian/vegan people have problems not only with their friends but also with their families and other individuals around them because of their preferences. It has been determined that especially negative family reactions play a decisive role in preventing dietary changes (Cherry, 2006).

Vegetarian/vegan individuals have difficulty explaining the reasons for their choices to their families and other individuals around them, or sometimes they get extreme reactions. It has been determined that vegetarian individuals are more empathetic towards life and prioritize their emotions more than omnivores. It has been determined that these individuals are stronger advocates than omnivores on issues such as environmental protection, equality and social justice (Oliver, 2021). However, it has also been determined that vegetarians are more introverted, neurotic and depressive than omnivores (Cherry, 2006).

Vegetarianism is a stigmatized identity, especially associated with negative stereotypes, and some vegetarians try to hide the fact that they are vegetarian from other people to avoid being stigmatized. An effective way to hide one's vegetarian identity is to not eat meat by giving the image of a meat eater (Bryant et al., 2022). Vegetarian individuals can make some exceptions in eating meat. The biggest reason for these exceptions is pressure from friends and family. Fear of offending some family cultures or traditions, the need to make a good impression, or the fear of stigma are among the important factors that cause vegetarians to quit vegetarianism for a moment (Gheihman, 2021). It is also emphasized that many vegetarians often eat at mainstream non-vegetarian restaurants. The reason for this is that it is difficult to find a vegetarian food and beverage business in certain regions and they have to socially accompany non-vegetarian people who prefer a meat-based meal (Cherry, 2006).

Such oppressive situations make it very difficult to be vegetarian and vegan. According to a study, "Why do you prefer to eat meat?" In response to the question, 22 of

the 63 participants stated that they ate meat “to make a social situation smoother and not to disrupt existing or expected social dynamics”. Among the specific examples, it was stated that they ate meat to "fit in with everyone", "avoid pretending", "contribute to family tradition" and "avoid being culturally inappropriate" (Bryant et al., 2022).

3.4 Vegetarian/Vegan Consumer Preferences

Examining the determinants of food choice allows to identify the drivers and barriers to consumption. Food choice is a complex behavior driven by a set of interactive variables related to product, context, and person. To understand how consumers make decisions about their food choices, it is necessary to understand how these variables interact and what effects they have on their eating behavior. Variables in food choices are biological, physiological, psychological and socio-cultural values (Profeta et al., 2021).

Restaurant preferences of customers are affected by a wide variety of factors. These factors are; food variety, price, atmosphere, location, environmental components of restaurants, service quality, food quality, cuisine type, preferred food, meal time, music, purpose of going to the restaurant (such as work, entertainment, socializing, spending time) and with whom (Malek & Umberger, 2021). Another attitude that can affect food preferences is the role of taste in food choices. In studies on the motivation of omnivores to consume meat, it has been determined that one of the main reasons for meat consumption is sensory pleasure. Examination of consumer perception and preferences is essential for understanding purchasing behavior (Hagmann et al., 2019). Revealing the consumers' purchasing behavior of food products and their future expectations contributes to many long-term predictions and the creation of the right marketing strategies. The first goal of these strategies is to create customer loyalty in order to ensure the sustainability of food and beverage businesses (Sanchez-Sabate & Sabaté, 2019).

3.5 Lifestyle of Vegans

With the term veganism, most individuals associate a concern for the life and well-being of animals. Vegans make it a principle to avoid practices that harm the living beings of other species. This situation can be interpreted as a commitment to animal welfare and animal rights ethics. However, veganism can also be justified from an ecological perspective.

Human-centered ideas about justice and collective self-interest can be examined under the title of veganism. The term "vegetarian", which emerged in the mid-19th century, comes from a variety of dietary choices that avoid some (at least meat) or all foods (eg fish, eggs and dairy products) (Tunçay Son & Bulut, 2016).

Vegan people avoid everything and adopt a stricter diet. Animal products are used not only for food but also for clothing or other purposes. According to the literature, besides religious motivations, the driving forces that lead people to vegetarian or vegan diets appear as ethical concerns or health concerns. People who abstain from meat in accordance with a moral obligation also refuse to harm animals. Veganism, which simply means staying away from commodities containing animal content in its production or distribution, becomes a social movement that criticizes the food industry and tries to change the industry, or at least to manage it, apart from a diet. Even in transportation, entertainment, clothing and cosmetics preferences, they are more meticulous and conscious in their purchasing behavior compared to other consumer groups (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

The definition of veganism mentioned in the paragraph above expresses the moral motivation to avoid cruelty to animals, but there are also self-interested justifications for a vegan lifestyle, such as the expected health benefits. However, empirical evidence shows that concern for animal welfare is the primary motivator for vegans, with expected health benefits second and the assumed positive impact on the environment third (Brouwer et al., 2022). According to a study among German vegans, reports from factory farming are among the most important reasons for being vegan, followed by climate protection and health issues (Gili et al., 2019).

Although the acceptance of vegans is basically the same, there can be serious differences of opinion and debates among vegans due to the diversity of reasons for individuals to be vegan and differences in life practices. These differences of opinion among vegans are explained by the "rights perspective" and "harm perspective" (Mortara, 2013). Veganism is a lifestyle that opposes anthropocentrism, which points to the questioning and changing of human-animal relations that have been going on for centuries. Contrary to what most people think, systems such as every living thing, nature and ecological order in the world were not created to serve people. These cases also have a systematically progressive life within themselves (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

When a person chooses a vegan lifestyle, it is assumed that he is thinking about the implications of his choices for the world he lives in. As a conscious global citizen and consumer, it is thought that he is aware that everything he does, eats, buys and uses has an effect on living things and systems other than himself. Vegans don't go to circuses either, as they often reject the use of animals that have been turned into circus performers after times of pain and violence. the use of animals for recreational purposes; It is banned in many countries such as India, Finland, Austria, Costa Rica, Singapore and Sweden (Gili et al., 2019).

At the same time, different evaluation of animals is the result of cultural learning. While there are cats and dogs as birthday gifts, there are pigs that are known to be as smart as dogs that are transformed into salami, as well as animals such as cows, goats, and chickens (Beck & Ladwig, 2021). Although there are countries where dogs are consumed as food, consuming cat and dog meat is not a generally accepted action. Consuming the meat of certain animals such as cows, goats, cattle, calves, chickens, etc. is considered ethically acceptable by most people. This is a culturally shaped behavior, and a child who grows up in a house where animal products are consumed will often maintain this attitude when he becomes an adult (Foer, 2015). However, it can be said that there is an inconsistency regarding the use/consumption of animals by humans. While protesting the bullfights in Spain and the killing of baby seals in Canada, on the other hand, continuing to consume the eggs of chickens that spend their entire lives in cages or the milk of cows and dairy calves kept away from their young, while condemning the racist regime in South Africa, not wanting a neighbor of another race (Singer, 2005).

3.6 Vegan Marketing Strategies

Vegan products do not appear as a completely new product range for the food industry, but recent innovations in products with a similar taste and structure to traditional meat and dairy products are creating some changes in the food industry (Díaz et al., 2021). Even if they do not adhere to a strict vegan diet, many consumers are changing their food purchases and preferences due to new levels of awareness and innovative food alternatives. In order to be effective and beneficial for the vegan movement, companies should determine which alternative products vegan consumers demand, what kind of vegan services they

would be happy to see, according to their target markets. Larger and more established vegan organizations have specialists who advise businesses. They help businesses to increase product diversity, correct errors in products or packaging, and many more (Díaz et al., 2021).

Affordable prices are also a factor that consumers pay attention to when purchasing vegan products. Most consumers still do not know how to use some of these products or are not sure which ones they should take to meet their nutritional needs (Leenaert, 2020:111). Vegan marketing strategy is defined as all marketing objectives and actions carried out in conjunction with a plan on behalf of a company's activities and operations in the vegan market. From another point of view, the vegan marketing strategy is also a part of the comprehensive marketing strategy of the enterprises. In order for businesses to both follow a correct vegan marketing strategy and manage this strategy correctly, they must constantly answer the following questions (Pimentel et al., 2021);

- What does the demand for plant-based options look like in my industry?
- In what way and method is it possible to learn whether plant-based products and services meet customer needs or not?
- How can long-term and profitable relationships with customers be developed?

Another issue that businesses need to pay attention to when executing vegan marketing strategies is the issue in which they will operate. The vegan marketing strategy followed in a country, region or city where meat consumption is culturally common and frequent in the kitchen should not be the same as the vegan marketing strategies carried out in locations with a culinary culture that is more prone to herbal nutrition. A correctly defined point of sale is important for any brand that wants to market its products effectively. The point of sale is directly linked not only to the product's features and benefits, but also to its impact on the consumer (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

In vegan product options marketing, it will be easier to sell products to the target group, vegans, than to other consumer groups. Vegan digital marketing is the use of electronic media or social media platforms to reach consumers and promote plant-based products or services. is to be preferred. Businesses can also choose this way to reach and influence investors and other stakeholders. The vegan market is known for its vibrant and innovative market structure. Individuals engaged in consumption or production in this

market find themselves very willing to try and support innovations and offers. It is possible to show the reason for this request as the philosophy of veganism. The launch of new vegan offerings, products, are classified as “good news stories” on social media. It is possible to share the cruelty shown to animals in production facilities or the images that animals live and are forced to live, to create discount codes only for plant-based products, and to do vegan marketing with striking labeling and packaging (Gvion, 2020).

3.7 Vegan Consumer Profiles

Before examining consumer attitudes towards vegan products, it would be helpful to explain the concept of attitude. Attitude emerges when a consumer makes a cognitive evaluation of the object based on a certain motivation (Beck & Ladwig, 2021). The relationship between diet and attitude is not always linear. For consumers who state that they adopt a vegan lifestyle, this situation does not seem to be valid for two reasons; The first is that the consumer's eating style also forms a part of his social identity, and the second is that they take a stance against animal consumption (Brouwer et al., 2022). Due to the low number of consumers who are able to integrate the two mentioned conditions into their lifestyle, product participation in vegan foods is quite low compared to other daily product groups (Dyett et al., 2013).

Meat-eating consumers aim to consume more plant-based products or reduce their meat consumption in the future (Egeler & Baur, 2022). In order to buy vegan food, consumers have to find these products, vegan consumers who search the internet sites and contact the business in case they have doubts about whether the product contains animal content, are also very sensitive about reading the allergen content warnings of the product. Today, many consumers, whose level of consciousness has increased, want to reduce their consumption of meat and animal foods, which are part of their plant-based diet. These consumers not only want to improve their own health, but also want to take a stand against the industrial food system (Beck & Ladwig, 2021).

Animal welfare and climate change threats are the most important reasons why consumers want to take a stance against the industrial food system. According to the report by Packaged Facts, the plant-based food market is growing. Plant-based nutrition and sustainability have recently taken their place among the most important food trends affecting

consumer preferences and food product launches. In the plant-based consumer profile, vegans and vegetarians tend to share some commonalities. Resources that can afford higher quality food and the willingness to pay more to buy quality products, such as sustainable, clean labeled food consumption, come to the fore (Brouwer et al., 2022). Young consumers who value fresh and healthy food and are eager to try new products, including Gen Z adults and millennials, are examples of young children who care about making healthy home-cooked meals and spending quality time with the family. Because they belong to the age group, they are already accustomed to shopping and using apps or websites (Aleixo et al., 2021).

3.8 Vegetarian Approach in Social Media

Developments in communication technologies in recent years have created significant changes in the traditional media world. Internet-based social media, which has changed the publishing elements dominated by traditional communication tools, has destroyed the existing rules. New communication possibilities have even allowed users to set up their personal media (Wibowo et al., 2021). The widespread use of social media and the fact that consumers spend a lot of time on social media have attracted the attention of brands. This situation has directed marketing activities towards the internet and social media. Because the phenomenon of social media is one of the areas of social interaction that includes new generation internet applications. They are online environments that allow users to share information, thoughts and knowledge, and where large masses can communicate with each other. In this way, brands can reach both their current and potential customers with the profiles they create on social media (Felix et al., 2017).

Social media has become a growing platform for sharing about food and people expressing their opinions on this issue. According to statistics, 72% of the population in Turkey uses the internet, while 63% of the population actively uses social media. Some social media tools come to the fore in terms of usage rates in Turkey. These platforms are; facebook, linkedln, youtube, blog, twitter, forums, podcasting, social networking sites, tumblr, snapchat, messenger and instagram (Boztepe Taşkıran, 2019). According to 2019 statistical data, the 53 most widely used social media networks in Turkey are YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, respectively (Bayrak, 2019). Instagram is a platform used

by users not only as a means of socialization but also as a means of obtaining information(Boztepe Taşkıran, 2019). Social media where communication tools are used inform vegetarian individuals about health and obesity. By gaining more knowledge through this information and interactions with vegetarians, vegetarianism is increasingly changing motivations (Jin, 2021). This proves the power of social interaction and communication. A study shows that a large number of vegans and vegetarians (especially young, ethical vegetarians) increase accessibility quickly and effectively using the Internet in the context of social networking (Li et al., 2021).

Owing to this promotional power of social media (internet, newspapers, magazines and other media), vegetarianism/veganism has become increasingly popular . The increase in the news about vegetarianism/veganism in current communication tools may be related to the statements of famous people such as movie actors, voice artists and models that they prefer these diets. Since these popular identities are much more effective on individuals, their influence in shaping the perception of vegetarianism in the media increases (Jin, 2021).

There has been a remarkable shift in the media representation of vegan food, with the announcement that “high-end vegan cuisine” was selected as one of the top ten food trends of the year in 2013. People from the fields of entertainment, sports and politics who adopt a vegan diet, for example; The increase in celebrities with high media profiles such as Al Gore, Bill Clinton, Ellen DeGeneres, Alicia Silverstone, Carrie Underwood, Natalie Portman, Mike Tyson, Beyoncé and Jay-Z has strongly supported this trend (Doyle, 2016).

3.9 Veganism and the Vegan Market around the World

With the increasing concerns about health, nature and animal welfare, the vegan market is a market that has grown especially in recent years. For this reason, vegetarian/vegan options have become widespread in many food chains (Ginsberg, 2017). Not only in the food industry, we now see the vegan product stamp on many clothing brands or cleaning product labels. The main reason for this is that there have been many recent breakthroughs in vegan products in the field of marketing. There is an undeniable benefit of knowing the consumption characteristics of consumers at the point of effective use of marketing resources and finding solutions to marketing problems (Tunçay Son & Bulut, 2016).

Many innovations brought by technology have also brought many health problems. For this reason, increasing health problems have caused people to turn to nature and nature. Especially the generation Z, who grew up with technology, computers and social media, behaves more consciously towards their health and environment. Vegan consumers from generation z around the world share must-visit vegan restaurants on social media platforms. There are thousands of young people who follow the trend of veganism, which is increasing unabated in the Z generation. Businesses and investors who are aware of this are creating markets for this rising trend. In a report published by Mintel, one of the leading research institutions, the percentages of people who have a positive attitude towards vegan cheese consumption and intend to buy are shown in the table below. The question "Do you want to buy vegan cheese products in the next 12 months" was asked to the people and percentage data were presented according to the yes answers received (Erben & Balaban-Sali, 2016a).

Table 1. Positive Consumer Attitudes Towards Vegan Cheese Product (%)

	France	Germany	Italy	Poland	Spain
Z Generation (Below 25)	34	42	31	36	35
Milenium (26-41)	36	32	32	40	38
Generation X (42-57)	21	16	25	30	21
Baby Boomers (58-76)	11	11	21	28	17

Source: Mintel & Dairy Alternatives, 2022

In addition, veganism has become widespread and popular in recent years with breakthroughs in the plant-based food industry. According to a study conducted by Global Data, while only 1% of the American population was vegan in 2014, this rate increased to 6% in 2017 (SinglePlatform, 2018). It is a separate information in the research that 1 percent of the total population in the whole world adopts a vegan diet. In other words, it is thought that approximately 79-80 million people worldwide are vegan (Erben & Balaban-Sali, 2016a).

3.10 Veganism and Vegan Market in Turkey

Turkey, with a population of approximately 80 million, predominantly Muslim, has been a cradle to numerous civilizations throughout its history. While the majority of its landmass lies in Asia, a portion also extends into Europe. Geographically divided into seven regions, Turkey boasts a rich, diverse, and delectable culinary culture that varies from one region to another. Turkish cuisine has evolved from the fusion of Central Asian nomadic tribes' food traditions with those of Anatolia, as well as the culinary contributions of the Seljuk and Ottoman Empires. Predominantly featuring meat and meat products, dairy, and grains, Turkish cuisine offers a wide variety of dishes, particularly those that incorporate sheep, goat, lamb, and beef (Altaş, 2017).

As a result, vegetarianism and veganism are relatively uncommon in Turkey and are often considered unconventional. This study aims to assess the current state of vegetarianism and veganism in Turkey, review existing research, and lay the groundwork for future investigations, potentially exploring the concept of vegan tourism. With significant global developments in vegetarianism and veganism, there is a need for research examining Turkey's position amidst these trends.

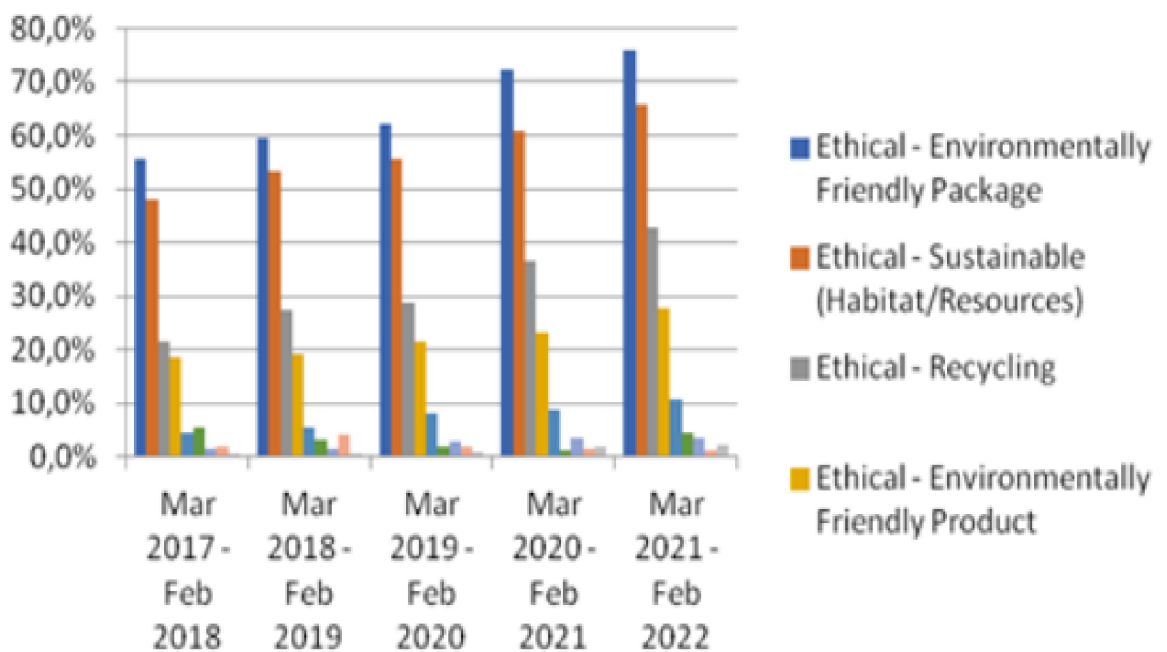
To provide context, it is worth noting some key global developments in vegetarianism and veganism as of 2015 before presenting the current situation in Turkey. Subsequently, information on the present state of vegetarianism and veganism in Turkey will be provided, as sourced from the Turkey Vegan & Vegetarian Association (2023).

Unfortunately, there is no clear information about how many vegans there are in Turkey. It has not been possible to find clear data about how many vegans live in which region in Turkey, how much this vegan population is decreasing or increasing in the literature. However, it would not be wrong to think that as long as there is an increasing interest globally, many studies will be conducted to determine these data in Turkey. In this direction, many new vegan restaurants are opening in Turkey and many restaurants have vegan menus. In 2020, the sales of vegan products, which are alternative meat and milk alternatives, reached 29.4 billion dollars and this market is expected to reach 162 billion dollars in 2030. (Dilek & Fennell, 2018) . According to a report published by Mintel, the

world's leading marketing research company, the number of vegan product launches has increased 7 times in the last two years.

Especially with the Covid-19 pandemic period, more initiatives in the field of healthy nutrition allow us to predict that the number of vegan people has increased. In the world, especially with the effect of the Covid 19 epidemic, the information on the labels has started to be taken into consideration more. The label information percentages on newly released vegan products and functional foods in Europe in the last five years are summarized in the table below.

Figure 1. Percentages of Label Information in Newly Released Foods by Year



Source: Mintel, 2022

It is stated that organic food purchasing decisions have a positive effect on organic food knowledge, as it reveals the benefits and features of food.. For this reason, many brands in Turkey are involved in the certification processes by regulating their product labels (Erben & Balaban-Sali, 2016b).

In Turkey, Didim Municipality has been organizing a vegan festival since 2017. Although it is a first in Turkey, vegan festivals are organized at different times in many countries of the world. There is an internationally recognized, proprietary symbol for labeling vegan and vegetarian products. In this way, consumers can distinguish vegan

products with this symbol on their product labels. The V-tag is a simple and reliable guide to assist consumers when shopping. In order to get the V label, the products must meet some criteria. The V-label, which is a quality certificate for vegan and vegetarian products all over Europe, is a licensed label developed by the European Vegetarian Union (EVU). This organization serves as the only independent vegan certification body in Europe (Altaş, 2017).

It is stated that organic food purchasing decisions positively affect organic food information, as it reveals the benefits and properties of food (Magistris and Gracia, 2008; Teng and Wang, 2015). In this context, consumers will be motivated towards the product in line with the information on the product label. However, vegan labeling is not carried out in Turkey in a controlled manner by vegan product certification institutions and the state. Many vegan products have the label shown in the figure below, which is still valid in Europe, even if it is produced in Turkey. The Turkish Vegan Association started its activities in 2012 as Turkey's first vegan association. This association, which is actively involved in many vegan events and social responsibility projects, continues its activities by prioritizing animal rights and welfare (Altaş, 2017).

Figure 2. Vegan Labels



Source: V-Label, 2023

The Turkish Vegan Association (TVD) started its activities in 2012 as Turkey's first vegan association. This association, which is actively involved in many vegan events and social responsibility projects, continues its activities by prioritizing animal rights and welfare(Tunçay Son & Bulut, 2016).

4 PRACTICAL PART

The survey form was prepared in accordance with the purpose of the study and the research model, in order to understand the motivations of the students living in Turkey who have adopted the vegan lifestyle, to become vegan, and to understand the situation of the vegan market in Turkey. The survey consists of three parts.

In the first part of the survey, there are questions about the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the second part, there are questions about the veganism of the participants and their motivation to be vegan. In the third part, there are questions for the participants to reach vegan products and to understand the vegan market in Turkey.

Statistics regarding the information on the gender of the participants are shown below.

Table 2. Gender Statistics of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	68	67.3
Male	33	32.7
Total	101	100.0

Source: Own Calculations

68 of the respondents are female and 33 are male. Looking at the percentage distribution of vegan students, 67.3% are female and 32.7% are male. It is seen that women are in the majority in the gender distribution of the vegan students who participated in the survey.

Statistical information on the marital status of the participants is shown below.

Table 3. Gender Statistics of Participants

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	83	82.2
Married	18	17.8
Total	101	100.0

Source: Own Calculation

While 83 of the consumers are single, 18 are married. Single students constitute a large part of the sample with a rate of 82.2 % . In this situation, the respondent the participants are composed of students.

Table 4. Positions of the Participants at the University

Education level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bachelor	42	41.6
Master	41	40.6
Doctoral	18	17.8
Total	101	100.0

Source: Own Calculations

The majority of the participants are undergraduate and graduate students at the

university. It is seen that only 17.8% of them are doctoral students. 41.6% of them are undergraduate students and 40.6% of them are master students.

Table 5. Income Level of Participants

Income rate	Frequency	Percentage (%)
2500 TL and below	29	28.7
2501 TL – 5000 TL	48	47.5
5001 TL – 7500 TL	12	11.9
7501 TL – 10000 TL	5	5
10001 TL and above	7	6.9
Total	101	100.0

Source: Own Calculations

Considering the general income situation, it is seen that the income of the majority is between 2501 and 5000 TL. Students with an income of 2500 or less are in the second place with 28.7 %. Considering the income status of the participants, it is seen that 75% of them have an income of less than 5000 TL.

Table 6. Duration of Attendance at the University

Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 and below 1	6	5.9
2	53	52.5
3	25	24.8
4	15	14.9
Above 4	2	2
Total	101	100

Source: Own Calculations

The majority of the participants participating in the research are in their 2nd and 3rd years at the university . The total number of students who have been at the university for 2 and 3 years is 78. The number of those who have been in the university for more

than 4 years is only 2.

Table 7. Veganism Duration of Participants

How many years have you been vegan?	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1 or below 1 year	41	40.6
2 years	40	39.6
3 years	14	13.9
Above 3 years	6	5.9
Total	101	100

Source: Own Calculations

Considering how long the participants have been vegan, it is seen that most of them have been vegan for 1 and 2 years. There is a maximum of 1 year or less vegan participants with a rate of 40.6%. The rate of those who are vegan for 2 years is 39.6%. The rate of those who are vegan for more than 3 years is the lowest with 5.9%.

After the demographic problems, the participants were asked four questions about the reasons for being vegan. These questions were asked in the form of a Likert scale and were made with 5 options as “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, “Strongly Disagree” . Below, it is aimed to understand which of the main reasons such as ethics, health, environmental problems, sustainability are the main reasons for the motivation of the participants to be vegan. The statistical information created according to the answers of the participants is shown below.

Table 8. Statistics of the Vegans Because of the Ethical Values

I am a vegan because of the ethical values					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	26	25.7	25.7	25.7
	Agree	44	43.6	43.6	69.3
	Neutral	23	22.8	22.8	92.1
	Disagree	5	5.0	5.0	97.0
	Strongly Disagree	3	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

Looking at the table above, it is seen that the rate of participants who are vegan for ethical reasons is 69.3. While 22.8% of the participants stated that they were neutral, 8% of them were vegan because ethical reasons were not.

Table 9. Statistics of the Vegans because of the Health Concerns

I am a vegan because of health concerns					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	8	7.9	7.9	7.9
	Agree	16	15.8	15.8	23.8
	Neutral	24	23.8	23.8	47.5
	Disagree	42	41.6	41.6	89.1
	Strongly Disagree	11	10.9	10.9	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

When we look at the proportions of the participants who are vegan for health reasons, it is seen that the health issue is not effective in being vegan with a ratio of over 50% . Only 23.8% of the participants stated that they prefer to be vegan for health reasons.

Table 10. Statistics of the Vegans because of the Environmental Issues

I am a vegan because of the environmental issues(eg organic waste, air pollution, water usage ..)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	42	41.6	41.6	41.6
	Agree	49	48.5	48.5	90.1
	Neutral	6	5.9	5.9	96.0
	Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	98.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

When the table above is examined, it is seen that environmental effects are quite effective in being vegan. 90.1% of the participants stated that they were vegan for environmental reasons. 41.6% of them gave the answer “Strongly Agree”.

Table 11. Statistics of the Vegans because of the Global Sustainability

I am a vegan because of global sustainability (eg world hunger, non-optimal allocation of food, unsustainability of keeping “humanely raised” grass-fed animals)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Agree	51	50.5	50.5	50.5
	Agree	37	36.6	36.6	87.1
	Neutral	9	8.9	8.9	96.0
	Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	98.0
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

It is seen that the issue of global sustainability, like environmental effects, is also an effective factor in being vegan. Because, it is seen that global sustainability is the effective factor for 87.1% of the participants to be vegan. It is seen that only 4% of the participants gave a negative answer. 8,9 % of the participants stated that they were neutral on this issue.

The other part of the questions asked to the participants was about the efficiency of the vegan market in Turkey and the access of the participants to vegan products. The statistics of the answers given by the participants on this subject are as follows.

The statistics of the answers given to the question asked to understand whether there is a vegan product that cannot be found in Turkey are shown below.

Table 12. Finding the Vegan Products

Are there any vegan products you're looking for but can't find?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	71	70.3	70.3	70.3
	No	30	29.7	29.7	100.0
	total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

70.3% of the participants stated that there were vegan products that they could not find despite searching. On the other hand, it was observed that 29.7% of the participants declared that they could reach the products they wanted.

Table 13. Channels for Buying Vegan Products

Which channels do you buy vegan products?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Online commerce websites	25	24.8	24.8	24.8
	The big shopping centers	47	46.5	46.5	71.3
	Social media channels	24	23.8	23.8	95.0
	Traditional Stores	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

When the channels where the participants buy vegan products are examined, it is seen that the density is in large shopping malls. It is seen that 46.5% of the participants do their vegan shopping from shopping centers. Next come social media channels and e-commerce sites.

Table 14. Prices of Vegan Products

Do you think vegan products are more expensive than the alternatives?					
		frequency	percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	78	77.2	77.2	77.2
	No	23	22.8	22.8	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

Considering the answers given regarding the prices of vegan products, it was seen that 78% of the majority stated that vegan products are more expensive than their alternatives.

Table 15. Difficulties of Finding Vegan Products

Do you have difficulties in finding the vegan products?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	70	69.3	69.3	69.3
	No	31	30.7	30.7	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

It is seen that 70% of the participants stated that they had problems in reaching vegan products. It is seen that only 30.7% of the participants have no problems in reaching vegan products.

Table 16. Getting Information about Vegan Products

Where do you get information about vegan products?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Social Media	60	59.4	59.4	59.4
	Recommendations from my friends	6	5.9	5.9	65.3
	Influencers	7	6.9	6.9	72.3
	Websites	12	11.9	11.9	84.2
	Blogs	12	11.9	11.9	96.0
	Television	4	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

It is seen that the biggest density of the answers given by the participants about which channels they get information about vegan products is social media. 59.4% of the participants stated that they received information about vegan products from social media. While websites and blogs had the same rate of 11.9%, the lowest rate was in television with 4%.

Table 17. Taking Nutritional Supplements

Do you take nutritional supplements because you are vegan?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	65	64.4	64.4	64.4
	No	36	35.6	35.6	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own Calculations

Considering the answers given by the participants to the question about whether they took nutritional supplements, it was seen that 64.4% of the participants took nutritional supplements. 35.6% of the participants stated that they did not take any nutritional supplement.

4.1 Normality Distribution and Descriptor Statistics

To understand whether the data distribution is normal, Skewness (skewness) and kurtosis (kurtosis) tests are performed. While Skewness measures the degree of non-symmetry of a distribution; Kurtosis is an index showing the degree to which too many or too few samples are found in the middle of the distribution. In order to examine whether the data set used in the study showed a normal distribution, skewness and kurtosis values were tested. The skewness and kurtosis values of a normally distributed data set are considered to be between -2 and +2 .

Table 18. Distribution Analysis of Responses

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistics	Std. error	Statistics	Std. error
What kind of degree are you studying in university?	101	,410	,240	1,055	,476
What year are you in university?	101	,736	,240	,101	,476
How many years have you been vegan ?	101	,842	,240	,039	,476
I am a vegan because of the ethical values	101	,826	,240	,694	,476
I am a vegan because of health concerns	101	-.525	,240	-.488	,476
I am a vegan because of the environmental issues	101	1,620	,240	4,059	,476
I am a vegan because of global sustainability	101	1,595	,240	3,149	,476
Are there any vegan products you're looking for but can't find?	101	,902	,240	-1,211	,476
Do you think vegan products are more expensive than the alternatives?	101	1,318	,240	-.268	,476
Which channels do you buy vegan products?	101	,375	,240	-.390	,476
Do you have difficulties in finding the vegan products ?	101	,850	,240	-1,304	,476
Where do you get information about vegan products?	101	,926	,240	-,717	,476
Do you take nutritional supplements because you are vegan?	101	,609	,240	-1,663	,476

Source: Own Calculations

As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the kurtosis and skewness values in all questions except for two questions were between -2 and +2. It has been observed that the answers given only to the questions I am vegan because of the environmental issues and I am a vegan because of global sustainability do not have a normal distribution.

The table below shows the descriptive statistics of the questions with 5 options. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation and number of observations of the variables are given in the table below.

Table 19. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am a vegan because of the ethical values	101	2.16	,967
I am a vegan because of health concerns	101	3.32	1,113
I am a vegan because of the environmental issues(eg organic waste, air pollution, water usage)	101	1.74	,820
I am a vegan because of global sustainability	101	1.68	,871

Source: Own Calculations

When the mean scores of the questions on the scales of the participants are evaluated in the table, the item with the highest average is the expression “I am vegan because of health concerns “with an average of 3,32 and a standard deviation of 1,113. The second high -mean question is (2,16) and (0,967) standard deviation “ I am a vegan because of the ethical values ”. The most disagreed statement was “I am a vegan because of global sustainability” with an average of 1.68 and a standard deviation of 0.871.

4.1.1 Chi-Square Analysis

Within the scope of the research, chi-square analyzes were conducted to determine the relationships between the variables. Analysis results are given in the tables below.

Table 20. Relationship between the duration of being vegan and gender

Your gender? * How many years have you been vegan ?								
			How many years have you been vegan ?				X ²	p
			1 or below 1 year	2 year	3 year	+ 3 year		
Your gender ?	Female	Count	25	31	9	3	3,5	0,31
	Male	Count	16	9	5	3		
Total		Count	41	40	14	6		

Source: Own Calculations

The results of the chi-square test of the relationship between the gender of the participants and the duration of being vegan are given above. As a result of the analysis, no significant relationship was found between the gender of the participants and the duration of being vegan ($p > 0.005$).

Table 21. Relationship between the Buying Channels Vegan Products and Gender

Which channels do you buy vegan products?							X ²	P
			Online commerce websites	The big shopping centers	Social Media channels	Traditional Stores		
Your gender?	Female	Count	18	33	14	3	1,43	0,69
	Male	Count	7	14	10	2		
Total		Count	25	47	24	5		

Source: Own Calculations

The results of the analysis on whether there is a relationship between gender and the channels where vegan products are purchased are given above. Accordingly, it is seen that there is no significant relationship between gender and the channels where

vegan products are purchased ($p>0.05$).

Table 22. Relationship between Income and finding expensive the vegan products

Do you think vegan products are more expensive than the alternatives?				X ²	P
		Yes	No		
Your Income Status(Monthly)?	2500 TL and below	25	4	4,968	0.291
	2501 TL- 5000 TL	34	14		
	5001 TL- 7500 TL	8	4		
	7501 TL - 10000 TL	5	0		
	10001 TL and above	6	1		
total		78	23		

Source: Own Calculations

The results of the chi-square test of the relationship between the income levels of the participants and the fact that they find vegan products expensive are given above. As a result of the analysis, no significant relationship was found between the gender of the participants and the fact that they found vegan products expensive ($p>0.005$).

Table 23. Relationship between Income and Taking Nutritional Supplements

Do you take nutritional supplements because you are vegan?				X ²	p
		Yes	No		
Your Income Status(Monthly)?	2500 TL and below	26	3	20,81	0,000
	2501 TL- 5000 TL	31	17		
	5001 TL- 7500 TL	4	8		
	7501 TL - 10000 TL	3	2		
	10001 TL and above	1	6		
Total		65	36		

Source: Own Calculations

The results of the chi-square tests on the relationship between the income levels of the participants and whether they buy supplements are given above. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that there was a significant relationship between the income levels of the participants and their intake of supplementary food ($p < 0.05$). When the answers given by the participants are examined, it is concluded that the participants with low income levels take more supplementary food. According to this, it is seen that 26 of the 29 participants whose income level is below 2500 TL stated that they took supplements, and although 6 of the participants whose income level was above 5001 TL, 16 answered no to this question.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the vegan diet in Turkey was examined specifically for university students. In the study, a total of 101 vegan university students were surveyed and the results listed below were obtained as a result of the analyzes made.

In Turkey, veganism is more common among female university students,

The rate of vegan university students who are vegan for ethical reasons is high in Turkey,

- The rate of vegan university students who are vegan due to health reasons is low in Turkey,

- The rate of vegan university students in Turkey who are vegan due to environmental reasons such as environmental pollution is high,

- The rate of vegan university students who are vegan due to sustainability is high in Turkey,

- In Turkey, vegan university students mostly find vegan products expensive,

- Vegan university students in Turkey have a great deal of difficulty in finding the vegan products they are looking for,

- Vegan students in Turkey face difficulties in finding vegan products,

- Vegan university students in Turkey procure vegan products mostly from big shopping malls,

- Vegan university students in Turkey learn more about vegan products from social media,

- In Turkey, vegan students have to take nutritional supplements to a large extent,

- There is no significant relationship between the gender of vegan university students and the duration of being vegan in Turkey,

- There is no significant relationship between the gender of vegan university students in Turkey and the channels they buy vegan products,

- There is no significant relationship between the income levels of vegan university students in Turkey and the fact that they find vegan products expensive,
- There is a significant relationship between the income levels of vegan university students and their intake of nutritional supplements in Turkey, and that students with lower income levels take more nutritional supplements.

According to Bayrakdaroglu et al. (2016) on vegans and veganism, it was concluded that the vegan and vegetarian lifestyle was adopted more by women than by men. Similarly, in this study, it was concluded that there are more vegan women among university students in Turkey.

In his thesis study, Yılmaz (2018) reached the conclusion that vegans actively use social media and get organized by communicating with each other from here. In this study, it was determined that vegan students learned more about vegan products through social media. Yegen and Aydın also emphasized that vegans are very active in social media. Allowing quick and simultaneous access to the masses, Twitter is also a forum where public issues are discussed, so it is a medium heavily used by organizations that advocate and try to spread veganism. It is also important in this sense that organizations such as The Vegan Society, Vegan, Your Daily Vegan, Vegan Outreach and Finding Vegan, which have a large number of followers on Twitter, have been observed to use Twitter effectively. Like Vegan Turkey, Turkish Vegan and Vegetarians Association also uses Twitter effectively and up-to-date (Yegen & Aydın, 2018).

It is difficult to determine the size of the vegan market in Turkey because it is not possible to reach up-to-date and comprehensive data. However, current research and expert opinions show that the vegan market in Turkey is growing and has significant potential. Although it is thought that the vegan and vegetarian population in Turkey is still low, it is stated that this rate has increased over the years (Erben & Balaban-Sali, 2016).

The potential of the vegan market in Turkey is growing with increasing health awareness and environmental awareness, especially among the young population and educated consumers. In addition, the popularity and growth of vegan and herbal products around the world is increasing the interest of consumers in Turkey for these products. This is one of the factors contributing to the growth of the vegan market (Tunçay Son & Bulut, 2016).

For most consumers, many alternative products to animal foods (such as cheese, steak, salmon, chicken) do not taste good enough and these alternatives are not readily available.

It is getting easier for vegans to find their favorite products every day. Despite this, it is not possible to say that there is a wide variety of products and dishes everywhere. Depending on the country or city in which consumers live, vegan options are not frequently encountered even in most catering establishments, let alone supermarkets. In addition, the prices of vegan food pose a problem. The prices of meat alternatives and especially the fresh fruit and vegetable group are quite expensive (Aleixo et al., 2021). In this study, it was revealed that vegan students living in Turkey find vegan products expensive and they have problems in reaching vegan products.

6 CONCLUSION

As in every identity element, the shaping of vegan identity is an expression of the individual's self-consciousness and self-understanding. It is a learned phenomenon that is generally not innate, developed by the individual as a result of interactions with other people and groups. Vegan individuals are brought up with certain identity elements related to their innate environment and cultural values. However, over time, in connection with their personal development and preferences, they adopt a vegan identity for various reasons. Being a collective identity, veganism creates social boundaries for individuals. With a vegan identity, individuals have a certain sense of trust and solidarity with vegan communities and social structures. Thus, they aim to create a safe environment for themselves against the exclusionary attitudes of the other.

“Veganism” is a concept that refers to avoiding animal foods for various reasons. Veganism is not only about the elimination of animal consumption, but also about environmental problems and a sustainable future for the world. For ethical or health reasons, vegans oppose the exploitation of animals and follow vegan diets in order to eat healthy. In recent years, the vegan diet has gained momentum all over the world, and people's awareness of this issue has begun to increase. However, although many people around the world follow vegan diets, it is stated that vegans and vegetarians are very few compared to the population in most countries. In Turkey, as in the rest of the world, the number of vegans is increasing day by day. However, there is no data on how many vegans there are in the country yet.

In this thesis, the vegan diet of university students in Turkey was examined. In this context, 101 university students studying at university in Turkey were surveyed and the results obtained from the survey were analyzed. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that university students in Turkey generally buy vegan products from big shopping malls, find it difficult to find vegan products and find the products expensive. In the literature review, conceptual studies were drawn from the studies on vegan types and vegan lifestyle. It has been seen that there are basic motivations such as ethics, health, environmental and Sustainability in veganism. As a result of the survey study, it was seen that university students in Turkey mostly preferred to be vegan for ethical reasons. After ethical reasons, environmental issues and Sustainability also motivate Turkish university students to become vegan.

Veganism continues to spread and it is predicted that the vegan trend will continue in the future. For this reason, it is thought that increasing the academic studies on this subject and increasing the data of the countries on this subject will be beneficial. It is thought that promoting vegan markets in countries will also be beneficial for the future of the world and the environment, since veganism is against environmental pollution and has a purpose such as a sustainable world purpose.

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8 Appendix A

Your gender?

Female ()

Male ()

Your marital status?

Single

Married

Your Income Status (Monthly)?

2500 TL and below

2501 TL- 5000 TL

5001 TL- 7500 TL

7501 TL - 10000 TL

10001 TL and above

What kind of degree are you studying in university?

Bachelor studies

Master's studies

Doctoral studies

What year are you in university?

1

2

3

4

Above 4

How many years have you been vegan?

1 or below 1 year

2 year

3 year

() Above 3 year

I am a vegan because of the ethical values

- (1) Strongly Disagree
- (2) Disagree
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Agree
- (5) Strongly Agree

I am a vegan because of health concerns

- (1) Strongly Disagree
- (2) Disagree
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Agree
- (5) Strongly Agree

I am a vegan because of the environmental issues (e.g. organic waste, air pollution, water usage.)

- (1) Strongly Disagree
- (2) Disagree
- (3) Neutral
- (4) Agree
- (5) Strongly Agree

I am a vegan because of global sustainability (e.g. world hunger, non-optimal allocation of food, unsustainability of keeping “humanely raised” grass-fed animals)

- (1) Strongly Disagree
- (2) Disagree
- (3) Neutral

(4) Agree

(5) Strongly Agree

Are there any vegan products you're looking for but can't find?

Yes

No

Do you think vegan products are more expensive than the alternatives?

Yes

No

Which channels do you buy vegan products?

Traditional Stores

The big shopping centres

Online commerce websites

Social Media channels

Do you have difficulties in finding the vegan products?

Yes

No

Where do you get information about vegan products?

Social Media

Blogs

Websites

Television

Recommendations from my friends

Influencers

Do you take nutritional supplements because you are vegan?

Yes

No