

# FACTORS AFFECTING VIETNAMESE CONSUMERS' PURCHASE BEHAVIOR TOWARD HAI HAU TRADITIONAL LONGAN CAKE

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## Abstract

This study analyzes the factors influencing Vietnamese consumers' purchase behavior toward Hai Hau traditional Longan cake, based on an integrated model of S-O-R (Stimulus-Organism-Response) and TPB (Theory of Planned Behavior). The results show that 6 out of 8 hypotheses are supported. Specifically, Perceived Price (PP) and Perceived Quality (PQ) have a positive impact on Attitude (AT), with PQ having a stronger influence; meanwhile, Packaging Aesthetics (PA) is not statistically significant. Simultaneously, Perceived Quality (PQ) and Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) positively affect Trust in local products (TR). Regarding purchase behavior, both Attitude (AT) and Trust (TR) positively influence Purchase Behavior (PB), with TR exerting a stronger effect, whereas Subjective Norms (SN) are not statistically significant. The research confirms the vital role of perceived quality and consumer ethnocentrism in building trust and driving purchase behavior, while highlighting the mediating role of attitude and trust in the consumption of local traditional specialties. Based on these findings, the study provides discussions and suggests several managerial implications to promote purchase behavior for local traditional products in general, and Hai Hau Longan cake in particular.

**Keywords:** Factors, Influence, Behavior, Consumers, Longan Cake, Hai Hau, Vietnam.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of international economic integration, the bakery market in Vietnam has become increasingly diverse with the emergence of numerous imported products. Nevertheless, traditional cakes continue to play a vital role in the nation's culinary and cultural life. Vietnam is recognized as having one of the most attractive cuisines in the world, with traditional folk cakes serving as a distinctive highlight. Developed over a long history, traditional cakes are associated with natural ingredients, artisanal processing methods, and communal cultural values. Currently, the growth of food festivals and promotional activities has contributed to expanding the consumption market for regional specialty products.

Among these, Hai Hau Longan cake is a representative product, imbued with traditional cultural values and frequently used as a gift during festivals and Lunar New Year (Hue Chi, 2017). This product has a history of nearly 200 years, featuring a manual processing procedure and simple ingredients that require high technical skills to create its unique and distinctive flavor (Thuy Dung, 2015; Nam Dinh Newspaper, 2017). These characteristics ensure that Longan cake is not merely a consumer food item but also a product carrying cultural values and local identity.

However, in the face of increasing competition and the robust development of e-commerce, consumer behavior is undergoing significant shifts, with greater emphasis placed on product quality, origin, branding, and convenience (Metric, 2026). This poses a challenge to the market development of traditional cakes, including Hai Hau Longan cake. Despite this, research on purchase behavior toward this specific product remains limited, particularly quantitative studies aimed at determining the extent of impact of various influencing factors.

Driven by this practical reality, this study is conducted to identify and measure the factors affecting Vietnamese consumers' purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake. From there, it proposes managerial implications and appropriate market development solutions.

## **2. THEORETICAL BASIS**

### **2.1 Key concepts**

#### *Traditional Cakes*

Traditional cakes are types of pastries with long-standing origins, closely associated with the culture, customs, and culinary life of a specific region or nation. These cakes are typically made according to traditional recipes using natural ingredients. Vietnam is a country with a diverse range of traditional cakes associated with different regions (Nguyen Thi Van Anh et al., 2025).

#### *Consumer Ethnocentrism*

With the rise of globalization and increasing competition in international products and services, consumers have become more concerned about their national cultural identity. These nationalistic sentiments are reflected in consumer behavior through a tendency toward domestic products—known as the consumer ethnocentrism orientation (Vida & Fairhurst, 1999).

Sumner (1906) defined ethnocentrism as the view of members within an in-group where their own group is seen as the center of everything, while all other groups are scaled and rated with reference to it. Thus, ethnocentrism refers to a psychological tendency where individuals evaluate other groups or ethnicities as inferior to their own, based on the perspective of their own group.

#### *Purchase Intention*

Purchase intention is a customer's readiness to buy a specific product or use a particular service. It is a dependent variable influenced by various external and internal factors. Purchase intention serves as a measure of a respondent's attitude toward purchasing or utilizing a service (MBA Skool Team, 2021). By exploring the underlying power of purchase intention, companies can understand the desires and shopping habits of their customers. With this information, firms can design focused advertising campaigns and marketing messages to drive sales and strengthen customer loyalty (Bhasin, 2023).

## Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior encompasses the actions and decisions that individuals or households make when they select, purchase, use, and dispose of a product or service (Bhat, 2021). This behavior integrates ideas from multiple scientific fields, including psychology, biology, chemistry, and economics. It relies on psychological principles to understand how individual motivations, perceptions, and attitudes shape consumer purchasing decisions. Biological factors, such as physiological needs and sensory experiences, also play a role in influencing consumption behavior. Economic theory helps explain how consumers allocate limited resources among competing needs, guiding businesses in pricing and product positioning strategies (Radu, 2023).

### 2.2 Theoretical overview

*Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)*. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), focuses on consumer behavior and identifies behavioral intentions. According to this model, behavioral intention is determined by an individual's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms (the influence of others on their attitude). This model predicts and explains the tendency to perform a behavior based on the consumer's attitude toward the behavior itself, rather than their attitude toward the product or service.

*Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)*. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension and refinement of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). It is widely used to predict specific individual behaviors, such as the purchase of products or services. Key factors influencing the decision are personal attitudes and subjective norms. Personal attitude is measured by beliefs and evaluations of the outcomes of that behavior. Ajzen (1991) defines Subjective Norms as the perceived pressure from influential people regarding whether an individual should or should not perform a certain behavior. TPB further incorporates a third factor, Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC). This refers to an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior, related to the availability of necessary resources, knowledge, and opportunities.

*Stimulus Organism Response Model (S - O - R)* by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) posits that individual behavior is formed by the impact of external stimuli (Stimulus) on internal psychological states (Organism), which in turn leads to behavioral reactions (Response). In consumer research, product attributes and socio cultural factors act as stimuli that influence consumer perceptions and attitudes (Jacoby, 2002).

*Integration of S-O-R and TPB* in studying the purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake allows for a comprehensive explanation of the process, from the impact of product and cultural factors (S), to the formation of attitudes and trust within the consumer (O), and finally, the purchase behavior (R). Furthermore, this combination clarifies the mediating role of psychological and social factors, thereby enhancing the model's explanatory power within the context of local specialty consumption in Vietnam.

### 2.3 Research overview

Consumer purchase behavior toward food products and local specialties is often explained through behavioral theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Accordingly, core factors including Attitude (AT), Subjective Norms (SN), and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) play a vital role in predicting consumption intentions and behaviors. However, in the context of traditional specialty products, many studies have expanded TPB by incorporating specific variables such as perceived quality, perceived price, trust, and consumer ethnocentrism to enhance the model's explanatory power.

Firstly, Attitude (AT) is considered one of the central factors in numerous studies on consumer behavior. Previous research indicates that attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention and purchase behavior, particularly in the context of organic food and consumer products (Le Manh Hung et al., 2022). Nevertheless, in the context of traditional products or local specialties, the role of attitude might not be the most prominent factor but instead depends on accompanying variables such as trust or perceived behavioral control (Nguyen Thi Van Anh et al., 2022). This suggests that while attitude remains a necessary factor, it must be considered in relationship with other elements.

In addition, Subjective Norms (SN) reflect the degree of influence from the social environment on consumption decisions. Many studies point out that subjective norms have a positive impact on purchase intention, especially in the context of local food where consumption behavior is strongly influenced by family, friends, and word of mouth (Nguyen Van Phuong et al., 2022). However, the role of this variable is often auxiliary and is not always the primary dominant factor, especially when consumers tend to make more independent decisions.

Regarding the group of perceived value factors, Perceived Quality (PQ) is identified as one of the most important variables. Studies in Vietnam show that perceived quality has a significant impact on purchase behavior and is often a prominent factor among marketing variables (Phan Thanh Nam & Ngo Chi Thanh, 2024). Furthermore, perceived quality can indirectly influence behavior through perceived price, as consumers tend to accept higher price levels if they evaluate the product quality as good (Le Nguyen Hau et al., 2011). This is particularly relevant in the context of specialty products where perceived value plays a crucial role.

Related to this, Perceived Price (PP) is also a significant factor in explaining consumption behavior. Unlike traditional approaches to price, many studies emphasize that consumers evaluate price based on the level of reasonableness or value for money rather than absolute price alone (Le Nguyen Hau et al., 2011). In the context of confectionery and specialty products, perceived price has been proven to have a positive impact on purchase behavior (Phan Thanh Nam & Ngo Chi Thanh, 2024), especially when the product is associated with gift giving values and experiences.

An important specific factor in local product research is Trust in local specialties (TR). Trust reflects the consumer's evaluation of the safety, origin, and reputation of the

product. Research by Nguyen Van Phuong et al. (2022) shows that trust has a positive and significant impact on local food purchase intention in Vietnam. This is particularly important for traditional products like Longan cake, as consumers find it difficult to verify quality before purchase and must therefore rely on trust to make decisions.

Moreover, Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) is also regarded as an essential factor in domestic product consumption behavior. Consumer ethnocentrism reflects the tendency to prioritize domestic products based on beliefs and socio cultural values. Studies show that consumer ethnocentrism can influence purchase intention directly or indirectly by enhancing the evaluation of product quality and value (Le Nguyen Hau et al., 2011; Luis Miguel et al., 2022). For traditional specialty products, this factor becomes even more vital as it is linked to cultural identity and national pride.

Additionally, in the current competitive context, Packaging Aesthetics (PA) is also considered a factor influencing consumption behavior. Packaging not only plays a role in preservation but also serves as a communication signal regarding product quality and image. Research by Orth and Malkewitz (2008) shows that packaging design can influence brand perception and consumer product evaluation. Especially for younger customer groups, aesthetic factors and packaging experience can impact attitudes and purchase decisions, particularly in cases of buying for gift purposes.

From the literature review, it is evident that purchase behavior toward traditional specialty products is influenced not only by the factors within TPB but also by specific factors such as perceived quality, perceived price, trust, and consumer ethnocentrism. Therefore, integrating these factors into the research model is necessary to more fully reflect consumer behavior in the context of Hai Hau Longan cake.

## 2.4 Proposed research models, scales, and hypotheses

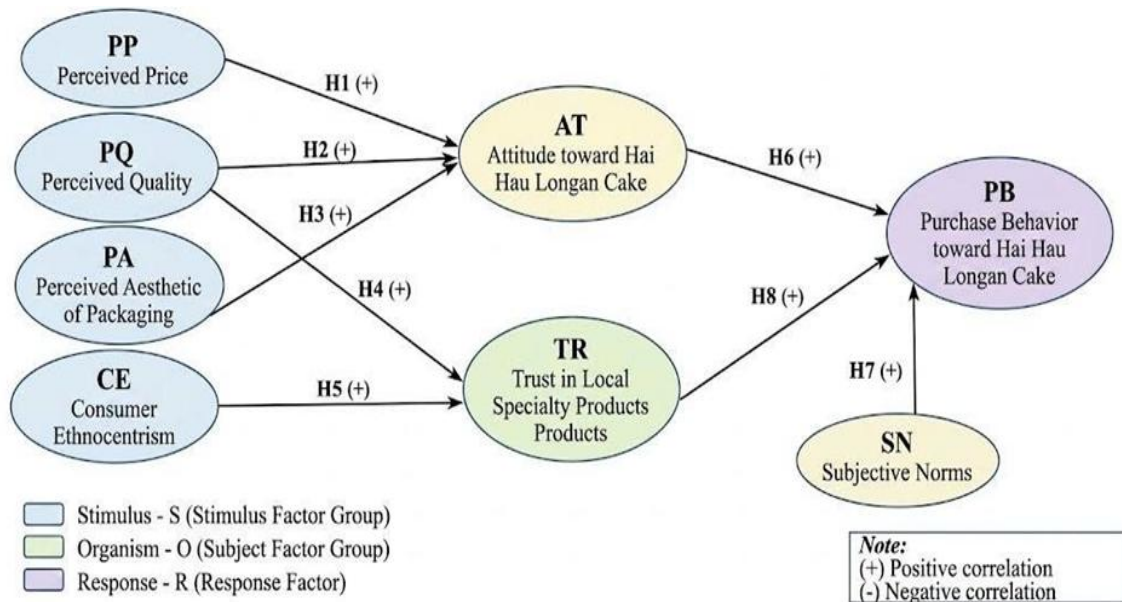
The Stimulus Organism Response (S - O - R) model by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) provides a theoretical framework to explain how external factors impact psychological states and lead to behavior. Meanwhile, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) clarifies the role of socio psychological factors, particularly attitude and subjective norms, in shaping behavior.

Based on the integration of these two theories, this study categorizes variables according to the S - O - R structure as follows.

*Stimulus Group (S)*: includes Perceived Price (PP), Perceived Quality (PQ), Packaging Aesthetics (PA), and Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE). These factors reflect product characteristics and consumer cultural orientations, serving as the initial impact on consumer perception. Accordingly, PP, PQ, and PA influence Attitude (AT) (H1, H2, H3), while PQ and CE impact Trust in local specialties (TR) (H4, H5).

*Organism Group (O)*: includes Attitude (AT), Subjective Norms (SN), and Trust (TR), representing the internal psychological and social states of the consumer. Among these, AT and SN are derived from TPB, while TR reflects specific trust toward local products.

*Response Group (R)*: is Purchase Behavior (PB). According to the research hypotheses, AT, SN, and TR all have an impact on PB (H6, H7, H8), representing the transformation process from perception and social influence into actual consumption behavior.



**Figure 1: Proposed Research Model**

Source: Proposal of the research team Research hypotheses

The research scale is specified in table 1.

**Table 1: Basis for variable formation and factor scales in the model**

No	Code	Observed variables	Reference sources
<b>I</b>	<b>PP</b>	<b>Perceived Price</b>	Phan Thanh Nam and Ngo Chi Thanh (2024), Le Nguyen Hau, Tran Truc Quynh and Le Duc Anh (2011), Tran Thi Tuan Anh et al. (2023)
1	PP1	The price of Hai Hau Longan cake is stable on the market	
2	PP2	Hai Hau Longan cake has various price levels to choose from	
3	PP3	The price of Hai Hau Longan cake is appropriate for my income	
4	PP4	The price of Hai Hau Longan cake is consistent with its quality	
<b>II</b>	<b>PQ</b>	<b>Perceived Quality</b>	Phan Thanh Nam and Ngo Chi Thanh (2024), Le Nguyen Hau, Tran Truc Quynh and Le Duc Anh (2011), Tran Thi Tuan Anh et al. (2023)
5	PQ1	Hai Hau Longan cake has a distinctive flavor	
6	PQ2	Hai Hau Longan cake is good for health	
7	PQ3	Hai Hau Longan cake has a delicious taste	
8	PQ4	Hai Hau Longan cake has natural origins and is safe for health	
9	PQ5	Hai Hau Longan cake has a diverse variety of types	
<b>III</b>	<b>PA</b>	<b>Packaging Aesthetics</b>	Silayoi and Speece (2007), Underwood (2003), Vilnai Yavetz
<b>10</b>	<b>PA1</b>	Longan cake packaging has a beautiful and attractive design	

11	PA2	Longan cake packaging conveys a sense of professionalism and quality	and Rafaeli (2007), Ruth et al. (1999)
12	PA3	Longan cake packaging provides me with a good aesthetic experience (looking, holding, opening)	
13	PA4	Longan cake packaging is suitable for gift giving	
IV	CE	<b>Consumer Ethnocentrism</b>	
14	CE1	Vietnamese people should buy traditional Longan cake	Tran Kim Dung (2015), Le Nguyen Hau, Tran Truc Quynh and Le Duc Anh (2011), Tran Thi Tuan Anh et al. (2023)
15	CE2	Buying traditional Longan cake makes me feel happy	
16	CE3	I will buy traditional Longan cake during traditional Lunar New Year holidays	
17	CE4	Enjoying traditional Longan cake makes me feel proud of national cuisine	
V	AT	<b>Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake</b>	
18	AT1	I like Hai Hau Longan cake	Lam Ngoc Thuy (2021), Tran Thi Tuan Anh et al. (2023)
19	AT2	I am attracted by the flavor of Hai Hau Longan cake	
20	AT3	I feel excited when mentioning Hai Hau Longan cake	
21	AT4	Enjoying Hai Hau Longan cake brings me many benefits	
VI	SN	<b>Subjective Norms</b>	
22	SN1	People around me buy Hai Hau Longan cake	Lam Ngoc Thuy (2021), Phan Trung Nam (2013), Phan Thanh Nam and Ngo Chi Thanh (2024), Tran Thi Tuan Anh et al. (2023)
23	SN2	People around me advise me to buy Hai Hau Longan cake	
24	SN3	There is plenty of information about Hai Hau Longan cake on current media channels	
25	SN4	Hai Hau Longan cake is promoted by influential people	
VII	TR	<b>Trust in local specialties</b>	
26	TR1	I believe that Longan cake specialty is safe and quality assured	Chaudhuri & Holbrook, (2001); Delgado-Ballester, (2004); Verbeke, (2005); Feldmann & Hamm, (2015)
27	TR2	I believe that Longan cake has a clear and reliable origin	
28	TR3	I trust the sellers or manufacturers who provide traditional Longan cake	
29	TR4	Overall I trust traditional Longan cake	
VI	PB	<b>Purchase Behavior toward traditional Longan cake</b>	
30	PB1	Buying Hai Hau Longan cake is a completely right decision	Phan Thanh Nam and Ngo Chi Thanh (2024), Le Nguyen Hau, Tran Truc Quynh and Le Duc Anh (2011), Tran Thi Tuan Anh et al. (2023)
31	PB2	Buying Hai Hau Longan cake is a recommended thing to do	
32	PB3	I will recommend many people to buy Hai Hau Longan cake	
33	PB4	I will continue to buy Hai Hau Longan cake in the future	

Source: Compilation and proposal of the research team

### Research Hypotheses:

**Hypothesis H1:** Perceived Price (PP) has a positive impact on Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT)

**Hypothesis H2:** Perceived Quality (PQ) has a positive impact on Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT)

**Hypothesis H3:** Packaging Aesthetics (PA) has a positive impact on Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT)

**Hypothesis H4:** Perceived Quality (PQ) has a positive impact on Trust in local specialty products (TR)

**Hypothesis H5:** Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) has a positive impact on Trust in local specialty products (TR)

**Hypothesis H6:** Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) has a positive impact on Purchase behavior toward Hai Hau Longan cake (PB)

**Hypothesis H7:** Subjective Norms (SN) has a positive impact on Purchase behavior toward Hai Hau Longan cake (PB)

**Hypothesis H8:** Trust in local specialty products (TR) has a positive impact on Purchase behavior toward Hai Hau Longan cake (PB)

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### **Data Collection Methodology**

Based on theoretical foundations and a literature review of factors influencing consumer behavior in general, purchase behavior for domestic and traditional products, and studies on traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam, the research group developed a proposed model and designed a survey questionnaire.

The survey was designed using a 5 point Likert scale as follows

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

After designing the questionnaire, the research group conducted a random pilot survey with 13 consumers. Preliminary results indicated that respondents agreed with the factors included in the model. Based on this pilot survey, the research group carried out a large scale survey via Google Forms targeting consumers in Vietnam through a specific link (<https://forms.gle/dnHMPjePhkuXDXS88>).

Due to limitations in time and resources for the survey, the author utilized a convenience sampling method. The sample size was determined according to the rule of Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) with  $n \geq 50 + 8m$  where  $m$  is the number of independent variables. Therefore, the minimum required sample size was  $50 + 8 \times 7 = 106$  observations.

With the perspective that collecting more observations ensures greater measurement stability, and based on collection capabilities, the research group decided to aim for a survey count of over 120. In practice, 205 responses were collected, of which 128 responses were from individuals who had previously purchased traditional Hai Hau Longan cake.

This figure exceeds the 106 requirement and was included in the analysis of influencing factors. Once collected, the research data will be cleaned and analyzed with the support of SMARTPLS software using various analytical techniques.

### ***Data processing methodology***

The general structural regression equations are as follows:

$$AT = a*PP + b*PQ + c*PA$$

$$TR = d*PQ + e*CE$$

$$PB = f*AT + n*SN + m*TR$$

A quantitative research method is conducted to process the research data collected from the survey of Vietnamese consumers regarding factors affecting the purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake. SMARTPLS software is utilized to test the hypotheses and evaluate the impact levels of the factors.

#### *Step 1: Evaluate the measurement model*

The evaluation of the measurement model is based on examining the values of indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha), convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

#### *Step 2: Evaluate the structural model*

After the measurement model meets the requirements, the structural model is evaluated through impact relationships, path coefficients, the coefficient of determination  $R^2$ , and the effect size  $f^2$ .

*Additionally*, when evaluating the factors, the collected data will be synthesized, calculated, and reflected using charts, tables, and figures in Excel software. For the influencing factors designed with a 5 point Likert scale, the evaluation of the influence level will involve calculating the mean values obtained for the scales. The mean score will then be identified within specific response thresholds to determine the influence level of each factor based on the achieved mean value.

$$\text{Internal value} = (\text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum}) / n = (5-1)/5 = 0,8$$

The evaluation thresholds based on mean scores are as follows:

- + 1,00 – 1,80: Strongly disagree
- + 1,81 – 2,60: Disagree
- + 2,61 – 3,40: Neutral
- + 3,41 – 4,20: Agree
- + 4,21 – 5,00: Strongly agree

#### 4. OVERVIEW OF THE TRADITIONAL HAI HAU LONGAN CAKE MARKET IN VIETNAM

The Nam Dinh Longan cake market in Vietnam is a specialty segment within the traditional confectionery group, operating more on occasion based demand such as temple offerings, visiting relatives, or Lunar New Year gifts rather than mass consumption. As a gift item associated with local memories, Longan cake is typically evaluated through a combination of its crispy and sweet taste, egg aroma, freshness, and the reputation of the manufacturer.

Buyers tend to seek the authentic origin to ensure the meaningful value of the gift. From a cultural and craft village perspective, the Vietnam News Agency describes Hai Hau Longan cake as being made from glutinous rice flour, chicken eggs, and sugar. Artisans roll the dough into balls and deep fry them, emphasizing craftsmanship and meticulousness, which forms the foundation for its rural specialty positioning in consumption (Thong tan xa Viet Nam, 2015).

On the supply side, production activities are concentrated in craft village clusters in Hai Hau district, most notably the Dong Cuong craft village in Yen Dinh town and several households in Hai Bac commune. The market is therefore characterized by a production distribution cluster with seasonal peaks, where households work overtime to meet orders and gifting needs.

Nam Dinh Newspaper notes that the busiest season lasts from the Mid Autumn Festival to the Lunar New Year. The Dong Cuong Longan cake craft village was officially recognized in 2012 with over 70 participating households. At the household level, production capacity can reach approximately 35 kg per day with a reference selling price of around 100,000 VND per kg.

Agents purchase the products for distribution, creating a supply chain that moves from craft villages to wholesalers and then to provincial or city markets (Nam Dinh Newspaper, 2017).

On the demand side, consumers are sensitive to risks regarding counterfeit goods, inconsistent quality, and hygiene, leading them to prioritize authentication signs. According to Nam Dinh Newspaper, at the end of 2019, the Hai Hau Longan Cake certification mark was granted by the Intellectual Property Office of Vietnam and has since been managed and promoted along the value chain (Nam Dinh Newspaper, 2020).

The list of granted certification marks updated to August 2021 also includes the Banh Nhan Hai Hau category, strengthening the legal basis for origin communication (IP Vietnam, 2021).

At the provincial level, the One Commune One Product (OCOP) program promotes standardization and digital channels. By the end of 2021, Nam Dinh had a cumulative total of 251 OCOP products rated 3 stars or higher. Support includes QR codes, packaging and label design, online communication, and website development (Nam Dinh Newspaper, 2022).

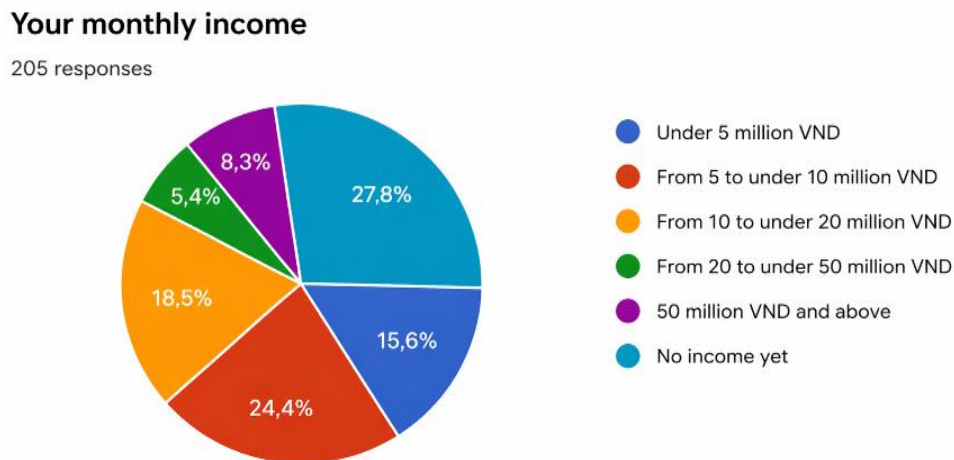
## 5. ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING PURCHASE BEHAVIOR TOWARD NAM DINH TRADITIONAL LONGAN CAKE AMONG VIETNAMESE CONSUMERS

### 5.1 Describe the survey subjects

The survey results from 205 participants show a gender imbalance in the sample structure where females account for 63,4%, males account for 32,2%, and the remainder preferred not to specify.

Regarding employment status, the majority of participants are employed (58%), followed by the student group (37,6%), while the proportion of retired individuals is very small. In terms of living areas, most respondents come from urban areas (91,2%), while rural areas only account for 8,8%.

**Chart 1: Income of survey participants**



*Source: The survey result*

The survey results indicate that the income structure of participants is quite diverse, with the most prominent group being those with no income (27,8%), reflecting the high proportion of students.

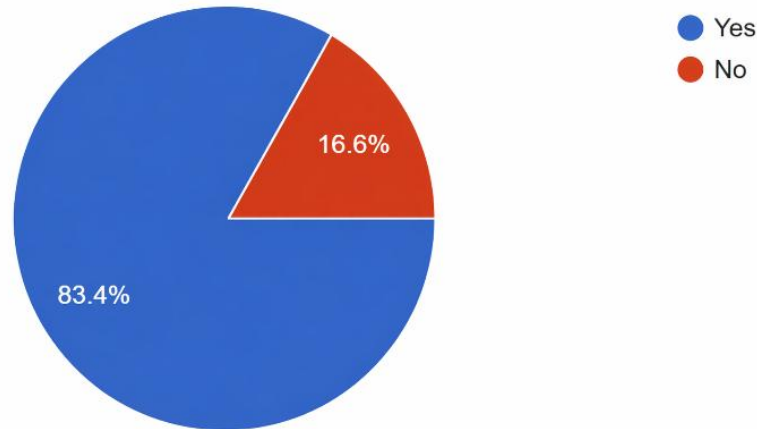
This is followed by the income groups of 5 to 10 million VND (24,4%) and 10 to 20 million VND (18,5%), suggesting that the majority of respondents have an average income level.

The low income group earning under 5 million VND accounts for 15,6%, while higher income groups (above 20 million VND) represent a relatively small proportion (approximately 13,7% in total).

Overall, the research sample leans toward younger individuals with low to middle income levels, which could significantly influence consumption behavior and the willingness to pay for Longan cake products.

## 5.2 Consumption trends for Longan cake

**Chart 2: Awareness of traditional Longan cake among survey respondents**



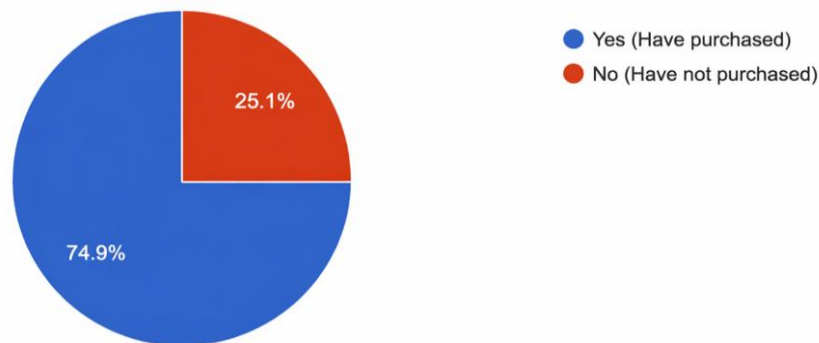
*Source: The survey result*

The survey results from 205 participants show a relatively high level of awareness regarding traditional Longan cake, as 83,4% of respondents stated they have known about the product, while only 16,6% were unaware. This reflects that Longan cake has reached a certain level of popularity in the market and is recognized by many consumers. However, the proportion of those who are unaware remains relatively significant, indicating room for expanding communication activities and enhancing consumer awareness in the future.

**Chart 3: Purchase status of traditional Longan cake**

Have you ever purchased traditional Hai Hau longan cake?

171 responses

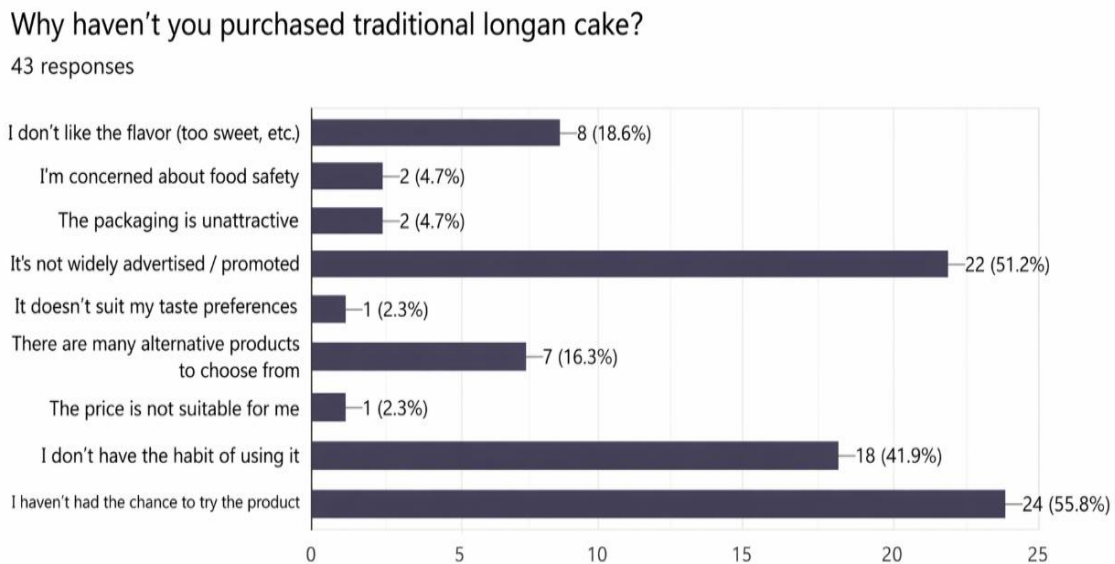


*Source: The survey result*

The survey results from 171 participants show that the majority of respondents have purchased traditional Hai Hau Longan cake, accounting for 74,9%, while 25,1% stated they have never purchased it. This reflects that the product not only has a high level of awareness but also possesses a relatively good conversion rate from awareness to purchase behavior.

However, the proportion of approximately one quarter of respondents who have never bought the product suggests that there is still room for market expansion, particularly through marketing activities aimed at stimulating first time experiences and increasing consumption behavior.

**Chart 4: Reasons for not purchasing traditional Longan cake**



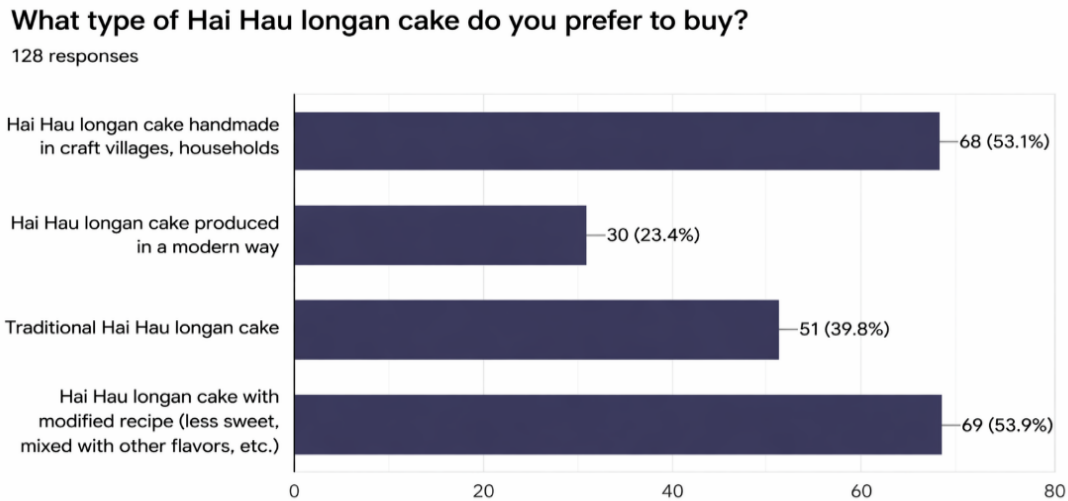
*Source: The survey result*

The survey results from 43 individuals who have never purchased Longan cake show that the biggest barrier lies in the lack of opportunity to experience the product (55,8%), followed by the product not being widely promoted (51,2%) and a lack of consumption habits (41,9%).

This indicates that the primary issue does not stem from core quality but rather from market accessibility and consumption behavior. Additionally, several product related factors such as flavor (18,6%) and the existence of substitute products (16,3%) also have a certain influence, but they are not the leading causes.

Factors such as price, packaging, or food safety concerns show very low percentages (below 5%), suggesting that these are not significant barriers.

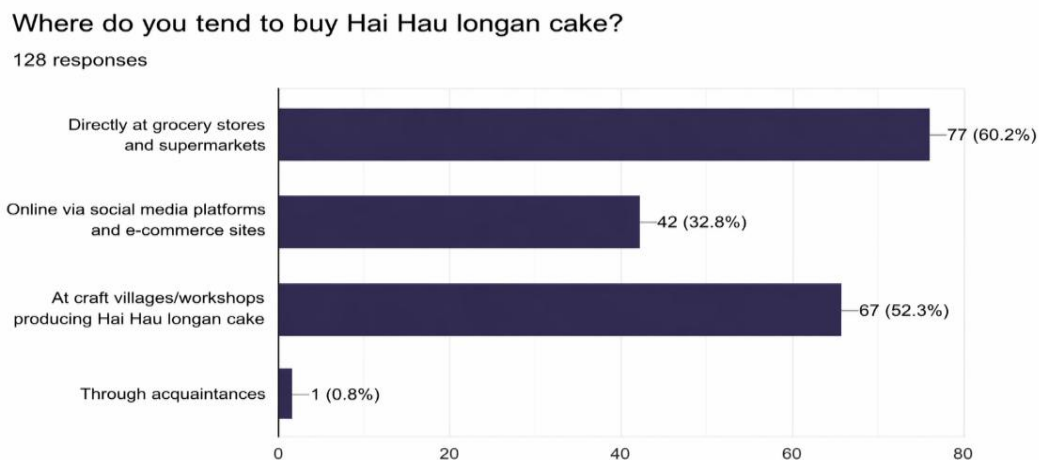
**Chart 5: Trends in the types of Hai Hau Longan cake selected**



*Source: The survey result*

The survey results from 128 individuals who have purchased Longan cake show a clear shift in consumption trends for Hai Hau Longan cake. The two most preferred types are improved Longan cake (53,9%) and traditional handmade Longan cake (53,1%), indicating that consumers highly value traditional factors while also being interested in flavor innovation. Meanwhile, the original version has an average selection rate (39,8%), and mass produced products are the least preferred (23,4%). This implies that consumers tend to prioritize products that are artisanal, distinctive, and suited to modern tastes rather than industrialized products.

**Chart 6: Purchase locations for traditional Hai Hau Longan cake**



*Source: The survey result*

The results show that consumers primarily purchase Longan cake through direct channels such as stores or supermarkets (60,2%) and craft villages (52,3%). Online channels remain limited (32,8%), while purchasing through acquaintances is almost negligible. This reflects a trend of prioritizing direct experience and the reliability of origin.

### 5.3 Testing results of factors affecting purchase behavior toward Nam Dinh traditional Longan cake among Vietnamese consumers

#### 5.3.1 Research model testing results

##### Testing the quality of observed variables

After the first model run, the observed variable PQ5 had an outer loading lower than 0,7 and the observed variables TR2 and TR4 had VIF coefficients greater than 5, so they were removed from the model. The research group proceeded to run the model for a second time, evaluating the quality of the observed variables through outer loading coefficients. The quality of the influencing observed variables is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Outer loadings of factors affecting purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam**

	AT	CE	PA	PB	PP	PQ	SN	TR
AT2	0,912							
AT3	0,915							
AT4	0,821							
CE1		0,878						
CE2		0,908						
CE3		0,891						
CE4		0,881						
PA1			0,916					
PA2			0,922					
PA3			0,916					
PA4			0,887					
PB1				0,925				
PB2				0,902				
PB3				0,911				
PB4				0,897				
PP1					0,887			
PP2					0,872			
PP3					0,895			
PP4					0,929			
PQ1						0,897		
PQ2						0,871		
PQ3						0,908		
PQ4						0,891		
SN1							0,880	
SN2							0,913	
SN3							0,846	
SN4							0,778	
TR1								0,946
TR3								0,947
AT1	0,891							

Source: Testing results of the research team

The results from Table 2 show that the outer loadings of all item total correlation coefficients for the variables influencing the purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam are all greater than 0,7 (Hair et al., 2016). This indicates that the observed variables are significant.

### **Testing the reliability of the measurement scale**

The evaluation of the measurement scale reliability for factors affecting the purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam using PLS SEM is conducted through two main indicators, which are Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR).

**Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) coefficients of factors affecting purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
AT	0,908	0,916	0,936	0,784
CE	0,912	0,914	0,938	0,791
PA	0,931	0,933	0,951	0,829
PB	0,930	0,931	0,950	0,826
PP	0,918	0,920	0,942	0,802
PQ	0,914	0,916	0,939	0,795
SN	0,882	0,919	0,916	0,732
TR	0,883	0,884	0,945	0,896

Source: Testing results of the research team

According to Table 3, the reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha for the factors shows that all scales satisfy the condition of being greater than 0,7 (DeVellis, 2012) and do not violate any rules for variable removal. Consequently, no variables were excluded, and the scales are acceptable in terms of reliability.

The Composite Reliability (CR) of all observed variables is also greater than 0,7 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) (Table 3). Therefore, the measurement scales possess reliability and analytical significance, making them suitable for use in the subsequent factor analysis.

### **Convergence**

Based on the data analysis results in Table 3, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all variables is greater than 0,5 (Hock and Ringle, 2010). This indicates that the model satisfies the necessary conditions for convergence.

### **Discriminant Validity**

The results in Table 4 regarding the Fornell Larcker criterion of the research model ensure discriminant validity because all square root values of the AVE on the diagonal are higher than their off diagonal values. Thus, regarding discriminant validity, both the cross loading criteria and the Fornell and Larcker criteria have satisfied the requirements.

**Table 4: Fornell Larcker criterion for the research model of factors affecting purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam**

	AT	CE	PA	PB	PP	PQ	SN	TR
AT	0,886							
CE	0,784	0,890						
PA	0,653	0,689	0,910					
PB	0,823	0,819	0,615	0,909				
PP	0,777	0,786	0,701	0,776	0,896			
PQ	0,854	0,850	0,701	0,841	0,803	0,892		
SN	0,649	0,656	0,735	0,551	0,669	0,661	0,856	
TR	0,785	0,771	0,640	0,833	0,856	0,811	0,583	0,946

Source: Testing results of the research team

### ***f*<sup>2</sup> Effect size**

The *f*<sup>2</sup> value represents the impact level of a construct (factor) when it is removed from the model. The *f*<sup>2</sup> values of 0,02, 0,15, and 0,35 correspond to small, medium, and large effects respectively (Cohen, 1988) of the exogenous variable. If the effect size is less than 0,02, it is considered to have no effect.

**Table 5: Bảng tổng kết giá trị *f*<sup>2</sup>**

	AT	CE	PA	PB	PP	PQ	SN	TR
AT				0,297				
CE								0,075
PA	0,003							
PB								
PP	0,075							
PQ	0,513							0,276
SN				0,003				
TR				0,395				

Source: Testing results of the research team

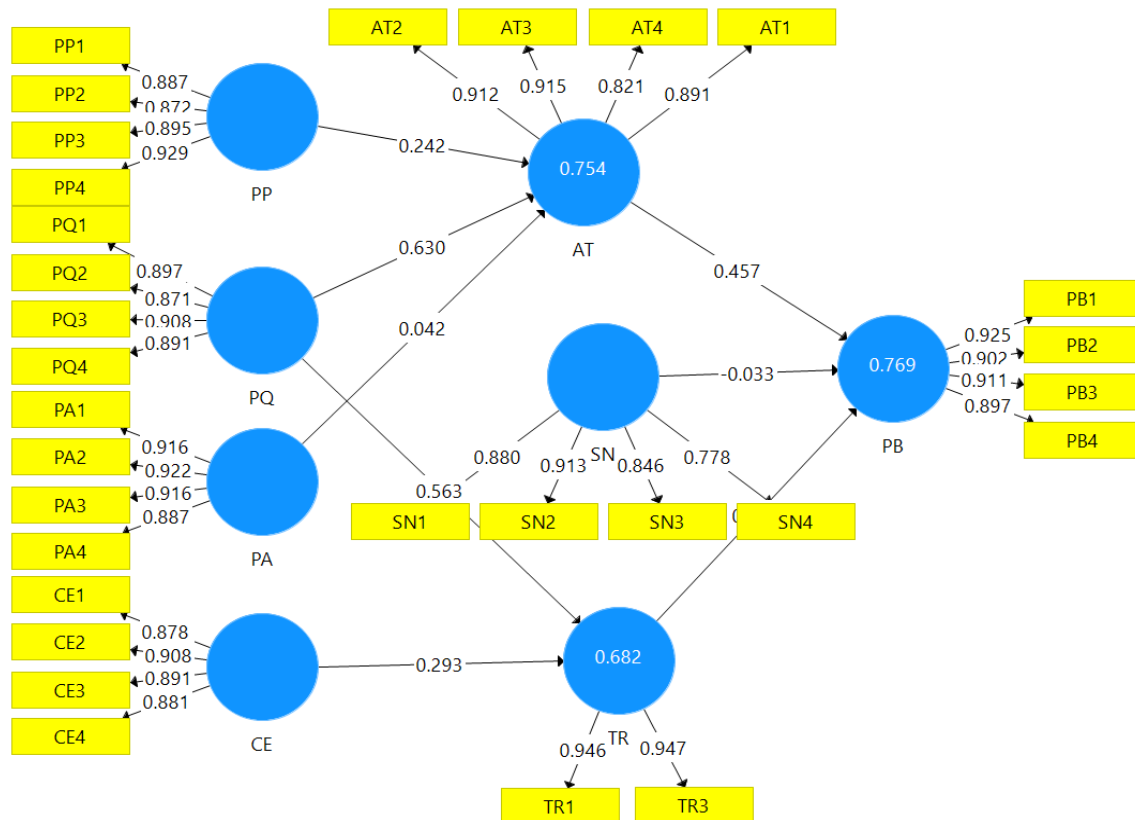
In this model, Table 5 shows the *f*<sup>2</sup> values for the following factors:

- Perceived Quality (PQ) reached 0,513, indicating a large effect, while Perceived Price (PP) reached 0,07, showing a small effect on Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT); and Packaging Aesthetics (PA) reached 0,03, which is considered to have no effect on Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT).
- Perceived Quality (PQ) reached 0,276, indicating a large effect, and Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) reached 0,075, showing a small effect on Trust in local specialty products (TR).
- Trust in local specialty products (TR) reached 0,395, indicating a large effect, while Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) reached 0,297, showing a medium effect on Purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake (PB); Subjective Norms (SN) reached 0,003, which is considered to have no effect on Purchase behavior (PB).

### 5.3.2 Evaluation results of impact levels using the structural model

#### Evaluation of impact relationships

The relationships and impact levels of factors influencing the purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam, as analyzed on SMARTPLS, are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Factors affecting purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake in Vietnam**

Source: Testing results by SMARTPLS of the research team

The results of the Bootstrap analysis to evaluate the impact relationships are presented in Table 6. At a 5% significance level:

- Perceived Price (PP) and Perceived Quality (PQ) have an influence on the variable Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) as these relationships have P values < 0,05; Packaging Aesthetics (PA) does not have sufficient statistical significance to demonstrate a relationship with the variable Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) because this relationship has a P value > 0,05.

Consequently, hypotheses H1 and H2 are accepted, while hypothesis H3 is rejected.

- Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) and Perceived Quality (PQ) have an influence on the variable Trust in local specialty products (TR) as these relationships have P values < 0,05.

Consequently, hypotheses H4 and H5 are accepted.

- Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) and Trust in local specialty products (TR) have an influence on Purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake (PB) as these relationships have P values < 0,05. Subjective Norms (SN) does not have sufficient statistical significance to demonstrate a relationship with Purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake (PB) because this relationship has a P value > 0,05.

Consequently, hypotheses H6 and H8 are accepted, while hypothesis H7 is rejected.

**Table 6: Path coefficients of the structural model**

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
AT => PB	0,457	0,454	0,098	4,661	0,000
CE => TR	0,293	0,284	0,121	2,417	0,016
PA => AT	0,042	0,042	0,065	0,649	0,516
PP => AT	0,242	0,240	0,080	3,011	0,003
PQ => AT	0,630	0,631	0,079	8,011	0,000
PQ => TR	0,563	0,566	0,112	5,020	0,000
SN => PB	-0,033	-0,025	0,065	0,505	0,614
TR => PB	0,493	0,488	0,086	5,737	0,000

Source: Testing results by SMARTPLS of the research team

The testing results in Table 6 show that with a 95% confidence level:

- Perceived Price (PP) and Perceived Quality (PQ) influence Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) with regression coefficients of 0,242 and 0,632 respectively. The regression equation is as follows:

$$\mathbf{AT = 0,242*PP + 0,630*PQ}$$

- Perceived Quality (PQ) and Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) influence Trust in local specialty products (TR) with regression coefficients of 0,563 and 0,293 respectively. The regression equation is as follows:

$$\mathbf{TR = 0,563*PQ+ 0,293*CE}$$

- Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT) and Trust in local specialty products (TR) influence Purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake (PB) with regression coefficients of 0,457 and 0,493 respectively. The regression equation is as follows:

$$\mathbf{PB = 0,457*AT + 0,493*TR}$$

### **Evaluation of the Coefficient of Determination $R^2$ (R square)**

The results of the PLS Algorithm analysis provide  $R^2$  values, reflecting the extent to which the independent variables explain the dependent variables.

The  $R^2$  index measures the coefficient of determination (R-square value), which is an indicator to measure the model's goodness of fit (the explanatory power of the model). Hair et al. (2010) suggest R-square values at levels of 0,75; 0,50; or 0,25.

**Table 7: Explanatory power of independent variables for dependent variables (R Square)**

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>
AT	0,754	0,748
PB	0,769	0,764
TR	0,682	0,677

*Source: Testing results of the research team*

Regarding the outcome variables, the results show an  $R^2$  of 0,754 and an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0,748. This indicates that the two variables PP and PQ explain 75,4% of the variance in the AT variable.

For the variable Trust in local specialty products (TR), the results show an  $R^2$  of 0,682 and an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0,677. Thus, the two variables PQ and CE explain 68,2% of the variance in the TR variable.

For Purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake (PB), the results show an  $R^2$  of 0,769 and an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0,764. Accordingly, the two variables AT and TR explain 76,9% of the variance in the PB variable.

### **Evaluation of the Model Fit Index (SRMR)**

Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) is an index that indicates the fit of the research model. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), a fitting model typically has an SRMR value smaller than 0,08.

**Table 8: Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) fit index**

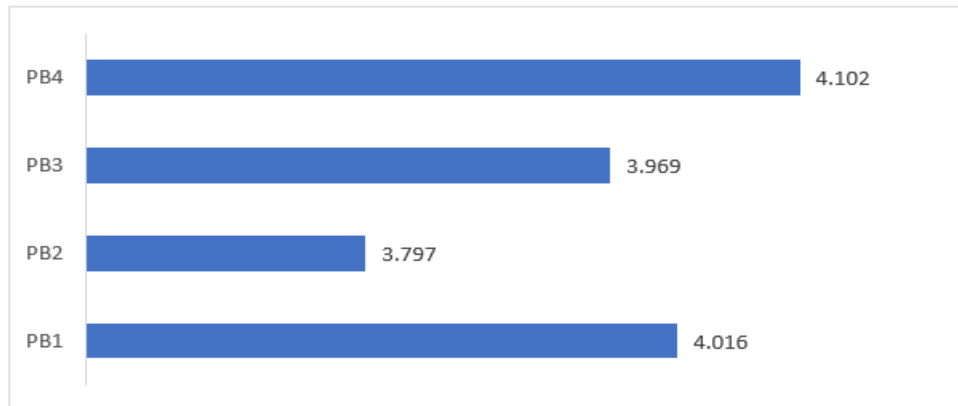
	<b>Saturated Model</b>	<b>Estimated Model</b>
SRMR	0,067	0,075

*Source: Testing results of the research team*

Based on the SRMR research results in Table 8, the value for the research model is 0,067, which is smaller than 0,08. Therefore, this model is suitable for data analysis.

#### 5.4 Additional evaluation through the mean values of observed variables

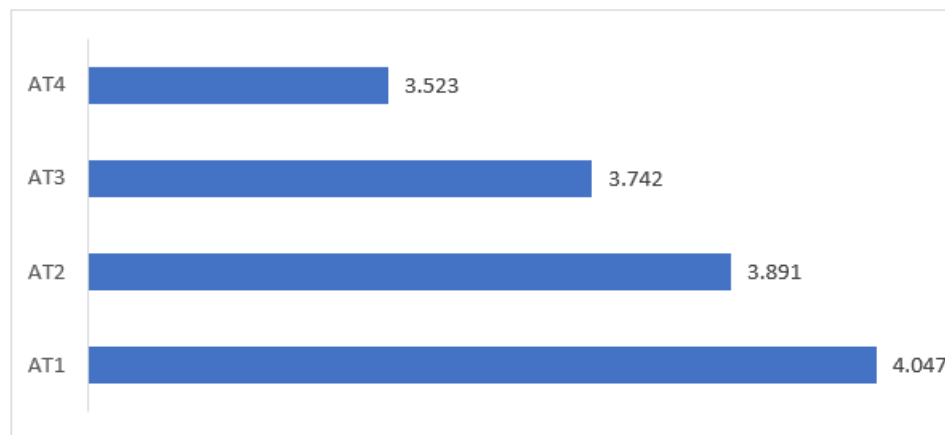
**Chart 7: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Purchase behavior toward traditional Hai Hau Longan cake (PB)”**



Source: Calculated from the survey results

The PB variables have mean values ranging from 3,797 to 4,102, with an overall average of approximately 3,97. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree), consumers agree with the purchase behavior and show a tendency to buy the product. In particular, PB4 reached 4,102, approaching the "Strongly agree" level, which reflects a relatively high intention to repurchase or engage in repeat purchase behavior. This indicates that the market possesses strong consumption potential.

**Chart 8: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake (AT)”**



Source: Calculated from the survey results

The observed variables for the attitude scale have mean values ranging from 3,523 to 4,047, with an overall average of approximately 3,80. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree), these results indicate that consumers generally agree and maintain a

positive attitude toward Hai Hau Longan cake. Notably, AT1 reached 4,047 (near the "Strongly agree" threshold), reflecting a very high evaluation of certain core aspects. However, AT4, at 3,523, remains within the lower "Agree" range, implying that some attitudinal dimensions are not yet truly prominent. Overall, attitude is a favorable factor in driving purchase behavior.

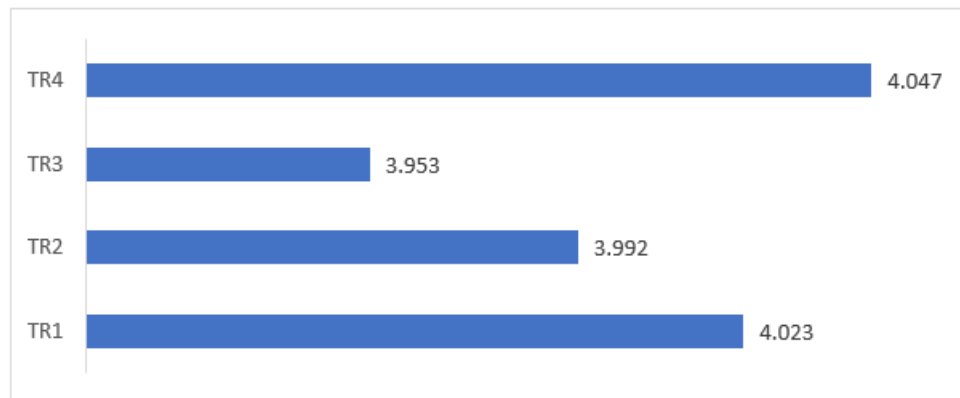
**Chart 9: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Subjective Norms (SN)”**



Source: Calculated from the survey results

The mean values of the SN variables range from 2,883 to 3,500, with an overall average of approximately 3,26. According to the Likert scale (2,61 to 3,40 Neutral; 3,41 to 4,20 Agree), these results indicate that subjective norms are only at a neutral level, leaning slightly toward agreement. Notably, SN4 has a value of 2,883 (within the "Neutral" level), reflecting that social pressure or influence from surrounding people is not yet clear. Thus, the subjective norm factor does not play a strong role in directing consumer behavior.

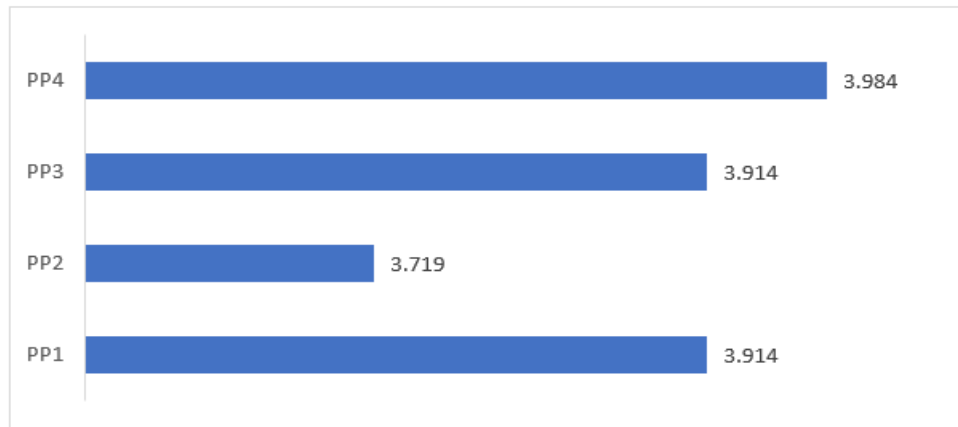
**Chart 10: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Trust in local specialty products (TR)”**



Source: Calculated from the survey results

The TR variables have mean values ranging from 3,953 to 4,047, with an overall average of approximately 4,00. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree) and approaching the "Strongly agree" level (4,21 to 5,00), these results indicate that consumers have a very high level of trust in local specialty products. The stability and uniformity among the variables suggest that trust is a strong and consistent factor in consumer perception.

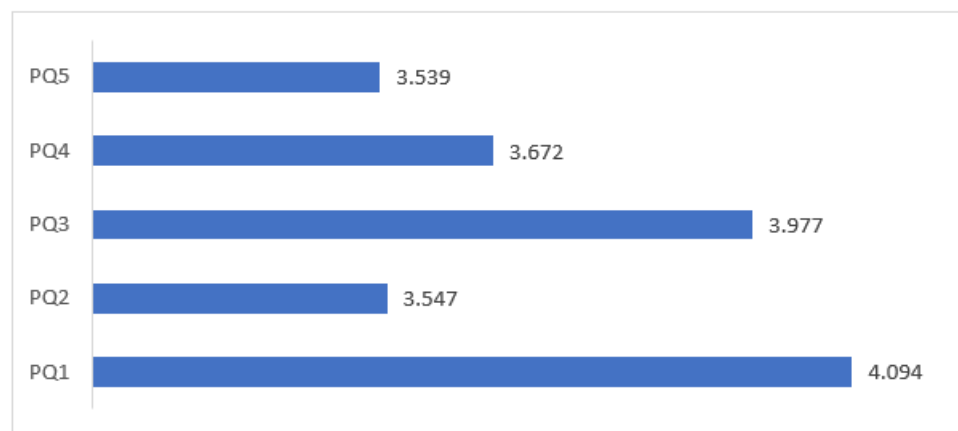
**Chart 11: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Perceived Price (PP)”**



*Source: Calculated from the survey results*

The observed variables for PP have mean values ranging from 3,719 to 3,984, with an overall average of approximately 3,88. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree), consumers agree that the product price is reasonable and acceptable. The relatively uniform values indicate that price perception is quite stable. Therefore, price is not a barrier but can support the purchase decision.

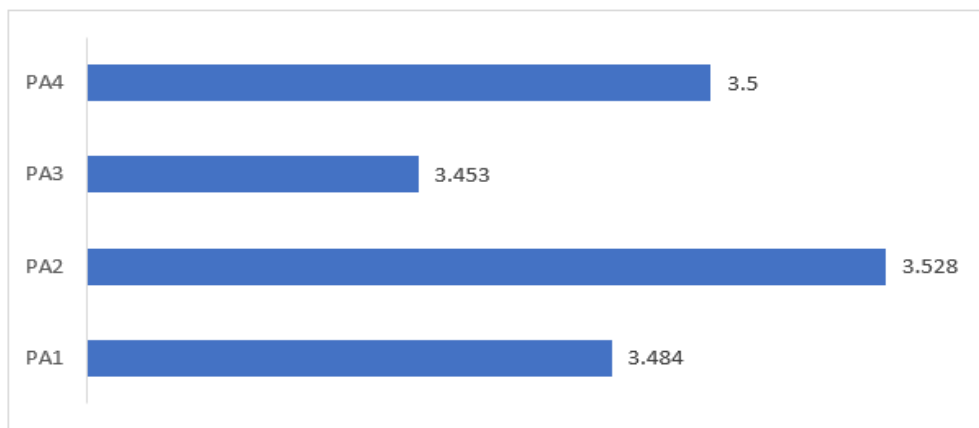
**Chart 12: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Perceived Quality (PQ)”**



*Source: Calculated from the survey results*

The observed variables for PQ have mean values ranging from 3,539 to 4,094, with an overall average of approximately 3,77. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree), consumers agree that the product has good quality. PQ1 reached 4,094, approaching the "Strongly agree" level, indicating that certain quality attributes are highly evaluated. However, some variables such as PQ2 (3,547) are only at a lower "Agree" level, reflecting an inconsistency in quality perception. Overall, perceived quality is a positive factor and plays an important role.

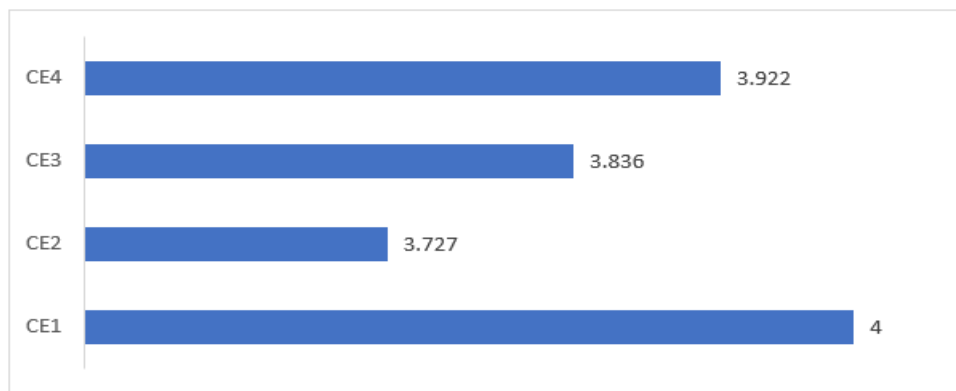
**Chart 13: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Packaging Aesthetics (PA)”**



Source: Calculated from the survey results

The observed variables for PA have mean values ranging from 3,453 to 3,528, with an overall average of approximately 3,49. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree), this result is only at a low agreement level, close to the "Neutral" threshold. This indicates that the product packaging is not yet truly prominent in terms of aesthetics and has not created a strong impression on consumers. This is a limitation that needs to be improved.

**Chart 14: Mean values of the observed variables for the factor “Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE)”**



Source: Calculated from the survey results

The mean values of the CE variables range from 3,727 to 4,000, with an overall average of approximately 3,87. According to the Likert scale (3,41 to 4,20 Agree), consumers demonstrate a high level of agreement with the tendency to prioritize domestic products. CE1 reached 4,000, showing a clear awareness of supporting local specialties. Thus, the ethnocentrism factor is a significant driver promoting the consumption of Hai Hau Longan cake.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Discussion of research results

The research results indicate that the model has a high level of fit ( $SRMR = 0,067 < 0,08$ ) and strong explanatory power ( $R^2 = 0,769$ ), confirming that the variables in the model have practical significance in explaining the purchase behavior toward Hai Hau Longan cake.

First, the results indicate that Trust in local specialty products (TR) has the strongest impact on purchase behavior ( $\beta = 0,493$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ), followed by Attitude (AT) ( $\beta = 0,457$ ;  $p < 0,001$ ). This is consistent with behavioral theories such as TPB and S-O-R, where cognitive factors (trust) and evaluation (attitude) play important mediating roles leading to behavior. In particular, the  $f^2$  value of TR (0,395) indicates a large effect size, affirming that trust is the core factor in the context of local specialty products.

Conversely, Subjective Norms (SN) are not statistically significant ( $p > 0,05$ ;  $\beta = -0,033$ ), suggesting that the purchase behavior toward Longan cake is not influenced by social pressure. This result reflects a characteristic of individual consumption where consumers make decisions based on their own experiences and perceptions rather than being dominated by others. This finding is also consistent with the context of the research sample, which mainly consists of young people who tend to be independent consumers.

Regarding factors affecting attitude, Perceived Quality (PQ) has the strongest impact ( $\beta = 0,630$ ;  $f^2 = 0,513$  – large effect size), while Perceived Price (PP) has a weaker impact ( $\beta = 0,242$ ;  $f^2 = 0,075$  – small effect size). This shows that consumers evaluate the product primarily based on quality rather than price, which is consistent with the characteristics of specialty products where perceived value plays a more important role than cost.

Notably, Packaging Aesthetics (PA) is not statistically significant ( $p > 0,05$ ;  $f^2 \approx 0$ ), indicating that aesthetic factors are not yet strong enough to influence consumer attitude. This result can be explained by the fact that Longan cake still carries a traditional character, and consumers care more about quality and origin than appearance.

Regarding Trust (TR), the results show that Perceived Quality (PQ) continues to be a strong influencing factor ( $\beta = 0,563$ ;  $f^2 = 0,276$ ), while Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE) has an influence but at a lower level ( $\beta = 0,293$ ;  $f^2 = 0,075$ ). This indicates that consumer trust is formed primarily from quality experiences while also being reinforced by the tendency to support domestic goods.

## 6.2 Managerial Implications

The research results provide several important managerial implications for production and business establishments of Hai Hau Longan cake. First, consumer trust is identified as the factor with the strongest impact on purchase behavior. Therefore, businesses need to focus particularly on building and strengthening trust through transparency of information regarding product origin, production processes, and food safety standards. Utilizing quality certifications while communicating the cultural values and traditional nature of the product will contribute to enhancing reliability and promoting consumption behavior.

Furthermore, perceived quality serves as a core factor, strongly influencing both consumer attitude and trust. Consequently, producers should focus on maintaining and improving product quality, especially characteristic elements such as flavor, ingredients, and traditional processing techniques. At the same time, innovating products by combining traditional and modern elements, such as diversifying flavors or making slight aesthetic improvements, will better meet consumer needs, particularly among the younger customer segment.

Regarding the price factor, although it has a positive influence on attitude, the impact level is not substantial, suggesting that consumers are not overly price sensitive toward specialty products. Therefore, businesses should not compete with low price strategies but should instead focus on value based pricing. This can be combined with benefit increasing forms such as product combos or gift packaging to enhance perceived customer value.

Additionally, the research results indicate that ethnocentrism influences trust, implying that exploiting the "local specialty" element is a suitable direction. Businesses should strengthen communication by linking the product with the Hai Hau locality, emphasizing traditional factors, cultural identity, and the "Vietnamese people prioritize Vietnamese goods" spirit to create a competitive advantage in the market.

However, a notable point is that packaging has not yet significantly influenced consumer attitude and was only rated at an average level. This shows that current packaging is not truly attractive and has not created differentiation. Therefore, businesses need to invest more in packaging design toward aesthetics, modernity, and convenience, especially developing product lines for gifting purposes to enhance added value and competitiveness.

Finally, the lack of statistical significance for subjective norms indicates that purchase behavior is not significantly influenced by social factors. Thus, marketing strategies should not rely too heavily on celebrities or word of mouth but instead focus on enhancing the individual consumer experience. Simultaneously, descriptive results show that a segment of consumers has never purchased the product primarily due to a lack of accessibility. Therefore, businesses need to expand distribution channels, increase product sampling activities, and develop online sales channels to increase accessibility and drive consumption behavior.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The study confirms that in the context of local specialty consumption, the sequence of Perceived Quality → Trust → Purchase Behaviour is the core impact chain, while factors such as subjective norms and packaging play limited roles. This contributes additional empirical evidence to the expansion of the TPB model combined with S-O-R in the field of traditional specialty consumption.

The study has certain limitations. First, the survey sample mainly focused on young people, urban areas, and low to middle income groups, thus limiting the generalizability of the results. Second, the data was collected using a cross sectional method, so it does not reflect behavioral changes over time. Third, the model has not considered several important factors such as consumer experience, emotions, or the influence of social media. Additionally, variables like subjective norms and packaging were not statistically significant, suggesting they should be re examined in future studies.

Future research should expand the sample to be more diverse in terms of age, region, and income to increase representativeness. At the same time, longitudinal research designs or qualitative methods could be applied to gain deeper insights into consumer behavior. Adding variables such as customer experience, emotions, social media, or brand image is also recommended to enhance the model's explanatory power. Furthermore, future studies could expand to other specialty products or perform multi group analysis to compare different consumer segments.

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