



Journal of Frontiers in Multidisciplinary Research

Allowance, Peer Influence and Health Consciousness of Senior High School Students Towards their Purchasing Decision on Milk Tea

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Article Info

E-ISSN: 3050-9726

P-ISSN: 3050-9718

Volume: 07

Issue: 01

Received: 28-11-2025

Accepted: 01-12-2025

Published: 02-01-2026

Page No: 17-26

Abstract

This study examined how allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness relate to senior high school students' purchasing decisions on milk tea at Impasugong National High School. A descriptive–correlational design was used, with 273 students selected through simple random sampling based on a computed sample size. Data were collected using an expert-validated, adapted questionnaire measured on a four-point Likert scale, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Spearman's rho correlation.

Results showed that the largest proportion of students received a daily allowance of 51–70 pesos, reported a high level of peer influence, and a low level of health consciousness. Correlation analysis indicated small but statistically significant positive relationships between allowance and purchasing decision and between health consciousness and purchasing decision, whereas peer influence had a weak, non-significant association with purchasing decision. These findings suggest that students with greater financial resources and relatively higher health awareness tend to be more engaged in milk tea purchasing, while peer pressure plays a limited role.

The study highlights allowance and health consciousness as key, though modest, predictors of milk tea purchasing decisions among senior high school students, with peer influence contributing minimally. The results provide evidence for businesses and educators to consider students' financial capacity and emerging health concerns when designing marketing strategies and school-based interventions related to beverage consumption.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54660/JFMR.2026.7.1.17-26>

Keywords: Allowance, Peer Influence, Health Consciousness, Purchasing Decision, Milk Tea, Theory of Planned Behavior, Senior High School Students, Consumer Behavior, Philippines

Introduction

The rising popularity of milk tea among senior high school (SHS) students has created a distinct youth consumer segment whose purchasing decisions are shaped by financial capacity, social influences, and health-related perceptions (Ong, 2021) ^[24]. Students' allowance reflects their available economic resources and perceived control over spending, which can determine how frequently they buy milk tea and what price–quality combinations they consider acceptable (Azizah & Aswad, 2022; Ong, 2021) ^[4, 24]. At the same time, peers help define what is trendy, acceptable, and desirable, as recommendations, shared experiences, and social activities around milk tea can reinforce norms about what and where to purchase (Huang, 2024) ^[14]. Health consciousness adds another layer of complexity, as some students regard milk tea as an enjoyable alternative to carbonated drinks, whereas others express concern about sugar content, additives, and potential long-term health risks (Baclangen, 2023; Qu *et al.*, 2023) ^[5, 25]. Together, these three factors interact to shape how SHS students evaluate, choose, and repeatedly purchase milk tea products (East *et al.*, 2021) ^[10].

In the local context of Poblacion, Impasugong, Bukidnon, milk tea outlets have expanded alongside the growing youth market, yet empirical studies on what drives SHS students' milk tea purchasing decisions remain limited. Most existing works focus on general consumer behavior or urban settings, leaving a gap in understanding how allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness jointly influence purchasing decisions among public-school students in a provincial municipality

(Azizah & Aswad, 2022; Ong, 2021) [4, 24]. Addressing this gap is important for entrepreneurs who need evidence-based insights for product positioning and promotional strategies and for educators and school programs that aim to promote informed and health-conscious consumption among adolescents (Baclangen, 2023; Qu *et al.*, 2023) [5, 25].

Guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study examines how allowance (as an indicator of perceived behavioral control), peer influence (as a form of subjective norm), and health consciousness (as a component of attitudes toward behavior) relate to SHS students' purchasing decisions on milk tea (Ajzen, 1991; East *et al.*, 2021) [1, 10]. Specifically, it investigates the levels of allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness and tests the relationships of these variables with students' purchasing decisions. By clarifying how financial, social, and health-related factors combine to influence milk tea consumption, the study seeks to provide practical insights for small beverage businesses and contribute to consumer education efforts that support responsible and informed purchasing among senior high school students (Azizah & Aswad, 2022; Huang, 2024; Ong, 2021) [4, 14, 24].

Objective of the study

This study aimed to analyze the significant relationship between allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness towards purchasing decision, specifically examining:

- The level of allowance, peer influence and health consciousness and;
- The significant relationship between the variables

Significance of the study

The findings of this study provide empirical insights into how allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness shape the purchasing decisions of senior high school students, thereby enriching the literature on youth consumer behavior and informing practical interventions.

To the milk tea businesses. The results can guide milk tea entrepreneurs in designing pricing schemes, product offerings, and promotional strategies that align with students' budget constraints, social dynamics, and health concerns, allowing them to better position their products in the youth market.

To the consumers. The study can raise awareness among senior high school students about the financial, social, and health-related factors that influence their milk tea purchases, supporting more mindful, responsible, and health-conscious decision-making.

To the academics. The study extends existing work on the Theory of Planned Behavior by examining the roles of allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness in a specific school-based context, providing a reference for future research on adolescent purchasing decisions and related educational programs.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that behavior is shaped by attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In this framework, the purchasing decision of senior high school students on milk tea is treated as the dependent variable, while allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness are the independent variables that are expected to influence that decision.

Allowance represents the financial resources available to students and reflects their perceived behavioral control, as a higher or more flexible allowance may enable them to purchase milk tea more frequently or choose higher-priced options. Peer influence captures the effect of classmates and friends on students' attitudes and subjective norms by shaping what is perceived as acceptable, trendy, or desirable in terms of milk tea consumption. Health consciousness reflects students' awareness and concern for the health implications of their beverage choices and is linked to their attitudes toward drinking milk tea.

The purchasing decision refers to the process by which a senior high school student chooses whether or not to buy milk tea, including considerations of need, preference, social expectations, health beliefs, and available resources. Within the TPB framework, this study examines how allowance (perceived behavioral control), peer influence (subjective norms), and health consciousness (attitudes) are related to the purchasing decisions of senior high school students toward milk tea.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1991) [1], explains that a person's intention to perform a behavior is shaped by three core determinants: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes refer to the individual's overall evaluation of performing the behavior as favorable or unfavorable, subjective norms capture perceived social pressure from important others, and perceived behavioral control reflects the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior given available resources and opportunities.

In this study, TPB provides the lens for understanding senior high school students' purchasing decisions on milk tea. Allowance is treated as an indicator of perceived behavioral control because students with greater financial resources may find it easier to buy milk tea when they want to. Peer influence corresponds to subjective norms, as classmates, friends, and social groups can encourage or discourage milk tea consumption through expectations and shared practices. Health consciousness is linked to attitudes toward the behavior, since students who are more aware of health risks may form less favorable evaluations of frequently drinking milk tea. By aligning allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness with the key components of TPB, the study examines how these factors jointly shape students' intentions and actual decisions to purchase milk tea.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to examine how allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness are related to the purchasing decisions of senior high school students on milk tea. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of allowance of the senior high school students?
2. What is the level of peer influence among the senior high school students?
3. What is the level of health consciousness of the senior high school students?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the senior high school students' allowance and their purchasing decisions on milk tea?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the senior high school students' peer influence and their purchasing

decisions on milk tea?

6. Is there a significant relationship between the senior high school students' health consciousness and their purchasing decisions on milk tea?

Research Hypotheses:

The following null hypotheses are tested in this study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between students' allowance and their purchasing decisions on milk tea.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between students' peer influence and their purchasing decisions on milk tea.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between students' health consciousness and their purchasing decisions on milk tea.

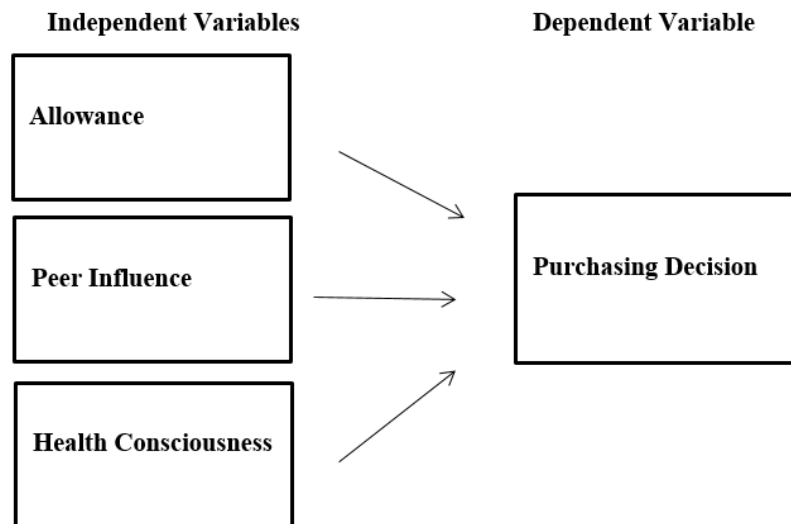


Fig 1: Framework of the Study

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the relationships among allowance, peer influence, health consciousness, and the purchasing decisions of senior high school students on milk tea. A descriptive–correlational design was used: the descriptive component summarizes the levels of allowance, peer influence, health consciousness, and purchasing decisions, while the correlational component tests the statistical associations between these variables. This design is appropriate because the study aims to quantify the degree to which the three independent variables are related to students' purchasing decisions in Poblacion, Impasugong, Bukidnon, without manipulating any conditions.

Participants of the Study

The target population of this study consisted of all senior high school (SHS) students enrolled in Impasugong National High School, Poblacion, Impasugong, Bukidnon. A total of 996 students from both the academic and technology-vocational–livelihood (TVL) tracks formed the population frame, limited to those who had previously purchased milk tea. From this population, a sample of 273 SHS students was determined using an online sample size calculator (Raosoft) and selected to represent the group whose allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness were examined in relation to their purchasing decisions on milk tea.

Population Sampling

Simple random sampling was employed to select participants from the senior high school (SHS) population of Impasugong National High School, ensuring that each eligible student had an equal chance of being included in the study. The population consisted of 996 SHS students who had experience purchasing milk tea. Using an online sample size calculator (Raosoft) with a 5% margin of error, a 95%

confidence level, and an assumed response distribution of 50%, the required minimum sample size was computed as 273 students, who then served as the respondents for the survey.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the survey were encoded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarize the levels of allowance, peer influence, health consciousness, and purchasing decisions of the senior high school students. Inferential statistics were applied to examine the relationships among the variables.

Because the main variables were measured using Likert-type scales and did not fully meet the assumptions of parametric tests, Spearman's rho correlation was employed to test the association between allowance, peer influence, health consciousness, and purchasing decisions. The null hypotheses stated that there is no significant relationship between each independent variable and purchasing decision; these hypotheses were evaluated at a 0.05 level of significance.

Research Instrument

The study used a structured survey questionnaire adapted from existing instruments on milk tea consumption and purchasing behavior, particularly the work of De Guzman (2020) on the popularity of milk tea among senior high school students and studies on factors affecting milk tea purchasing decisions (e.g., Bestica-Baclangen, 2020). Items were modified to fit the context of Impasugong National High School and to align with the constructs of allowance, peer influence, health consciousness, and purchasing decision in this study.

The final questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first

section gathered information on students' daily allowance to capture their financial capacity related to purchasing milk tea. The second section measured peer influence and health consciousness through statements describing social influences and health-related beliefs about milk tea consumption. The third section assessed purchasing decisions, including preferences, frequency of purchase, and reasons for buying milk tea. All attitudinal items were rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating stronger agreement with the statement.

Validation of Instrument: To ensure the quality of the instrument, content validity was established through expert review by faculty members with backgrounds in business and research methods, who examined the clarity, relevance, and alignment of items with the study variables. A pilot test was then conducted with a small group of senior high school students who were not part of the main sample. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, and all scales obtained coefficients above 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability.

Expert Evaluation: The content of the research instrument was evaluated by subject-matter experts to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study variables. Experienced faculty members in business and research methods reviewed each item and provided suggestions for revising wording, removing ambiguities, and improving content coverage. Based on their comments, the questionnaire was refined, and a pilot test with a small group of senior high school students was conducted to further assess reliability and comprehensibility.

Data Collection: Data were collected through a face-to-face survey administration. After securing approval from school authorities, the researchers coordinated with the senior high school department to identify eligible classes and schedule survey sessions. The purpose of the study, procedures, and voluntary nature of participation were explained to the students before distributing the questionnaires. Respondents completed the survey during class time, and the accomplished questionnaires were collected immediately. Throughout the data collection, ethical considerations were observed. Participation was voluntary, students could decline or withdraw without penalty, and no identifying information was recorded on the questionnaires. Responses were treated as confidential and were used solely for research purposes.

Ethical Consideration

Before data collection, the researchers informed all potential participants about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Students were advised that they could refuse or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, and that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes. Informed consent was obtained, and no identifying information was recorded on the questionnaires to help protect anonymity.

All data were treated with strict confidentiality and stored securely. The researchers ensured that no deception, coercion, or procedures that could harm the participants' physical, psychological, or social well-being were involved. The study adhered to the ethical guidelines and policies of Bukidnon State University and complied with institutional standards on integrity, including proper acknowledgment of sources and avoidance of plagiarism.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Level of Daily Allowance of the Respondents

Daily Allowance	Frequency	Percentage	Qualitative Statement
10-30	27	9.9	Very Low
31-50	20	7.3	Low
51-70	112	41.0	Average
71-90	40	14.7	High
>90	74	27.1	Very High
N	273	100	

Note: 10-30 pesos Very Low; 31-50 pesos Low; 51-70 pesos Average; 71-90 pesos High; 91 Above pesos Very High.

The results in Table 1 indicate that most senior high school students receive a daily allowance of 51–70 pesos (41.0%), categorized as average, while more than one-fourth receive over 90 pesos daily (27.1%), classified as very high. This pattern suggests that a substantial share of students has enough discretionary funds to purchase milk tea regularly, which is consistent with recent findings that students with limited yet regular allowances form a key segment of the milk tea market and show high purchase involvement despite budget constraints (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Lin *et al.*, 2023) [7, 19]. Studies on adolescents' food and beverage purchasing also report that younger consumers, particularly students, tend to allocate a notable portion of their allowance to drinks and snack foods, highlighting the role of daily allowance in shaping purchase frequency and product choice (Lin *et al.*, 2023; van den Bogerd *et al.*, 2020) [19, 27].

Table 2: Level of Peer Influence of the Respondents

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Qualitative statement
1. My knowledge of milk tea is influenced by secondary sources such as family/friends, internet and advertisement ad etc.	3.15	.85	High
2. My decision in buying milk tea is heavily influenced by my family/friends.	2.86	.88	High
3. I drink milk tea whenever my friend's drink.	2.70	.84	High
4. I feel left behind when others buy milk tea when I have none.	2.05	.84	Low
5. I buy milk tea just to join the current trend.	1.84	.80	Low
Mean Score	2.52	.57	High

Note: 1.00-1.74 Very Low; 1.75-2.49 Low; 2.50-3.24 High; 3.25- 4.00 Very High

The results in Table 2 show that senior high school students report a generally high level of peer influence regarding milk tea, with an overall mean of 2.52 (SD = 0.57). This suggests that while students do not strongly endorse buying milk tea purely “to join the trend,” they are substantially influenced by family, friends, and online sources in terms of information and shared consumption experiences. Recent studies on milk tea and bubble tea consumption similarly find that recommendations from peers, social media exposure, and group drinking occasions play a key role in shaping young consumers’ beverage choices and brand preferences, even when not all individuals explicitly perceive themselves as

conforming to trends (Alfaro *et al.*, 2023; Firmansyah & Anwar, 2020; Sutanto & Wijaya, 2019) [2, 12, 26].

These findings align with research on adolescent and youth consumer behavior showing that peer groups often function as reference points for what is “acceptable” or “popular,” particularly for hedonic products such as milk tea and other specialty drinks (Chaudhary & Gupta, 2022; Lim *et al.*, 2016) [8, 18]. Rather than being “forced” to buy milk tea, students may be responding to perceived social norms and the desire to share experiences with friends, which is consistent with the subjective-norm component of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Table 3: Level of Health Conscious of the Respondents

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Qualitative statement
1. My consumption of milk tea helps me maintain a good sleep schedule.	2.00	.70	Low
2. My consumption of milk tea and prioritizing a balance diet shown positive effects on my skin.	2.07	.80	Low
3. My consumption of milk tea along with a healthy lifestyle contributes to a well-functioning digestive system.	2.22	.80	Low
4. My consumption of milk tea has given me enough energy and alertness each day.	2.21	.77	Low
5. My consumption of milk tea has become a part of my daily routine or diet.	1.82	.80	Low
Mean Score	2.06	.64	Low

Note: 1.00-1.74 Very Low; 1.75-2.49 Low; 2.50-3.24 High; 3.25- 4.00 Very High

The results in Table 3 indicate that students demonstrate a generally low level of health consciousness related to milk tea consumption, with an overall mean of 2.06 (SD = 0.64). This suggests that most respondents do not strongly perceive milk tea as contributing positively to sleep, skin, digestion, or daily energy, and relatively few reports that milk tea is part of their regular diet. Similar patterns of limited or ambivalent health awareness have been reported in recent research, where adolescents and young adults recognize some benefits of tea but are less aware of the potential health risks associated with sugar-sweetened milk-tea beverages, such as excess sugar and calorie intake (Nour *et al.*, 2023) [22].

At the same time, contemporary reviews highlight that tea itself contains antioxidants that may support cardiovascular and metabolic health, while adding milk and large amounts of sugar can alter these effects and increase health risks when consumed frequently (Higdon & Frei, 2013; Kaur *et al.*, 2017; Mhatre *et al.*, 2025) [13, 16, 20]. The low health-conscious scores in this study therefore align with literature showing that many young consumers focus more on taste and enjoyment than on nutritional information when purchasing milk tea, and may underestimate the long-term health implications of habitual consumption of sugar-rich milk-tea drinks (Lin *et al.*, 2023; Nour *et al.*, 2023) [19, 22].

Table 4: Level of Purchased Decision of the Respondents

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Qualitative statement
1. I prefer to purchase lower price milk teas.	3.44	.73	Very High
2. I prefer to buy as much as possible on discounted sale price	3.40	.75	Very High
3. Flavor has a significant value for me while buying.	3.64	.50	Very High
4. I like to purchase one flavor I like the most every time.	3.38	.62	Very High
5. Getting very good quality is important for me.	3.66	.55	Very High
6. When it comes to deciding between good quality and price, I prefer quality.	3.40	.68	Very High
7. I prefer buying the best-selling milk teas.	3.21	.73	High
8. I visit different milk tea shops to get variety flavors.	2.95	.84	High
9. I buy milk tea for social occasion/entertainment.	2.78	.79	High
10. Milk tea acts as a refreshment.	3.27	.68	Very High
11. Milk tea tastes good.	3.49	.62	Very High
12. Milk tea satisfies basic thirst and is filling.	3.32	.69	Very High
13. I buy milk tea because my peers buy it.	2.85	.82	High
14. I drink milk tea with my friends.	3.48	.65	Very High
15. I drink milk tea with my family.	3.16	.82	High
16. drink milk tea with my schoolmates.	3.40	.71	Very High
17. I go to milk tea shop with my friends or schoolmates.	3.47	.72	Very High
18. I go to milk tea shop with my family.	3.00	.86	High
19. I learned to drink milk tea from word of mouth.	3.12	.74	High
20. I learned to drink milk tea from internet, blogs, and social medias.	3.12	.78	High
Mean Score	3.52	.28	Very High

Note: 1.00-1.74 Very Low; 1.75-2.49 Low; 2.50-3.24 High; 3.25- 4.00 Very High

The results in Table 4 indicate a very high level of involvement in milk tea purchasing decisions among senior

high school students, with an overall mean of 3.52 (SD = 0.28). Students strongly value taste, product quality, and

price, as reflected in very high ratings for items related to flavor, good quality, preference for lower prices, and buying during discounts. This pattern is consistent with recent studies showing that milk tea consumers, particularly younger cohorts, place primary importance on taste, flavor variety, and perceived quality, while also remaining highly price-sensitive (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Consumer Preference Analysis Team, 2021) [7, 9].

The table also shows high to very high agreement with items related to refreshment, thirst satisfaction, and social consumption with friends, family, and schoolmates, indicating that milk tea functions both as a hedonic treat and

as a social beverage. Similar findings have been reported in recent work on milk tea and bubble tea, where Generation Z and young adults frequently purchase milk tea as a form of self-reward, for social bonding, and as an alternative to coffee, often influenced by popular flavors and best-selling menu items (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Factors Affecting Consumers' Buying Behavior, 2019; Milk Tea Preference Study Group, 2021) [7, 11, 21]. These results suggest that SHS students are active, intentional consumers who repeatedly purchase milk tea based on a combination of economic considerations, sensory appeal, and social experiences.

Table 5: Level of the Variables on Purchasing Decision

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Peer Influence	2.52	.57	High
Health Consciousness	2.06	.64	Low
Purchasing Decision	3.52	.28	Very High

Note: 1.00-1.74 Very Low; 1.75-2.49 Low; 2.50-3.24 High; 3.25- 4.00 Very High

Table 5 summarizes the overall levels of the study variables. Peer influence registered a high mean score ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.57$), indicating that senior high school students are generally exposed to social and interpersonal cues related to milk tea consumption, consistent with research showing that peers and social networks are salient references for beverage choices among adolescents and young adults (Chaudhary & Gupta, 2022; Firmansyah & Anwar, 2020) [8, 12]. Health consciousness, however, obtained a low mean score ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 0.64$), suggesting limited concern about the health implications of frequently drinking milk tea, which echoes recent work reporting that many milk-tea consumers under-estimate the sugar and calorie content of these beverages and prioritize enjoyment over health considerations (Lin *et al.*, 2023; Nour *et al.*, 2023) [19, 22]. Purchasing decision reached a very high level ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.28$), reinforcing the earlier finding that students are active and frequent milk tea buyers who place strong emphasis on taste, quality, value for money, and social experiences when deciding to purchase. Taken together, the pattern of high peer influence, low health consciousness, and very high purchasing decision is consistent with studies describing Generation Z and student consumers as highly engaged in milk tea consumption while being more motivated by hedonic and social factors than by nutritional concerns (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Lin *et al.*, 2023) [7, 19].

Table 6: Test of the Significant Relationship Between Daily Allowance and Customer Purchased Decision

Independent Variable	Purchase Decision	P-value	Interpretation
Daily Allowance	.226**	<0.01	Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Spearman rho test

Note: (N=273)

Table 6 presents the relationship between students' daily allowance and their purchasing decision on milk tea. The results show a statistically significant, positive correlation between daily allowance and purchasing decision (Spearman $r=0.226$, $p<.01$). This indicates that students with higher daily allowance tend to report slightly higher levels of purchasing involvement for milk tea, although the strength of the association is small rather than high. Similar patterns have been observed in recent studies on milk tea and beverage

consumption, where students with greater monthly allowances are more likely to purchase milk tea more frequently or choose more premium products, reflecting the role of disposable income in shaping drink choices (Lin *et al.*, 2023; Ong, 2021) [19, 24]. Research on university and college students' spending also suggests that higher allowance and perceived financial capacity are associated with increased expenditure on discretionary items such as snacks and sugar-sweetened beverages, supporting the idea that allowance functions as a form of perceived behavioral control over food and drink consumption (Almoraie, 2025; Baghianimoghadam *et al.*, 2016) [3, 6].

Table 7: Test of Significant Relationship Between Peer Influence and Customers Purchased Decision

Independent Variable	Purchase Decision	P-value	Interpretation
Peer Influence	.106	.081	Not Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Spearman rho test

Note: (N=273)

Table 7 indicates that peer influence has a low, positive, but statistically non-significant correlation with students' purchasing decisions for milk tea (Spearman $r=0.106$, $p=.081$). This suggests that, in this sample, students who report higher peer influence do not necessarily show markedly higher levels of purchasing involvement, and that other factors such as personal taste, perceived quality, and individual financial capacity may play a more decisive role in their decisions. Similar findings have been reported in some recent studies, where social influence variables showed only modest or inconsistent effects once product attributes and individual preferences were taken into account, indicating that young consumers do not always rely on peers when deciding what and how often to buy milk tea. At the same time, several studies note that while peers can shape initial awareness and trial of milk-tea brands, repeat purchasing is more strongly driven by intrinsic product characteristics (e.g., flavor, sweetness level, texture) and perceived value rather than ongoing social pressure. This helps explain why your descriptive results show high scores on items related to social occasions and drinking with friends, yet the overall correlation between the peer-influence scale and purchasing decision remains weak and non-significant:

students may enjoy consuming milk tea in social settings, but their underlying purchase decision appears to be grounded more in personal preferences and budget than in direct peer conformity.

Table 8: Test of Significant Relationship Between Health-Conscious Review and Customers Purchased Decision

Independent Variable	Purchase Decision	P-value	Interpretation
Health Conscious	.174**	0.04	Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Spearman rho test

Table 8 indicates that health consciousness has a small, positive, and statistically significant correlation with students' purchasing decisions for milk tea (Spearman $r=0.174$, $p=0.04$). This means that students who report being more health-conscious tend to show slightly higher purchasing involvement, although the strength of the relationship is weak rather than strong. This pattern suggests that health concerns do play a role in shaping milk tea choices, but they are only one of several factors

Table 9: Summary of the Correlation of Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable Purchased Decision

Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Interpretation
Allowance	.226**	<0.01	Significant
Peer Influence	.106	0.81	Not Significant
Health Consciousness	.174**	0.04	Significant

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Spearman rho test

Note: (N=273)

The summary in Table 9 shows that allowance and health consciousness have small but statistically significant positive correlations with purchasing decision, whereas peer influence does not show a significant association. The correlation between allowance and purchasing decision ($r = .226$, $p < .01$) suggests that students with higher financial resources tend to report somewhat higher levels of milk tea purchasing, supporting previous findings that disposable income or allowance is a key enabler of purchase frequency for milk tea and other discretionary beverages among Filipino youth and college students (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Lin *et al.*, 2023) [7, 19]. The significant but weak correlation between health consciousness and purchasing decision ($r = .174$, $p = .04$) indicates that more health-aware students do not necessarily avoid milk tea; instead, they may remain engaged consumers who make more selective choices regarding brands, sugar levels, or perceived quality, consistent with studies showing that health-conscious beverage buyers often modify rather than eliminate their consumption (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Nour *et al.*, 2023) [15, 22].

In contrast, the non-significant correlation between peer influence and purchasing decision suggests that, once allowance and individual preferences are considered, peer pressure alone does not strongly determine whether or how often students buy milk tea. This aligns with recent research in which social factors such as reference groups and online influence are important for initial awareness and brand trial, but repeated purchasing is driven more by intrinsic product attributes (e.g., flavor, quality, value for money) and personal motivations like self-treat or refreshment (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Factors Affecting Consumers' Buying Behavior, 2019) [7, 11]. Taken together, the results

influencing students' decisions.

Recent studies on beverage and food choices similarly report that health consciousness is positively but modestly related to purchasing behavior, with health-aware consumers often seeking safer, higher-quality, or customizable options rather than avoiding a product category altogether (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Lee & Vega, 2020) [15, 17]. In milk-tea-specific research, health-oriented customers are more likely to adjust sugar levels, choose perceived "healthier" variants, or favor brands that highlight quality ingredients, which is consistent with the idea that higher health consciousness can increase involvement and selectivity rather than simply reducing consumption (Consumer Preference Analysis Team, 2021; Factors Affecting Consumers' Buying Behavior, 2019) [9, 11]. These findings support the present result that, within a generally low-health-conscious group, students who think more about health still tend to engage actively with milk tea but may do so in ways that reflect health-related considerations, such as flavor choices, sweetness level, or product quality.

imply that students' milk tea purchasing decisions are primarily shaped by economic capacity and individual evaluations—including health-related considerations—rather than by direct peer pressure, which is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior's emphasis on perceived behavioral control and attitudes as key predictors of behavior.

Discussion

The present findings show that students with higher daily allowances exhibit slightly greater involvement in milk tea purchasing, consistent with research indicating that greater disposable income among adolescents and young adults increases the likelihood of buying premium or branded milk tea and raises repurchase frequency (Lin *et al.*, 2023; Zhang *et al.*, 2023) [19]. Students with limited allowances, by contrast, tend to be more price-sensitive and restrict the frequency or type of beverages they buy, a pattern also observed in Philippine and Asian youth markets where financial constraints shape access to variety and brand choice (Bestica-Baclangen, 2024; Ong, 2021) [7, 24]. Although the correlation between allowance and purchasing decision in this study is small, it supports the view that allowance functions as a form of perceived behavioral control in the Theory of Planned Behavior, enabling or constraining milk tea consumption.

The results also indicate that peer influence has only a weak and statistically non-significant relationship with purchasing decision, suggesting that peers play a limited role once individual preferences and financial capacity are considered. This aligns with studies reporting that while peers and social media can trigger initial trial or shape perceptions of what is fashionable, repeated purchasing of milk tea is more strongly

driven by taste, quality, and value for money than by direct peer pressure (Alfaro *et al.*, 2023; Lin *et al.*, 2023; Ong, 2021) [2, 19, 24]. Social proof mechanisms and fear of missing out (FOMO) may still affect some vulnerable students, particularly in highly trend-driven settings, but the overall weak correlation found here suggests that senior high school students do not rely heavily on peers when deciding whether to buy milk tea (Chaudhary & Gupta, 2022) [8].

In contrast, health consciousness shows a small but significant positive association with purchasing decision. This result is consistent with recent work suggesting that health-conscious consumers do not necessarily avoid milk tea; instead, they remain engaged but make more selective choices, such as adjusting sugar levels, choosing perceived “healthier” variants, or favoring brands that signal quality and safety (Iqbal *et al.*, 2021; Nour *et al.*, 2023) [15, 22]. Narrative reviews of boba and milk tea consumption highlight that young consumers are aware of high sugar content and potential health risks, yet many experience cognitive dissonance and rationalize continued consumption because of enjoyment, social bonding, and habit (Nour *et al.*, 2023) [22]. The low overall health-consciousness scores in this study, combined with the positive correlation with purchasing decision, suggest that more health-aware students may still buy milk tea but perhaps in more controlled or customized ways.

Taken together, these findings underscore that allowance and individual evaluations—including health-related considerations—are more influential than peer pressure in shaping senior high school students’ milk tea purchasing decisions. They support previous research emphasizing the roles of economic capacity and personal attitudes in youth beverage choices and point to the importance of financial literacy and health education programs that help students balance enjoyment with responsible and informed consumption (Almoraie, 2025; Iqbal *et al.*, 2021) [3, 15]. Interventions that encourage students to critically evaluate price, sugar content, and marketing messages may be more effective than those that focus solely on reducing peer influence.

Conclusion

This study examined how allowance, peer influence, and health consciousness relate to the purchasing decisions of senior high school students toward milk tea. The descriptive results showed that most respondents received an average daily allowance and reported high levels of purchasing involvement, but only low levels of health consciousness regarding milk tea consumption. These patterns indicate that students actively and frequently purchase milk tea while paying relatively little attention to its potential health implications.

Inferential analyses revealed small yet statistically significant positive relationships between allowance and purchasing decision and between health consciousness and purchasing decision, whereas peer influence showed a weak, non-significant association. This means that students with higher allowances and those who are relatively more health-conscious tend to be slightly more engaged in buying milk tea, while peer pressure alone does not strongly determine their purchasing behavior. Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior, allowance and health consciousness appear to operate as key components of perceived behavioral control and attitudes, respectively,

whereas subjective norms (peer influence) play a more limited role in this context.

Although peer influence did not emerge as a significant predictor in the correlation analysis, the descriptive findings on social consumption and existing literature suggest that peers may still shape awareness, initial trial, and shared drinking occasions rather than directly drive purchase frequency. Overall, the study underscores that economic capacity and individual evaluations—including emerging health considerations—are more central than direct peer pressure in explaining senior high school students’ milk tea purchasing decisions. Given the study’s focus on a single public school and a limited set of variables, future research should incorporate additional psychological, familial, and marketing factors and extend to other settings to capture the broader and more complex determinants of youth beverage consumption

Findings Summary

The study’s findings indicate that senior high school students’ milk tea purchasing decisions are modestly but significantly associated with daily allowance and health consciousness, while peer influence does not show a significant effect. Specifically, daily allowance has a small positive correlation with purchasing decision ($r = 0.226$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that students with greater financial resources are somewhat more likely to buy milk tea more frequently or with greater involvement. Health consciousness also demonstrates a small positive correlation with purchasing decision ($r = 0.174$, $p < 0.04$), implying that students who think more about health still choose to purchase milk tea, possibly by selecting products or options they perceive as more compatible with their health goals.

In contrast, peer influence shows a weak and non-significant correlation with purchasing decision ($r = 0.106$, $p = 0.081$), indicating that, in this sample, social pressure from friends or classmates does not substantially determine whether students decide to purchase milk tea. Overall, the results suggest that economic capacity and individual evaluations—including emerging health considerations—play a more important role than direct peer influence in shaping senior high school students’ milk tea purchasing behavior.

Implication for Practice

For milk tea businesses, the small but significant roles of allowance and health consciousness imply that products and promotions should balance affordability with health-oriented features, such as flexible cup sizes, sugar-reduction options, and clear information on ingredients. Emphasizing value for money, quality, and customizable “better-for-you” choices may be more effective than relying mainly on peer-driven or trend-based marketing.

For educators and school programs, the findings indicate a need to strengthen financial literacy and nutrition education so that students can align their beverage choices with both their budgets and health goals. Practical initiatives could include classroom discussions on sugar-sweetened drinks, campaigns promoting mindful consumption, and collaboration with nearby vendors to encourage healthier, student-friendly offerings.

Recommendations

For milk tea businesses. Because students’ purchasing decisions are modestly related to allowance and health

consciousness, product and marketing strategies should emphasize affordable yet customizable options that allow students to manage both budget and perceived health concerns. Examples include tiered pricing, student discounts, and clear choices for reduced sugar, smaller sizes, or added “healthier” ingredients, coupled with messages that highlight quality and value rather than relying mainly on peer-driven trends.

For schools and educators. Strengthening financial literacy and health education programs can help students make more informed beverage choices that align with their limited resources and long-term well-being. Integrating discussions on sugar-sweetened beverages into consumer education, homeroom guidance, or health subjects, and collaborating with nearby retailers to encourage healthier, student-friendly offerings, would be beneficial.

For policymakers and community stakeholders. Local education and health authorities may consider guidelines or awareness campaigns on responsible milk tea consumption among adolescents, focusing on sugar intake, budgeting, and marketing literacy. Partnerships with small beverage businesses could promote voluntary measures such as transparent nutrition information and student-oriented “better-choice” menus.

For future research. Subsequent studies should include additional variables—such as sex, grade level, track, socio-economic status, parental influence, and exposure to digital marketing—to capture more fully the determinants of milk tea consumption among youth. Replicating and extending the study in other schools, municipalities, and educational levels (e.g., junior high school or college) is recommended to compare patterns across contexts and to validate the current findings.

Hypothesis testing results and decision

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between allowance and purchasing decision on milk tea. The analysis shows a small but statistically significant positive correlation between daily allowance and purchasing decision ($r = 0.226$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that students with higher allowances tend to report slightly higher levels of milk tea purchasing, supporting studies that link greater financial capacity to increased engagement with beverage products and branded milk tea. In line with work emphasizing the role of disposable income in youth consumption, the null hypothesis Ho1 is rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between peer influence and purchasing decision on milk tea. Results indicate a weak, non-significant correlation between peer influence and purchasing decision ($r = 0.106$, $p = 0.081$), suggesting that peers play only a limited role in shaping how often or how strongly students decide to buy milk tea. This finding is consistent with research showing that, once taste, quality, and price are considered, peer awareness does not necessarily translate into actual purchasing behavior among adolescents. Therefore, the null hypothesis Ho2 is retained.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between health consciousness and purchasing decisions on milk tea.

The analysis shows a small but statistically significant positive correlation between health consciousness and purchasing decision ($r = 0.174$, $p < 0.04$). Rather than

reducing consumption, more health-conscious students appear to remain active milk tea buyers, possibly by choosing options they perceive as acceptable within their health goals, a pattern also noted in recent work on health-oriented beverage consumers. Despite concerns raised about sugar-sweetened drinks, these results suggest that enjoyment and selective customization can coexist with health awareness, so the null hypothesis Ho3 is rejected.

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How to Cite This Article

Reil NT, Dino MS, Jalapan ZAR, Ballar MM, Birol TL. Allowance, peer influence and health consciousness of senior high school students towards their purchasing decision on milk tea. *J Front Multidiscip Res*. 2026;7(1):17-26. doi:10.54660/JFMR.2026.7.1.17-26.

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