

# A Study about the Awareness of Vegan Diet through Social Media and its Impact on People to Adopt Veganism

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## Abstract

Veganism being the most admired lifestyle in the recent time; this research paper intends to explore the various aspects of the digital media in influencing the decision of masses to convert to this lifestyle. This paper studies the various influencing factors for people in choosing to become a Vegan. For this we first understand the awareness about the topic in people. Further, we explore the availability of information to the public on the digital platforms, social media and as well on the web portals and then how the information transforms the people to adopt the Vegan lifestyle by all means or otherwise.

**Keywords:** Veganism, Vegan Foods, Vegan Diet, Social Media

## INTRODUCTION

“VEGANISM” is a step ahead of vegetarianism where unlike the vegetarians who only avoid eating meat, Vegans avoid all products belonging to the animal origin. For example, many food items those are considered as vegetarian food but are obtained from animal origin for e.g. dairy products, are not consumed by VEGANS. Similarly, lifestyle products like silk garments, leather accessories, animal fur etc. are also discouraged and avoided completely.

Veganism is explained more as a lifestyle which supports love for animals and strongly opposes any kind of livestock farming for the purpose of gains through trade of animal and animal products. As we understand that Man has always used animals as a support for various activities in day-to-day life and also utilized animals and

their products for personal needs and financial gains. However, a group of people known as Vegans have identified this act of humans as cruel and unjust. They strongly discourage and oppose the use of animals and animal products or any kind of livestock farming. This is mainly because of the increase in the extent of cultivation of animal products in various manners which is not viewed as civilized behaviour.

Humans have largely gone up to the extent of harassing animals by various means to draw innumerable benefits to suit their lifestyle needs. Animals are used largely for obtaining products like meat, milk, dairy, accessories, oils etc. Previously such products were derived from animal only up to the extent of readily available or extra produce by the animal for e.g. If a cow has given birth to a calf then the excess milk produced by the cow was used by the adopting family and other milk products were made from such excess milk. Similarly, the meat, oil or accessory from animals were made only in case of natural death of the animal and utilized in all possible manners by humans. Lately, this is not the trend; animals are cultivated, adopted and farmed to obtain the goods of animal origin as per market demand. This has given rise to the extensive cruelty against animals as Cows are injected for producing more milk, then slaughtered to get meat, leather etc., Chicken poultry farms are using all possible techniques to increase the broiler chicken produce and almost manufacturing them like products.

This awareness about animal harassment and cruelty has given rise to this new lifestyle or veganism; where people have adopted the strategy of non-violence against animals. They have very gracefully embraced this lifestyle and shown their humanity by being considerate about other living beings.

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This movement progressed with the beliefs, causes, and ideals behind Veganism and its strength grew with time. Though initially Veganism was only a shift to eliminate dairy from the vegetarian diet; today a Vegan is explained as a “strict Vegetarian who avoids all animal food including dairy products and abstains from using animal products,” extending beyond merely dietary exclusions.

## Need of the Study

Veganism is a lifestyle which is still not very popular amongst masses and we still have a major number following only vegetarianism. If we understand Veganism completely, we would also understand that the human lifestyle is hampering the other living beings and humans are not considerate towards animals.

It is very important to create awareness about Veganism through all means. Considering the Digital Platform, Social Networking sites, web portals are the new preachers for anything and everything today, it becomes more relevant to draw benefits through them. The youth today is completely occupied by various E-portals for all kind of information required in their day-to-day life. Hence, we have tried to access the impact of such platforms about creating the awareness about Veganism, providing sufficient information about the topic and also serving the need of conversion of masses in the Vegan lifestyle.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Iguacel, I., Huybrechts, I., Moreno, L. A., and Michels, N. (2020): The study highlighted vegetarian and Vegan diets which are increasingly becoming popular. Although the diet not only provides beneficial health effects but also leads to nutritional deficiencies. Cognitive impairment and mental health disorders have a high economic burden.

Frawley, E. S. (2017): The research was a social science examination into the adaptation and transition to Veganism. This study had used ethnography techniques to reflect the dynamism and intricacies of a lifestyle free of animal products and also signifies veganism a meaningful strategy for employing personal values through action as a response to broader issues.

M. Cole. K Morgan- The British Journal of Sociology, (2016): Empirical sociology studies of Vegan are rare (McDonald 2000, Cole 2008). When Vegans are present

as research practice, they are usually treated as a subset of vegetarians and their Veganism, tends to be viewed as a form of dietary asceticism.

Son, G. Y. T., and Bulut, M. (2016): According to the research Veganism is becoming an increasing trend day by day is a life style and a life philosophy. The reason of choosing Vegan diet differs according to preferences of consumers.

Richter, M., Boeing, H., Grünewald-Funk, D., Hesecker, H., Kroke, A., Leschik-Bonnet, E., and Watzl, B. (2016): The study had found out that the number of consumers follow a vegan diet has increased in many countries and it is likely to grow and influence the food sector. The aim of the research was to identify different segments of consumers according to their motivation for adopting a Vegan diet and also to examine the attitudes of the consumers towards animal agriculture. The primary focus was to determine that all consumers follow a Vegan diet oppose meats.

Lightower, H., Davies, J., and Long, A. (2009): The study had discussed the need for food guide for vegans. Look at the nutritional information and advice found in current popular Vegan cookery books, including sample menus; food grouping; food description and recipes. The further had suggested a possible approach to a Vegan Food Guide (VFG) incorporating foods suitable for this group. The study had concluded that more needs to be undertaken in this area to develop the VFG and to ensure that the VFG is made readily available to vegans.

Cherry, E. (2006): The author had studied about social movement scholar's enlistment into and continued involvement in social movement organizations. A more recent trend in social movement concerns about the cultural activism which takes place primarily outside of social movement organizations. The study had demonstrated how culture and social networks function to provide support for cultural movement participation.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To understand the awareness about Vegan diet.
- To find the availability of information on various online and social media platforms.
- To ascertain the possibilities of converting to Vegan diet.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology was one of the most crucial part of study to carry out the research the insights of the objectives was studied. The impact of social media and other online platforms and possibilities of converting to Vegan diet was identified and floated in the form of a questionnaire. This feedback from various targeted respondents was collected with the help of the survey questionnaire. This survey was specifically carried out to evaluate and fulfil the set objectives for the study.

### Type of Research

A descriptive form of research was used to study the various social media and online platforms and how they influence people in converting to vegan diet this also includes surveys and fact finding enquiries in different manner.

### Methods of Data Collection

*Primary Data:* It was collected from the mixed sample of various respondents, Primary data was collected through survey in the following ways:

- *Personal Interviews:* The answer was sought to a set of pre-conceived questions through personal interviews and the data was collected in a structured way.
- *Questionnaires:* Considering the Reviews, and the additional inputs, one questionnaire was prepared and distributed to various respondents.
- *By Observation:* The data was collected by observing the non verbal behavior to understand dynamic behavioral process.

*Secondary Data:* It was collected from published/unpublished literature on various social media and online platforms and how they influence people in converting to vegan diet and also the latest references available from the journals, newspapers, research publications and magazines, past records and other relevant sources available online.

*Questionnaire – Design and Implementation:* The questionnaire design was done with the aid of experts in statistical techniques and taking into account the depth needs & objectives of the study. The questionnaire was administered to the sample population and sample size.

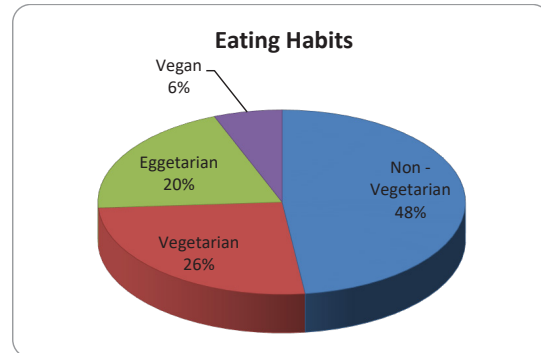
*Sampling Techniques:* To conduct this study different respondent was selected, to achieve the minimum sample requirement a total of 120 questionnaires were distributed and in return 100 were received.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected was analyzed using basic and advanced analytical tools. This also includes the detailed analysis of the data which was conducted with the purpose of attaining the set objectives of the research. Mentioned below is the analysis which is presented graphically and in tabulated form for better interpretation. The Interpretation of the collected data was done by drawing inferences from the collected facts after the analysis of the study.

**Table 1: Frequency Analysis - Eating Habits of the Respondents**

Frequency				Total
Non - Vegetarian	Vegetarian	Eggetarian	Vegan	
48	26	20	6	100%

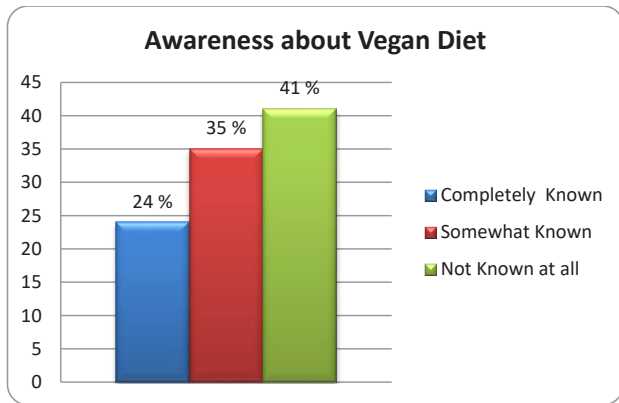


**Fig. 1: Eating Habits**

*Interpretation:* According to the above chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 48% were found to be non-vegetarians, 26% of the respondents were found to be vegetarians, the percentage of the egg eaters was 20% whereas the percentage of vegan food eaters was found to be only 6% from the entire respondents.

**Table 2: Frequency Analysis - Awareness of the Respondents about Vegan Diet**

Frequency			Total
Completely Known	Somewhat Known	Not Known at all	
24	35	41	100%

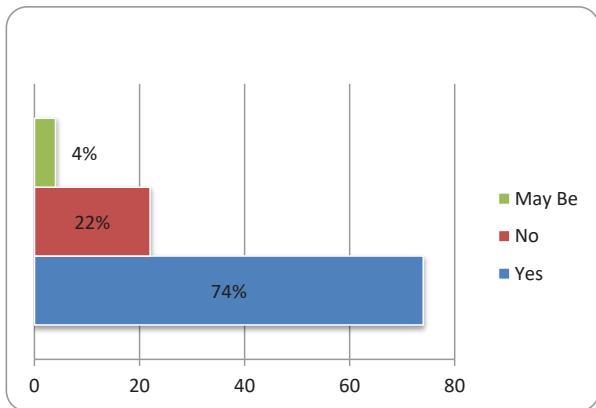


**Fig. 2: Awareness about Vegan Diet**

*Interpretation:* According to the above chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 41% were found to be unaware about veganism the percentage of respondents who were somewhat aware were 35%, whereas 24% of the respondents were found to be completely aware about veganism.

**Table 3: Frequency Analysis - Availability of Online Information about Veganism to Respondents**

Frequency			Total
Yes	No	May be	
74	22	4	100%

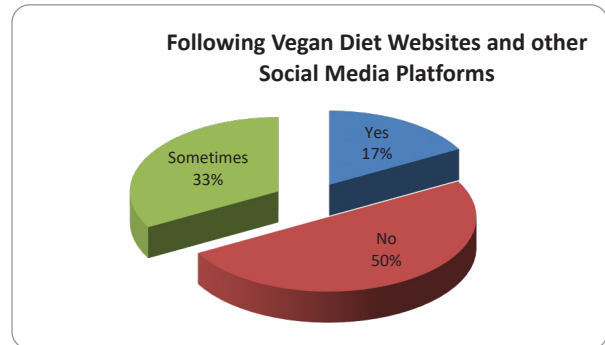


**Fig. 3: Availability of Information**

*Interpretation:* According to the chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 74% were of an opinion that there is information available online and on other social media platforms that influence people converting to vegan where as 22% of the respondents are of an opinion that there is no information available.

**Table 4: Frequency Analysis - Respondents Following Information about Vegan Diet on Various Websites and Other Social Media Platforms**

Frequency			Total
Yes	No	Sometimes	
17	50	33	100%

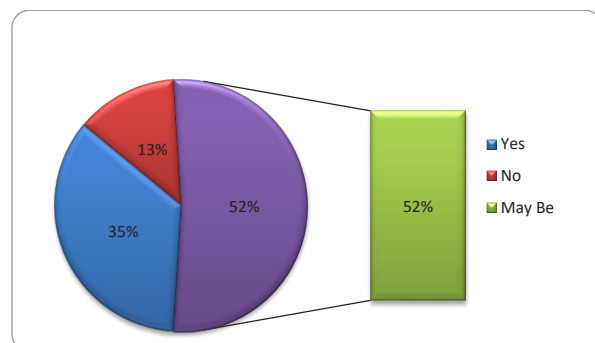


**Fig. 4: Following Vegan Diet Websites and Other Social Media Platforms**

*Interpretation:* According to the above chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 50% were not following any online and social media platforms, the percentage of respondents following were 17% and the respondents who were sometimes following these pages were 33% respectively.

**Table 5: Frequency Analysis - Impact of Information Available on Websites towards Conversion of Respondents to Veganism**

Frequency			Total
Yes	No	May be	
35	13	52	100%

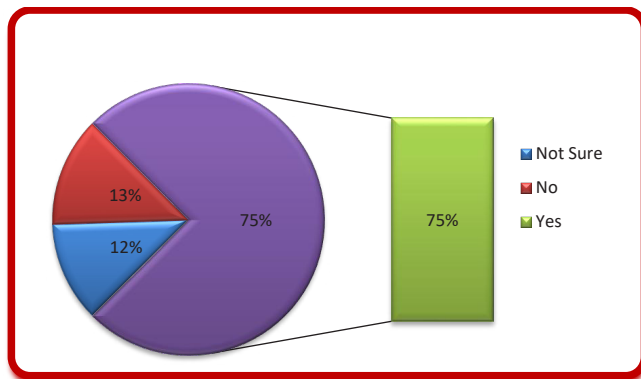


**Fig. 5: Impact of Websites**

*Interpretation:* According to the above chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 52% of the respondents are of an opinion that online platforms have an impact on converting Vegan, the percentage of respondents agreeing is 35% where as 13% of the respondents are of an opinion that these platforms does not influence converting to vegan.

**Table 6: Frequency Analysis - Impact of Various Social Media Platforms on Converting Respondents to Veganism**

Frequency			Total
Yes	No	May be	
75	12	13	100%

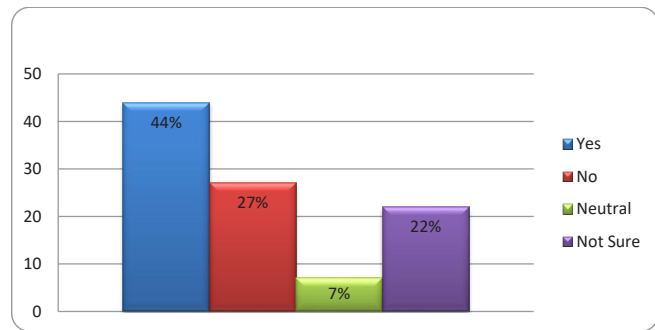


**Fig. 6: Social Media Impact**

*Interpretation:* According to the above chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 75% of the respondents are of an opinion that social media platforms do have an impact on converting to vegan, the percentage of respondents not sure was 12% where as 13% of the respondents were of an opinion that these platforms does not influence converting to vegan.

**Table 7: Frequency Analysis - Influence of the Available Online Information in Converting Respondents to Adopt Veganism**

Frequency				Total
Yes	No	Neutral	Not Sure	
44	27	07	22	100%



**Fig. 7: Influence of Available Information**

*Interpretation:* According to the chart it can be stated that majority of the respondents i.e. 44% were of an opinion that there is an influence of information available online and on other social media platforms making them converting to Vegan where as 27% of the respondents are of an opinion that there is no influence whereas 22% of the respondents were not sure about the influence.

## OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

- It has been found that most of the consumers are non-vegetarians and vegetarians, the comparative ratio of Vegan diet followers are very low. Hence, there is a great need of generating the awareness about Veganism.
- According to the data analysis it has been found that majority of people are still unaware about Veganism hence there is a need for generating knowledge about the concept.
- As a result of lack of awareness there are less number of followers on social media and other online platforms.
- Online platforms have an impact on converting to Vegan as it has an influence on decision making.
- Social media platforms plays a vital role in influencing people to converting to veganism as these platforms has a greater impact on decision making.
- According to the data it has been found that there is information available online about veganism but it is not been followed by many people because of lack of awareness.

- According to the respondents if Veganism is promoted well online and social media will influence people in following a Vegan diet.

## SUGGESTIONS

- There could be more awareness generated amongst people about Veganism as there is a lack of knowledge about the concept.
- Social media platforms could be used efficiently to generate the awareness as it has a greater influence in the decision making.
- Awareness could also be generated on various online platforms as there is information available but not promoted, if promoted well it would have an impact on adopting Veganism.
- Develop new Vegan recipes and promote it well on social media and other websites.

## CONCLUSIONS

- There is a lack of awareness about veganism amongst people because it is not been searched on social media and other online platforms.
- If veganism is promoted well on various social media platforms and other online platforms would influence people in converting to Vegan.

- Social media platforms have a greater impact on converting to Vegan as it is been followed by masses and it has an influence in decision making.

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