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How attitude, perceived savings, price discount affect, perceived food quality shapes purchase intentions of Menu Rahmah

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ABSTRACT

Malaysians are still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic's aftermath, despite its recovery. Compounded by the slowdown in the economy, many Malaysians are struggling to afford even the most basic meals. The Malaysian government has introduced Menu Rahmah, a price-discounted meal option, as a response to the current economic crisis, offering an ideal choice for Malaysians in need. The study aims to explore Malaysians' purchase intentions toward Menu Rahmah by extending the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The data was gathered from 283 Malaysians through an online survey questionnaire. A partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the relationships between the study variables. The study's empirical results indicate that attitude, perceived savings, and price discounts affect significantly influence Malaysians' purchase intention of Menu Rahmah, while perceived food quality does not. This study contributes to the growing literature on TPB and consumer behaviour in discounted products. Additionally, the Malaysian government's Menu Rahmah initiative is a commendable effort to assist struggling Malaysians. By analysing the impact of attitude, perceived savings, and price discounts on Malaysians' purchase intentions, the government and its Menu Rahmah operators can encourage more consumption as an alternative.

1. Introduction

Malaysia is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic's aftermath in spite of a slow recovery, with many of its citizens struggling to make ends meet and afford basic meals according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports (Kuala Lumpur hard-hit, 2024). The introduction of Menu Rahmah, a price-discounted meal option, by the government is an ideal solution for many of Malaysia's impoverished citizens. Menu Rahmah is one of several initiatives under the Rahmah umbrella programme, alongside Bakul Rahmah (Rahmah Basket), Kafe Rahmah (Rahmah Café), Jualan Murah Rahmah (Rahmah Sales), and many others. The Rahmah umbrella, also known as Payung Rahmah or the umbrella of mercy, was introduced by the Kementerian Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Kos Sara Hidup (KPDN), under the

government led by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, on January 11, 2023. The term Rahmah signifies the unity of individuals within a single, unified entity during challenging times.

The Menu Rahmah initiative was officially launched by the KPDN on January 31, 2023, offering affordable lunch or dinner sets at participating restaurants for RM5. The programme is primarily aimed at the B40 income group and the hard-core poor, aiming to provide them with a sufficient meal. Big restaurants and eateries lead the way in promoting and offering Menu Rahmah. For example, Mydin Mohamed Holdings Berhad (Mydin) is among the leading establishments actively promoting and offering Menu Rahmah. Since its launch, many large and small eateries have introduced their own Menu Rahmah set meals, with some hailing it as a crowd-puller.

A former KPDN Minister, maintained that while the word Rahmah, which stems from the Arabic word, is a fundamental Islamic religious concept, it should be interpreted as a holistic approach to fostering wellness among the average Malaysian. Hence, non-halal restaurants are also engaging in serving Menu Rahmah to appeal to non-Muslim clientele in the B40 income bracket and the hardworking poor. The Menu Rahmah pricing initiative significantly enhances food affordability for the B40 demographic.

Although Menu Rahmah primarily targets the B40 income group and the hard-core poor, the KPDN has clarified that the initiative is not limited to them. The programme was named Menu Rahmah, rather than B40 Menu, to reflect its inclusivity, as it serves all Malaysians, including those from the M40 and even T20 groups who may be affected by rising living costs. Designed to provide affordable meals to anyone facing financial pressure, Menu Rahmah has also faced criticism and scepticism, particularly regarding food quality, given the perception that lower prices imply lower standards. Nevertheless, most participating vendors maintain that quality remains uncompromised to protect both the programme's integrity and their own reputation.

Despite these concerns, the Menu Rahmah initiative has been well-received across multiple demographics, reflecting strong public interest in affordable meal options. Although limited, some academic studies have been conducted on the programme. Prior research on Menu Rahmah (Azmi et al., 2023; Badri & Jamil, 2024; Lee et al., 2024, 2025) has provided valuable insights into consumer awareness, affordability, and satisfaction, suggesting that consumers generally appreciate Menu Rahmah for alleviating financial burdens and offering affordable meal options, although limitations in food variety and availability have been noted. empirical studies examining how various factors interact to influence consumers' behavioural intention toward Menu Rahmah are at presence scarce. To address this empirical gap, the present study extends the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) framework to examine the behavioural and economic factors shaping Malaysians' intention to purchase Menu Rahmah meals.

Given that Menu Rahmah meals are offered at a subsidised or discounted price, the programme can be viewed within the broader context of consumer behaviour toward discounted products. Previous research on discounted items, such as clothing (Bunyamin et al., 2021; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018) and food (Suwarno, 2020), has revealed that factors like attitude (Cheah et al., 2015; Suwarno, 2020), perceived savings (Allah Pitchay et al., 2022; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018; Lee Weisstein et al., 2014), price discount effect (Büyükdağ et al., 2020; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018; Rehman et al., 2023), and perceived quality (Konuk, 2018; Iranmanesh et al., 2017; Vo and Nguyen (2015) significantly influence consumers' purchase intentions. As Menu Rahmah represents a government-led discounted meal initiative, understanding how these factors interact within this specific context is crucial. Therefore, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, this study is among the first to apply an extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) framework to examine the determinants of Malaysians' purchase intention toward Menu Rahmah meals.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a widely used social psychological theory for studying consumer intention. The TPB, founded by Ajzen in 1985, is based on Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) Theory

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of Reasoned Action (TRA). Since the TRA has drawn criticism from a number of researchers for potentially failing to adequately explain people's volitional behaviour (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Kippax & Crowford, 2015), the TPB was created to address these shortcomings (Ajzen, 1985).

The TPB is an extensively used research tool for comprehending consumer purchase intention as it provides a strong theoretical correlation and helps explain antecedent variables (Simanjuntak & Putra, 2021). Numerous research studies have employed the TPB to forecast intentions, suggesting that this theory has demonstrated efficacy in forecasting human intention, particularly in diverse research domains such as food purchases (Kumar & Smith, 2018; Lim & An, 2021; Nawang et al., 2023). Nonetheless, research findings have remained inconsistent within the TPB framework (Fachrurrozie et al., 2023), due to varying research predictors, measurement tools, sampling, and analysis.

Previous scholars who have employed the TPB in their investigations have concluded that TPB is not adequate to elucidate a complex psychological mechanism. As a result, TPB was altered in numerous studies to include crucial components that help explain or forecast particular behaviours. Furthermore, Ajzen (1991) and Fishbein and Ajzen (2011) implied that the TPB could be expanded if more predictors could be found that, when added, explained a greater amount of variance (Iranmanesh et al., 2018).

Aligned with this perspective, the present study extends TPB by integrating perceived savings, price discount effect, and perceived food quality to reflect the economic and value-driven nature of low-cost meal purchases. These constructs provide a more comprehensive explanation of consumer decision-making in initiatives such as Menu Rahmah, where affordability and perceived value play crucial roles.

Although TPB has been widely applied in food consumption research, its use in the Menu Rahmah context remains underexplored. Nevertheless, extant studies on Menu Rahmah (Azmi et al., 2023; Badri & Jamil, 2024; Lee et al., 2024, 2025) have predominantly adopted a descriptive approach, rather than empirically examining the interrelationships among factors that underpin behavioural intention. Therefore, this study contributes by testing an extended TPB framework to explain consumers' purchase intention toward Menu Rahmah meals, addressing both theoretical and contextual gaps in the literature.

2.2 Purchase Intention

Intention, a motivational factor influencing behaviour, was initially developed in the context of TRA and TPB. It expresses the amount of effort that individuals are willing to put into engaging in a particular behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Intentions are instructions people give themselves to behave in specific ways (Triandis, 1979), representing their scripts and plans for future actions (Bagozzi & Yi, 1989). Intentions involve considering the implications of their actions and making a commitment to action (Bagozzi, 1981). In this study, intention refers to a consumer's willingness or inclination to purchase Menu Rahmah in the future. Empirical studies consistently show that attitude is a strong predictor of purchase intention (Febriandika et al., 2023; Kumar & Smith, 2018; Lee & Chen-Yu , 2018; Lim & An, 2021), while economic factors such as perceived savings and price discounts enhance purchase likelihood by improving perceived value and affordability. Similarly, perceived food quality strengthens consumers' trust and satisfaction even in low-cost contexts (Nawang et al., 2023).

However, prior studies often examined these factors in isolation and rarely in the context of government-supported affordability initiatives. Research on Menu Rahmah remains minimal and descriptive, leaving a gap in understanding the behavioural and economic factors that shape Malaysians' intention to purchase low-cost meals. Therefore, this study extends the TPB framework by integrating attitude, perceived savings, price-discount effect, and perceived food quality to provide a more comprehensive and contextually grounded understanding of consumers' purchase intention toward Menu Rahmah meals.

2.3 Attitude

In the context of the TPB, attitude is one factor that affects intention. Attitude is a personal assessment or evaluation of a behaviour, indicating whether the behaviour is favourable or unfavourable (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 6). Attitudes can be understood as condensed evaluations of a particular subject, consisting

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of three main components: affective, cognitive, and behavioural. The affective component relates to the emotions or feelings that a person has toward the subject, whereas the cognitive component involves the beliefs, thoughts, and characteristics associated with it, while the behavioural component reflects past actions taken in relation to the subject (Haddock & Maio, 2008). Many researchers have examined the roles that these three elements play in the development and manifestation of attitudes. Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) emphasized that an individual's attitude significantly influences their intention to perform a specific behaviour, with a positive attitude increasing the likelihood of committing the behaviour. Studies have shown that attitudes significantly influence consumer purchase intentions (Cheah et al., 2015; Dobbelstein & Lochner, 2023; Sun et al., 2018; Suwarno, 2020; Tacardon et al., 2023). Following the majority of studies that discovered a significant relationship, this study assumes that a finding can be generalized to the intention to purchase Menu Rahmah. As such, the following hypothesis is proposed:
H1: There is a positive and significant relationship between attitude and purchase intention of Menu Rahmah.

2.4 Perceived Savings

Perceived savings refer to the monetary savings customers perceive when purchasing a product or service compared to its substitutes (Arshad & Arshad, 2021). Consumers' primary motivation for purchasing products and services is financial savings, which involves comparing the cost of goods with their benefits to avoid wasting money and meet their needs and desires (Bresciani-Turroni, 1936). Consumers perceive higher price discounts as more money savings, as demonstrated in Menu Rahmah. In the context of this study, an increase in savings correlates with a greater likelihood of purchasing Menu Rahmah. Previous studies by Allah Pitchay et al. (2022), Iranmanesh et al. (2017), Lee and Chen-Yu (2018), Royanda and Hidayat (2024), and Wang and Tian (2023) have validated that perceived savings significantly impact consumer purchase intentions. Hence, the following hypothesis is put forth:
H2: There is a positive and significant relationship between perceived savings and purchase intention of Menu Rahmah.

2.5 Perceived Discount Affect

A price discount is a reduction in the business's listed price during a specific period. It is price reductions offered by sellers to buyers as a form of appreciation for certain enjoyable activities, as stated on the product label or packaging (Bunyamin et al., 2021), thereby saving consumers from the normal price. Price discounts provide economic benefits, influence brand beliefs, and evoke positive emotions, increasing brand awareness, and purchase intentions among consumers (Teng, 2009). As such, price discounts have become a mode for many companies to market their products and services, as customers have become more adept at finding ways to minimize their spending. The word "affect" is primarily used in marketing research to denote a broad category of emotions, such as "feel the moods" (Bagozzi et al., 1999). In this study, the impact of price discounts is specified as the emotions elicited by the discounts on Menu Rahmah meals. A cornucopia of studies has documented that price discounts affect significantly impact consumer purchase intentions (Büyükdağ et al., 2020; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018; Rehman et al., 2023; Shahzad et al., 2019; Teng, 2009). Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:
H3: There is a positive and significant relationship between price discounts affect and purchase intention of Menu Rahmah.

2.6 Perceived Food Quality

Perceived quality refers to a consumer's perception of a product's superiority or excellence (Zeithaml, 1988). The perceived quality of discounted food such as Menu Rahmah refers to the consumer's perception of the quality of products offered at a discounted price. Previous research indicates that price promotions can decrease consumers' perception of the quality of the discounted item (Chandon et al., 2000). In a way

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that consumers often associate higher prices with better quality, while lower prices are frequently perceived as a sign of inferior quality (Nusair et al., 2010). Past studies found that perceived quality significantly impacts consumer purchase intentions of discounted products (Konuk, 2018; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018; Steenkamp, 1986; Pananda, 2023; Vo & Nguyen, 2015; Yazdanparast & Kukar-Kinney, 2023). Consumers' quality perceptions are influenced by several factors, such as sensory attributes, visual appeal, taste, texture, freshness, and safety. If consumers view discounted options like the Menu Rahmah meal as inferior to more premium alternatives, it could diminish their willingness to choose them. However, there is currently limited understanding of how Malaysian consumers assess the quality of Menu Rahmah meals that differ visually, temporally, or peripherally. Grounded on the aforementioned literature, the following hypothesis is posited:

H4: There is a positive and significant relationship between perceived food quality and purchase intention of Menu Rahmah.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the suggested research model for the study. Based on the TPB, the model was constructed to analyse Malaysians' purchase intentions of Menu Rahmah, testing four hypotheses related to attitude, perceived savings, perceived discounts affect, and perceived quality.

Perceived savings and perceived discount effect reflect consumers' evaluation of financial benefits and affordability, which shape positive attitudes and perceived control over purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, perceived food quality represents consumers' assessment of a meal's safety, freshness, and overall excellence, which in turn fosters trust and satisfaction, reinforcing purchase intention. Collectively, these constructs extend the traditional TPB by incorporating economic and quality-related dimensions that better explain consumer behaviour in low-cost meal initiatives such as Menu Rahmah.

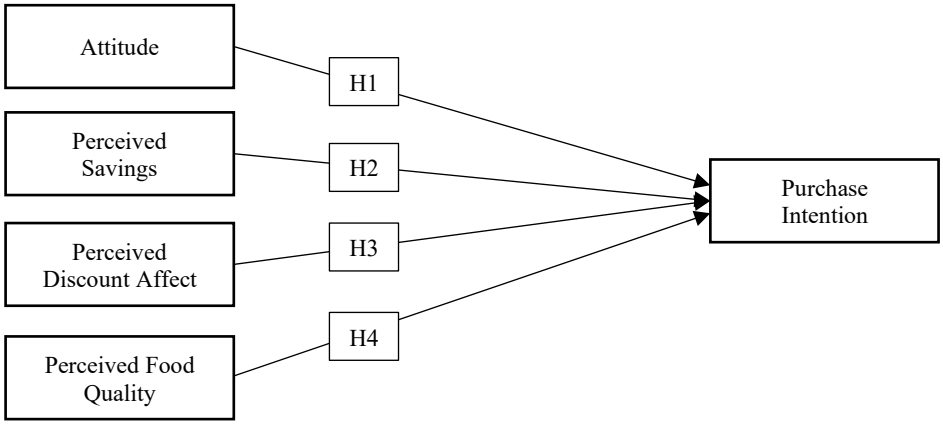

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

3. **Methodology**

The study is a quantitative study utilizing a questionnaire survey. The survey was administered online using Google Forms, and a uniform resource locator (URL) link was distributed across various social media platforms, principally Facebook and WhatsApp. The online survey was chosen due to its rapid, efficient, and low-cost collection of large data sets (Lefever et al., 2007; Nayak & Narayan, 2019), as well as its validation features for complete responses and compensation for missing values. Also, the online survey platform allows for the collection of diverse perspectives from various geographical locations.

A cross-sectional study comprising 283 samples was drawn from the population in December 2023 among Malaysians using convenience sampling. For a study applying a partial least squares structural

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equation modelling (PLS-SEM), the minimum sample size for regression analysis is determined by applying the "10-times rule" method, which states that the sample size should be 10 times larger than the number of variables (Barclay et al., 1995; Hair et al., 2011; Roscoe, 1975). With five variables in this study, the minimum sample size required by the "10-times rule" method is 50. Therefore, 283 is a sufficient sample size for PLS-SEM regression analysis.

The survey questionnaire includes eight demographic questions and 20 questions on attitude, perceived savings, perceived discounts affect, perceived food quality, and purchase intention. All measurement items were adapted from well-established source with some modifications to suit the study context. Specifically, attitude items were adapted from Dobbelstein and Lochner (2023) and Sun et al. (2018); perceived savings from Lee and Chen-Yu (2018) and Lee Weisstein et al. (2014); perceived discount effect from Büyükdağ et al. (2020) and Rehman et al. (2023); perceived food quality from Konuk (2018) and Vo and Nguyen (2015); and purchase intention items from Febriandika et al. (2023) and Lee and Chen-Yu (2018).

The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and PLS-SEM with SmartPLS software version 4.0, which utilizes a variance-based approach within structural equation modelling (SEM). The demographic profiles of the respondents were described using a frequency distribution using the SPSS. While the PLS-SEM was used to test the hypotheses. As this is an exploratory study and the hypothesized relationships between variables have not yet been evaluated, PLS-SEM is considered appropriate (Hair et al., 2021). Besides, the PLS-SEM is effective for confirming and assessing proposed structural measurement models, even with limited sample sizes (Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2015), as demonstrated in this study with 283 samples. The PLS-SEM includes a two-step analytical approach for evaluation (Hair et al., 2012) consisting of the measurement model and the structural model.

4. Results

4.1 Respondents' Profile

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics of all the respondents in the study. Of 283 respondents, 55.1% are male and 44.9% are female. The majority of the respondents are Malay (82.7%), followed by Indian (11.3%), Chinese (3.5%), and other (2.5%). Given that the majority of respondents are aged between 18 and 25 years old (72.4%), single (87.3%), unemployed (64.3%), and have either completed or are presently pursuing a bachelor's degree (75.6%), it is not surprising that the majority (63.6%) make less than RM2,000 per month.

Table 1. Respondents' profile

Description		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	158	55.1
	Female	127	44.9
Ethnic	Malay	234	82.7
	Chinese	10	3.5
	Indian	32	11.3
	Other	7	2.5
Marital Status	Single	247	87.3
	Married	36	12.7
Educational Level	Diploma	42	14.8
	Bachelor	214	75.6
	Master/PhD	27	9.5
Occupation	Employed	107	35.7

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	Unemployed	182	64.3
Income	RM2,000 and below	180	63.6
	RM2,001 – RM4,000	80	28.3
	RM4,001 – RM6,000	16	5.7
	RM6,001 and above	7	2.6

4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model is assessed for its internal reliability consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2010). The reliability of a study is evaluated using composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha values, convergent validity using outer loading values and average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity using Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation. Internal consistency reliability is achieved when Cronbach's alpha value exceeds 0.7 (Pallant, 2020) and CR values are above 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010). While convergent validity requires factor loading above 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010) and AVE value of 0.5 or higher (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2022). Table 2 shows that the constructs' reliability and validity values surpass the recommended thresholds for each assessment, indicating a high level of confidence in the survey instrument's quality.

Table 2. Reliability and Validity Test

Constructs	**Items**	**Outer Loading**	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**CR**	**AVE**
Attitude	A1	0.787	0.797	0.866	0.619
	A2	0.810			
	A3	0.702			
	A4	0.842			
Perceived Savings	PS1	0.735	0.871	0.912	0.723
	PS2	0.883			
	PS3	0.905			
	PS4	0.868			
Price Discounts Affect	PDA1	0.847	0.917	0.942	0.802
	PDA2	0.870			
	PDA3	0.922			
	PDA4	0.940			
Perceived Food Quality	PFQ1	0.799	0.841	0.892	0.675
	PFQ2	0.786			
	PFQ3	0.922			
	PFQ4	0.772			
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.847	0.917	0.942	0.802
	PI2	0.863			
	PI3	0.937			
	PI4	0.932			

For the discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larker's criterion and the HTMT ratio of correlation value were assessed. The Fornell-Larcker criterion establishes discriminant validity when the square root of each construct's AVE is greater than its highest correlation with any other construct in both groups, indicating that a latent variable explains its own indicators' variance better than other latent variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) as indicated in Table 3.

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Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Criterion Test

Construct		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Attitude	**0.787**				
2.	Perceived Savings	0.768	**0.850**			
3.	Price Discounts Affect	0.749	0.789	**0.896**		
4.	Perceived Food Quality	0.642	0.712	0.711	**0.822**	
5.	Purchase Intention	0.727	0.739	0.723	0.592	**0.896**

Note: Numbers in bold are square root of AVE, non-bold numbers are the correlations among the constructs

As for the HTMT, the value should be lower than 0.90 threshold (Henseler et al., 2019). Table 4 demonstrates that all construct pairs were less than 0.90, with the exception of attitude and perceived savings, which had a value of 0.906, which was somewhat higher. Further assessment is carried out to verify that the HTMT value significantly differs from 1.00 using bootstrapping, thereby confirming the lack of discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). The bootstrapping test showed that none of the upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval of HTMT had a value of 1.00, indicating discriminant validity. Overall, the study successfully passed the measurement model assessments.

Table 4. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Test

Construct		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Attitude					
2.	Perceived Savings	0.906				
3.	Price Discounts Affect	0.863	0.817			
4.	Perceived Food Quality	0.734	0.883	0.795		
5.	Purchase Intention	0.828	0.822	0.646	0.780	

4.3 Structural Model Assessment

After concluding the measurement model assessment and verifying all standards, the study proceeded with the bootstrapping procedure to analyse the hypothesised relationships in the structural model assessments. The procedure was carried out with a 0.05 significance level, a suggested sample size of 5,000 subsamples from 283 observations, and an accelerated and bias-corrected confidence interval method (Hair et al., 2022). The structural model's results include significance testing, effect size (f^2), and explanatory power (R^2). Regarding the interpreting the effect size (f^2), Cohen (1988) identified 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 as small, medium, and large effect sizes respectively. While R^2 values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 suggest strong, moderate, and weak explanatory power (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2019). Accordingly, Table 5 and Figure 2 display all of these values.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis and Path		**Std. Beta**	**Std. Error**	**t-value**	**p-value**	**f^2**	**Decision**
H1	Attitude -> Purchase Intention	0.297	0.068	4.388	0.000	0.084	Accepted
H2	Perceived Savings -> Purchase Intention	0.307	0.078	3.945	0.000	0.072	Accepted
H3	Price Discounts Affect -> Purchase Intention	0.260	0.072	3.620	0.000	0.054	Accepted
H4	Perceived Food Quality -> Purchase Intention	-0.002	0.057	0.028	0.977	0.000	Rejected

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Out of four hypotheses, one hypothesis was not supported. The result found a negative correlation between perceived food quality and purchase intention, alas a non-significant effect with a t-value less than 1.65 in one-tailed test (β = -0.002, t = 0.028, p = 0.977), thereby H4 was not supported. Whereas H1, H2, and H3 were supported as presented in Table 6. The results also showed that R^2 value for purchase intention was 0.630, suggesting a moderate explanatory power, which indicates that 63% of the variance in purchase intention can be explained by attitude, perceived savings, price discounts affect, and perceived quality. Regarding the effect size (f^2), the research model showed that the effect size was small, falling between 0.000 and 0.084.

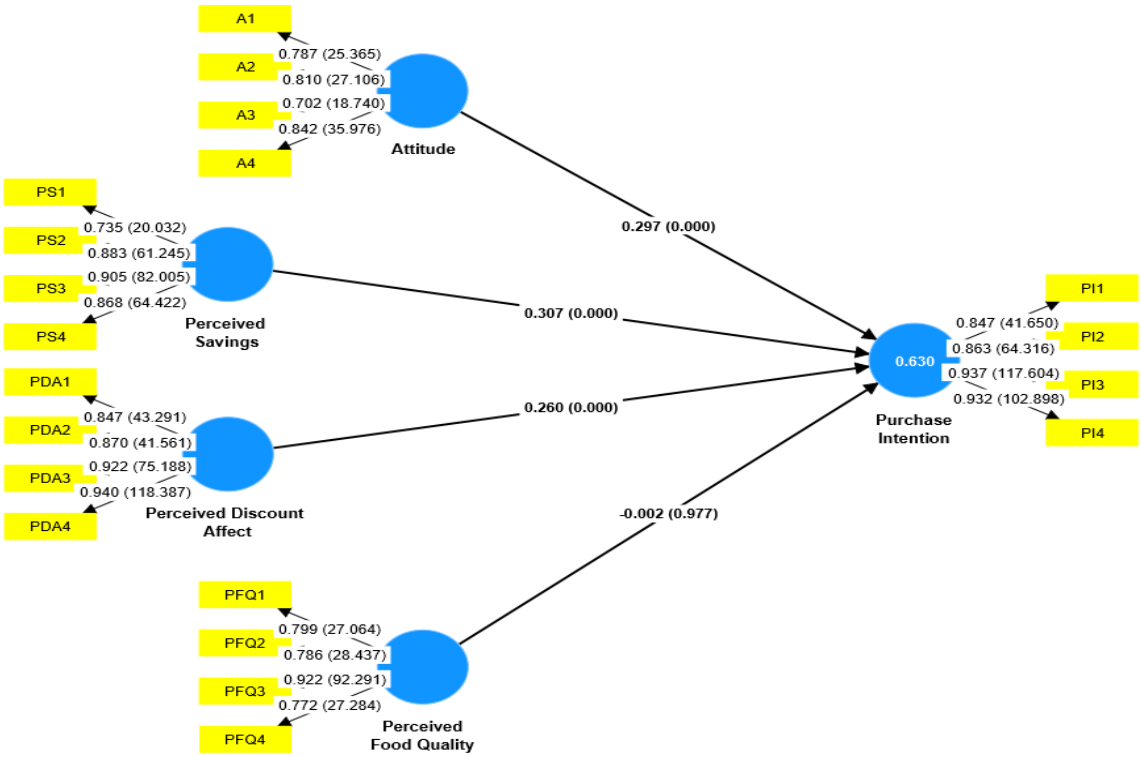

Fig. 2. Structural Results

5. Discussion

This study explored the purchase intentions of Malaysian consumers regarding Menu Rahmah meals using an extended TPB-based model. The study's empirical results indicate that Malaysian consumers' purchasing decisions are shaped by their attitudes, their perception of savings from the menu Rahmah programme, and the perceived price reduction offered by the sellers for Menu Rahmah meals. On the other hand, customers' intentions to purchase are not significantly impacted by their perception of the quality of the Menu Rahmah meals.

The study indicates that Malaysians have a favourable attitude towards Menu Rahmah meals, with full support for them. The result is in line and supports previous studies (Cheah et al., 2015; Dobbelstein & Lochner, 2023; Sun et al., 2018; Suwarno, 2020; Tacardon et al., 2023), demonstrating that favourable and positive attitudes further strengthen purchase intentions on discounted items. The introduction of Menu Rahmah by the government as part of its policy and initiatives to ease the burden of rising living expenses

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for the majority of Malaysians has been well-received. The introduction of Menu Rahmah is also believed to have lessened the financial and emotional strain of providing for the family.

The study found that perceived savings from Malaysians significantly influence their purchase intentions for Menu Rahman meals, with higher price discounts indicating increased money savings. The results of this study support those of earlier research by Allah Pitchay et al. (2022), Iranmanesh et al. (2017), Lee and Chen-Yu (2018), Royanda and Hidayat (2024), and Wang and Tian (2023), showing that people's intentions to purchase are influenced by larger discounts that they perceive to be offering greater financial savings. Customers gain advantages and benefits from savings because they can purchase a complete meal for less money. Therefore, increasing customers' perception of savings will correspondingly elevate their purchase intention.

Price discounts affect also proved to be a significant factor that influence Malaysians' purchase intention of Menu Rahmah meals. The concept refers to the reduction from the normal price given by the sellers to the buyers. As it provided full meals at a reasonable price, the Menu Rahmah meals meet the aforementioned requirements. The result validates findings by previous studies on purchase intentions on discounted items (Büyükdağ et al., 2020; Lee & Chen-Yu, 2018; Rehman et al., 2023; Shahzad et al., 2019; Teng, 2009).

While a negative relationship was observed, the effect of perceived food quality on the purchase intention of Menu Rahmah was found to be non-significant. This finding contradicts prior studies such as Konuk (2018), Lee and Chen-Yu (2018), Steenkamp (1986), Pananda (2023), Vo and Nguyen (2015), and Yazdanparast and Kukar-Kinney (2023), which demonstrated that higher perceived food quality significantly enhances consumers' purchase intention by fostering trust, satisfaction, and perceived value. In contrast**,** within the context of Menu Rahmah, discounted meals are typically perceived as average in quality rather than premium, with consumers prioritising affordability and financial savings over quality attributes. This divergence may be attributed to the unique nature of Menu Rahmah as a social welfare initiative, where economic value and accessibility take precedence over culinary excellence. Consequently, purchase decisions are more strongly driven by perceived savings and value-for-money than by quality perceptions, resulting in a weaker or non-significant association between food quality and purchase intention.

6. **Conclusion**

This study addresses a significant research gap in understanding consumer behavioural intention toward low-cost meal initiatives in Malaysia. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this represents one of the first empirical examinations of the Menu Rahmah programme since its launch, as existing studies such as Azmi et al. (2023), Badari and Jamli (2024), and Lee et al. (2024, 2025) were primarily exploratory and descriptive, focusing on consumer perceptions rather than predictive behavioural models. The main research objective was to identify the behavioural and economic factors influencing Malaysians' intention to purchase Menu Rahmah meals, given the limited prior empirical evidence on consumer responses to government-subsidised food programmes.

Utilizing a questionnaire survey grounded in an extended TPB framework, this study applied PLS-SEM to investigate how attitude, perceived savings, price discount effects, and perceived food quality influence Malaysian consumers' purchase intention. The findings reveal that attitude, perceived savings, and price discount effect significantly influence purchase intention, whereas perceived food quality does not. Attitude emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by perceived savings and price discount effect. Interestingly, although previous studies have found that perceived food quality may negatively affect purchase intention for discounted products, this study found no significant effect, suggesting that affordability and perceived economic value may outweigh quality concerns in the context of Menu Rahmah.

Theoretically, the findings of this study enhance the existing literature on consumer behaviour regarding discount products and the TPB. It contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the purchase intentions of discounted products among Malaysian consumers. This study's findings can be expanded upon by other researchers to explore other aspects related to food and beverages. In practice, this

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study also helps to provide insights to marketers of discount products. As noted earlier, the findings highlight the significance of consumers' attitudes in influencing their purchase intentions. The positive attitude towards the Menu Rahmah meals will significantly their purchase intentions for the meal. Other than that, perceived financial savings gained by the consumers through the price discounts as demonstrated by the Menu Rahmah motivates consumers to purchase meals provided in the programme. The study highlights that Malaysians appreciate Menu Rahmah, especially during uncertain economic conditions. To sustain this initiative, the government and stakeholders must commit to its continued dedication and support food vendors by offering initiatives and controlling raw material prices.

This study is not without limitations. It should be noted that this study investigated the role of crucial personal factors, from the demand, i.e. consumers, side of the Menu Rahmah. For future, research should be conducted to determine the possible factors that may influence the supply, i.e. seller, side of the programme. Possible factors to be included are halal certification and tax incentives for the Menu Rahmah sellers. Additionally, while the current study only uses a survey questionnaire to collect data, future research could adopt a mixed methods approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative techniques, offering a more comprehensive understanding of consumer purchasing behaviour regarding discount products and services.

Overall, this study provides an important foundation for future research on affordable meal programmes and offers actionable implications for sustaining Menu Rahmah as a socially impactful and economically viable initiative.

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Conflict of interest statement

The authors agree that this research was conducted in the absence of any self-benefits, commercial or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

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