

**HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

**LE THI TRANG**

**CONSUMER CULTURE OF THE YOUTH IN  
HANOI TODAY**

**SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS**

**MAJOR: CULTURE STUDIES**

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**The thesis can be found at:**

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The urgency of subject

From a theoretical perspective, consumer culture not only reflects material needs but also expresses the spiritual values, lifestyles, and attitudes of youth towards social issues. The consumption habits of young people can have a significant impact on societal issues such as environmental protection, sustainable consumption, and even changes in moral standards and social values. Studying consumer behavior helps us identify the relationship between consumer culture and the formation of social values, thereby uncovering changes in the cultural identity of the younger generation, especially in the context of globalization and the strong influence of foreign cultures. Therefore, researching the consumer culture of youth helps expand the boundaries of understanding regarding the tastes, needs, and specific consumption behaviors, which in turn forecasts trends and addresses emerging issues in contemporary Vietnamese consumer society.

Practically, in recent years, Hanoi has witnessed a significant change in the consumption habits of young people. Factors such as digital technology (smartphones, social media, e-commerce), the economic environment (income growth, the development of the middle class), and social changes (lifestyle changes, shifts in value perspectives) have had a profound impact on the consumption patterns of youth. Therefore, there is a need for new research to timely capture these changes, understand emerging consumption trends, and examine how they affect various aspects of social life. Studying the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi is essential for developing effective education and communication strategies aimed at positively, sustainably, and responsibly changing the consumption habits and behaviors of young people.

Based on the above reasons, it is evident that studying the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today is both a theoretical and practical issue. Therefore, the PhD candidate has chosen the topic "*Consumer Culture of the Youth in Hanoi Today*" as the subject of their doctoral research in Cultural Studies. Based on their own research and surveys, the PhD candidate hopes to contribute a direct study on the issue of youth consumer culture in the current context.

### 2. Research Objectives and Tasks

#### 2.1. Research Objectives

Based on clarifying the theoretical issues related to consumer culture, the thesis delves into identifying the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today, from the current situation and influencing factors to the emerging issues. The goal is to provide an in-depth understanding of the consumption habits, needs, and behaviors of young people in Hanoi in the context of rapid social and economic changes, thereby contributing to the development of a sustainable, responsible consumer culture that aligns with global trends.

#### 2.2. Research Tasks

To achieve the research objectives, the thesis undertakes the following tasks:

- Provide an overview of the current research on the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today;

- Clarify the theoretical issues related to the consumer culture of youth (concepts, structure, roles, and research theories);
- Conduct a practical survey on the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today, examining the four components of consumer culture, with specific manifestations in areas such as cuisine, fashion, entertainment, and education;
- Identify the influencing factors, trends, and discuss some solutions for the development of youth consumer culture in Hanoi in the future.

### **3. Research Subjects and Scope**

#### ***3.1. Research Subjects***

The research subject of the thesis is the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today. The thesis focuses on studying the consumer culture of a segment of youth in Hanoi who are educated, have a certain level of qualifications, and possess stable income or allowances. This group comes from various regions and is currently living, studying, and working in the capital city of Hanoi.

#### ***3.2. Research Scope***

- *The research subjects:* The thesis selects the research subject as the youth in Hanoi today. This is a social group that is in the process of forming their personality, shaping their lifestyle, and plays an important role in both creating and enjoying culture in particular and contributing to building the national culture in general. Within the scope of this thesis, the researcher focuses on studying a segment of youth who are educated and have a stable financial background, consisting of the following three groups: 1) University and college students; 2) Youth who are civil servants and government employees; 3) Youth working in private enterprises.

- *The research space:* The thesis focuses on studying the consumer culture of youth living, studying, and working in Hanoi. This is an area where many consumption activities of both material and spiritual products take place, revealing many aspects of consumer culture to be explored.

- *The research period:* The thesis conducts research from 2016 to the present, which marks the time when the Prime Minister approved the National Action Program on Sustainable Production and Consumption until 2020, with a vision until 2030, according to Decision No. 76/QĐ-TTĐ, dated January 11, 2016. Youth, as consumers, are also a target group of the program. Therefore, the researcher will focus on studying the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi from 2016 to the present.

- *The research content:* The researcher delves into studying the values in the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today, reflected in the four components of the consumer culture structure (concepts, tastes, behaviors, and payment methods), and in four specific areas: cuisine, fashion, entertainment, and education.

### **4. Theoretical Basis and Research Methods**

#### ***4.1. Theoretical Basis***

The thesis is based on the methodology of dialectical materialism and historical materialism from Marxist theory, as demonstrated in: (1) The determinative role of social

existence on social consciousness: Based on the economic, cultural, and social values of the capital region, Hanoi is gradually forming a diverse consumer market, governed by the state and strongly regulated by the market; (2) The principle of universal connections: The objective, necessary relationships between traditional consumption concepts and modern life; the relationship between the economy and culture, and the relationship between the subjects involved in consumption life, which will influence and shape the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today.

## **4.2. Research approach and methods**

### **4.2.1. Research approach**

In this thesis, the PhD candidate employs an interdisciplinary approach of cultural studies, combined with a specialized approach.

### **4.2.2. Research methods**

The research methods used by the PhD candidate in this thesis include: the analysis and synthesis method, the sociological survey method using questionnaires, the interview method, the comparison and contrast method, and the forecasting method.

## **5. Scientific and Practical Significance of the thesis**

- *Scientific significance:* The thesis helps clarify the concepts and theories of consumer culture research, as well as the consumption behaviors of young Vietnamese people from a cultural perspective. This forms new viewpoints for explaining the consumption trends of the younger generation in contemporary society.

- *Practical significance:* The thesis contributes to identifying the current status and issues in the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today. The research findings will enrich the resource pool on the habits, needs, behaviors, and consumption trends of young people, thereby assisting businesses in making sound and effective decisions in developing product strategies, marketing promotions, and engaging with the youth consumer group.

## **6. New contributions of the thesis**

- The thesis develops several theoretical issues related to consumer culture, further clarifying the concept, structure, and role of consumer culture in social life.

- The thesis adds scientific arguments through practical research on the consumer culture of youth, exploring the concepts, tastes, behaviors, and payment methods in youth consumption in Hanoi today, across the fields of cuisine, fashion, entertainment, and education.

- The thesis provides explanations regarding the consumption needs of youth, the factors influencing their consumer culture, thereby clarifying the issues raised concerning the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today and offering discussions on solutions for developing the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi in the future.

## **7. Structure of the thesis**

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, reference list, and appendices, the content of the thesis consists of 03 chapters and 9 sections.

## **Chapter 1**

# **THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR STUDYING THE CONSUMER CULTURE OF YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY AND AN OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH SUBJECT**

## **1.1. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH ON CONSUMER CULTURE OF THE YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY**

### **1.1.1. Research Works on Consumption and Consumer Culture**

Globally, there are many research works on consumer culture at various levels. Consumer culture is an interdisciplinary concept that relates to various fields such as cultural studies, sociology, economics, and psychology. However, consumer culture is the study of the cultural values embedded in human consumption behavior, which can be generalized into a philosophy of life. Humans are both the creators of consumer values and the recipients of these cultural consumer values.

### **1.1.2. Research works on the consumer culture of youth**

Research on the consumer culture of youth, both globally and in Vietnam, has started to receive attention in recent decades. These studies approach the issue from various perspectives, revealing multiple aspects to explore around the topic of youth consumption and consumer culture within the context of strong integration. They also highlight certain changes in the consumer culture of youth in the context of global integration.

### **1.1.3. Research Works on the Consumer Culture of the Youth in Hanoi**

Currently, there are not many research works directly focusing on the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi. They have only appeared or been mentioned in smaller studies addressing psychological aspects, consumption behaviors, or habits of youth, or based on survey data from youth groups in Hanoi used for quantitative research on issues related to youth life and the life of young people in general.

### **1.1.4. The issues that need to continue researching in the thesis**

The theoretical and practical gaps in the research works summarized on the consumer culture of youth are as follows: there have not been many direct studies on the consumer culture of different social groups, especially youth. In terms of research perspective, very few works come from a cultural studies viewpoint. Therefore, issues related to consumer culture need to be further researched from the cultural studies theory. Exploring the consumer culture of youth as a way of choice to express subjectivity, thereby seeking and

forming their personality or individual identity, though not widely addressed, provides a more comprehensive perspective. These research directions also help the PhD candidate gain a broader view and motivate them to delve deeper into clarifying the issues they are interested in.

## **1.2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON THE CONSUMER CULTURE OF THE YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY**

### **1.2.1. Concepts**

#### ***1.2.1.1. The Concept of Culture***

In this thesis, the PhD candidate uses the definition of culture by Mr. Ph. Mayo, the former Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as follows: "Culture is the dynamic totality of creative activities (of individuals and communities) in the past and present. Over the centuries, these creative activities have formed a system of values, traditions, and tastes—elements that define the unique characteristics of each nation".

#### ***1.2.1.2. The Concept of Consumption***

Consumption is the process of purchasing and using goods and services to satisfy the needs of individuals and organizations. In this study, consumption can be understood as the expenditure of both tangible and intangible values, involving the purchase and use of goods and services by individuals, families, or organizations for the purpose of daily life, in order to fulfill personal, family, and social needs.

#### ***1.2.1.3. The Concept of Consumer Society***

Consumer society is a society in which the production and consumption of goods play a central role, reflecting economic power, social status, and cultural differences through the purchase and use of various goods and services. These products are used to express social relationships, establish identity, and bring meaning to life. This creates a social order where consumption becomes the dominant lifestyle in society.

#### ***1.2.1.4. The Concept of Consumer Lifestyle***

Consumer lifestyle is the way of life of individuals expressed through consumption activities, which are repeated and shape consumption patterns and habits in personal, group, and social life. Therefore, when discussing a consumer lifestyle, it also means talking about

lifestyle in terms of consumption, or in other words, discussing the meanings and values of consumption and consumer behavior in society.

#### ***1.2.1.5. The Concept of Consumer Culture***

Building on the research of scholars both domestically and internationally, the researcher presents their own concept of consumer culture as follows: Consumer culture is a component of culture in general, consisting of an organic whole of elements such as beliefs, tastes, behaviors, and consumption methods of individuals, groups, and specific communities. In essence, it is the cultural content embedded in consumption activities, reflecting the lifestyle and way of life of individuals, groups, and social communities based on value measurements.

#### ***1.2.1.6. The Concept of Youth***

In the context of this thesis, the researcher adopts the concept of youth in the broadest sense as a community of individuals aged 16 to 30 who live, work, and study in a specific area. This group is defined as a young social class with legal age characteristics and distinctive traits such as dynamism, a preference for novelty, and being a key socio-political force with an important role in the future of the nation.

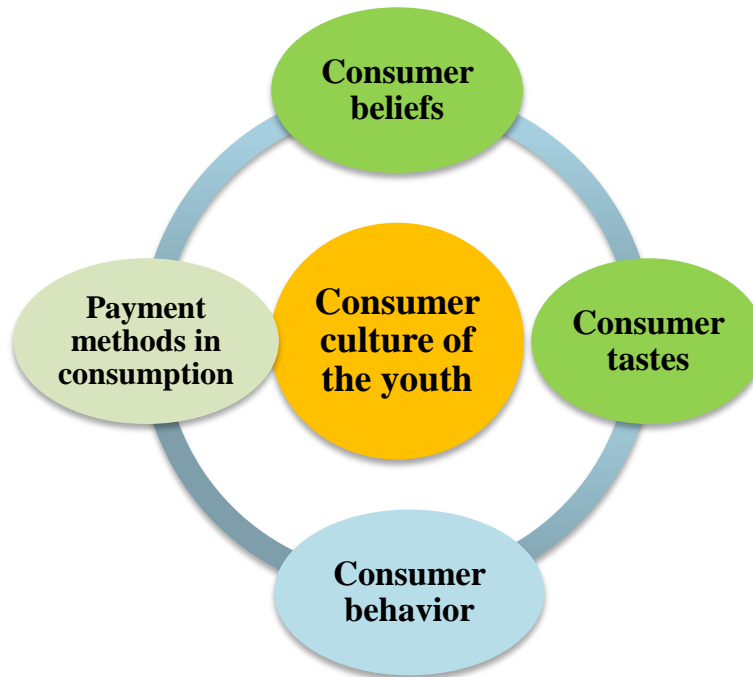
#### ***1.2.1.7. The Concept of Youth Consumer Culture***

Youth consumer culture refers to the way young people seek to express their personal style through their choices and the cultural marks they leave through consumption activities. It is an organic whole of elements ranging from values, preferences to behaviors and payment methods in youth consumption. Based on the cultural content embedded in consumption activities, it reflects the style and lifestyle of young people.

### **1.2.2. Structure of Youth Consumer Culture**

Consumer culture is an element of culture, and like culture in general, consumer culture is a social phenomenon that is holistic, systemic, and closely interconnected. The structure of youth consumer culture can be viewed as comprising four components, as shown in the diagram below:





**Diagram 1.1: Structure of Youth Consumer Culture**

### **1.2.1. Role of Youth Consumer Culture**

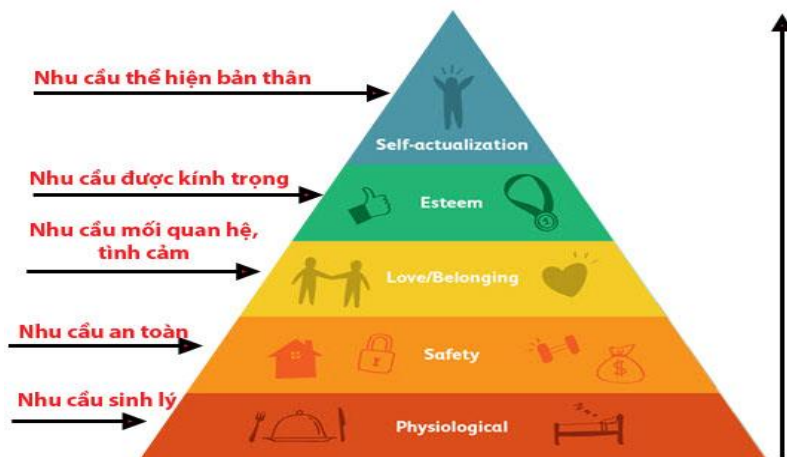
*In the economic sector*, youth consumer culture has a significant impact on business strategies, particularly in the four key areas of product, pricing, distribution, and trade promotion. Companies must understand and align their offerings to the preferences, behaviors, and trends of young consumers in order to remain competitive and relevant in the market.

*In the cultural and social sphere*, youth consumer culture is an integral part of overall consumer culture. By observing the consumer culture of individual young people, youth groups, and youth communities, one can uncover the various cultural nuances and characteristics that distinguish each of these entities. These consumer behaviors reflect deeper social and cultural aspects, shaping the collective identity of the youth population. Thus, understanding youth consumption patterns helps to reveal their values, interests, and the ways in which they engage with both traditional and modern cultural elements.

### **1.2.2. Theories Applied in the Thesis**

To find the answers to the research question in this thesis, the researcher has relied on the following two research theories:

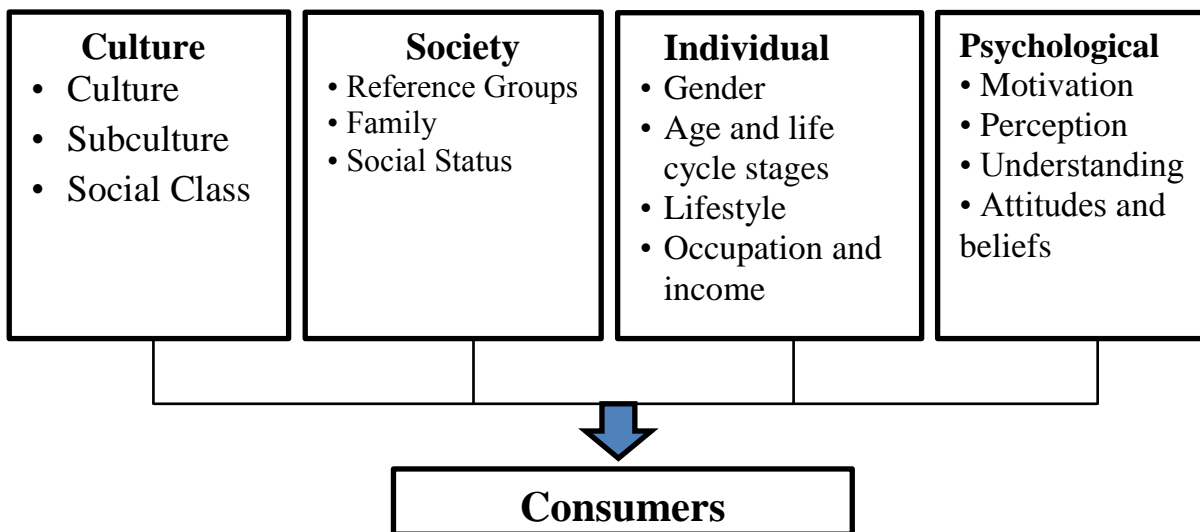
**\*Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory**



**Figure 1.1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

The researcher uses Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory to gain insights into the needs of young people according to a hierarchical system. This framework helps to explain the needs and preferences of young people in their consumption choices, whether it be products, goods, or services.

**\*Consumer Behavior Theory by Philip Kotler**



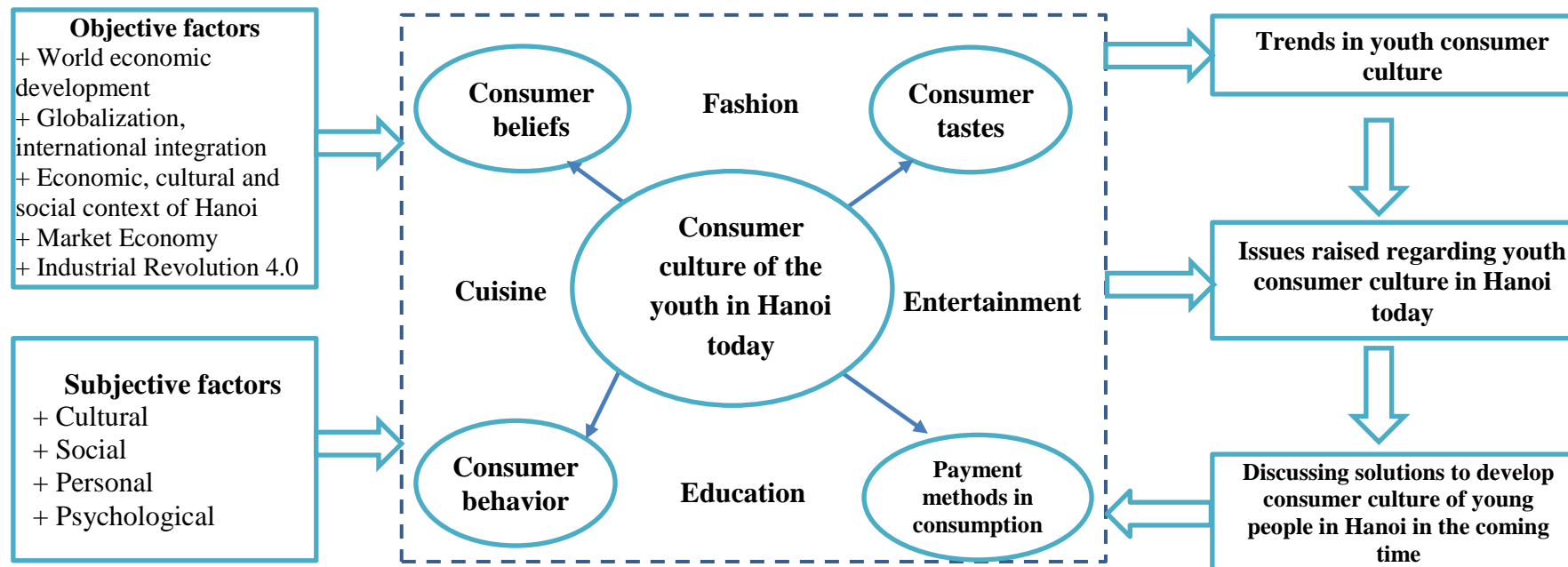
**Figure 1.2. Model of factors affecting consumer behavior (Kotler, 2009)**

The researcher approaches and uses Philip Kotler's consumer behavior theory to study the subjective factors affecting the consumer behavior of young people in Hanoi today. This is the theoretical basis for a comprehensive view of the influence of four factors: culture, society, individuality and psychology on the consumer culture of young people, thereby making the other research contents of the thesis more solid.

**1.2.3. Thesis analytical framework**

Based on the theoretical issues presented, the researcher builds and forms an analytical framework for the basic contents that the thesis will research as follows:

In the context of globalization and international integration, the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi is currently influenced by both subjective and objective factors. By applying the selected research theories, this thesis develops an investigation into the current state of the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi, based on the structure of consumer culture, which includes: perceptions, preferences, behaviors, and payment methods in consumption. The issues that the thesis delves into help to clearly identify the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi today. The areas of food, fashion, entertainment, and education, chosen for the survey, are prominent in the lives of young people, where consumption activities are strong, and consumer culture is most evident, providing multiple aspects to explore and clarify. Based on the current state of the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi, the researcher identifies the challenges faced in the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi, and then discusses some solutions aimed at orienting, building, and developing the consumer culture of young people in the capital on three fronts: awareness, attitude, and behavior. This forms the foundation for building a generation of young, modern, and civilized consumers in the future.



### **1.3. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH OBJECT**

#### **1.3.1. General overview of youth in Hanoi capital**

Hanoi, the capital city, is home to a large number of young people from different provinces who come here for study, work, and residence. Currently, Hanoi has nearly 3 million young people, accounting for 35% of the city's population [5] (with nearly 700,000 students studying at universities, colleges, and vocational schools in the city, while the rest work in businesses, government agencies, and as freelancers).

In addition to common characteristics in terms of psychology and social behavior, the youth community in Hanoi also possesses distinctive features typical of urban youth. For example, they have a high level of education, a spirit of innovation, dynamism, flexibility, and responsiveness to new trends. In their studies, work, and social activities, urban youth demonstrate clear organizational skills and discipline. They also have favorable conditions for acquiring scientific and technological knowledge, as well as diverse cultural information. Urban youth are quick to develop economic thinking, calculate benefits and effectiveness, and demand higher levels of material and cultural consumption compared to other youth groups.

#### **1.3.2. Overview of some groups of young people selected for research**

##### ***1.3.2.1. The group of young people are students from universities and colleges***

Currently, in Hanoi, there are 97 universities, academies and 33 colleges, accounting for 1/3 of the total number of schools and 40% of the total number of students nationwide. With this system of universities and colleges, Hanoi has about 700,000 students from many provinces and cities across the country. For students in Hanoi, the first thing that is easy to see is that students come from many regions across the country, and their cultural life is influenced by the customs and practices of the regions where they reside. The cultural life of students in the capital is concretely expressed through learning activities, arts, sports, volunteer social activities, and consumer activities serving daily life and the development of all aspects of students.

##### ***1.3.2.2. The group of young people are officials and civil servants in state agencies***

The group of young people who are cadres and civil servants in State agencies is an important part of the country's workforce, playing a key role in implementing policies, laws and performing public tasks. The characteristics of this group of young people have distinct factors, influenced by both the job requirements within the State administrative framework and the specific age and social circumstances. In terms of age, young people in State administrative agencies are mature, physically complete and relatively stable in terms of

psychology. On the other hand, this group of young people is a group of intellectuals, educated, with stable jobs, sensitive to new things, dynamic and creative, eager to learn, and are the future owners of the country. This is a group of young people with stable income, therefore capable of being financially independent and having consumption activities. Consumer needs are also rich and diverse based on personal interests and finances, so research on consumer culture of young people who are officials and civil servants in state agencies also has its own characteristics compared to other youth groups.

### ***1.3.2.3. Group of young people working in non-state enterprises***

The youth group in non-state enterprises are young people working in companies, factories, enterprises, and industrial parks belonging to the non-state enterprise sector. As of February 2020, 1,130 Youth Union and Association organizations with nearly 25,300 union members were established in non-state enterprises in Hanoi, a significant increase compared to 2013, with 178 organizations and nearly 7,200 union members. This shows that this is the largest youth group after the student youth group, so it always receives attention and creates conditions for development in all aspects. It can be seen that the psychological-social characteristics and specific work characteristics make the cultural life of the youth group working in non-state enterprises strongly differentiated, including consumer activities. Therefore, studying the consumer culture of young people working in non-state enterprises provides a comparative view of the psychology and consumer behavior of this group of young people with other groups of young people in Hanoi today.

From the generalization of theory and practice, it can be seen that young people are the elite class of the young generation, they are very sensitive to new trends, new movements in science, technology, culture, art, and lifestyle. Each group of young people will have a different level, taste, aesthetics, habits and consumer behavior. Therefore, studying the consumer culture of young people in the capital, it is necessary to grasp the basic characteristics of young people in general and young people of social groups in particular. That is the basis for building, shaping and developing the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi in the context of globalization and international integration today.

The theoretical and practical issues in Chapter 1 are the premise and basis for identifying and evaluating the consumer culture of young people in Hanoi city in Chapter 2.

## Chapter 2

### IDENTIFYING THE CONSUMPTION CULTURE OF THE YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY

#### 2.1. THE CONTEXT AND FACTORS AFFECTING THE CONSUMPTION CULTURE OF YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY

##### 2.1.1. Objective Factors

##### *2.1.1.1. The strong development of the global economy and its significant impact on the economy and consumption activities of each country*

The 21st century is the era in which the knowledge economy is being formed and developed. The use of knowledge as the main resource to create high-value products in a short period of time, meeting the needs of society, has become an inevitable reality. An economy based on innovation will create many new products and services, catering to the increasingly high and diverse demands of young people, in a more civilized and modern direction. Many young people have been and are changing their lifestyles to better align with the age of industrialization and the information explosion, which also includes changes in their personal consumption culture.

##### *2.1.1.2. The process of globalization and deep international integration, both in terms of breadth and depth*

Based on the process of globalization, young people are leading the way in adopting and integrating the cultural values of humanity and their nation into their lives. Young people are always influenced by new cultural values because they represent a progressive intellectual class, always ready to embrace new waves of consumption. The consumer culture of today's youth is not outside the global consumer culture trends, but it also involves the selection, supplementation, and reinforcement of traditional cultural values of their nation, creating distinct characteristics specific to the social group that represents the younger generation of the country. However, some negative aspects of consumer society, such as a lifestyle focused on indulgence, material consumption, and a desire to show off, are changing the perceptions and consumption habits of many young people.

##### *2.1.1.3. The strong impact of the market economy on the consumption lifestyle of contemporary Vietnamese society*

The rapid development of Vietnam's economy has transformed the living conditions of its people. The market economy and free competition have led to product diversification, reduced prices, and stimulated consumption. All the positive and negative changes arising from the market economy have contributed to the improvement and transformation of production and consumption habits among all people in society, including the youth.

##### *2.1.1.4. The Impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and Mass Media on the Consumption Life of Young People*

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has not only changed the way of production and business but also transformed the consumption behavior, shopping habits, and payment

methods of young people, creating a smart, convenient, and global consumption environment. Mass media, especially television, social media, and online advertising, have a profound influence on the consumption culture of young people. These platforms can create positive trends such as sustainable consumption, but they can also lead to negative effects like excessive consumption or the establishment of unrealistic social norms. Therefore, having a smart and thoughtful consumption mindset, carefully considering choices in the context of modern society, is crucial for the youth.

***2.1.1.5. The economic, cultural, and social context of Hanoi has undergone many changes since the Doi Moi period***

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, is witnessing rapid changes in its economy, culture, and society. These shifts in the economic, cultural, and social landscape since the Doi Moi reforms have had a significant impact on the lifestyles and consumption habits of young people. The opening up of the economy and international integration have led to the adoption of various cultural influences, especially consumer culture from Western countries and developed economies. Consumer products and international service models (such as fashion, cosmetics, technology, and tourism) have made their way into Hanoi. The economic and socio-cultural context of Hanoi since Doi Moi has resulted in substantial changes in the consumer culture of the city's youth. The robust development of the market economy, international integration, and the digital technology transformation have enriched the choices and consumption habits of young people. They not only consume based on basic needs but also according to personal tastes, lifestyle ideals, and demands for quality, aesthetics, and sustainability in consumption.

**2.1.2. Subjective factors**

***2.1.2.1. Cultural factors (including culture, cultural branch, and social class) of an individual***

Culture is the most fundamental source of human behavior. These cultural values deeply influence an individual's consciousness and impact their life activities, including consumer behavior.

Cultural branches affect product consumption behavior, decision-making processes, and ideological communication. Each cultural branch has its own unique habits and ways of behavior that align with their culture.

Social class plays an important role in various aspects of consumer behavior. Each social class makes different consumption decisions and approaches consumer behavior in distinct ways. Among these, the economic segmentation of social classes holds particular importance. Manufacturers must approach the market by segmenting based on the wealth levels of social classes in order to provide suitable products.

***2.1.2.2. Social factors (including reference groups, social status, and especially family)***

Youth consumer culture is heavily influenced by their social status, which is often determined by their family's position.

A person's reference group consists of groups that have a direct or indirect influence on their attitudes or behaviors. These groups can include family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

Family plays a significant role in shaping individuals, as it is the first socializing environment for every person. As a result, consumption trends and consumer behaviors are often learned from a young age within the family environment.

***2.1.2.3. Personal factors (including: gender, age and stages of the life cycle, occupation and income, and lifestyle)***

Age changes both the psychology and physiology of an individual, thereby affecting their shopping behaviors. The stages of the life cycle are also closely related to consumption. These differences arise from the needs, financial capacity, and perceptions that are tightly linked to age and life cycle stages. Gender is another factor that significantly influences shopping behavior. The differing perspectives on shopping between men and women lead to distinct consumption behaviors between the two genders. The financial capacity of young people is primarily derived from family support, income from employment, borrowing capacity, and their attitudes toward spending and saving. Lifestyle provides a comprehensive and vivid portrait of a person, with their choice of goods and services reflecting their lifestyle. Thus, personal factors strongly influence the consumer culture of youth, directly shaping their needs, choices, and consumer behaviors. The shopping habits of young people must align with their living circumstances, economic conditions, and self-awareness of their personal culture.

***2.1.2.4. Psychological factors (including motives, perception, understanding, beliefs, and attitudes)***

The consumption needs of young people today are heavily influenced by the psychology of the crowd, which significantly impacts individuals and the development of the socio-economic landscape. The motives of consumers guide their consumption behaviors, including the process of seeking information, evaluating products, and making purchasing decisions. Each individual's perception of design, price, quality, and service attitude may vary. A person's knowledge is shaped by interactions with urges, stimulating factors, suggestive situations, responsive reactions, and reinforcement. Through practical experience and understanding, people form beliefs and attitudes toward products.

**2.2. EXPRESSIONS OF YOUTH CONSUMER CULTURE IN HANOI TODAY**

Based on the research findings of the thesis, the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today can be identified through four components within the structure of consumer culture as follows:

**2.2.1. Consumer beliefs**

The consumption concept of today's youth is reflected in flexibility, selectivity, strong individuality, and responsibility. Flexibility in product selection focuses on convenience in life, saving time and effort in daily spending activities. Although the choices in consumption are diverse and not overly idolizing or strict about any particular product,



youth generally show selectivity in their consumption, seeking products that meet criteria such as reasonable prices, good quality, and practicality. Through their consumption activities, youth express their strong individuality, as consumption is not just an essential need but also a way to shape, build, and showcase their style, personality, and identity. Responsibility is reflected in their awareness of creating a sustainable life, with a preference for green consumption that is environmentally friendly. It can be seen that the consumption concept of youth contains both the philosophical depth of national cultural traditions and the spirit of the times, emphasizing the significance of consumption in human life while affirming one's self-image in the overall consumption picture of modern society.

### **2.2.2. Consumer tastes**

Based on their own consumption concept, young people establish a system of values and standards that guide their consumption behavior. This consumption behavior bears a strong personal imprint, which to some extent reflects their consumer culture. The values and consumption needs of youth are expressed through their tastes in consumption at different times. Consumer values are formed from consumption needs, with basic needs serving as a guiding source, while higher needs represent the steps in an individual's consumption activities. For young people, consumption tastes clearly develop along four aspects as follows:

First, today's youth are more conscious of the value of the products they consume in affirming their self-worth.

Second, youth nowadays prefer to experience consumption through multi-channel platforms.

Third, young people are less loyal to any particular store or brand.

Fourth, youth always seek purpose in the things they purchase.

### **2.2.3. Consumer behavior**

#### **• Consumer behavior of youth for food**

Being a generation with a free-spirited mindset, lifestyle, and financial approach, young people in Hanoi today are not hesitant to spend on food to indulge themselves. However, this does not mean that young people do not carefully consider their spending. Particularly, those working in office environments are willing to spend a significant amount of money on healthy eating habits in exchange for something more important - saving time and maintaining good health, which ultimately gives them the energy to earn more money.

#### **• Consumer behavior of youth for fashion**

Born in a prosperous context, young people represent a generation of consumers who grew up with the Internet, easily accessing global information. This has helped the youth develop a more open mindset, be dynamic, creative, and more easily change their behaviors compared to previous generations, especially in the field of fashion. Young people view fashion as a tool to create differentiation, build personality, and establish their personal identity in society.

- **Consumer behavior of youth for entertainment**

For young people, the need for entertainment after stressful study or work hours is a natural requirement. The favorite leisure activities of youth in Hanoi today include: browsing the web/social media, shopping combined with entertainment on social media, meeting friends at cafés, traveling, going on picnics, listening to music, taking photos, and more. In general, the entertainment activities of young people today are diverse, rich, and tend to be more individualistic. A notable trend is that youth often use multiple social media platforms at the same time. Each young person has their own choice of entertainment. All of this depends on their age, culture, and social awareness, with the most important factor being whether they engage in entertainment in a positive or negative direction.

- **Consumer behavior of youth for education**

Education helps young people, as well as individuals in general, develop the ability to solve complex problems, foster creative thinking, and adapt to changes in life. This is crucial in a world that is constantly changing and developing. Investment in education remains one of the key spending areas that youth focus on, stemming from a desire to improve themselves, build an image of being well-educated, skilled, and socially aware, while striving to become global citizens. All knowledge starts with learning, and spending in the field of education is an investment in the future.

Thus, the consumption behavior of young people begins with material needs or spiritual desires. This may include shopping to meet basic needs such as food and fashion, or fulfilling more advanced desires such as entertainment and travel. Based on these needs, young people make purchasing decisions and select products based on factors such as price, quality, brand, and convenience. The economic, cultural, and social environment of the capital also provides favorable conditions for youth to have more opportunities to access information and stay updated on new consumption trends and modern consumption channels. Hanoi is a place where tradition meets modernity, where different cultural layers influence how young people perceive their value through what they own and consume, thereby shaping their consumption behaviors, lifestyle, and social mindset.

#### **2.2.4. Payment methods in consumption**

In reality, a strong economy always goes hand in hand with a modern payment system. Payment methods are an integral part of consumption activities, reflecting and creating differences in the consumer culture of individuals, groups, or society as a whole. The changes in payment methods among young people in Hanoi also reflect shifts in their mindset, psychology, and consumption philosophy, which are evident in their consumption activities. Payment methods help shape the consumer culture of modern society, particularly emphasizing the younger demographic that is in the process of integrating with global consumer culture.

### **2.3. GENERAL COMMENTS ON CONSUMER CULTURE OF YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY**

#### **2.3.1. On the concept of consumption**

Young people in Hanoi today tend to be smart and flexible consumers. They are not only concerned about product quality but also highly value factors such as utility, value, and sustainability in their consumption. In summary, young people are savvy consumers who know how to leverage technology, choose products that align with their needs and modern consumption trends, while also focusing on quality and long-term value. The richness, diversity, and flexibility in the consumer culture of youth reflect their dynamism and creativity in life. From another perspective, it also shows their ability to adapt to the uncertainties of contemporary society. In consumption activities, young people exhibit flexibility and diversity in product selection, not overly idolizing or being strict with any specific product, as long as it meets the criteria of good quality, reasonable price, time-saving, and practicality.

### **2.3.2. On the tastes of consumption**

The consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today not only reflects consumption trends and habits but also serves as a way for them to assert their personal identity, uniqueness, and the distinct mark of their generation in society. For young people, shopping is not merely about meeting basic needs, but is considered a hobby or even a form of entertainment and socializing. On the other hand, with diverse methods of shaping personal identity and determining social status, the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today also has a strong impact on business practices, shaping markets, and contributing to the overall consumer culture of society.

### **2.3.3. On the behavior of consumption**

The consumption of age-appropriate products, with a focus on food, clothing, and beauty products, clearly reflects the selective consumption trend among young people. Today, in addition to acquiring in-depth knowledge in their chosen profession, young people must also cultivate knowledge in all other areas of social life. Youth are in the process of forming their life values, career orientation, and personal development. Balancing finances for consumption activities is not something all young people can manage. Only when they truly understand the value of money can young people learn to appreciate it and develop controlled consumption habits, thus avoiding unexpected risks.

### **2.3.4. Payment methods in Youth consumer**

Young people in Hanoi today are actively adopting and applying modern shopping and consumption methods, combining technology, convenience, and sustainable living habits. The use of digital platforms, e-wallets, and product information searches have become key factors that help them make intelligent consumption decisions that align with their personal needs. However, the ease of shopping and the vast variety of products available lead to an increase in consumption demands, which can easily cause young consumers to overindulge in shopping. On the other hand, while the convenience of online shopping with home delivery is beneficial, the quality of the products cannot be verified until they are received. This results in the situation where the product may not meet expectations upon inspection, and even if it is exchanged or returned, the process can be cumbersome in terms of

transportation. Therefore, young consumers need to be cautious in choosing products to fully leverage the advantages of e-commerce and obtain quality items as expected.

From understanding the influencing factors, the researcher proceeds to analyze the manifestations of the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today. This analysis is based on the four elements of the consumer culture structure, including: beliefs, tastes, behaviors, and payment methods in consumption. Through practical surveys, it can be observed that the consumer culture in Hanoi has fundamentally been shaping and developing. The consumer culture of young people has undergone certain changes, containing many civilized and modern values, while also exhibiting some limitations in practice. Through consumer culture, young people assert their style, lifestyle, and identity, updating global consumption trends while reconnecting with the values of their ethnic traditions.

From the practical evaluation, the researcher identifies several key points regarding the youth of Hanoi today from the perspective of consumer culture as follows: (1) Young people are a generation that guides and creates new consumption trends; (2) Young people are a generation with needs that are closely tied to technology, thus they tend to use technology to seek interesting consumption experiences; (3) Young people are a generation that follows trends set by the crowd but tends to place more trust and expectations in personal evaluations from themselves, friends, and family, rather than just relying on online reviews; (4) Young people are a generation with practical views and thinking, beginning to calculate, plan, think long-term, seek employment, and set long-term goals in life.

### **Chapter 3**

## **DISCUSSION ON TRENDS, ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH CONSUMER CULTURE IN HANOI TODAY**

### **3.1. CONSUMER TRENDS OF YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY**

#### **3.1.1. Forecasts on new consumer trends in Vietnam**

Consumer trends often reflect changes in the needs, preferences, habits, and values of consumers. Understanding and responding to these trends is a key factor for businesses producing consumer goods to remain competitive and thrive at any time and in any country. The Vietnamese consumer market is undergoing a significant shift due to changing consumer tastes influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic in recent years. Among these, the four most prominent consumer trends of Vietnamese people today are:

Vietnamese consumers today perceive shopping as an experience and a way to "enhance their lives." Passion and unique personal experiences are key factors that influence consumer spending, helping them find joy and value in their daily lives.

Vietnamese consumers are shifting towards "smart shopping," paying increasing attention to understanding the origins of products. Before making a purchase, Vietnamese consumers always want to research the details related to the product, and the majority of them affirm that the product's origin is a crucial factor influencing their buying decisions.

Vietnamese consumers are also moving towards connected consumption, supported by digital technology and online platforms. The development of information infrastructure has enabled consumers to be more active and frequent in their shopping activities.

These trends are shaping the shopping habits and consumer behavior of Vietnamese people, which in turn is leading to changes in the market. This requires businesses to continuously stay updated and adjust their marketing strategies accordingly.

### **3.1.2 .Prominent Trends in the Consumer Culture of Youth in Hanoi Today**

#### ***Trend 1: Smart Consumption***

The reason why smart consumption is considered a prominent trend in the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today is due to the flexible changes in their tastes and consumer behaviors. Young people tend to choose a simple and practical lifestyle, focusing more on quality of life and spiritual satisfaction rather than displaying status and personal identity through luxury items and spending levels. Every aspect, from information gathering, consumption beliefs, and behaviors, to daily lifestyles, has undergone significant changes. Moreover, many young people have learned how to maximize the benefits of shopping, minimizing their expenses while still acquiring the items they wish to purchase.

#### ***Trend 2: Sustainable Consumption***

Sustainable consumption is the use of products/services that meet essential needs while minimizing negative impacts on the environment during production and throughout the product's life cycle. The habit of sustainable consumption has evolved over the years, transitioning from a trendy movement to a regular practice for many people. More and more young individuals are becoming aware of the negative environmental impact of excessive consumption and are starting to opt for more eco-friendly alternatives. However, changing shopping habits is not always easy, especially when considering the convenience and cost of conventional products. Therefore, the shift toward sustainable consumption has not yet become widespread among today's youth.

#### ***Trend 3: Consumption of Vietnamese Products***

Young people choose to use Vietnamese products primarily because the quality of products from Vietnamese brands has been gradually improving and winning over young consumers with refined tastes and modern consumption habits. It can be said that consuming Vietnamese goods among youth is a way to promote Vietnamese brands. The trend of young Vietnamese people prioritizing domestic products serves as a reflection of their patriotic spirit in the era of industrialization, modernization, and deep international economic integration. However, the mentality towards consuming Vietnamese products may change if product quality declines, as a small segment of youth still have a preference for foreign goods and do not fully trust the quality of Vietnamese products. Nevertheless, consuming Vietnamese products will continue to be a dominant trend in the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi in the coming time.

## **3.2. ISSUES FACING THE CONSUMER CULTURE OF YOUTH IN HANOI TODAY**

The development and explosion of the digital age today have led to significant changes in the world. It brings about a more modern and convenient lifestyle and is gradually changing the consumption habits of Vietnamese people, including the youth in Hanoi today. From the advantages and limitations discussed above, the thesis outlines some basic issues facing the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today as follows:

***Issue 1: The Conflict Between Consumption Needs and the Financial Capacity of Youth***

The reality of consumption exceeding the income of youth today has become a significant issue. They even have to use credit cards to spend first and pay later, or are willing to spend extravagantly on shopping, partying, traveling, and indulging in pleasures. There are cases where they spend as much as they earn, and before the end of the month, they run out of money, falling into debt when unforeseen circumstances arise. This phenomenon reflects part of the modern reality of today's youth, especially Generation Z. The tendency for excessive partying, impulsive shopping, and uncontrolled spending has inadvertently trapped many young people in a cycle of debt, leading to financial and life consequences. The conflict between consumption needs and financial capacity also gives rise to issues related to consumer lifestyles. A significant number of youth in Hanoi today have a consumption mindset focused on status, materialism, and a preference for appearances.

***Issue 2: The Conflict Between Youth Consumption Behavior and National Cultural Values***

Mâu thuẫn giữa hành vi tiêu dùng của thanh niên và các giá trị văn hoá dân tộc là một vấn đề đáng chú ý trong bối cảnh hiện đại, đặc biệt khi các yếu tố toàn cầu hóa, đô thị hóa, và sự phát triển mạnh mẽ của công nghệ thông tin đang ảnh hưởng mạnh mẽ đến đời sống xã hội. Thanh niên ở cái độ tuổi còn đang loay hoay định hình lối sống tiêu dùng cho bản thân, đương nhiên cũng có những lệch chuẩn trong hành vi tiêu dùng là điều hoàn toàn có thể xảy ra. Có thể nói rằng, thanh niên là bộ phận tiếp nhận và thể hiện rõ nhất mọi biến đổi của xã hội, đất nước và thời đại, từ tiếp nhận tri thức khoa học đến văn hóa, lối sống tiêu dùng. Việc tiêu dùng của thanh niên có thể gặp mâu thuẫn với các giá trị văn hoá dân tộc, nhưng với sự giáo dục và thay đổi thói quen tiêu dùng, có thể xây dựng văn hoá tiêu dùng vừa hiện đại vừa bảo vệ được các giá trị truyền thống. Việc giải quyết mâu thuẫn giữa hành vi tiêu dùng với các giá trị truyền thống của dân tộc là tạo dựng thói quen tiêu dùng hợp lý, hợp với thuần phong mỹ tục, những điều tốt đẹp đã ăn sâu vào đời sống xã hội để xây dựng văn hoá tiêu dùng cho một thế hệ trẻ giàu bản sắc.

***Issue 3: The Conflict in Choosing to Consume Products from Vietnamese or Foreign Brands***

Youth in Hanoi today are facing a common conflict when choosing products to consume, especially between Vietnamese brands and foreign products. This conflict arises from various factors, including trust, quality, price, and cultural and social elements. The conflict between choosing Vietnamese and foreign brands reflects the clash between traditional, patriotic values and modern consumption trends. While some young people

prioritize national choices, others are attracted to international brands known for their quality and novelty. However, with the development of the market, the quality of Vietnamese products is improving, and the choice of products will no longer solely depend on brand but also on the needs and values consumers seek. Along with the change in the shopping mindset of the youth, the choice between domestic and foreign products requires the involvement of businesses and manufacturers to revive and strengthen the trust of young people in "made in Vietnam" goods. The "Vietnamese people use Vietnamese products" campaign is a great opportunity for young consumers—an emerging and dynamic consumer group—to express their patriotic spirit through everyday shopping habits.

### **3.3. DISCUSSIONS OF SOME SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOPING CONSUMER CULTURE FOR YOUTH IN HANOI IN THE COMING TIME**

Based on the current state of youth consumer culture in Hanoi, the researcher boldly presents some discussions on solutions for developing consumer culture for youth in the coming time, aiming to guide, build, and promote a civilized and modern consumer culture. Specifically, these solutions are as follows:

#### ***3.3.1. Solution to Raise Awareness About Consumer Culture for Youth***

It can be said that raising the awareness of youth in orienting, building, and developing consumer culture is the most important solution in shaping the consumer culture for youth today. This is because human actions always stem from awareness, which influences emotions, beliefs, the formation of motivations, determination, and finally manifests in behavior. Correct awareness will determine consumer behaviors that align with the values, standards, and civilized consumption lifestyles of modern society. To raise awareness about consumer culture for youth, it is necessary to help them change their consumption habits, thereby becoming smarter and more responsible consumers. Raising awareness about consumer culture for youth requires the participation of multiple parties, including education, media, and changes in their own consumption habits. A comprehensive strategy that combines providing information, encouraging specific actions, and creating practical opportunities is the best way to help youth form and develop a responsible consumer culture in the future.

#### ***3.3.2. Solutions on Mechanisms and Policies to Promote Youth Consumer Culture***

The government always has a direct or indirect impact on the consumption behavior of youth through a series of signals that are consistently conveyed in the economy. These signals include propaganda, education, as well as policies on taxes, prices, laws, standards, and community consumption values. The vision of youth consumer culture refers to the strategic thinking on product manufacturing and the formation of consumption habits among young Vietnamese people. To build a consumer culture for youth, the government needs to regularly update mechanisms and policies to protect consumer rights that align with the current social context, especially focusing on the youth demographic. The government is responsible for regulating, guiding, and encouraging businesses to develop

consumer products suited to the youth market segment, thus unleashing the potential of this promising young consumer group. Therefore, promoting youth consumer culture is not only a government task but also requires the active participation of businesses and the community. These solutions will contribute to the development of a generation of youth with a high level of consumer awareness, responsibility towards the environment and society, and, in turn, contribute to the sustainable development of the economy and society.

### ***3.3.3. Solutions for Developing the Consumer Market for Youth***

Along with raising awareness and improving policies, developing the market is also an important group of solutions to build and develop a consumer culture for youth in Hanoi today. Vietnamese businesses should proactively innovate their thinking and understand the importance of market research, as well as understanding the consumer culture of youth in particular and young people in general, in order to come up with a reasonable and effective business strategy for their limited resources. The consumption demand of youth is increasing, and businesses are continuously enhancing production and consumption to meet this demand. To succeed in conquering this potential consumer group, each business needs to focus on developing its market and products to meet the various levels of consumption needs of youth today. Developing the consumer market for youth is an important goal because they are a large, dynamic consumer group that is easily receptive to new products and services. However, to succeed, businesses need to fully understand the needs, preferences, trends, and consumption habits of this group. By leveraging technology, building approachable and creative brands, and creating products and services that meet the desires of youth, businesses can attract and retain this customer group in the future.

### ***3.3.4. Solutions to Encourage Youth to Consume Vietnamese Products, Contributing to Socio-Economic Development***

Consuming Vietnamese products needs to become a source of pride for every young person today. Consuming Vietnamese products is not just about patriotism; it is about solidarity and unity, helping the country overcome difficult times, thereby expressing Vietnam's identity in the economic and consumer sectors. The movement "Vietnamese people prioritize using Vietnamese products" is currently entering a new phase as our country increasingly integrates into the global economy with many new bilateral and multilateral trade agreements being signed. The pressure and competition in the domestic market will become more intense. In the coming time, to implement the movement more



effectively, it is necessary to continue building, inheriting, and promoting the values that have been formed and are forming in the consumer culture of the Vietnamese people, thereby inspiring trust, support, and a sense of responsibility among youth to proactively consume Vietnamese products. Encouraging youth to consume Vietnamese products is a long-term strategy, requiring a coordinated approach with multiple solutions, not only from the authorities but also from social organizations, businesses, families, schools, and the youth themselves. Creating high-quality products, along with strategies for propaganda, education, and creating a favorable consumption environment, will help Vietnamese products dominate the market, especially among the youth. If implemented comprehensively and effectively, this will be an important foundation for youth to develop a sustainable lifestyle that is responsible toward society and the environment.

## CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the author has researched and clarified the following key contents:

Firstly, an overview of the research related to the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today and clarifying the theoretical issues regarding the consumer culture of youth, while also providing a summary of the research subject.

Secondly, identifying the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today based on the logic of moving from the current situation, forecasting trends, and providing an overall evaluation of the key aspects of the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today.

Thirdly, analyzing the influencing factors, the challenges that arise, and discussing some solutions for the development of the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi in the future.

It can be seen that the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today is highly mobile, formed based on cultural diversity, but all are oriented towards new trends and values, where: (1) the economic value of goods reflects the social status of the owner; (2) the value of individuals is elevated; (3) the internet and digital technology have become dominant, creating many conveniences but also increasingly influencing and forming new consumption habits; (4) electronic transactions stimulate the capacity and increase opportunities for youth; many common global values are established, which also serves as the foundation for each country to reflect, establish, and preserve its own values; (5) shopping spaces are increasingly expanding, allowing youth to save time while enhancing their ability to interact. Various influencing factors impact the decision-making and purchasing habits of youth in Hanoi today, which partly explains the changes in the consumer culture of young Vietnamese people. These influences include age, gender, education, occupation, income, standard of living, family characteristics, and attitudes and consumption habits. The media also plays an important role in raising awareness among youth about consumer culture, contributing to the process of advising and solving consumers' problems. The shift in the mindset of this young customer group is the driving force for producers to strive to improve quality and creativity in every product.

Through the research results of this dissertation, it can be concluded that the consumer culture of youth in Hanoi today has fundamentally been forming and developing. Under the influence of many subjective and objective factors, the consumer culture of youth has undergone certain changes, encompassing many positive and civilized values but also containing certain limitations in practice. Therefore, it is necessary to have solutions to orient, build, and develop the consumer culture for the youth of the capital city in three aspects: awareness, attitude, and behavior. This is the foundation for building a wise generation of young consumers in the future.

**LISTS OF THE AUTHOR'S PUBLISHED RESEARCH WORKS  
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