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Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intentions through Trust and Attitude


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RECOMMENDED TOOLS



Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intention through Trust and Attitude

Aekram Faisal^{a*}, Anton Hindardjo^b, Rachmat Ramadhan^c

^{a,c}Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, Indonesia

^bFaculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Mercu Buana, Jakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) on green purchase intention among Generation Z, with a particular focus on the mediating roles of green trust and green attitude. Adopting a quantitative approach, data was collected from 295 Generation Z respondents in Greater Jakarta who follow eco-conscious influencers. Structural equation modeling and bootstrapping techniques were employed for data analysis. The results show that social media influencers do not have a direct effect on green purchase intention; however, they exert a positive influence on both green trust and green attitude. Furthermore, green trust and green attitude fully mediate the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention, with both variables significantly affecting green purchase intention. These findings highlight the importance of fostering trust and positive attitudes through influencer-generated content to enhance eco-friendly product purchase intentions among Generation Z consumers. This study contributes to the growing literature on green consumer behavior in the digital era and offers practical insights for marketers targeting environmentally conscious young consumers. Additionally, it provides avenues for future research on the role of digital marketing dynamics in promoting sustainable products among youth.

KEYWORDS

Social Media Influencers
Green Purchase Intention
Green Trust
Green Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Environmental issues have become increasingly complex and urgent on a global scale, particularly in the modern era, where digital technology and fast-paced consumption dominate everyday life. Issues such as climate change, ecosystem degradation, deforestation, and rising carbon emissions have prompted societies worldwide to re-evaluate their lifestyles and consumption patterns. In response to these challenges, the concept of green consumption has emerged, referring to consumer behavior that considers the ecological impact of products purchased and consumed (Teixeira et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024).

Although awareness of environmental sustainability has increased significantly, a notable gap persists between environmental awareness and actual consumer behavior, a phenomenon known as

*Corresponding Author: aekram.faisal@trisakti.ac.id; doi: 10.35313/ijabr.v8i01.551

the attitude-behavior gap (Zhuo et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2019). Consumers may express concern for environmental issues, yet these attitudes do not always translate into environmentally responsible purchasing decisions. This discrepancy poses a substantial challenge to the achievement of sustainable consumption objectives.

One consumer segment that has gained increasing scholarly attention in green consumer behavior research is Generation Z, defined as individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. As digital natives, this generation is deeply embedded in digital technologies and heavily engaged with social media as a platform for communication, information seeking, lifestyle inspiration, and consumption reference (Sugiarti et al., 2023; Valendia & Purwanegara, 2022). Interestingly, despite demonstrating relatively high levels of social and environmental awareness, Generation Z's actual purchasing behavior does not always consistently reflect green consumption principles.

Within the digital ecosystem, social media influencers (SMIs) play a pivotal role as persuasive and credible communicators. Influencers are seen as figures capable of building emotional closeness and trust, thereby influencing consumer attitudes and purchase decisions through personal, authentic, and persuasive content (Ki et al., 2020; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2017). Consequently, SMIs have become an increasingly popular marketing tool for brands, including those promoting eco-friendly products.

Prior research has indicated that SMIs exert a positive influence on green purchase intention (GPI) (Sugiarti et al., 2023; De Veirman et al., 2017). However, empirical findings in the literature remain inconclusive. For example, Teixeira et al. (2023) found that the direct effect of influencers on GPI is not statistically significant. These mixed results suggest that the influence of SMIs may operate indirectly, necessitating the need to incorporate mediating variables to better explain the underlying psychological mechanisms of consumer behavioral change.

To address this inconsistency, recent studies have increasingly incorporated psychological mediators, such as green trust and green attitude. Green trust refers to the consumer's belief regarding the credibility of a product's environmental claims, which are often shaped by the trustworthiness of the influencer (Shahabbuddin, 2024). Trust plays a crucial role in combating concerns related to greenwashing, a practice in which brands misleadingly portray their products as environmentally friendly (Sun & Shi, 2022). Meanwhile, green attitudes reflect an individual's values, beliefs, and commitment toward environmental preservation and have been consistently identified as a strong predictor of green behavior (Putri et al., 2021; Sun & Xing, 2022).

Against this backdrop, the present study proposes a dual-mediation model that examines the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention through the simultaneous mediation of green trust and green attitude. This approach seeks to reconcile contradictory findings in prior research while deepening the understanding of the psychological processes underpinning green consumer behavior within digital marketing contexts.

Accordingly, the objective of this study is to analyze the influence of social media influencers on Generation Z's green purchase intention, with green trust and green attitude serving as mediating variables. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) examine the effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention; (2) examine the effect of social media influencers on green trust; (3) examine the effect of social media influencers on green attitude; (4) examine the effect of green trust on green purchase intention; (5) examine the effect of green attitude on green purchase intention; (6) examine the mediating role of green trust in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention; and (7) examine the mediating role of green attitude in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Based on the literature review, the hypotheses are formulated and presented in the proposed conceptual framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory, originally introduced by Kelman (1958), explains that behavior change occurs through three key processes: compliance, identification, and internalization. In the digital age, these processes have become even more pronounced, especially through the growing role of social media influencers.

Recent empirical research highlights the relevance of this theory in shaping green consumer behavior. For example, Liao (2024) found that social media users tend to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors when such actions are perceived as socially normative and endorsed by influential online figures. Similarly, Purnama et al. (2025) noted that social value orientation moderates the effect of social influence on pro-environmental actions, indicating that personal values and perceived social expectations jointly shape sustainable behaviors. Accordingly, social influence remains a critical theoretical lens for understanding how social media influencers impact eco-conscious decision-making within the digital environment.

Social Media Influencers (SMIs)

Social media influencers (SMIs) are individuals who have built credibility and amassed sizable followings on social media platforms, thereby possessing the persuasive power to affect followers' attitudes, preferences, and behaviors (Casaló et al., 2020; Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). They play a significant role in shaping consumer decision-making through the creation and dissemination of authentic content, particularly within lifestyle and fashion domains, and increasingly in sustainability-related contexts.

In the context of green marketing, SMIs have emerged as powerful agents in promoting sustainable consumption behaviors. When influencers consistently communicate eco-conscious values, they contribute to the legitimization and normalization of green practices among their audiences (Jin et al., 2019). Additionally, the development of parasocial relationships, defined as emotional, one-sided bonds between followers and influencers, enhances message effectiveness and can directly impact green purchase intention (Schouten et al., 2021; Jalali & Khalid, 2021). Research by Lou & Yuan (2019) and Ki et al. (2020) also supported the idea that message value, source credibility, and perceived expertise of SMIs significantly boost followers' trust in promoted green products. These factors serve as key psychological triggers in motivating eco-friendly consumer behavior, positioning SMIs as strategic partners in the advancement of green branding initiatives.

Green Trust (GT)

Green trust is a crucial psychological mechanism that influences environmentally responsible consumer behavior. It refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a brand or company based on perceptions of its environmental performance and the sincerity of its sustainability efforts. Chuah et al. (2020) emphasized that green trust is shaped not only by corporate environmental claims but also by the perceived alignment between those claims and the firm's actual environmental practices. In the era of green skepticism, trust acts as a protective factor against accusations of greenwashing and plays a central role in cultivating long-term relationships with environmentally conscious

consumers.

From a strategic standpoint, green trust functions as a mediating factor that connects various green marketing attributes to customer loyalty and purchase intention. This role is further reinforced by Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024), who showed that corporate social responsibility (CSR) and green brand image enhance consumers' behavioral intention through the development of green trust, particularly in developing economies where environmental credibility is increasingly scrutinized.

Furthermore, the influence of green trust has been documented across a wide range of sectors, including organic food, healthcare services, and retail. Rashid & Lone (2024) reported that green trust strongly affects purchase intention in the organic food market, highlighting its importance in contexts where health and environmental concerns intersect. Meanwhile, Jannah et al. (2024) revealed that in outpatient healthcare services, green trust significantly boosts green brand equity, emphasizing that the perception of sustainability is equally vital in service-based industries. These studies collectively affirm that green trust is not merely an abstract or symbolic factor but a pivotal construct that translates green marketing strategies into tangible consumer outcomes.

Green Attitude (GA)

Green attitude refers to an individual's favorable evaluation or predisposition toward environmentally friendly products and behaviors. It plays a critical role in shaping green behavioral intention, particularly in the context of eco-conscious consumption. Shehawy & Khan (2024) found that green attitude significantly predicts green purchase intention, with this relationship further strengthened by green awareness, underscoring the role of environmental consciousness in activating attitudinal influences on behavior.

Amoako et al. (2020), employing the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), demonstrated that green attitude significantly influences young consumers' perceptions of green value and their willingness to engage in green purchasing. This underscores the importance of integrating environmental education and value-based campaigns among younger demographics. Van Tonder et al. (2023) further emphasized that green attitudes are shaped by internal values and social norms, which together foster green customer citizenship behaviors (e.g., advocacy, recycling, and participation in eco-initiatives). Similarly, Mehak and Batcha (2024) linked individual green attitudes to organizational sustainability, arguing that the alignment between green human resource practices and employee green attitudes enhances environmental performance in the workplace. Moreover, Corboş et al. (2024) highlighted that green attitude, coupled with effective green communication, plays a pivotal role in influencing consumers' actual green buying behavior. This finding illustrates how strategic communication efforts can help bridge the persistent gap between pro-environmental attitudes and concrete consumer actions.

Green Purchase Intention (GPI)

Green purchase intention refers to a consumer's deliberate intention to buy environmentally friendly products. It reflects a growing awareness of ecological issues and a desire to mitigate environmental harm through responsible consumption. Consumers with high levels of green purchase intention tend to value sustainability, perceive eco-friendly products as beneficial, and are motivated by emotional, social, and functional values (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Rashid & Lone, 2024; Sun & Xing,

2022).

Green purchase intention is shaped by various psychological and informational factors, including environmental knowledge, perceived effectiveness of green behavior, and credibility of environmental claims (Nguyen et al., 2019; Amoako et al., 2020). As digital platforms increasingly serve as primary information sources, exposure to eco-conscious messages, particularly those delivered by social media influencers and online marketing campaigns, can significantly strengthen consumers' green intentions (Jalali & Khalid, 2021; Teixeira et al., 2023).

Although green purchase intention does not always lead to actual purchasing behavior, it remains a strong predictor of eco-friendly consumption patterns (Yadav & Pathak, 2017; Zhuo et al., 2022). A deeper understanding of green purchase intention, therefore, enables marketers and policymakers to design better strategies to promote sustainable products and shift consumer behavior toward environmental responsibility.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention

Recent empirical studies highlight the growing influence of social media influencers in promoting sustainable consumption. Influencers' perceived opinion leadership significantly contributes to shaping consumer behavior, including green purchasing, as consumers tend to rely on their guidance when making eco-conscious decisions (Casaló et al., 2020). Moreover, the perceived credibility of influencers, particularly in terms of trustworthiness and expertise, further enhances the persuasiveness of environmental claims, which in turn reinforces green consumption intentions (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019).

The effectiveness of influencer-driven environmental messaging is also contingent upon the alignment between an influencer's identity and the content being promoted. A strong influencer-message fit fosters emotional connection and enhances message authenticity, which, in turn, increases persuasive impact (Schouten et al., 2021). Additionally, emotional engagement and value-based messaging from influencers are key drivers of favorable consumer attitudes and intentions toward sustainable products (Lim et al., 2017). Notably, the manner in which influencers frame their roles, either as educators (*informers*) or entertainers, also affects consumer responsiveness, with informative and value-aligned content leading to stronger green purchase intention (Zhao et al., 2024).

Drawing from these findings, social media influencers are seen as key agents in promoting sustainable behavior. Their capacity to influence consumer perceptions and elicit emotional engagement with environmental issues has been consistently linked to higher levels of green purchase intention. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H₁: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Trust

Social media influencers play a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions, particularly in building green trust, which refers to consumers' confidence in the environmental claims associated with products. According to Zhao et al. (2024), influencers perceived as authentic and informative can significantly enhance consumers' willingness to trust green-related messages. When influencers communicate sustainability themes consistently and integrate eco-friendly lifestyles into their

content, their perceived credibility increases, thereby reinforcing consumer trust (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). Moreover, Casaló et al. (2020) highlighted that influencers who act as opinion leaders are more persuasive in influencing trust-related outcomes, especially when followers identify with them and regard them as reliable sources of environmental values.

Green trust is further strengthened when influencers' personal values align with the messages they convey. Jalali & Khalid (2021) demonstrated that when influencers visibly integrate eco-conscious habits in their lifestyles and communication, audiences are more likely to perceive the messages as genuine and internalize them. This finding aligns with Chuah et al. (2020), who emphasized that green trust is sustained through consistent environmental behavior demonstrated by both organizations and individuals. In this respect, the influencer's role extends beyond content creation to include modeling sustainable behaviors that enhance perceived integrity and value congruence.

In addition, green trust has been identified as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between influencer communication and green purchase intention. Amin & Tarun (2021) pointed out that green trust acts as a psychological assurance that validates consumers' environmentally conscious decisions. Supporting this, Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024) asserted that green advertising by influencers significantly enhances consumer trust when the messaging is clear, consistent, and emotionally resonant. Based on the converging insights from these studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green trust.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Attitude

Social media influencers play a key role in shaping consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products, commonly referred to as green attitudes, through persuasive messaging and engaging content. Casaló et al. (2020) found that influencers, acting as opinion leaders, can positively influence followers' perceptions of sustainability. By consistently promoting eco-friendly values, influencers contribute to the formation of social norms that encourage pro-environmental attitudes (Zhao et al., 2024).

Visual content, in particular, is highly effective in influencing green attitudes. Jalali & Khalid (2021) demonstrated that images reflecting environmental concerns significantly affect followers' perceptions. When influencers share visually compelling eco-friendly messages, they foster environmental awareness and foster positive attitudes toward green products (Chen et al., 2020). Sustained exposure to such sustainability-oriented content further strengthens favorable green brand attitudes among followers.

In addition, the emotional bond between influencers and their followers, often conceptualized as parasocial interaction, plays a crucial role in shaping green attitudes. Ki et al. (2020) found that influencers who build authentic relationships with their audiences are more effective in influencing attitudes and behaviors. By promoting sustainable lifestyles in a relatable manner, influencers enhance message persuasiveness and encourage the development of more favorable green attitudes among followers (Shehawry & Khan, 2024). Based on this literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₃: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green attitude.

The Effect of Green Trust on Green Purchase Intention

Green trust plays a significant role in influencing consumers' green purchase intention by reducing skepticism and enhancing the perceived credibility of environmental claims. Research by Rashid & Lone (2024) showed that consumers who trust a product's environmental assertions are more likely to develop intentions to purchase eco-friendly products. This trust is particularly crucial in markets where greenwashing is prevalent, as transparency helps build a reliable connection between consumers and brands (Sun & Shi, 2022).

Trust is further amplified through social media influencers who provide credible and transparent environmental information. Teixeira et al. (2023) highlighted that influencers whose values align with sustainability are more effective in fostering trust, especially among younger consumers. This enhanced trust, in turn, directly influences consumer intention to purchase green products. Supporting this argument, Sugiarti et al. (2023) showed that influencer credibility is a key determinant in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions.

Moreover, green trust is strengthened by product-related factors, such as perceived quality and transparent communication of environmental claims. When brands clearly and consistently communicate their sustainability initiatives, they enhance consumer trust, which subsequently leads to stronger green purchase intentions (Corboş et al., 2024). Based on this body of research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₄: Green trust has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The Effect of Green Attitude on Green Purchase Intention

Consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products (green attitude) are widely recognized as critical determinants of green purchase intention. Chen et al. (2020) suggested that individuals with positive attitudes toward sustainability and eco-friendly consumption are more likely to exhibit strong intentions to purchase green products. Such positive attitudes stem from environmental awareness and the belief that personal consumption choices can meaningfully contribute to sustainability efforts.

Findings from Yadav & Pathak (2017), as well as recent results by Teixeira et al. (2023), consistently showed that green attitude is a significant predictor of green purchase intention. The more favorable consumers' attitudes toward environmental protection, the greater their likelihood of engaging in green purchasing behavior. This relationship is supported by Sinh (2024), who found that green attitude amplifies the link between personal values and sustainable consumption intentions.

Moreover, although green attitude is influenced by factors such as environmental concern, it remains a central driver of green purchase intention. Consumers with positive sustainability-oriented attitudes are more inclined to select eco-friendly products, particularly among younger generations whose consumption decisions are strongly guided by environmental values (Putri et al., 2021). Based on this growing body of research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Green attitude has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention Mediated By Green Trust

Green trust plays a critical mediating role in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Hu et al. (2019) emphasized that trust in influencers significantly shapes consumer behavior, particularly in the context of endorsing sustainable products. When consumers trust an influencer, they are more inclined to believe in the credibility of the eco-friendly products being promoted, which subsequently strengthens their intention to purchase.

Similarly, Jannah et al. (2024) highlighted that green trust is a key factor in strengthening consumer engagement with environmentally responsible brands. Amin & Tarun (2021) further argued that green trust connects consumers' environmental values with green purchase intentions, such that higher levels of trust lead to stronger purchasing tendencies. Chuah et al. (2020) also noted that environmental concern, when combined with green trust, increases consumer engagement with brands that actively promote sustainability. These findings suggest that influencers who authentically endorse green products can effectively enhance consumer trust and, in turn, stimulate green purchase intentions.

Additionally, Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024) pointed out that green trust mediates the effects of green advertising and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives on consumer behavior, underscoring its central role in driving sustainable consumption. Collectively, this body of research indicates that green trust is essential for translating influencer endorsements into genuine green purchase intentions. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Green trust mediates the effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention Mediated By Green Attitude

Green attitude plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Chen et al. (2020) found that consumers with positive green attitudes are more receptive to green brand messages and, consequently, exhibit stronger intentions to purchase sustainable products. This aligns with Lim et al. (2017), who emphasized that customer attitude mediates the impact of influencer marketing on purchase behavior.

Further supporting this, Corboş et al. (2024) argued that influencers actively shape consumer attitudes in sustainability contexts, thereby encouraging more eco-friendly purchasing decisions. Similarly, Putri et al. (2021) observed that attitudes significantly mediate the effect of environmental knowledge on green product purchase intentions. These findings highlight the importance of aligning influencer messages with consumers' environmental values to strengthen green purchasing behavior.

In addition, Shehawy and Khan (2024) identified that green awareness moderates the relationship between green attitude and purchase intentions, further underlining the importance of cultivating a positive green attitude through influencer-driven communication. Collectively, this body of research emphasizes the pivotal role of both social media influencers and consumer attitudes in promoting sustainable consumption behaviors. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₇: Green attitude mediates the effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention.

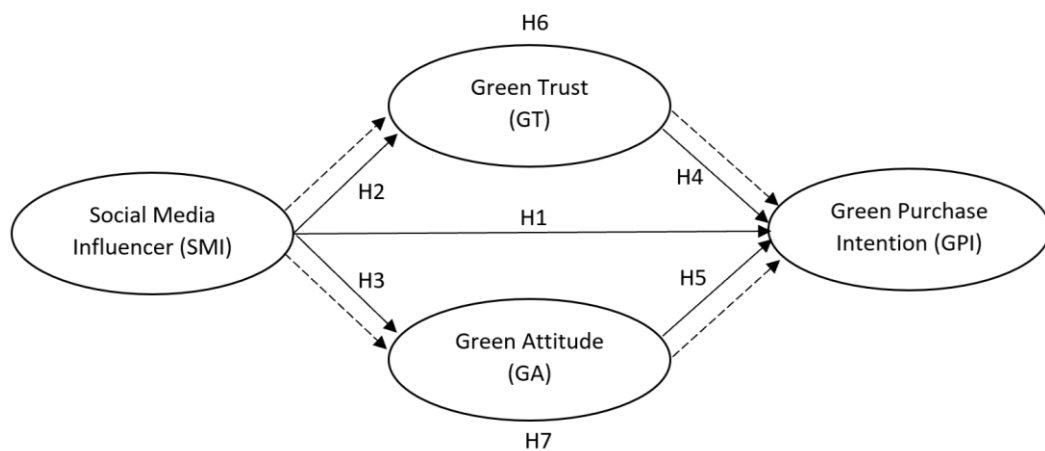


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach with a survey method to analyze the influence of social media influencers (SMIs) on green purchase intention (GPI), both directly and indirectly through green attitude (GA) and green trust (GT) as mediating variables. The unit of analysis comprised Generation Z individuals in the Greater Jakarta area who actively used social media and followed influencers with an expressed concern for environmental issues. A nonprobability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, was employed to ensure that respondents met the predetermined selection criteria.

It should be noted that the use of purposive sampling may introduce potential bias, particularly regarding sample representativeness, as the study focuses on a specific subgroup of Generation Z social media users in Greater Jakarta. Accordingly, the findings should not be generalized to the broader Generation Z population. Furthermore, although no formal control variables were incorporated into the model, demographic information, including gender, education level, and income, was collected and reported to provide contextual insight for interpreting the results.

A total of 295 respondents participated in this study, exceeding the minimum sample size of 200 recommended by Hair et al. (2019) for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. Data was collected through an online questionnaire distributed to respondents who met the specified criteria. The study examined four primary constructs: social media influencers (SMIs), green attitude (GA), green trust (GT), and green purchase intention (GPI). Each construct was measured using multiple items adapted from established studies. Specifically, social media influencers were measured using two items adapted from Teixeira et al. (2023), green attitude using four items adapted from Teixeira et al. (2023), green trust using five items adapted from Amin & Tarun (2021), and green purchase intention using five items adapted from Panopoulos et al. (2023). All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses and evaluate the relationships among the constructs in the research model. To assess mediation effects, this study employed a bootstrapping procedure, which enables the estimation of confidence intervals for indirect effects (Hayes, 2022).

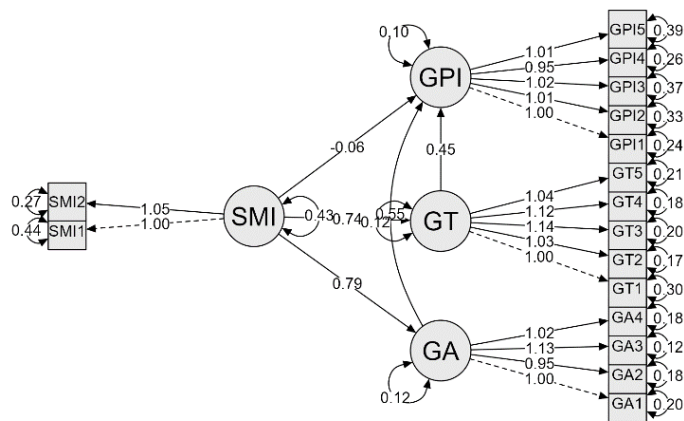


Figure 2. SEM output

RESULTS

The results of the validity and reliability tests presented in Table 1 indicate that all variables and indicators in this study meet the required criteria for validity and reliability. Each indicator exhibits a factor loading exceeding the threshold value of 0.60, which, according to Hair et al. (2019), provides strong evidence of convergent validity. In addition, the Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceed 0.80, thereby confirming a satisfactory level of internal consistency and reliability.

Table 1. Validity and reliability test results

Variables and Indicators		Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Social Media Influencers (SMIs)			0.818	Reliable
SMI1	When seeking information about environmentally friendly products, I consult influencers' opinions on social networks.	0.815		Valid
SMI2	Influencers' opinions on social networks affect my intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.812		Valid
Green Attitude (GA)			0.904	Reliable
GA1	My environmental awareness influences my intention to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.893		Valid
GA2	My positive beliefs about environmental well-being impact my intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.830		Valid
GA3	My feelings about environmental well-being impact my intention to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.782		Valid
GA4	My pro-environmental behavior influences my attitude toward purchasing environmentally friendly products.	0.732		Valid

Variables and Indicators		Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Green Trust (GT)			0.904	Reliable
GT1	The reputation of environmentally friendly products is generally reliable.	0.715		Valid
GT2	The environmental performance of eco-friendly products is generally dependable.	0.750		Valid
GT3	Environmental claims made by eco-friendly products are generally trustworthy.	0.705		Valid
GT4	The environmental concern demonstrated by eco-friendly products meets my expectations.	0.736		Valid
GT5	Eco-friendly products keep their promises and commitments to environmental protection.	0.830		Valid
Green Purchase Intention (GPI)			0.859	Reliable
GPI1	I choose to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.834		Valid
GPI2	I intend to buy eco-friendly products in the future because of their positive contribution to the environment.	0.846		Valid
GPI3	I buy eco-friendly products even though they are more expensive compared to non-green products.	0.803		Valid
GPI4	I prefer eco-friendly products over non-green products when the product quality is similar.	0.702		Valid
GPI5	I often buy products that use recycled or recyclable packaging.	0.797		Valid

Source: Data processed (2024)

In evaluating the suitability of the structural model with empirical data, several goodness-of-fit (GOF) indices were used. The results show that the proposed model demonstrates an acceptable to good level of fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of 0.949 and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) value of 0.938 exceed the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating a good model fit. In addition, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.047 is below the cut-off value of 0.08, indicating an acceptable fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.074 falls within an acceptable range, indicating a reasonably good model fit. Overall, these results suggest that the proposed model demonstrates adequate compatibility with the empirical data and is suitable for further interpretation.

Table 2. Respondent profile

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	115	38.983
Female	180	61.017
Work		
Civil Servants	2	0.678
Private Sector Employee	17	5.763

	Frequency	Percentage
Entrepreneurial Student	4 272	1.356 92.203
Education		
High School	59	20
Diploma	54	18.305
Undergraduate	180	61.017
Postgraduate	2	0.678
Income		
Under 5,000,000 IDR	253	85.763
5,000,000 – 10,000,000 IDR	36	12.203
10,000,001 – IDR 20,000,000 IDR	4	1.356
More than 20,000,000 IDR	2	0.678
The Most Commonly Used Social Media		
Facebook	2	0.678
Instagram	169	57.288
TikTok	112	37.966
X (Twitter)	12	4.068

Based on Table 2, the respondents' demographic profiles reveal several dominant characteristics. The majority of respondents were female (61.017%, $n = 180$), and most were students (92.203%, $n = 272$). In terms of educational background, the sample was predominantly composed of bachelor's degree holders (61.017%, $n = 180$). Regarding income level, most respondents reported monthly earnings below IDR 5,000,000 (85.763%, $n = 253$). In addition, Instagram emerged as the most frequently used social media platform among respondents (57.288%, $n = 169$). Overall, these data indicate that the sample largely consists of female undergraduate students with relatively low-income levels who actively use Instagram as their primary social media platform.

Table 3. Hypothesis testing (direct)

Hypothesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H1: SMI $\rightarrow$ GPI	-0.061	0.685	Not Supported
H2: SMI $\rightarrow$ GA	0.786	0.000	Supported
H3: SMI $\rightarrow$ GT	0.739	0.000	Supported
H4: GA $\rightarrow$ GPI	0.550	0.000	Supported
H5: GT $\rightarrow$ GPI	0.453	0.000	Supported

Source: Data processed (2024)

Based on the data in Table 3, the results of the direct influence analysis show several important findings. Social media influencers (SMIs) do not exert a significant direct influence on green purchase intention (GPI), as indicated by an estimated coefficient of -0.061 and a p-value of 0.685; therefore, H1 is not supported. In contrast, SMIs have a positive and significant influence on green attitude (GA) and green trust (GT), with estimated coefficients of 0.786 and 0.739 (both $p < 0.001$), respectively, thereby supporting H2 and H3. Furthermore, both GA and GT exhibit positive and significant effects on GPI, with estimated coefficients of 0.550 and 0.453, respectively (both $p < 0.001$), thus supporting H4 and H5.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing (Mediation)

Hypothesis	Estimate	p	95% Confidence Interval		Decision
			Lower	Upper	
H6: SMI → GA → GPI	0.200	0.000	0.120	0.293	Supported
H7: SMI → GT → GPI	0.167	0.000	0.102	0.255	Supported

Source: Data processed (2024)

The mediation analysis presented in Table 4 highlights the significant roles of green attitude (GA) and green trust (GT) as mediating variables. Social media influencers (SMIs) exert a significant indirect effect on green purchase intention (GPI) through GA, with an estimated coefficient of 0.200 ($p < 0.001$; 95% confidence interval: 0.120 to 0.293), thereby supporting H6. Similarly, SMIs demonstrate a significant indirect influence on GPI through GT, with an estimated 0.167 ($p < 0.001$; 95% confidence interval: 0.102 to 0.255), supporting H7. These two results show that both GA and GT play important mediating roles in the relationship between SMIs and GPI.

Overall, the results indicate that although social media influencers do not directly influence green purchase intention, they have a significant role in shaping consumers' green attitude and green trust. In turn, both green attitude and green trust positively affect green purchase intention. These findings underscore the importance of social media influencers in fostering favorable attitudes and building consumer trust toward environmentally friendly products, which ultimately encourages green purchasing intention. Accordingly, marketing strategies that leverage social media influencers should prioritize the development of positive attitudes and the strengthening of consumer trust in eco-friendly products, rather than focusing solely on directly stimulating purchase intentions.

DISCUSSION

This study examines the role of social media influencers in shaping Generation Z's green purchase intention by emphasizing the mediating effects of green attitude and green trust. The findings provide important insights into how influencer marketing contributes to pro-environmental behavior and highlight the complexity of consumer decision-making in the digital era.

The analysis shows that social media influencers do not have a significant direct influence on green purchase intention. This aligns with previous research suggesting that exposure to sustainability-oriented influencer content alone is insufficient to directly stimulate purchasing behavior (Zhao et al., 2024; Teixeira et al., 2023). Despite being active on social media, Generation Z consumers are not automatically persuaded to make green purchases solely based on influencer promotions. Instead, their behavioral intentions appear to be shaped by deeper psychological mechanisms, particularly attitude formation and trust development.

Despite the absence of direct effects, this study confirms that social media influencers play a critical role in shaping positive green attitudes and fostering green trust. These indirect effects serve as essential pathways linking influencer communication to consumer behavioral intention. Green attitudes are strengthened through repeated exposure to authentic and value-driven messages that resonate with Generation Z's strong concern for environmental responsibility and ethical consumption (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Corboş et al., 2024). Influencers who demonstrate transparency, consistency, and genuine commitment to sustainability are more effective in influencing attitudes, as their credibility enhances message acceptance (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2021).

Green trust also emerges as a key mediator in the relationship between influencers and purchase intention. It is essential in reducing consumer skepticism toward sustainability claims, particularly among a generation that is highly aware of greenwashing and skeptical of corporate motives (Chuah et al., 2020; Jalali & Khalid, 2021). Influencers can strengthen green trust by displaying long-term engagement with sustainable lifestyles, endorsing environmentally responsible brands, and participating in environmental initiatives. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing that influencer credibility, expertise, and perceived authenticity are fundamental drivers of consumer trust (Shahahbuddin, 2024; Jin et al., 2019).

The findings also validate theoretical perspectives that emphasize the importance of mediation mechanisms in influencing behavioral intention. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitudes toward behavior and perceived behavioral control are stronger predictors of intention than external stimuli alone (Amoako et al., 2020). This suggests that influencer marketing influences green purchase intention indirectly through consumers' cognitive and affective evaluations, making the effect of influencers more indirect and dependent on the consumer's internal belief systems. Similarly, the Value-Belief-Norm theory posits that pro-environmental behavior is driven by internalized values, environmental concern, and personal norms rather than by external persuasion alone (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Liao, 2024). The present study empirically supports these theoretical frameworks by demonstrating the central role of green attitude and green trust as mediators.

Moreover, emotional engagement emerges as an important complementary factor. Influencer content that evokes empathy, concern, or urgency about environmental issues can positively influence consumer responses, particularly when combined with personal storytelling or visually engaging content (De Veirman et al., 2017; Sun & Shi, 2022). Generation Z, with their high digital fluency and visual literacy, is especially responsive to such content formats, making platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube highly effective for sustainability-related communication (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Sugiarti et al., 2023).

This study also underscores the importance of perceived congruence between influencers and the sustainability messages they endorse. When influencers' identities, lifestyles, and values align with the environmental principles they promote, consumers are more likely to develop favorable attitudes and trust, ultimately strengthening green purchase intention (Ki et al., 2020). In contrast, a lack of congruence may weaken message credibility and limit behavioral impact, regardless of influencer popularity.

Overall, this study enhances the understanding of influencer marketing effectiveness in the context of sustainable consumption by demonstrating that social media influencers influence green purchase intention indirectly through green attitude and green trust. These mediating mechanisms are essential for translating environmental awareness into behavioral intention, particularly among Generation Z consumers who prioritize authenticity, ethical values, and social impact. By integrating green attitude and green trust as key explanatory constructs, this study contributes to a more nuanced and theoretically grounded understanding of how influencer marketing can promote sustainable consumption.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention among Generation Z by focusing on the mediating roles of green trust and green attitude. The findings reveal that social media influencers do not exert a significant direct influence on green purchase intention. This suggests that mere exposure to environmentally themed content shared by influencers is insufficient to immediately drive green purchasing behavior among Generation Z

consumers. However, the results demonstrate that social media influencers have a significant and positive impact on both green trust and green attitude, highlighting their ability to foster confidence in eco-friendly product claims and to shape favorable perceptions of environmentally responsible consumption.

Moreover, both green trust and green attitude significantly mediate the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. These findings suggest that although influencers may not directly persuade Generation Z to purchase green products, they exert an indirect influence by cultivating trust and fostering positive environmental attitudes. In other words, the influencers' effectiveness lies in their ability to shape internal psychological constructs rather than merely promoting products. This study, therefore, contributes to the growing body of literature on sustainable consumer behavior by underscoring the psychological pathways through which influencer marketing operates in the context of green consumption. It emphasizes that the journey from message exposure to actual purchase intention is complex and highly dependent on intermediary factors such as trust formation and attitudinal development.

Importantly, these findings directly address the research gap identified in the introduction concerning the inconsistent empirical evidence on the direct effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention. By demonstrating that this relationship is fully mediated by green trust and green attitude, the study provides clearer theoretical insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying Generation Z's green purchasing behavior. In doing so, the study not only reconciles previous contradictory evidence but also strengthens the theoretical integration of influencer marketing and consumer psychology in sustainability research. Overall, this study advances the green marketing literature by highlighting the indirect yet crucial role of trust and attitude in translating influencer communication into meaningful behavioral intentions among young consumers.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The outcomes of this research offer strategic implications for marketing professionals, brand managers, and producers of eco-friendly products targeting Generation Z consumers. First, marketers should prioritize collaborations with social media influencers who demonstrate authenticity, consistency, and credibility in promoting sustainable lifestyles. Rather than emphasizing popularity or follower counts alone, it is crucial to evaluate an influencer's alignment with environmental values and their ability to communicate sustainability messages in a credible and meaningful manner.

Second, content strategies should be designed to foster both emotional engagement and cognitive understanding among consumers. This can be achieved through storytelling, educational content, and real-life demonstrations of eco-friendly behaviors. Transparent communication, such as clearly explaining a product's environmental benefits or disclosing sustainable sourcing and production practices, can enhance consumer trust and mitigate skepticism regarding greenwashing.

Third, brands are encouraged to leverage interactive features available on social media platforms to promote two-way communication with consumers. Tools such as question-and-answer sessions, polls, and discussion forums can encourage audience participation and allow consumers to share their experiences and perspectives. Additionally, brands could invest in digital campaigns and influencer-led environmental education initiatives that build awareness and reinforce positive attitudes toward green behavior. The findings also highlight the need for consistent messaging across platforms to strengthen brand trust and the perceived authenticity of eco-friendly claims. By

leveraging these insights, brands can design more effective campaigns that not only raise awareness but also cultivate long-term pro-environmental behavioral intentions among Generation Z consumers.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings and that provide directions for future research. First, the geographical scope of the study is limited, which may constrain the generalizability of the results. Generation Z consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward sustainability are likely to differ across cultural and regional contexts. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to replicate this research in different countries or cultural settings to examine potential cross-cultural variations in the influence of social media influencers on green purchase behavior.

Second, the cross-sectional research design restricts the ability to capture changes in attitudes, trust, and behavioral intentions over time. Longitudinal research designs would allow scholars to observe how repeated exposure to influencer-generated sustainability content shapes green trust and green attitude, and whether these effects translate into sustained green purchasing behavior in the long term.

Third, this study focuses primarily on individual-level psychological constructs (i.e., trust and attitude) without accounting for broader contextual or external factors that may influence green purchase intention. Future studies could incorporate additional moderating or mediating variables such as environmental awareness, regulatory support, peer influence, or economic incentives. These factors may further enrich the model and provide a more holistic view of green consumer decision-making.

Finally, future studies could examine the differential effects of various types of social media influencers, such as micro-influencers, macro-influencers, and celebrity endorsers, on green trust and green attitude. Investigating these distinctions may provide more nuanced insights into how influencer characteristics and endorsement strategies influence sustainable consumption and help practitioners optimize influencer selection in green marketing campaigns.

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81	Publication	Xinyue Zhang, Xintong Guo, Bader Alhafi Alotaibi, Mohsin Riaz. "Decarbonizing Tr...	<1%
82	Publication	Yasser Moustafa Shehawy, Syed Md Faisal Ali Khan. "Consumer readiness for gre...	<1%
83	Internet	amsdottorato.unibo.it	<1%
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Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intention through Trust and Attitude

Aekram Faisal^{a*}, Anton Hindardjo^b, Rachmat Ramadhan^c

^{a,c}Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, Indonesia

^bFaculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Mercu Buana, Jakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) on green purchase intention among Generation Z, with a particular focus on the mediating roles of green trust and green attitude. Adopting a quantitative approach, data was collected from 295 Generation Z respondents in Greater Jakarta who follow eco-conscious influencers. Structural equation modeling and bootstrapping techniques were employed for data analysis. The results show that social media influencers do not have a direct effect on green purchase intention; however, they exert a positive influence on both green trust and green attitude. Furthermore, green trust and green attitude fully mediate the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention, with both variables significantly affecting green purchase intention. These findings highlight the importance of fostering trust and positive attitudes through influencer-generated content to enhance eco-friendly product purchase intentions among Generation Z consumers. This study contributes to the growing literature on green consumer behavior in the digital era and offers practical insights for marketers targeting environmentally conscious young consumers. Additionally, it provides avenues for future research on the role of digital marketing dynamics in promoting sustainable products among youth.

KEYWORDS

Social Media Influencers
Green Purchase Intention
Green Trust
Green Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Environmental issues have become increasingly complex and urgent on a global scale, particularly in the modern era, where digital technology and fast-paced consumption dominate everyday life. Issues such as climate change, ecosystem degradation, deforestation, and rising carbon emissions have prompted societies worldwide to re-evaluate their lifestyles and consumption patterns. In response to these challenges, the concept of green consumption has emerged, referring to consumer behavior that considers the ecological impact of products purchased and consumed (Teixeira et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024).

Although awareness of environmental sustainability has increased significantly, a notable gap persists between environmental awareness and actual consumer behavior, a phenomenon known as

*Corresponding Author: aekram.faisal@trisakti.ac.id; doi: 10.35313/ijabr.v8i01.551

the attitude-behavior gap (Zhuo et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2019). Consumers may express concern for environmental issues, yet these attitudes do not always translate into environmentally responsible purchasing decisions. This discrepancy poses a substantial challenge to the achievement of sustainable consumption objectives.

One consumer segment that has gained increasing scholarly attention in green consumer behavior research is Generation Z, defined as individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. As digital natives, this generation is deeply embedded in digital technologies and heavily engaged with social media as a platform for communication, information seeking, lifestyle inspiration, and consumption reference (Sugiarti et al., 2023; Valendia & Purwanegara, 2022). Interestingly, despite demonstrating relatively high levels of social and environmental awareness, Generation Z's actual purchasing behavior does not always consistently reflect green consumption principles.

Within the digital ecosystem, social media influencers (SMIs) play a pivotal role as persuasive and credible communicators. Influencers are seen as figures capable of building emotional closeness and trust, thereby influencing consumer attitudes and purchase decisions through personal, authentic, and persuasive content (Ki et al., 2020; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2017). Consequently, SMIs have become an increasingly popular marketing tool for brands, including those promoting eco-friendly products.

Prior research has indicated that SMIs exert a positive influence on green purchase intention (GPI) (Sugiarti et al., 2023; De Veirman et al., 2017). However, empirical findings in the literature remain inconclusive. For example, Teixeira et al. (2023) found that the direct effect of influencers on GPI is not statistically significant. These mixed results suggest that the influence of SMIs may operate indirectly, necessitating the need to incorporate mediating variables to better explain the underlying psychological mechanisms of consumer behavioral change.

To address this inconsistency, recent studies have increasingly incorporated psychological mediators, such as green trust and green attitude. Green trust refers to the consumer's belief regarding the credibility of a product's environmental claims, which are often shaped by the trustworthiness of the influencer (Shahabbuddin, 2024). Trust plays a crucial role in combating concerns related to greenwashing, a practice in which brands misleadingly portray their products as environmentally friendly (Sun & Shi, 2022). Meanwhile, green attitudes reflect an individual's values, beliefs, and commitment toward environmental preservation and have been consistently identified as a strong predictor of green behavior (Putri et al., 2021; Sun & Xing, 2022).

Against this backdrop, the present study proposes a dual-mediation model that examines the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention through the simultaneous mediation of green trust and green attitude. This approach seeks to reconcile contradictory findings in prior research while deepening the understanding of the psychological processes underpinning green consumer behavior within digital marketing contexts.

Accordingly, the objective of this study is to analyze the influence of social media influencers on Generation Z's green purchase intention, with green trust and green attitude serving as mediating variables. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) examine the effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention; (2) examine the effect of social media influencers on green trust; (3) examine the effect of social media influencers on green attitude; (4) examine the effect of green trust on green purchase intention; (5) examine the effect of green attitude on green purchase intention; (6) examine the mediating role of green trust in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention; and (7) examine the mediating role of green attitude in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Based on the literature review, the hypotheses are formulated and presented in the proposed conceptual framework.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory, originally introduced by Kelman (1958), explains that behavior change occurs through three key processes: compliance, identification, and internalization. In the digital age, these processes have become even more pronounced, especially through the growing role of social media influencers.

Recent empirical research highlights the relevance of this theory in shaping green consumer behavior. For example, Liao (2024) found that social media users tend to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors when such actions are perceived as socially normative and endorsed by influential online figures. Similarly, Purnama et al. (2025) noted that social value orientation moderates the effect of social influence on pro-environmental actions, indicating that personal values and perceived social expectations jointly shape sustainable behaviors. Accordingly, social influence remains a critical theoretical lens for understanding how social media influencers impact eco-conscious decision-making within the digital environment.

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Social Media Influencers (SMIs)

Social media influencers (SMIs) are individuals who have built credibility and amassed sizable followings on social media platforms, thereby possessing the persuasive power to affect followers' attitudes, preferences, and behaviors (Casaló et al., 2020; Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). They play a significant role in shaping consumer decision-making through the creation and dissemination of authentic content, particularly within lifestyle and fashion domains, and increasingly in sustainability-related contexts.

In the context of green marketing, SMIs have emerged as powerful agents in promoting sustainable consumption behaviors. When influencers consistently communicate eco-conscious values, they contribute to the legitimization and normalization of green practices among their audiences (Jin et al., 2019). Additionally, the development of parasocial relationships, defined as emotional, one-sided bonds between followers and influencers, enhances message effectiveness and can directly impact green purchase intention (Schouten et al., 2021; Jalali & Khalid, 2021). Research by Lou & Yuan (2019) and Ki et al. (2020) also supported the idea that message value, source credibility, and perceived expertise of SMIs significantly boost followers' trust in promoted green products. These factors serve as key psychological triggers in motivating eco-friendly consumer behavior, positioning SMIs as strategic partners in the advancement of green branding initiatives.

Green Trust (GT)

Green trust is a crucial psychological mechanism that influences environmentally responsible consumer behavior. It refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a brand or company based on perceptions of its environmental performance and the sincerity of its sustainability efforts. Chuah et al. (2020) emphasized that green trust is shaped not only by corporate environmental claims but also by the perceived alignment between those claims and the firm's actual environmental practices. In the era of green skepticism, trust acts as a protective factor against accusations of greenwashing and plays a central role in cultivating long-term relationships with environmentally conscious

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consumers.

From a strategic standpoint, green trust functions as a mediating factor that connects various green marketing attributes to customer loyalty and purchase intention. This role is further reinforced by Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024), who showed that corporate social responsibility (CSR) and green brand image enhance consumers' behavioral intention through the development of green trust, particularly in developing economies where environmental credibility is increasingly scrutinized.

Furthermore, the influence of green trust has been documented across a wide range of sectors, including organic food, healthcare services, and retail. Rashid & Lone (2024) reported that green trust strongly affects purchase intention in the organic food market, highlighting its importance in contexts where health and environmental concerns intersect. Meanwhile, Jannah et al. (2024) revealed that in outpatient healthcare services, green trust significantly boosts green brand equity, emphasizing that the perception of sustainability is equally vital in service-based industries. These studies collectively affirm that green trust is not merely an abstract or symbolic factor but a pivotal construct that translates green marketing strategies into tangible consumer outcomes.

Green Attitude (GA)

Green attitude refers to an individual's favorable evaluation or predisposition toward environmentally friendly products and behaviors. It plays a critical role in shaping green behavioral intention, particularly in the context of eco-conscious consumption. Shehawy & Khan (2024) found that green attitude significantly predicts green purchase intention, with this relationship further strengthened by green awareness, underscoring the role of environmental consciousness in activating attitudinal influences on behavior.

Amoako et al. (2020), employing the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), demonstrated that green attitude significantly influences young consumers' perceptions of green value and their willingness to engage in green purchasing. This underscores the importance of integrating environmental education and value-based campaigns among younger demographics. Van Tonder et al. (2023) further emphasized that green attitudes are shaped by internal values and social norms, which together foster green customer citizenship behaviors (e.g., advocacy, recycling, and participation in eco-initiatives). Similarly, Mehak and Batcha (2024) linked individual green attitudes to organizational sustainability, arguing that the alignment between green human resource practices and employee green attitudes enhances environmental performance in the workplace. Moreover, Corboş et al. (2024) highlighted that green attitude, coupled with effective green communication, plays a pivotal role in influencing consumers' actual green buying behavior. This finding illustrates how strategic communication efforts can help bridge the persistent gap between pro-environmental attitudes and concrete consumer actions.

Green Purchase Intention (GPI)

Green purchase intention refers to a consumer's deliberate intention to buy environmentally friendly products. It reflects a growing awareness of ecological issues and a desire to mitigate environmental harm through responsible consumption. Consumers with high levels of green purchase intention tend to value sustainability, perceive eco-friendly products as beneficial, and are motivated by emotional, social, and functional values (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Rashid & Lone, 2024; Sun & Xing,

2022).

Green purchase intention is shaped by various psychological and informational factors, including environmental knowledge, perceived effectiveness of green behavior, and credibility of environmental claims (Nguyen et al., 2019; Amoako et al., 2020). As digital platforms increasingly serve as primary information sources, exposure to eco-conscious messages, particularly those delivered by social media influencers and online marketing campaigns, can significantly strengthen consumers' green intentions (Jalali & Khalid, 2021; Teixeira et al., 2023).

Although green purchase intention does not always lead to actual purchasing behavior, it remains a strong predictor of eco-friendly consumption patterns (Yadav & Pathak, 2017; Zhuo et al., 2022). A deeper understanding of green purchase intention, therefore, enables marketers and policymakers to design better strategies to promote sustainable products and shift consumer behavior toward environmental responsibility.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention

Recent empirical studies highlight the growing influence of social media influencers in promoting sustainable consumption. Influencers' perceived opinion leadership significantly contributes to shaping consumer behavior, including green purchasing, as consumers tend to rely on their guidance when making eco-conscious decisions (Casaló et al., 2020). Moreover, the perceived credibility of influencers, particularly in terms of trustworthiness and expertise, further enhances the persuasiveness of environmental claims, which in turn reinforces green consumption intentions (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019).

The effectiveness of influencer-driven environmental messaging is also contingent upon the alignment between an influencer's identity and the content being promoted. A strong influencer-message fit fosters emotional connection and enhances message authenticity, which, in turn, increases persuasive impact (Schouten et al., 2021). Additionally, emotional engagement and value-based messaging from influencers are key drivers of favorable consumer attitudes and intentions toward sustainable products (Lim et al., 2017). Notably, the manner in which influencers frame their roles, either as educators (*informers*) or entertainers, also affects consumer responsiveness, with informative and value-aligned content leading to stronger green purchase intention (Zhao et al., 2024).

Drawing from these findings, social media influencers are seen as key agents in promoting sustainable behavior. Their capacity to influence consumer perceptions and elicit emotional engagement with environmental issues has been consistently linked to higher levels of green purchase intention. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H₁: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Trust

Social media influencers play a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions, particularly in building green trust, which refers to consumers' confidence in the environmental claims associated with products. According to Zhao et al. (2024), influencers perceived as authentic and informative can significantly enhance consumers' willingness to trust green-related messages. When influencers communicate sustainability themes consistently and integrate eco-friendly lifestyles into their

content, their perceived credibility increases, thereby reinforcing consumer trust (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). Moreover, Casaló et al. (2020) highlighted that influencers who act as opinion leaders are more persuasive in influencing trust-related outcomes, especially when followers identify with them and regard them as reliable sources of environmental values.

Green trust is further strengthened when influencers' personal values align with the messages they convey. Jalali & Khalid (2021) demonstrated that when influencers visibly integrate eco-conscious habits in their lifestyles and communication, audiences are more likely to perceive the messages as genuine and internalize them. This finding aligns with Chuah et al. (2020), who emphasized that green trust is sustained through consistent environmental behavior demonstrated by both organizations and individuals. In this respect, the influencer's role extends beyond content creation to include modeling sustainable behaviors that enhance perceived integrity and value congruence.

In addition, green trust has been identified as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between influencer communication and green purchase intention. Amin & Tarun (2021) pointed out that green trust acts as a psychological assurance that validates consumers' environmentally conscious decisions. Supporting this, Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024) asserted that green advertising by influencers significantly enhances consumer trust when the messaging is clear, consistent, and emotionally resonant. Based on the converging insights from these studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green trust.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Attitude

Social media influencers play a key role in shaping consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products, commonly referred to as green attitudes, through persuasive messaging and engaging content. Casaló et al. (2020) found that influencers, acting as opinion leaders, can positively influence followers' perceptions of sustainability. By consistently promoting eco-friendly values, influencers contribute to the formation of social norms that encourage pro-environmental attitudes (Zhao et al., 2024).

Visual content, in particular, is highly effective in influencing green attitudes. Jalali & Khalid (2021) demonstrated that images reflecting environmental concerns significantly affect followers' perceptions. When influencers share visually compelling eco-friendly messages, they foster environmental awareness and foster positive attitudes toward green products (Chen et al., 2020). Sustained exposure to such sustainability-oriented content further strengthens favorable green brand attitudes among followers.

In addition, the emotional bond between influencers and their followers, often conceptualized as parasocial interaction, plays a crucial role in shaping green attitudes. Ki et al. (2020) found that influencers who build authentic relationships with their audiences are more effective in influencing attitudes and behaviors. By promoting sustainable lifestyles in a relatable manner, influencers enhance message persuasiveness and encourage the development of more favorable green attitudes among followers (Shehawry & Khan, 2024). Based on this literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₃: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green attitude.

2

The Effect of Green Trust on Green Purchase Intention

Green trust plays a significant role in influencing consumers' green purchase intention by reducing skepticism and enhancing the perceived credibility of environmental claims. Research by Rashid & Lone (2024) showed that consumers who trust a product's environmental assertions are more likely to develop intentions to purchase eco-friendly products. This trust is particularly crucial in markets where greenwashing is prevalent, as transparency helps build a reliable connection between consumers and brands (Sun & Shi, 2022).

Trust is further amplified through social media influencers who provide credible and transparent environmental information. Teixeira et al. (2023) highlighted that influencers whose values align with sustainability are more effective in fostering trust, especially among younger consumers. This enhanced trust, in turn, directly influences consumer intention to purchase green products. Supporting this argument, Sugiarti et al. (2023) showed that influencer credibility is a key determinant in shaping consumers' purchasing decisions.

Moreover, green trust is strengthened by product-related factors, such as perceived quality and transparent communication of environmental claims. When brands clearly and consistently communicate their sustainability initiatives, they enhance consumer trust, which subsequently leads to stronger green purchase intentions (Corboş et al., 2024). Based on this body of research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₄: Green trust has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The Effect of Green Attitude on Green Purchase Intention

Consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products (green attitude) are widely recognized as critical determinants of green purchase intention. Chen et al. (2020) suggested that individuals with positive attitudes toward sustainability and eco-friendly consumption are more likely to exhibit strong intentions to purchase green products. Such positive attitudes stem from environmental awareness and the belief that personal consumption choices can meaningfully contribute to sustainability efforts.

Findings from Yadav & Pathak (2017), as well as recent results by Teixeira et al. (2023), consistently showed that green attitude is a significant predictor of green purchase intention. The more favorable consumers' attitudes toward environmental protection, the greater their likelihood of engaging in green purchasing behavior. This relationship is supported by Sinh (2024), who found that green attitude amplifies the link between personal values and sustainable consumption intentions.

Moreover, although green attitude is influenced by factors such as environmental concern, it remains a central driver of green purchase intention. Consumers with positive sustainability-oriented attitudes are more inclined to select eco-friendly products, particularly among younger generations whose consumption decisions are strongly guided by environmental values (Putri et al., 2021). Based on this growing body of research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Green attitude has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

2

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention Mediated By Green Trust

Green trust plays a critical mediating role in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Hu et al. (2019) emphasized that trust in influencers significantly shapes consumer behavior, particularly in the context of endorsing sustainable products. When consumers trust an influencer, they are more inclined to believe in the credibility of the eco-friendly products being promoted, which subsequently strengthens their intention to purchase.

Similarly, Jannah et al. (2024) highlighted that green trust is a key factor in strengthening consumer engagement with environmentally responsible brands. Amin & Tarun (2021) further argued that green trust connects consumers' environmental values with green purchase intentions, such that higher levels of trust lead to stronger purchasing tendencies. Chuah et al. (2020) also noted that environmental concern, when combined with green trust, increases consumer engagement with brands that actively promote sustainability. These findings suggest that influencers who authentically endorse green products can effectively enhance consumer trust and, in turn, stimulate green purchase intentions.

Additionally, Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024) pointed out that green trust mediates the effects of green advertising and corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives on consumer behavior, underscoring its central role in driving sustainable consumption. Collectively, this body of research indicates that green trust is essential for translating influencer endorsements into genuine green purchase intentions. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Green trust mediates the effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention.

The Influence of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention Mediated By Green Attitude

Green attitude plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Chen et al. (2020) found that consumers with positive green attitudes are more receptive to green brand messages and, consequently, exhibit stronger intentions to purchase sustainable products. This aligns with Lim et al. (2017), who emphasized that customer attitude mediates the impact of influencer marketing on purchase behavior.

Further supporting this, Corboş et al. (2024) argued that influencers actively shape consumer attitudes in sustainability contexts, thereby encouraging more eco-friendly purchasing decisions. Similarly, Putri et al. (2021) observed that attitudes significantly mediate the effect of environmental knowledge on green product purchase intentions. These findings highlight the importance of aligning influencer messages with consumers' environmental values to strengthen green purchasing behavior.

In addition, Shehawy and Khan (2024) identified that green awareness moderates the relationship between green attitude and purchase intentions, further underlining the importance of cultivating a positive green attitude through influencer-driven communication. Collectively, this body of research emphasizes the pivotal role of both social media influencers and consumer attitudes in promoting sustainable consumption behaviors. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₇: Green attitude mediates the effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention.

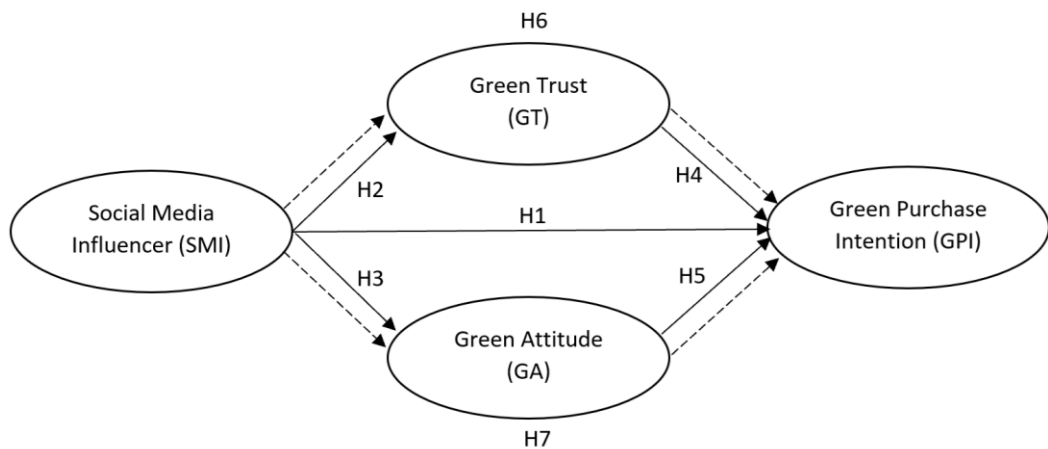


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach with a survey method to analyze the influence of social media influencers (SMIs) on green purchase intention (GPI), both directly and indirectly through green attitude (GA) and green trust (GT) as mediating variables. The unit of analysis comprised Generation Z individuals in the Greater Jakarta area who actively used social media and followed influencers with an expressed concern for environmental issues. A nonprobability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, was employed to ensure that respondents met the predetermined selection criteria.

It should be noted that the use of purposive sampling may introduce potential bias, particularly regarding sample representativeness, as the study focuses on a specific subgroup of Generation Z social media users in Greater Jakarta. Accordingly, the findings should not be generalized to the broader Generation Z population. Furthermore, although no formal control variables were incorporated into the model, demographic information, including gender, education level, and income, was collected and reported to provide contextual insight for interpreting the results.

A total of 295 respondents participated in this study, exceeding the minimum sample size of 200 recommended by Hair et al. (2019) for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. Data was collected through an online questionnaire distributed to respondents who met the specified criteria. The study examined four primary constructs: social media influencers (SMIs), green attitude (GA), green trust (GT), and green purchase intention (GPI). Each construct was measured using multiple items adapted from established studies. Specifically, social media influencers were measured using two items adapted from Teixeira et al. (2023), green attitude using four items adapted from Teixeira et al. (2023), green trust using five items adapted from Amin & Tarun (2021), and green purchase intention using five items adapted from Panopoulos et al. (2023). All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses and evaluate the relationships among the constructs in the research model. To assess mediation effects, this study employed a bootstrapping procedure, which enables the estimation of confidence intervals for indirect effects (Hayes, 2022).

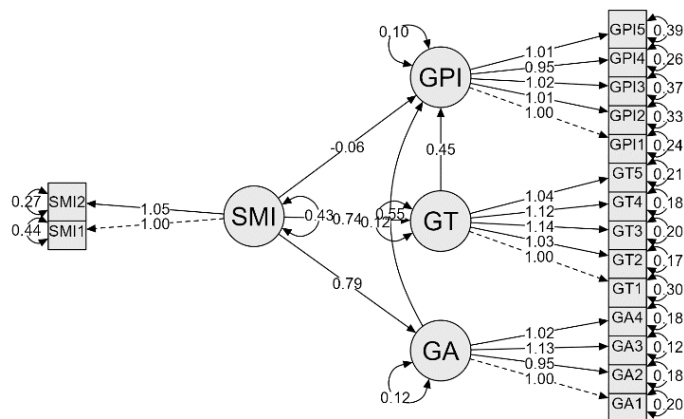


Figure 2. SEM output

RESULTS

The results of the validity and reliability tests presented in Table 1 indicate that all variables and indicators in this study meet the required criteria for validity and reliability. Each indicator exhibits a factor loading exceeding the threshold value of 0.60, which, according to Hair et al. (2019), provides strong evidence of convergent validity. In addition, the Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs exceed 0.80, thereby confirming a satisfactory level of internal consistency and reliability.

Table 1. Validity and reliability test results

Variables and Indicators		Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Social Media Influencers (SMIs)			0.818	Reliable
SMI1	When seeking information about environmentally friendly products, I consult influencers' opinions on social networks.	0.815		Valid
SMI2	Influencers' opinions on social networks affect my intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.812		Valid
Green Attitude (GA)			0.904	Reliable
GA1	My environmental awareness influences my intention to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.893		Valid
GA2	My positive beliefs about environmental well-being impact my intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.830		Valid
GA3	My feelings about environmental well-being impact my intention to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.782		Valid
GA4	My pro-environmental behavior influences my attitude toward purchasing environmentally friendly products.	0.732		Valid

	Variables and Indicators	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
5	Green Trust (GT)		0.904	Reliable
45	GT1 The reputation of environmentally friendly products is generally reliable.	0.715		Valid
	GT2 The environmental performance of eco-friendly products is generally dependable.	0.750		Valid
	GT3 Environmental claims made by eco-friendly products are generally trustworthy.	0.705		Valid
77	GT4 The environmental concern demonstrated by eco-friendly products meets my expectations. Eco-friendly products keep their promises	0.736		Valid
	GT5 and commitments to environmental protection.	0.830		Valid
57	Green Purchase Intention (GPI)		0.859	Reliable
53	GPI1 I choose to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.834		Valid
19	GPI2 I intend to buy eco-friendly products in the future because of their positive contribution to the environment.	0.846		Valid
3	GPI3 I buy eco-friendly products even though they are more expensive compared to non-green products.	0.803		Valid
	GPI4 I prefer eco-friendly products over non-green products when the product quality is similar.	0.702		Valid
	GPI5 I often buy products that use recycled or recyclable packaging.	0.797		Valid

Source: Data processed (2024)

In evaluating the suitability of the structural model with empirical data, several goodness-of-fit (GOF) indices were used. The results show that the proposed model demonstrates an acceptable to good level of fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value of 0.949 and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) value of 0.938 exceed the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating a good model fit. In addition, the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.047 is below the cut-off value of 0.08, indicating an acceptable fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) value of 0.074 falls within an acceptable range, indicating a reasonably good model fit. Overall, these results suggest that the proposed model demonstrates adequate compatibility with the empirical data and is suitable for further interpretation.

Table 2. Respondent profile

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	115	38.983
Female	180	61.017
Work		
Civil Servants	2	0.678
Private Sector Employee	17	5.763

	Frequency	Percentage
Entrepreneurial Student	4 272	1.356 92.203
Education		
High School	59	20
Diploma	54	18.305
Undergraduate	180	61.017
Postgraduate	2	0.678
Income		
Under 5,000,000 IDR	253	85.763
5,000,000 – 10,000,000 IDR	36	12.203
10,000,001 – IDR 20,000,000 IDR	4	1.356
More than 20,000,000 IDR	2	0.678
The Most Commonly Used Social Media		
Facebook	2	0.678
Instagram	169	57.288
TikTok	112	37.966
X (Twitter)	12	4.068

Based on Table 2, the respondents' demographic profiles reveal several dominant characteristics. The majority of respondents were female (61.017%, $n = 180$), and most were students (92.203%, $n = 272$). In terms of educational background, the sample was predominantly composed of bachelor's degree holders (61.017%, $n = 180$). Regarding income level, most respondents reported monthly earnings below IDR 5,000,000 (85.763%, $n = 253$). In addition, Instagram emerged as the most frequently used social media platform among respondents (57.288%, $n = 169$). Overall, these data indicate that the sample largely consists of female undergraduate students with relatively low-income levels who actively use Instagram as their primary social media platform.

Table 3. Hypothesis testing (direct)

Hypothesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H1: SMI $\rightarrow$ GPI	-0.061	0.685	Not Supported
H2: SMI $\rightarrow$ GA	0.786	0.000	Supported
H3: SMI $\rightarrow$ GT	0.739	0.000	Supported
H4: GA $\rightarrow$ GPI	0.550	0.000	Supported
H5: GT $\rightarrow$ GPI	0.453	0.000	Supported

Source: Data processed (2024)

Based on the data in Table 3, the results of the direct influence analysis show several important findings. Social media influencers (SMIs) do not exert a significant direct influence on green purchase intention (GPI), as indicated by an estimated coefficient of -0.061 and a p-value of 0.685; therefore, H1 is not supported. In contrast, SMIs have a positive and significant influence on green attitude (GA) and green trust (GT), with estimated coefficients of 0.786 and 0.739 (both $p < 0.001$), respectively, thereby supporting H2 and H3. Furthermore, both GA and GT exhibit positive and significant effects on GPI, with estimated coefficients of 0.550 and 0.453, respectively (both $p < 0.001$), thus supporting H4 and H5.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing (Mediation)

Hypothesis	Estimate	p	95% Confidence Interval		Decision
			Lower	Upper	
H6: SMI → GA → GPI	0.200	0.000	0.120	0.293	Supported
H7: SMI → GT → GPI	0.167	0.000	0.102	0.255	Supported

Source: Data processed (2024)

The mediation analysis presented in Table 4 highlights the significant roles of green attitude (GA) and green trust (GT) as mediating variables. Social media influencers (SMIs) exert a significant indirect effect on green purchase intention (GPI) through GA, with an estimated coefficient of 0.200 ($p < 0.001$; 95% confidence interval: 0.120 to 0.293), thereby supporting H6. Similarly, SMIs demonstrate a significant indirect influence on GPI through GT, with an estimated 0.167 ($p < 0.001$; 95% confidence interval: 0.102 to 0.255), supporting H7. These two results show that both GA and GT play important mediating roles in the relationship between SMIs and GPI.

Overall, the results indicate that although social media influencers do not directly influence green purchase intention, they have a significant role in shaping consumers' green attitude and green trust. In turn, both green attitude and green trust positively affect green purchase intention. These findings underscore the importance of social media influencers in fostering favorable attitudes and building consumer trust toward environmentally friendly products, which ultimately encourages green purchasing intention. Accordingly, marketing strategies that leverage social media influencers should prioritize the development of positive attitudes and the strengthening of consumer trust in eco-friendly products, rather than focusing solely on directly stimulating purchase intentions.

DISCUSSION

This study examines the role of social media influencers in shaping Generation Z's green purchase intention by emphasizing the mediating effects of green attitude and green trust. The findings provide important insights into how influencer marketing contributes to pro-environmental behavior and highlight the complexity of consumer decision-making in the digital era.

The analysis shows that social media influencers do not have a significant direct influence on green purchase intention. This aligns with previous research suggesting that exposure to sustainability-oriented influencer content alone is insufficient to directly stimulate purchasing behavior (Zhao et al., 2024; Teixeira et al., 2023). Despite being active on social media, Generation Z consumers are not automatically persuaded to make green purchases solely based on influencer promotions. Instead, their behavioral intentions appear to be shaped by deeper psychological mechanisms, particularly attitude formation and trust development.

Despite the absence of direct effects, this study confirms that social media influencers play a critical role in shaping positive green attitudes and fostering green trust. These indirect effects serve as essential pathways linking influencer communication to consumer behavioral intention. Green attitudes are strengthened through repeated exposure to authentic and value-driven messages that resonate with Generation Z's strong concern for environmental responsibility and ethical consumption (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Corboş et al., 2024). Influencers who demonstrate transparency, consistency, and genuine commitment to sustainability are more effective in influencing attitudes, as their credibility enhances message acceptance (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2021).

Green trust also emerges as a key mediator in the relationship between influencers and purchase intention. It is essential in reducing consumer skepticism toward sustainability claims, particularly among a generation that is highly aware of greenwashing and skeptical of corporate motives (Chuah et al., 2020; Jalali & Khalid, 2021). Influencers can strengthen green trust by displaying long-term engagement with sustainable lifestyles, endorsing environmentally responsible brands, and participating in environmental initiatives. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing that influencer credibility, expertise, and perceived authenticity are fundamental drivers of consumer trust (Shahahbuddin, 2024; Jin et al., 2019).

The findings also validate theoretical perspectives that emphasize the importance of mediation mechanisms in influencing behavioral intention. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitudes toward behavior and perceived behavioral control are stronger predictors of intention than external stimuli alone (Amoako et al., 2020). This suggests that influencer marketing influences green purchase intention indirectly through consumers' cognitive and affective evaluations, making the effect of influencers more indirect and dependent on the consumer's internal belief systems. Similarly, the Value-Belief-Norm theory posits that pro-environmental behavior is driven by internalized values, environmental concern, and personal norms rather than by external persuasion alone (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Liao, 2024). The present study empirically supports these theoretical frameworks by demonstrating the central role of green attitude and green trust as mediators.

Moreover, emotional engagement emerges as an important complementary factor. Influencer content that evokes empathy, concern, or urgency about environmental issues can positively influence consumer responses, particularly when combined with personal storytelling or visually engaging content (De Veirman et al., 2017; Sun & Shi, 2022). Generation Z, with their high digital fluency and visual literacy, is especially responsive to such content formats, making platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube highly effective for sustainability-related communication (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Sugiarti et al., 2023).

This study also underscores the importance of perceived congruence between influencers and the sustainability messages they endorse. When influencers' identities, lifestyles, and values align with the environmental principles they promote, consumers are more likely to develop favorable attitudes and trust, ultimately strengthening green purchase intention (Ki et al., 2020). In contrast, a lack of congruence may weaken message credibility and limit behavioral impact, regardless of influencer popularity.

Overall, this study enhances the understanding of influencer marketing effectiveness in the context of sustainable consumption by demonstrating that social media influencers influence green purchase intention indirectly through green attitude and green trust. These mediating mechanisms are essential for translating environmental awareness into behavioral intention, particularly among Generation Z consumers who prioritize authenticity, ethical values, and social impact. By integrating green attitude and green trust as key explanatory constructs, this study contributes to a more nuanced and theoretically grounded understanding of how influencer marketing can promote sustainable consumption.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention among Generation Z by focusing on the mediating roles of green trust and green attitude. The findings reveal that social media influencers do not exert a significant direct influence on green purchase intention. This suggests that mere exposure to environmentally themed content shared by influencers is insufficient to immediately drive green purchasing behavior among Generation Z.

consumers. However, the results demonstrate that social media influencers have a significant and positive impact on both green trust and green attitude, highlighting their ability to foster confidence in eco-friendly product claims and to shape favorable perceptions of environmentally responsible consumption.

Moreover, both green trust and green attitude significantly mediate the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. These findings suggest that although influencers may not directly persuade Generation Z to purchase green products, they exert an indirect influence by cultivating trust and fostering positive environmental attitudes. In other words, the influencers' effectiveness lies in their ability to shape internal psychological constructs rather than merely promoting products. This study, therefore, contributes to the growing body of literature on sustainable consumer behavior by underscoring the psychological pathways through which influencer marketing operates in the context of green consumption. It emphasizes that the journey from message exposure to actual purchase intention is complex and highly dependent on intermediary factors such as trust formation and attitudinal development.

Importantly, these findings directly address the research gap identified in the introduction concerning the inconsistent empirical evidence on the direct effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention. By demonstrating that this relationship is fully mediated by green trust and green attitude, the study provides clearer theoretical insight into the psychological mechanisms underlying Generation Z's green purchasing behavior. In doing so, the study not only reconciles previous contradictory evidence but also strengthens the theoretical integration of influencer marketing and consumer psychology in sustainability research. Overall, this study advances the green marketing literature by highlighting the indirect yet crucial role of trust and attitude in translating influencer communication into meaningful behavioral intentions among young consumers.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The outcomes of this research offer strategic implications for marketing professionals, brand managers, and producers of eco-friendly products targeting Generation Z consumers. First, marketers should prioritize collaborations with social media influencers who demonstrate authenticity, consistency, and credibility in promoting sustainable lifestyles. Rather than emphasizing popularity or follower counts alone, it is crucial to evaluate an influencer's alignment with environmental values and their ability to communicate sustainability messages in a credible and meaningful manner.

Second, content strategies should be designed to foster both emotional engagement and cognitive understanding among consumers. This can be achieved through storytelling, educational content, and real-life demonstrations of eco-friendly behaviors. Transparent communication, such as clearly explaining a product's environmental benefits or disclosing sustainable sourcing and production practices, can enhance consumer trust and mitigate skepticism regarding greenwashing.

Third, brands are encouraged to leverage interactive features available on social media platforms to promote two-way communication with consumers. Tools such as question-and-answer sessions, polls, and discussion forums can encourage audience participation and allow consumers to share their experiences and perspectives. Additionally, brands could invest in digital campaigns and influencer-led environmental education initiatives that build awareness and reinforce positive attitudes toward green behavior. The findings also highlight the need for consistent messaging across platforms to strengthen brand trust and the perceived authenticity of eco-friendly claims. By

leveraging these insights, brands can design more effective campaigns that not only raise awareness but also cultivate long-term pro-environmental behavioral intentions among Generation Z consumers.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings and that provide directions for future research. First, the geographical scope of the study is limited, which may constrain the generalizability of the results. Generation Z consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward sustainability are likely to differ across cultural and regional contexts. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to replicate this research in different countries or cultural settings to examine potential cross-cultural variations in the influence of social media influencers on green purchase behavior.

Second, the cross-sectional research design restricts the ability to capture changes in attitudes, trust, and behavioral intentions over time. Longitudinal research designs would allow scholars to observe how repeated exposure to influencer-generated sustainability content shapes green trust and green attitude, and whether these effects translate into sustained green purchasing behavior in the long term.

Third, this study focuses primarily on individual-level psychological constructs (i.e., trust and attitude) without accounting for broader contextual or external factors that may influence green purchase intention. Future studies could incorporate additional moderating or mediating variables such as environmental awareness, regulatory support, peer influence, or economic incentives. These factors may further enrich the model and provide a more holistic view of green consumer decision-making.

Finally, future studies could examine the differential effects of various types of social media influencers, such as micro-influencers, macro-influencers, and celebrity endorsers, on green trust and green attitude. Investigating these distinctions may provide more nuanced insights into how influencer characteristics and endorsement strategies influence sustainable consumption and help practitioners optimize influencer selection in green marketing campaigns.

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International Journal of Applied Business Research

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Terjemahkan ke Indonesia

Dear Mr./Ms. Aekram Faisal:

Thank you for submitting the manuscript, "Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intentions through Trust and Attitude" to International Journal of Applied Business Research. With the online journal management system that we are using, you will be able to track its progress through the editorial process by logging in to the journal web site:

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If you have any questions, please contact me. Thank you for considering this journal as a venue for your work.

Kind regards,

Professor Dwi Suhartanto, Ph.D.

Chief Editor of IJABR

Bukti catatan koreksi dari Reviewer berkaitan substansi (Selasa, 26 Agustus 2025)

Notifications



[IJABR] Editor Decision (Revisions)

2025-08-26 06:10 AM

Dear Mr./Ms. Aekram Falsal, Anton Hindarjo, Rachmat Ramadhan,

The manuscript entitled "Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intentions through Trust and Attitude" which you submitted to the International Journal of Applied Business Research has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewer(s) are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewer(s) have recommended publication, but also suggested some revisions to your manuscript. Therefore, we invite you to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments and revise your manuscript. Please use the [this format](#) to respond to the reviewer(s)' comments.

You will be unable to make your revisions to the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. *Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or colored text.*

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to the International Journal of Applied Business Research, your revised manuscript should be uploaded within two weeks from the date of this notification. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision in a reasonable amount of time, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to the International Journal of Applied Business Research and we look forward to receiving your revision.

Sincerely,

Chief Editor of International Journal of Applied Business Research

Catatan reviewer ada di bawah ini

Thank you for choosing me to review this paper.

The title of the manuscript is precise, specific, and effectively captures the key constructs under investigation. It clearly identifies the subject (social media influencers), the target population (Generation Z), and the mediating mechanisms (trust and attitude) influencing green purchase intentions. As such, the title is well-formulated for both academic and practitioner audiences, conveying the core theme of the study without ambiguity.

The abstract presents a comprehensive overview of the research, highlighting the objective, methodology, sample characteristics, key findings, and theoretical contributions. The structure is clear and informative, providing the reader with a strong sense of what the paper delivers. However, the presence of a duplicated abstract should be addressed for formatting and editorial consistency. Overall, the abstract effectively communicates the study's essence and makes the case for its relevance within the field of green consumer behavior and digital marketing.

The selected keywords; "Social Media Influencers," "Green Purchase Intentions," "Green Trust," and "Green Attitude" are appropriate and reflect the central themes of the paper. These keywords are likely to enhance the paper's discoverability through academic databases and align well with the constructs explored throughout the study.

The introduction provides a strong foundation for the research. It establishes the environmental urgency that underpins the study's relevance and contextualizes the growing significance of Generation Z as a digitally native, environmentally conscious consumer segment. The discussion of the "attitude-behavior gap" is particularly useful in highlighting a persistent challenge in green marketing literature. Furthermore, the introduction presents the role of social media influencers as potential change agents in shaping consumer behavior. Nonetheless, while the narrative flow is solid, the research objectives and hypotheses would benefit from being more explicitly stated at the end of the introduction to enhance clarity and academic rigor.

The literature review is a standout feature of the manuscript. It is thorough, well-organized, and draws from a diverse range of relevant studies, including both foundational theories and recent empirical findings. Each conceptual construct--social media influencers, green trust, green attitude, and green purchase intention--is well-defined and grounded in established literature. The hypotheses are logically derived and supported with citations from high-quality sources, which strengthens the theoretical underpinning of the proposed model. This section not only builds a compelling argument for the study's framework but also demonstrates the authors' engagement with contemporary debates in green consumer behavior.

The methodology is appropriately designed and clearly articulated. A quantitative survey approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and bootstrapping techniques is suitable for testing the hypothesized relationships. The use of purposive sampling to target Generation Z social media users in Greater Jakarta is justified, and the sample size of 295 respondents meets SEM recommendations. The measurement items are drawn from validated instruments in existing literature, ensuring construct reliability and validity. The study also presents strong reliability coefficients (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.8$) and acceptable model fit indices (e.g., CFI = 0.949, RMSEA = 0.074). One area for improvement would be elaborating more on potential

biases inherent in the non-probability sampling method and clarifying whether any control variables were considered.

The results are presented with clarity and precision. The direct effects analysis shows that social media influencers do not have a significant direct effect on green purchase intention, but they do significantly influence green trust and green attitude. Both of these mediating variables, in turn, significantly predict green purchase intention. The mediation analysis using bootstrapping confirms that the influence of social media influencers on purchase intention is fully mediated by trust and attitude. Tables are well-structured and supplemented by appropriate narrative explanations, making the statistical results accessible to readers.

The discussion section effectively interprets the findings within a broader theoretical and empirical context. The authors rightly emphasize that influencer content alone does not directly trigger purchase intention among Gen Z consumers. Instead, psychological constructs such as trust and attitude serve as critical pathways. This aligns with the theory of planned behavior and other established behavioral theories, which assert that internal cognitive factors are stronger predictors of intention than external stimuli alone. The authors also successfully connect their findings to parasocial interaction theory and the importance of influencer authenticity and alignment with sustainable values. Emotional engagement, credibility, and perceived congruence between influencer and message are all identified as critical factors in shaping green attitudes and trust. This level of analysis demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the influencer-consumer dynamic in the context of sustainability.

The conclusion succinctly reiterates the study's core findings and contributions. It emphasizes that while influencers may not directly prompt eco-friendly purchases, they play a pivotal role in cultivating trust and positive environmental attitudes, which in turn drive green purchase intentions. This insight adds value to both academic understanding and marketing practice. However, a more explicit restatement of how these findings close the research gap identified in the introduction would strengthen the conclusion's cohesion and impact.

The managerial implications section offers actionable insights for marketers and brand strategists. It underscores the importance of collaborating with influencers who are genuinely committed to environmental values and the need for emotionally engaging, transparent, and informative content. The authors also suggest leveraging platform-specific features for interaction and dialogue, which is particularly relevant in today's engagement-driven digital landscape. These recommendations are well-grounded in the empirical findings and provide valuable guidance for designing effective green marketing strategies.

The study is also commendable for including a reflective limitations and future research section. It acknowledges the geographic and demographic constraints of the sample and suggests expanding the research across cultural contexts. The authors propose longitudinal studies to observe behavioral change over time and call for the inclusion of additional variables, such as peer influence or perceived product affordability. Finally, the paper proposes examining differences in influence based on the type of influencer (e.g., micro, macro, celebrity), which would add depth to future studies on influencer effectiveness in green marketing.

In conclusion, this manuscript offers a valuable and timely contribution to the literature on green marketing, consumer psychology, and digital influence. It provides both theoretical advancement and practical insights by demonstrating the indirect yet powerful role those social media influencers play in shaping sustainable consumer behavior among Generation Z. With minor refinements—particularly in formatting, clarity of objectives, and deeper sampling reflection, it is highly suitable for publication in IJABR.

Bukti respon penulis terkait catatan dari reviewer (Selasa, 26 Agustus 2025)

The screenshot shows an email interface for the 'International Journal of Applied Business Research'. The email is titled 'Submission of Revised Manuscript and Correction of Author Information in OJS'. It is addressed to the 'Chief Editor' and is dated '2025-08-26 11:04 PM'. The email content includes a thank you to the reviewers, a statement that the manuscript has been revised according to their feedback, and a request to correct the author information for the third author, replacing 'okay' with 'rachmatramadhan@trisakti.ac.id'. The email is signed by 'Aekram Faisal (on behalf of all authors)'.

International Journal of Applied Business Research

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Arie Indra Gunawan (arieindragunawan)

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Messages

Note	From
Dear Chief Editor, On behalf of my co-authors, I would like to sincerely thank you and the reviewers for the constructive comments and valuable suggestions provided for our manuscript entitled <i>"Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intentions through Trust and Attitude."</i> We are pleased to inform you that we have carefully revised the manuscript according to the reviewers' feedback. All suggested changes have been incorporated, and a detailed author response document addressing each comment is attached along with the revised manuscript. In addition, we would like to kindly request a correction of the author information in the OJS submission system. The email address of the third author should be updated to: rachmatramadhan@trisakti.ac.id. We apologize for this oversight during the initial submission. Thank you very much for your kind assistance. Sincerely, Aekram Faisal (on behalf of all authors) okay, replaced to rachmatramadhan@trisakti.ac.id	aekram_faisal 2025-08-26 11:04 PM arieindragunawan

Catatan perbaikan di lampirkan setelah ini

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for your invitation to revise the manuscript in accordance with the reviewers' comments. Find below, a table listing the issues as well as how they have been dealt with.

Reviewer 1

Comments (Reviewer comment)	Response (Author response)
1. Abstract “However, the presence of a duplicated abstract should be addressed for formatting and editorial consistency.”	We thank the reviewer for pointing this out. The duplicated abstract has been removed, and only one clear and concise abstract is retained to ensure formatting and editorial consistency.
2. Introduction “...the research objectives and hypotheses would benefit from being more explicitly stated at the end of the introduction to enhance clarity and academic rigor.”	We appreciate this suggestion. The introduction section has been revised by explicitly stating the research objectives and hypotheses at the end of the section, thereby improving clarity and academic rigor.
3. Methodology “One area for improvement would be elaborating more on potential biases inherent in the non-probability sampling method and clarifying whether any control variables were considered.”	Thank you for highlighting this important point. We have revised the methodology section by elaborating on the potential biases inherent in the purposive sampling approach. In addition, we have clarified the consideration of control variables to ensure transparency and methodological rigor.
4. Conclusion “However, a more explicit restatement of how these findings close the research gap identified in the introduction would strengthen the conclusion's cohesion and impact.”	We are grateful for this valuable feedback. The conclusion section has been revised to explicitly restate how the findings address the research gap identified in the introduction, thereby enhancing the cohesion and impact of the conclusion.
5. General Note “With minor refinements—particularly in formatting, clarity of objectives, and deeper	We sincerely thank the reviewer for the positive evaluation and constructive feedback. We have implemented the suggested refinements related to formatting, clearer

sampling reflection, it is highly suitable for publication in IJABR.”	objectives, and deeper reflection on sampling. We believe these revisions have strengthened the manuscript considerably.
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Warm regards,
Author

Aekram Faisal, Anton Hidarjo, and Rachmat Ramadhan

Green Social Media Influencers: Shaping Gen Z's Green Purchase Intentions through Trust and Attitude

Aekram Faisal^{a*}, Anton Hidarjo^b, Rachmat Ramadhan^c

^{a, c} Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

^b Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Mercu Buana, Indonesia

Received dd/mm/yyyy; accepted dd/mm/yyyy

ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of Social Media Influencers on Green Purchase Intention among Generation Z, focusing on the mediating roles of Green Trust and Green Attitude. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected from 295 Gen Z respondents in Greater Jakarta who follow eco-conscious influencers. Structural Equation Modeling and bootstrapping methods were employed. Results show SMI has no direct effect on Green Purchase Intentions but positively influences Green Trust and Green Attitude. Green Trust and Green Attitude fully mediate the Social Media Influencers - Green Purchase Intentions relationship, both significantly impacting Green Purchase Intentions. Findings emphasize the importance of building trust and positive attitudes through influencer content to boost eco-friendly product purchase intentions among Gen Z. The research contributes to understanding green consumer behavior in the digital age, offering insights for marketers targeting environmentally conscious young consumers. It also opens avenues for future research on digital marketing dynamics in promoting sustainable products to youth.

KEYWORDS

Social Media Influencers
Green Purchase Intentions
Green Trust
Green Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Environmental issues have become increasingly complex and urgent on a global scale, particularly in the modern era where digital technology and fast-paced consumption dominate daily life. Phenomena such as climate change, ecosystem degradation, deforestation, and rising carbon emissions have prompted societies worldwide to reevaluate their lifestyles and consumption patterns. In response to these challenges, the concept of green consumption has emerged, referring to consumer behavior that considers the ecological impact of products purchased and used (Teixeira et al., 2023; Zhao et al., 2024).

Although awareness of environmental sustainability has increased significantly, there remains a notable gap between environmental awareness and actual consumer behavior—a phenomenon known as the attitude-behavior gap (Zhuo et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2019). Consumers may express concern for the environment, yet this attitude does not always translate into environmentally

*Corresponding Author: aekram.faisal@trisakti.ac.id; doi: 123456789101112

conscious purchasing decisions. This gap presents a significant challenge in achieving sustainable consumption goals.

One consumer segment that has gained increasing attention in green consumer behavior research is Generation Z, those born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. Known as digital natives, this generation is deeply embedded in digital technologies and heavily engaged with social media as a platform for communication, information, lifestyle inspiration, and consumption reference (Sugiarti et al., 2023; Valendia & Purwanegara, 2022). Interestingly, while Gen Z exhibits a relatively high level of social and environmental concern, their actions do not always reflect consistent green purchasing behavior.

Within the digital ecosystem, social media influencers (SMIs) play a critical role as effective and credible communicators. Influencers are seen as figures capable of building emotional closeness, trust, and influencing actual consumer decisions through personal, authentic, and persuasive content (Ki et al., 2020; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2019; Lim et al., 2017). As such, SMIs have become a popular marketing tool for brands, including those promoting eco-friendly products.

Previous research has shown that SMIs have a positive influence on green purchase intention (GPI) (Sugiarti et al., 2023; De Veirman et al., 2017). However, findings in the literature remain inconsistent. For example, studies by Teixeira et al. (2023) found that the direct influence of influencers on GPI was not statistically significant. These findings suggest that the effect of influencers may operate indirectly, necessitating the inclusion of mediating variables to explain the underlying psychological mechanisms of consumer behavioral change.

To address this inconsistency, recent studies have begun to incorporate psychological mediators, such as green trust and environmental attitude. Green trust refers to the consumer's belief in the credibility of a product's environmental claims, often shaped by the trustworthiness of the influencer (Shahabuddin, 2024). Trust is particularly crucial in combating greenwashing—when brands falsely claim to be environmentally friendly (Sun & Shi, 2022). Meanwhile, environmental attitude reflects a person's values, beliefs, and commitment toward environmental preservation, and has been shown to be a strong predictor of green behavior (Putri et al., 2021; Sun & Xing, 2022)).

Against this backdrop, the present study proposes a dual-mediation model that examines the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention through the simultaneous mediation of green trust and environmental attitude. This approach not only bridges theoretical gaps regarding the contradictory findings of previous studies but also enriches our understanding of the psychological processes involved in green consumer behavior in digital marketing contexts.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the influence of social media influencers on Generation Z's green purchase intention, with green trust and green attitude as mediating variables. Specifically, this study aims to: (1) analyze the positive effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention; (2) analyze the positive effect of social media influencers on green trust; (3) analyze the positive effect of social media influencers on green attitude; (4) analyze the positive effect of green trust on green purchase intention; (5) analyze the positive effect of green attitude on green purchase intention; (6) analyze the mediating effect of green trust on the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention; and (7) analyze the mediating effect of green attitude on the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed and illustrated in the conceptual framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Influence Theory

Social Influence Theory, introduced by Kelman (1958), explains that behavior change occurs through compliance, identification, and internalization. In the digital age, these processes have become even more pronounced, especially through the role of social media influencers.

Recent empirical research highlights the relevance of this theory in shaping green consumer behavior. For example, Liao (2024) found that social media users tend to adopt environmentally responsible behaviors when they perceive such actions as normative and endorsed by influential figures online. Similarly, Purnama et al. (2025) noted that social value orientation moderates the effect of social influence on pro-environmental actions, indicating that personal values and perceived social expectations work hand in hand to shape sustainable behavior.

Thus, social influence remains a critical lens for understanding how influencers impact eco-conscious decisions in the digital environment.

Social Media Influencers (SMIs)

Social Media Influencers (SMIs) are individuals who have built credibility and a sizable following on social media platforms and possess the persuasive power to affect their followers' attitudes, preferences, and behaviors (Casaló et al., 2020; Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). They play a significant role in shaping consumer decision-making through authentic content, especially in lifestyle, fashion, and increasingly, sustainability domains.

In the context of green marketing, SMIs have emerged as powerful agents in promoting sustainable behavior. For instance, when influencers consistently communicate eco-conscious values, they help legitimize and normalize green behaviors (Jin et al., 2019). Additionally, the development of parasocial relationships—emotional, one-sided connections between followers and influencers—enhances message effectiveness and can directly impact green purchase intentions (Schouten et al., 2021; Jalali & Khalid, 2021).

Research by Lou & Yuan (2019) and Ki et al. (2020) also supports the idea that message value, source credibility, and perceived expertise of SMIs significantly boost followers' trust in promoted green products. These factors serve as important psychological triggers in motivating eco-friendly consumer behavior, making SMIs strategic partners in green branding efforts.

Green Trust

Green trust is a crucial psychological mechanism that influences environmentally responsible consumer behavior. It refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a brand or company based on its perceived environmental performance and sincerity in sustainability efforts. Chuah et al. (2020) emphasize that green trust is shaped not only by corporate environmental claims but also by the perceived alignment between those claims and the actual environmental practices of the company. In the age of green skepticism, trust acts as a protective factor against accusations of greenwashing and is essential in cultivating long-term relationships with environmentally aware consumers.

From a strategic standpoint, green trust functions as a mediating factor that connects various

green marketing attributes to customer loyalty and purchase intentions.. This finding is reinforced by Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024), who show that corporate social responsibility (CSR) and green brand image enhance behavioral intentions through green trust, particularly in the context of developing economies where environmental credibility is increasingly scrutinized.

Furthermore, green trust has demonstrated effectiveness across various sectors, including organic food, healthcare services, and retail. Rashid & Lone (2024) found that green trust strongly influences the purchase intentions of organic food, underscoring its relevance in the food sector where health and environmental concerns intersect. Meanwhile, Jannah et al. (2024) reveal that in outpatient services, green trust significantly boosts green brand equity, emphasizing that the perception of sustainability is equally vital in service-based industries. These studies collectively affirm that green trust is not merely a soft factor but a pivotal construct that translates green marketing strategies into measurable consumer outcomes.

Green Attitude

Green attitude refers to an individual's favorable evaluation or disposition toward environmentally friendly products and behaviors. It plays a critical role in shaping green behavioral intentions, particularly in the context of eco-conscious consumption. Shehawy & Khan (2024) found that green attitude significantly predicts green purchase intention, and this relationship is strengthened by green awareness, highlighting the importance of environmental consciousness in activating attitudinal intentions.

Amoako et al. (2020), employing the Theory of Planned Behavior, demonstrated that green attitude significantly influences young consumers' perceptions of green value and their willingness to engage in green purchasing. This underscores the importance of integrating environmental education and value-based campaigns among younger demographics.

Van Tonder et al. (2023) further emphasized that green attitudes are shaped by internal values and social norms, which together foster green customer citizenship behaviors (e.g., advocacy, recycling, and participation in eco-initiatives). Similarly, Mehak and Batcha (2024) linked individual green attitudes with organizational sustainability, asserting that green HR practices, when aligned with employee green attitudes, improve environmental performance at the workplace.

Moreover, Corboş et al. (2024) highlighted that green attitude, coupled with effective green communication, play a pivotal role in influencing consumers' actual green buying behavior. This illustrates how communication strategies can bridge the gap between attitude and action.

Green Purchase Intention

Green purchase intention refers to a consumer's deliberate intention to buy environmentally friendly products. It reflects a growing awareness of ecological issues and a desire to reduce environmental harm through responsible consumption. Consumers who exhibit high green purchase intention tend to value sustainability, view eco-friendly products as beneficial, and are motivated by emotional, social, and functional values (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Rashid & Lone, 2024; (Sun & Xing, 2022).

Green purchase intention is shaped by various psychological and informational factors, including environmental knowledge, perceived effectiveness of green behavior, and credibility of

environmental claims (Nguyen et al., 2019; Amoako et al., 2020). As digital platforms become key sources of information, exposure to eco-conscious messages—particularly from influencers and online campaigns—can significantly reinforce consumers' green intentions (Jalali & Khalid, 2021; Teixeira et al., 2023).

Although green purchase intention does not always lead to actual purchase behavior, it remains a strong predictor of eco-friendly consumption patterns (Yadav & Pathak, 2017; Zhuo et al., 2022). Understanding green purchase intention helps marketers and policymakers design better strategies to promote sustainable products and shift consumer behavior toward environmental responsibility.

The influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention

Recent empirical studies highlight the growing influence of social media influencers (SMIs) in promoting sustainable consumption. Influencers' perceived opinion leadership significantly contributes to shaping consumer behavior, including green purchasing, as consumers tend to rely on their guidance when making eco-conscious decisions (Casaló et al., 2020). The perceived credibility of influencers, particularly in terms of trustworthiness and expertise, further enhances the persuasiveness of environmental claims, which in turn reinforces green consumption intentions (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019).

The effectiveness of influencer-driven environmental messaging also depends on the alignment between the influencer's identity and the content being promoted. A strong message-influencer fit fosters emotional connection and enhances the authenticity of the message, increasing its persuasive impact (Schouten et al., 2021). Additionally, emotional engagement and value-based messaging from influencers are key drivers of positive consumer attitudes and intentions toward sustainable products (Lim et al., 2017). Notably, the way influencers frame their roles—either as educators (*informers*) or entertainers—also affects consumer responsiveness, with informative and value-aligned content leading to stronger green purchase intentions (Zhao et al., 2024).

Drawing from these findings, social media influencers are seen as key agents in promoting sustainable behavior. Their ability to influence consumer perceptions and emotional engagement with environmental issues has been consistently linked to higher levels of green purchase intention. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H₁: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The influence of social media influencers on green trust

Social media influencers (SMIs) play a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions, particularly in building green trust—defined as the confidence consumers place in the environmental claims of products. According to Zhao et al. (2024), influencers who are perceived as authentic and informative can significantly enhance consumers' willingness to trust green messaging. When influencers communicate consistently about sustainability and incorporate green lifestyles into their content, their credibility increases, reinforcing consumer trust (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). Moreover, Casaló et al. (2020) highlight that influencers who act as opinion leaders are more persuasive in influencing trust-related outcomes, especially when followers identify with them and see them as reliable sources of environmental values.

Green trust is further strengthened when influencers' personal values align with their messaging. Jalali & Khalid (2021) demonstrate that when influencers visibly integrate eco-conscious habits in their lifestyle and communication, their audience is more likely to internalize the messages as genuine. This finding aligns with Chuah et al. (2020), who emphasize that green trust can be sustained through consistent corporate and individual environmental behavior. The influencer's role, therefore, goes beyond content creation—it extends into modeling sustainable behaviors that enhance perceived integrity and alignment with green values.

In addition, the presence of green trust mediates the relationship between influencer communication and green purchase intention. Amin & Tarun (2021) point out that green trust acts as a psychological assurance that validates consumers' environmentally conscious decisions. Supporting this, Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024) assert that green advertising by influencers significantly impacts consumers' trust when the messaging is clear, consistent, and emotionally resonant. Based on the converging insights from these studies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green trust.

The influence of social media influencers on green attitude

Social media influencers (SMIs) play a key role in shaping consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products, or green attitudes, through persuasive messaging and engaging content. Casaló et al. (2020) found that influencers, acting as opinion leaders, can positively influence their followers' perceptions of sustainability. By consistently promoting eco-friendly values, influencers help shape social norms and encourage pro-environmental attitudes (Zhao et al., 2024).

Visual content is particularly effective in influencing green attitudes. Jalali & Khalid (2021) demonstrated that images reflecting environmental concerns significantly affect followers' perceptions. When influencers share visually compelling eco-friendly messages, they foster awareness and positive attitudes toward green products (Chen et al., 2020). This consistent exposure to sustainable content strengthens positive green brand attitudes among followers.

The emotional connection between influencers and their followers, known as parasocial interaction, is also crucial in shaping green attitudes. Ki et al. (2020) found that influencers who build authentic relationships with their audience can more effectively influence attitudes and behaviors. By promoting sustainable lifestyles, influencers make their messages more persuasive, helping followers develop more favorable green attitudes (Shehawy & Khan, 2024). Based on this literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₃: Social media influencers have a positive effect on green attitudes.

The effect of green trust on green purchase intention

Green trust significantly influences consumers' green purchase intention by reducing skepticism and enhancing credibility. Research by Rashid & Lone (2024) shows that when consumers trust the environmental claims of a product, they are more likely to purchase it. This trust is crucial in a market where greenwashing is common, and transparency helps build a reliable connection between the consumer and the brand (Sun & Shi, 2022).

Trust is further amplified through social media influencers who provide credible and transparent

environmental information. Teixeira et al. (2023) highlighted that influencers who align with sustainability values help foster trust, particularly among younger consumers. This trust directly impacts their intention to buy green products. Studies like Sugiarti et al. (2023) reinforce this, demonstrating that influencer credibility is key to shaping purchase decisions.

Additionally, green trust is built on factors like product quality and transparent environmental claims. When brands clearly communicate their sustainability efforts, they enhance trust, leading to stronger purchase intentions (Corboş et al., 2024). Based on this body of research, the following hypothesis can be proposed:

H₄: Green trust has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The effect of green attitude on green purchase intention

Consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products—referred to as green attitude—are widely recognized as critical determinants of green purchase intention. Chen et al. (2020) suggested that individuals with positive attitudes toward sustainability and eco-friendly consumption are more likely to exhibit strong intentions to purchase green products. This positive attitude stems from environmental awareness and a belief that their consumption choices can meaningfully contribute to sustainability efforts.

Findings from Yadav & Pathak (2017) as well as recent results by Teixeira et al., (2023) consistently show that green attitude is a significant predictor of green purchase intention. The more favorable a consumer's attitude toward environmental protection, the higher the likelihood they will engage in green purchasing behaviors. This relationship is supported by Sinh (2024), who found that green attitude amplifies the link between personal values and sustainable consumption intentions.

Additionally, green attitude, while influenced by factors like environmental concern, remains a key driver of green purchase intention. Consumers with positive attitudes toward sustainability are more likely to choose eco-friendly products, especially younger generations driven by environmental values (Putri et al., 2021). Based on this growing body of research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Green attitude has a positive effect on green purchase intention.

The influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention mediated by green trust

Green trust plays a critical role in mediating the impact of social media influencers on green purchase intention. Hu et al. (2019) emphasize that trust in influencers influences consumer behavior, especially when endorsing sustainable products. When consumers trust an influencer, they are more likely to believe in the eco-friendly products being promoted, which in turn boosts their intention to purchase. Similarly, Jannah et al. (2024) highlight that green trust is a key factor in strengthening consumer engagement with environmentally responsible brands.

Amin & Tarun (2021) further argue that green trust connects consumer values to green purchase intentions, with higher trust levels leading to stronger purchase behaviors. Chuah et al. (2020) also note that environmental concern, combined with green trust, increases consumer

engagement with brands promoting sustainability. This suggests that when influencers authentically support green products, they can effectively enhance consumers' trust and green purchasing intentions.

Additionally, Nguyen-Viet & Thanh Tran (2024) point out that green trust mediates the influence of green advertising and CSR initiatives on customer behavior, making it a crucial element in driving sustainable consumption. This understanding underscores that green trust is essential for translating influencer endorsements into genuine green purchase actions. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₆: Green trust mediates the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention.

The influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention mediated by green attitude

Green attitude plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. Chen et al. (2020) found that when consumers hold positive green attitudes, they are more likely to be influenced by green brand messages and develop stronger intentions to purchase sustainable products. This aligns with Lim et al. (2017), who emphasized that customer attitude mediates the impact of influencer marketing on consumer purchase behavior.

Further supporting this, Corboş et al. (2024) argue that influencers shape consumer attitudes, especially in the context of sustainability, encouraging more eco-friendly purchasing decisions. Putri et al. (2021) also observed that attitudes significantly mediate the effect of environmental knowledge on green product purchase intentions. These findings highlight the importance of aligning influencer messages with consumer values to enhance green purchasing behavior.

In addition, Shehawy and Khan (2024) identified that green awareness moderates the relationship between green attitudes and purchase intentions, further underlining the importance of cultivating a positive green attitude through influencer marketing. This research underscores the pivotal role that both influencers and consumers' attitudes play in promoting sustainable consumption behaviors. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₇: Green attitude mediates the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention.

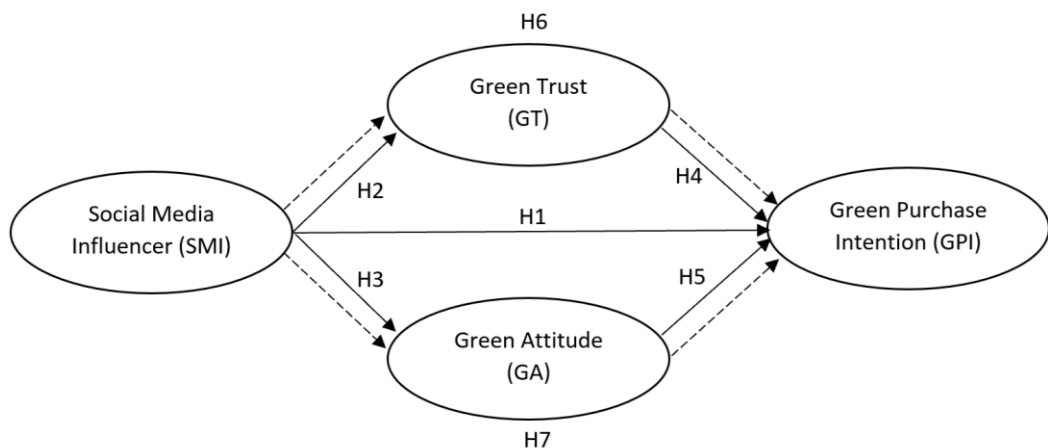


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to analyze the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention both directly and through green attitude and green trust as mediators. The research analysis unit is Generation Z individuals in the Greater Jakarta area who have actively used social media and followed influencers who have concern for the environment. Sampling was carried out by nonprobability sampling methods, especially purposive sampling techniques, to ensure that respondents met the criteria that had been determined. It is important to note that the use of purposive sampling may introduce potential biases, particularly regarding the representativeness of the sample, as it focuses on specific criteria (Gen Z social media users in Greater Jakarta). To address this concern, we acknowledge that the findings cannot be generalized to the entire Gen Z population. Furthermore, while no formal control variables were applied in this study, demographic information such as gender, education level, and income was collected and reported to provide context for interpreting the results.

The number of respondents participating in this study was 295, which is in accordance with the recommendation of Hair et al. (2019) which suggested a minimum sample size of 200 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis. Data was collected through an online questionnaire distributed to respondents who met the criteria. This study uses four main variables: Social Media Influencer (SMI), Green Attitude (GA), Green Trust (GT), and Green Purchase Intention (GPI). Each variable is measured using several items adapted from the current literature. Social Media Influencers are measured by two items adapted from Teixeira et al. (2023). Green Attitude is measured by four items that are also adapted from Teixeira et al. (2023). Green Trust is measured by five items adapted from Amin & Tarun (2021). Green Purchase Intention is measured by five items adapted from Panopoulos et al. (2023). All items are measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Data analysis was carried out using the SEM method to test hypotheses and evaluate the relationships between variables in the research model. For the analysis of mediation effects, this study adopts a bootstrapping method that allows estimation of confidence intervals for indirect effects Hayes (2022).

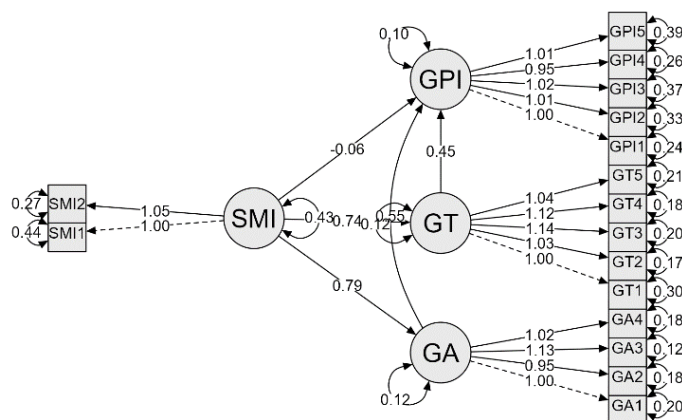


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

RESULTS

The results of the validity and reliability test presented in Table 1 reveal that all variables and indicators in this study meet the required validity and reliability criteria. Each indicator shows a loading factor that exceeds the threshold of 0.6, which according to Hair et al. (2019) is a strong indication of convergent validity. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable was recorded above 0.8, in line with the standard to confirm an adequate level of reliability.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variables and Indicators		Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Social Media Influencer (SMI)			0.818	Reliable
SMI1	When I need information about environmentally friendly products, I seek influencers' opinions on social networks.	0.815		Valid
SMI2	Influencers' opinions on social networks affect my intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.812		Valid
Green Attitude (GA)			0.904	Reliable
GA1	My environmental awareness influences my intention to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.893		Valid
GA2	Positive beliefs about environmental well-being impact my intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.830		Valid
GA3	My feelings about environmental well-being impact my intention to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.782		Valid
GA4	My behavior towards the environment influences my attitude towards the intention to purchase environmentally friendly products.	0.732		Valid
Green Trust (GT)			0.904	Reliable
GT1	The reputation of environmentally friendly products is generally reliable.	0.715		Valid
GT2	The environmental performance of eco-friendly products is generally dependable.	0.750		Valid
GT3	Claims made by eco-friendly products about the environment are generally trustworthy.	0.705		Valid
GT4	The environmental concern of Eco-Friendly Products meets your expectations.	0.736		Valid
GT5	Eco-friendly products keep their promises and commitments to environmental protection.	0.830		Valid
Green Purchase Intention (GPI)			0.859	Reliable

GPI1	I choose to buy environmentally friendly products.	0.834	Valid
GPI2	I intend to buy eco-friendly products in the future because of their positive contribution to the environment.	0.846	Valid
GPI3	I buy eco-friendly products even though they are more expensive compared to non-green products.	0.803	Valid
GPI4	I prefer eco-friendly products over non-green products when the product quality is similar.	0.702	Valid
GPI5	I often buy products that use recycled/recyclable packaging.	0.797	Valid

Source: Data processed (2024)

In evaluating the suitability of the structural model with empirical data, several goodness-of-fit (GOF) indices are used. The results of the analysis show that the model has a fairly good level of suitability. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.949 and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) of 0.938 are above the 0.90 threshold, indicating a good fit . The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.047 is below the cut-off value of 0.08, indicating an acceptable fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of 0.074 is within an acceptable range for a fairly good indication of fit. Overall, it shows that the proposed model has adequate compatibility with the data and is acceptable for further interpretation.

Table 2. Respondent Profile

	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Gender</u>		
Man	115	38.983
Woman	180	61.017
<u>Work</u>		
Civil Servants	2	0.678
Private Sector Employee	17	5.763
Entrepreneurial	4	1.356
Student	272	92.203
<u>Education</u>		
High School	59	20
Diploma	54	18.305
Undergraduate	180	61.017
Postgraduate	2	0.678

<u>Income</u>		
Under 5,000,000 IDR	253	85.763
5,000,000 – 10,000,000 IDR	36	12.203
10,000,001 – IDR 20,000,000 IDR	4	1.356
More than 20,000,000 IDR	2	0.678
<u>The Most Commonly Used Social Media</u>		
Facebook	2	0.678
Instagram	169	57.288
TikTok	112	37.966
X (Twitter)	12	4.068

Based on Table 2, the respondents' profiles show several dominant characteristics. The majority of respondents were women (61.017 percent or 180 people), with most of them having the status of students (92.203 percent or 272 people). The education level was dominated by bachelors (61.017 percent or 180 people), while the income of most respondents was below 5,000,000 IDR (85.763 percent or 253 people). Instagram is the most frequently used social media by respondents (57.288 percent or 169 people). This data illustrates that the research sample is mostly composed of female students with undergraduate education, relatively low income, and actively use Instagram as their main social media platform.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing (Direct)

Hypothesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H1: SMI → GPI	-0.061	0.685	Not Supported
H2: SMI → GA	0.786	0.000	Supported
H3: SMI → GT	0.739	0.000	Supported
H4: GA → GPI	0.550	0.000	Supported
H5: GT → GPI	0.453	0.000	Supported

Source: Data processed (2024)

Based on the data in Table 3, the results of the direct influence analysis show several important findings. Social Media Influencers (SMI) do not have a significant direct influence on Green Purchase Intention (GPI), with an estimated coefficient of -0.061 and a p-value of 0.685, so H1 is not supported. However, SMI has a positive and significant influence on Green Attitude (GA) and Green Trust (GT), with estimated coefficients of 0.786 and 0.739 (both $p < 0.001$), respectively, supporting H2 and H3. Furthermore, both GA and GT are proven to have a positive and significant influence on GPI, with estimated coefficients of 0.550 and 0.453 (both $p < 0.001$), supporting H4 and H5.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing (Mediation)

Hypothesis	Estimate	p	95% Confidence Interval		Decision
			Lower	Upper	
H6: SMI → GA → GPI	0.200	0.000	0.120	0.293	Supported
H7: SMI → GT → GPI	0.167	0.000	0.102	0.255	Supported

Source: Data processed (2024)

The analysis of the mediation effect in Table 4 reveals the important role of GA and GT as mediators. SMI has a significant indirect influence on GPI via GA, with an estimated 0.200 ($p < 0.001$, 95% confidence interval: 0.120 to 0.293), supporting H6. Similarly, SMI also has a significant indirect influence on GPI through GT, with an estimated 0.167 ($p < 0.001$, 95% confidence interval: 0.102 to 0.255), supporting H7. These two results show that GA and GT play an important role in mediating the relationship between SMI and GPI.

Overall, the results of this study show that although Social Media Influencers do not have a direct influence on Green Purchase Intention, they have a significant role in shaping consumers' Green Attitude and Green Trust. Furthermore, Green Attitude and Green Trust then affect Green Purchase Intention positively. This finding emphasizes the importance of the role of Social Media Influencers in building consumer attitudes and trust in environmentally friendly products, which can ultimately encourage the intention to purchase green products. Marketing strategies that utilize Social Media Influencers need to focus on forming positive attitudes and building consumer trust in eco-friendly products, rather than directly encouraging purchase intent.

DISCUSSION

This study explores the role of social media influencers in shaping Generation Z's intention to purchase environmentally friendly products, emphasizing the mediating effects of green trust and green attitude. The findings highlight how influencer marketing can contribute to pro-environmental behavior, revealing the complexity of this relationship in the digital age.

The analysis shows that social media influencers do not have a significant direct influence on green purchase intention. This aligns with previous research suggesting that exposure to environmentally oriented content through influencers is insufficient to directly drive purchasing behavior (Zhao et al., 2024; Teixeira et al., 2023). Despite being active on social media, Generation Z consumers are not automatically persuaded to make green purchases solely based on influencer promotions. Instead, their purchasing decisions are influenced by more deeply rooted psychological factors, such as trust and attitude formation.

Nonetheless, this study confirms that social media influencers play a crucial role in shaping positive environmental attitudes and fostering trust in green products. These indirect pathways are significant, as they serve as bridges between influencer content and consumer behavior. The development of green attitudes is influenced by repeated exposure to authentic, value-driven messages, which resonate with Generation Z's desire for environmental responsibility and ethical branding (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Corboş et al., 2024). Influencers who are perceived as genuinely committed to sustainability are more successful in influencing attitudes, especially when their

content reflects transparency, consistency, and moral values (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2021).

Trust also emerges as a key mediator in the relationship between influencers and purchase intention. Green trust is essential in reducing consumer skepticism toward sustainability claims, particularly among a generation that is highly aware of greenwashing and skeptical of corporate motives (Chuah et al., 2020; Jalali & Khalid, 2021). Influencers can enhance green trust by demonstrating a long-term commitment to sustainable practices, such as promoting eco-friendly lifestyles, supporting environmental campaigns, or partnering with transparent brands. Previous studies also confirm that the credibility and perceived expertise of influencers are critical in fostering consumer trust (Shahahbuddin, 2024; Jin et al., 2019).

The findings also validate theoretical perspectives that emphasize the importance of mediation in influencing behavioral outcomes. According to the theory of planned behavior, attitudes toward behavior and perceived behavioral control are stronger predictors of intention than external stimuli alone (Amoako et al., 2020). This suggests that the influence of social media is filtered through cognitive and emotional evaluations, making the effect of influencers more indirect and dependent on the consumer's internal belief systems. This is further supported by the value-belief-norm theory, which argues that pro-environmental behavior is driven by personal norms, environmental concern, and the perceived consequences of actions (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Liao, 2024).

Moreover, the role of emotional engagement cannot be overstated. Influencer content that evokes empathy, concern, or urgency about environmental issues can positively influence consumer responses, particularly when combined with personal storytelling or visually engaging content (De Veirman et al., 2017; Sun & Shi, 2022). Generation Z, with their high digital fluency and visual literacy, is especially responsive to such content formats, making platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube highly effective for sustainability communication (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Sugiarti et al., 2023).

This study also underscores the importance of perceived congruence between the influencer and the product or message they endorse. Consumers are more likely to adopt sustainable behavior when they perceive that the influencer's identity and lifestyle align with the environmental values they promote (Ki et al., 2020). Without this alignment, even popular influencers may fail to influence meaningful changes in consumer intentions.

The study enhances our understanding of how social media influencers affect green purchase intention not through direct influence but by shaping positive environmental attitudes and building trust. These mediating mechanisms are vital in translating awareness into behavioral intention, particularly among a generation that values authenticity, social impact, and ethical consumption. By integrating trust and attitude as key constructs, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of influencer effectiveness in promoting sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to analyze the influence of social media influencers on green purchase intention among Generation Z, particularly by examining the mediating roles of green trust and green attitude. The findings reveal that social media influencers do not exert a significant direct influence on green purchase intention. This suggests that mere exposure to environmentally themed content shared by influencers is not sufficient to immediately drive purchase behavior among Generation Z. However, the results show that social media influencers do have a significant and positive impact on green trust and green attitude. This demonstrates the

influencers' ability to foster confidence in eco-friendly product claims and to shape favorable perceptions of environmentally conscious consumption.

Moreover, both green trust and green attitude were found to significantly mediate the relationship between social media influencers and green purchase intention. These findings suggest that while influencers may not directly persuade Generation Z to purchase green products, they influence behavioral intention indirectly by cultivating trust and nurturing positive environmental attitudes. In other words, the influencers' effectiveness depends on their capacity to shape internal psychological constructs rather than merely promoting products. This study, therefore, contributes to the growing body of literature on sustainable consumer behavior by underscoring the psychological pathways through which influencer marketing operates in the context of green consumption. It emphasizes that the journey from message exposure to actual intention to purchase environmentally friendly products is nuanced, and highly dependent on intermediary factors such as trust and attitude formation.

These findings also directly address the research gap identified in the introduction, namely the inconsistent results regarding the direct effect of social media influencers on green purchase intention. By demonstrating that the relationship is fully mediated by trust and attitude, this study provides clearer theoretical insight into the psychological mechanisms that explain Gen Z's green purchasing behavior. In doing so, the study not only reconciles previous contradictory evidence but also strengthens the theoretical integration of influencer marketing with consumer psychology in the context of sustainability. This contributes to advancing green marketing literature by highlighting the indirect yet crucial role of trust and attitude in translating influencer communication into meaningful behavioral intentions among young consumers.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

The outcomes of this research offer strategic implications for marketing professionals, brand managers, and producers of eco-friendly products aiming to target Generation Z. Firstly, marketers should prioritize collaborations with influencers who demonstrate authenticity, consistency, and credibility in promoting sustainable lifestyles. Rather than focusing solely on popularity or follower count, it is essential to assess an influencer's alignment with environmental values and their ability to communicate them effectively.

Secondly, content strategies should be designed to foster emotional engagement and cognitive understanding. This includes the use of storytelling techniques, educational content, and real-life demonstrations of eco-friendly behaviors. Transparency in communication—such as clearly explaining the environmental benefits of a product or disclosing sustainable sourcing practices—can enhance consumer trust and mitigate skepticism regarding greenwashing.

Thirdly, brands should utilize interactive features on social media platforms to promote two-way communication, such as Q&A sessions, polls, and discussion threads that encourage followers to share their opinions and experiences. Additionally, brands could invest in digital campaigns and influencer-led environmental education initiatives that build awareness and reinforce positive attitudes toward green behavior. The findings also highlight the need for consistent messaging across platforms to strengthen brand trust and the perceived authenticity of eco-friendly claims. By leveraging these insights, brands can design more effective campaigns that not only raise awareness but also cultivate long-term pro-environmental behavioral intentions among Generation Z consumers.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite offering meaningful contributions, this study has several limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the geographical scope of the study may limit the generalizability of the findings. The behaviors and attitudes of Generation Z can vary significantly across cultures and regions; therefore, future research should extend the investigation to diverse geographic and cultural contexts to examine potential cross-cultural differences in the impact of social media influencers on green behavior.

Second, the cross-sectional nature of the research design does not allow for the observation of changes in behavior or perception over time. A longitudinal approach could provide a deeper understanding of how trust and attitude evolve through continuous exposure to influencer content and whether this leads to sustained behavioral change.

Third, this study focused solely on psychological constructs within the individual (i.e., trust and attitude), without accounting for broader external variables that may affect green purchase intention. Future studies could incorporate additional moderating or mediating variables such as environmental awareness, regulatory support, peer influence, or economic incentives. These factors may further enrich the model and provide a more holistic view of green consumer decision-making. Finally, it would be valuable for future research to explore how different types of influencers—such as micro-, macro-, and celebrity influencers—vary in their impact on green trust and green attitude. Differentiating the influence of various endorsement types could offer more nuanced insights into optimal influencer selection and content strategy design in sustainable marketing campaigns.

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Aekram Faisal

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

Anton Hindardjo

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Mercu Buana, Indonesia

Rachmat Ramadhan

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia

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