

The Role of Social Media Influencers in Achieving Sustainable Consumption: A Study on Purchase Intention of Recycled Bottled Drinking Water

Intan Yuniarti Ningsih^{1*}, Ayu Ekasari²

^{1*,2} Management Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Trisakti, West Jakarta City, Special Capital Region of Jakarta, Indonesia

Email: intanyuniarti43@gmail.com^{1*}, ayu.ekasari@trisakti.ac.id²

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Abstract

Indonesia is currently facing serious challenges in managing plastic waste, particularly from single-use packaging such as bottled drinking water. This issue highlights the need for a shift toward more responsible and sustainable consumption behavior. Several companies have introduced innovations in recycled packaging; however, consumers often remain skeptical of environmental claims. In the digital marketing era, social media influencers play a crucial role in promoting eco-friendly products by enhancing brand awareness, brand image, and perceived value, which ultimately influence purchase intention. Despite this potential, previous studies have reported inconsistent findings on the effectiveness of influencers in encouraging green purchase behavior. This study aims to develop a conceptual model to analyze the effect of social media influencers on purchase intention toward recycled bottled drinking water, incorporating mediating variables (brand awareness, brand image, perceived value) and a moderating variable (green skepticism). This research adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method with 290 respondents as the sample. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results show that Social Media Influencer Endorsement positively influences Purchase Intention directly and indirectly through Brand Image and Perceived Value. Meanwhile, Green Skepticism also moderates the influence of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Perceived Value. However, Brand Awareness does not mediate the influence of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention. The findings are expected to provide insights for companies in designing effective marketing strategies using social media influencers to promote sustainable consumption.

Keywords:

Social Media Influencer; Purchase Intention; Brand Awareness; Brand Image; Perceived Value.

1. INTRODUCTION

The bottled beverage industry, particularly the mineral water sector, has grown into a highly dominant sector in the consumer market, both globally and nationally. The growth of this sector is driven not only by urbanization and rising incomes but also by shifts in modern lifestyles, which increasingly prioritize convenience and quick access to high-quality water (Sugiarti et al., 2023). Bottled mineral water has become increasingly popular among urban consumers, primarily because it is perceived as cleaner, safer, and more convenient than tap water or water from local sources.

However, this trend has serious environmental impacts, particularly regarding plastic waste and the carbon footprint generated by the production, filling, distribution, and disposal of plastic bottles. Various studies reveal that PET bottles are among the primary sources driving increases in greenhouse gas emissions.

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) studies show that the manufacturing process of PET bottles results in a high carbon footprint, with the majority of emissions stemming from electricity consumption during the production phase (Alfarisi & Primadasa, 2019). Similar findings were revealed in the report *Environmental Impact of PET Water Bottles* by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which explains that the production of plastic bottles has a significant impact on energy and water use, as well as CO₂ emissions, throughout their life cycle. Another study by Horowitz (2018), an LCA study of Green2O products, also shows that the production, transportation, and end-of-life processes of PET packaging are the primary contributors to carbon pollution and ecological impact. These findings confirm that bottled drinking water has a significant ecological impact, thereby requiring industry commitment and changes in consumer behavior toward more environmentally friendly products.

In response to growing public concern about plastic waste from bottled water, bottled mineral water companies in Indonesia have begun focusing on developing more environmentally friendly products. Le Minerale, produced by PT Tirta Fresindo Jaya (Mayora Group), was introduced in 2015 as part of Mayora's efforts to enter the domestic mineral water industry. The Mayora Group demonstrates a strong commitment to plastic waste management through a circular economy program that includes Le Minerale products. In its 2021 Sustainability Report, Mayora highlighted efforts to reduce plastic use and develop more sustainable packaging (Mayora, 2021). This commitment is reflected in the construction of a food-grade PET recycling plant with an annual capacity of 22,000 tons of rPET in Jombang, as reported by Kompas and confirmed by the Ministry of Industry (Faizal, 2023). Since 2021, Le Minerale has also been actively involved in the National Circular Economy Movement (GESN), which aims to collect PET bottles and educate consumers. According to a report by Kompas Lestari, the program has successfully collected more than 25,000 tons of plastic bottles for recycling (Syamdani & Noviyanti, 2023). This series of initiatives led Mayora to receive the Titanium Award from BPOM in recognition of its contribution to reducing plastic waste, underscoring that packaging and recycling are key aspects of Mayora's sustainability strategy, including for Le Minerale.

Meanwhile, Danone-AQUA has addressed the plastic waste problem more directly through the launch of AQUA Life, a bottled water product made entirely from recycled plastic (rPET). AQUA Life was first launched in Bali in 2019 as a pilot project on the circular economy implemented in Indonesia (SehatAqua.co.id, 2020). In its official sustainability report, Danone-AQUA states that this product is part of its efforts to reduce plastic waste through the use of rPET packaging, increasing the proportion of recycled materials to 50% by 2025, and the construction of the largest food-grade plastic recycling facility in Indonesia in partnership with Veolia in Pasuruan since 2019 (Group Danone Indonesia, 2024).

To promote these two bottled water products, the company also utilizes Social Media Influencer Endorsements (SMIE) as part of an effective marketing communication strategy. Social Media Influencer Endorsements are a form of marketing collaboration in which an influencer promotes a product to their followers through posts, reviews, or recommendations presented naturally and convincingly. According to Cordova (2025), support from influencers can build a closer relationship between the brand and consumers because the message is conveyed by a trusted figure. This view aligns with the statement by Strähle & Gräff (2017), who emphasize that trust in Influencers significantly influences message acceptance and reinforces positive perceptions of the brand. Additionally, Reilly & Hynan (2014) note that Influencers act as social bridges, enabling brands to reach consumers in a more personal, relevant, and persuasive manner.

Panopoulos (2023) found that content created by social media influencers can raise environmental awareness and significantly boost the intention to purchase eco-friendly products. This is because consumers tend to perceive sustainability messages from influencers as more authentic and convincing. These findings align with research by Alvalin & Sugiarto (2024), which indicates that the role of social media influencers has grown increasingly influential as social media evolves, with the content they share shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchase intentions, including for products that prioritize sustainability. Research by Suryaputra (2024) also supports this view by showing that influencers not only convey information about sustainability but also foster more sustainable behaviors through calls to action, education, and real-life examples of eco-friendly lifestyles showcased on social media. Overall, these three studies confirm that support from social media influencers is an effective communication tool for influencing consumer attitudes, awareness, and behavior toward more environmentally conscious consumption patterns.

Based on the research findings by Nurhalisa et al. (2023), it is suspected that Green Skepticism (GS) moderates the relationship between Social Media Influencers (SMIs) and purchase intention. Green skepticism refers to people's disbelief about companies' environmental claims or performance (Sarairoh, 2023). Companies need to avoid green skepticism because it can reduce consumers' motivation to make eco-friendly choices or buy eco-friendly products. Based on a literature review, the moderating role of Green Skepticism (GS) in the relationship between Social Media Influencers (SMIs) and consumer reactions is becoming increasingly evident. Fang (2024) emphasizes that perceptions of greenwashing can reduce the effectiveness of sustainability messages on social media, so that high levels of consumer skepticism will reduce the impact of eco-friendly communication. In line with this, Sarairoh (2023) demonstrates that green skepticism can influence the direction and strength of the relationship between environmental factors and consumer purchase intent, where high levels of skepticism tend to diminish the positive effects that would otherwise be present..

The consistency of results across these studies indicates that, in the context of green marketing communication, including influencer-supported campaigns, consumer skepticism has significant potential to influence the effects of stimuli on cognitive and behavioral responses. Therefore, it is hypothesized that green skepticism plays a crucial moderating role in explaining the influence of SMIE on brand awareness (BA), brand image (BI), perceived value (PV), and purchase intention (PI), particularly for eco-friendly products such as eco-friendly mineral water.

With the advancement of digital marketing, influencers now play a crucial role in conveying messages about sustainability. However, their success in this regard depends heavily on how consumers perceive the authenticity, transparency, and clarity of the environmental claims made. A recent study by Pham & Barretta. (2024) explains that consumers analyze advertisements or environmental messages based on their details. Claims that are specific, clear, and supported by data are more effective in reducing skepticism than general or ambiguous claims. If these findings are applied to promotions by influencers, it can be concluded that influencer content containing detailed information about environmental benefits, recycling processes, or a product's carbon footprint data will be more successful in fostering a positive perception compared to content that merely highlights an "eco-friendly" label without in-depth explanation.

In the context of bottled water, this approach is becoming increasingly significant. The bottled water industry often faces criticism for contributing to plastic waste and carbon footprints, so manufacturers need to communicate their sustainability strategies in a more credible manner. When influencers promote bottled water products claimed to be eco-friendly, consumers tend to evaluate whether those claims truly reflect sustainable practices or are merely marketing gimmicks. Research by Promalessy & Handriana. (2024) shows that greenwashing not only reduces purchase intent but can also lead to the spread of negative opinions, especially when consumers feel deceived. In other words, if an influencer promotes a mineral water product with unfounded environmental claims, the risk of reputational damage for the company stems not only from decreased sales but also from the potential spread of negative opinions on social media.

One of the psychological variables influencing this process is skepticism toward sustainability, which is defined as a moderating variable in this study. Environmental skepticism is a measure of consumers' doubts regarding sustainability claims, and several studies have shown that this variable can amplify or diminish the impact of influencer communication on consumer responses. A study by Khandai (2025) shows that high levels of skepticism can lead to distrust of the brand, even evoking negative emotions such as "brand shame" and "brand hatred." In the context of this study, environmental skepticism was tested to determine whether consumer doubt regarding eco-friendly claims can reduce the influence of influencer endorsements on brand awareness, brand image, perceived value, and ultimately consumer purchase intent toward eco-friendly mineral water.

This study aims to enrich existing theory by integrating digital green marketing, influencer authenticity, the mediating role of brand perception, and the moderating effect of environmental skepticism into a single comprehensive framework. In practical terms, the findings of this study can serve as a guide for sustainable mineral water producers in developing more targeted communication strategies. By understanding how consumers process sustainability claims and how influencers can amplify or diminish the impact of environmental messages, companies can create campaigns that are authentic, transparent, and resilient to consumer skepticism. This approach is crucial to ensuring that sustainability efforts are not merely marketing buzzwords but are genuinely embraced and trusted by increasingly critical consumers in the digital age.

This research is vital for Indonesia and globally because it can redefine the role of social media influencers, which goes beyond promoting certain products or services to actively driving positive behavioral change. Moreover, this research can help brands build better trust, design clear messages about pro-environmental behavior, as well as collaborate with social media influencers to promote sustainable consumption.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach combined with hypothesis testing to evaluate the influence of the variables Social Media Influencer, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention, and Green Skepticism. The data collected is cross-sectional in nature, as it was gathered during a specific time period with individuals as the unit of analysis. This study uses primary data, that is, information collected directly from respondents Sekaran (2016). Data were collected via an online questionnaire on Google Forms and distributed through social media platforms such as Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook to participants who met the criteria. The questionnaire was specifically designed to gather primary data relevant to the research objectives, particularly to measure the following variables: Social Media Influencer Endorsement, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention, and Green Skepticism.

2.1. Sampling Method

The research sample consists of individuals who have knowledge or experience related to Social Media Influencer Endorsement (SMIE), namely Dr. Reisa Brotoasmoro and Hamish Daud, who recommend eco-

friendly mineral water products on social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, or others. Additionally, they have purchased eco-friendly mineral water products previously recommended by these social media influencers. This study employed non-probability sampling, in which respondents are selected without equal probability for each member of the population. Furthermore, purposive sampling was also used, where the researcher established specific criteria to determine respondents who align with the study's objectives (Sekaran, 2016; Space, n.d.).

The sample size was determined using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the assistance of AMOS 22. In general, SEM recommends a sample size of 5–10 times the number of indicators. With 29 indicators, the minimum sample size required is in the range of 145–290 respondents to ensure the model is valid and reliable. Of the 325 respondents collected, 290 met the analysis criteria, so this number is in line with the recommended minimum standard (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019).

2.2. Research Instrument Validation Methods

Testing research instruments, including validity and reliability, is a crucial step, especially for variables that cannot be measured directly and require indicators as measurement tools, using AMOS 22 (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019). The instrument validation in this study involved validity and reliability tests. The validity test assesses how accurately the indicators reflect the variables under study, ensuring that the research findings are supported by relevant and reliable data (Sekaran, 2016). Indicators for Social Media Influence, Brand Image, Perceived Value and Purchase Intention were adopted from Munir & Watts (2025), whereas brand image's indicators came from Munir & Watts (2025) and Tung & Vigneron (2024). Finally, five indicators of green skepticism were adopted from Goh, Swee Kwong and Balaji (2016). The validity of each indicator was evaluated using factor analysis, with the aim of comparing the factor loadings from the respondent data ($n = 290$) to the established standards. The factor loading threshold used was 0.35 (Hair & Brunsveld, 2019). Based on the test results, all variables passed the validity test.

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

No	Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
1	Social Media Influencer	0,736	Valid
2	Brand Awareness	0,833	Valid
3	Brand Image	0,907	Valid
4	Perceived Value	0,895	Valid
5	Purchase Intention	0909	Valid
6	Green Skepticism	0,797	Valid

Source: Data analyzed using SEM AMOS 22

Internal reliability tests are used to assess the consistency among indicators in representing the research variable, as well as the uniformity of items within the relevant construct. A reliable matrix indicates stability and supports the validity of the research. A reliability test is considered credible if Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.70 and not credible if it is less than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2020). Table 1 shows that all variables in this study, ranging from Social Media Influencers, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Value, to Purchase Intention and Green Skepticism, are reliable. This is evidenced by an α value greater than 0.70, indicating that the questions have good internal consistency and are therefore capable of establishing the constructs of each variable.

2.3. Data Analysis Methods

This study analyzes data using SEM, a multivariate statistical method capable of assessing complex relationships among variables. SEM combines multiple regression to assess relationships among variables and factor analysis to uncover the latent concepts underlying the measurement of variables. With this approach, researchers can estimate the interactions that influence one another within a single system (Hair et al., 2020). The analysis was conducted using AMOS, which allows for the simultaneous testing of measurement and structural models. Before testing the hypotheses, the model's goodness of fit was assessed to ensure its suitability for use, based on specific evaluation criteria (Hair et al., 2020):

- Absolute Fit Measures.** To assess the Absolute Fit Measures, the overall model fit is evaluated by considering the Probability, Expected Cross-Validation Index (ECVI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA).
- Incremental Fit Measures.** In incremental fit measures, the proposed model is compared with the baseline model, also known as the null model. The criteria used in these measures include the Normal Fit Index (NFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Relative Fit Index (RFI), and the Incremental Fit Index (IFI).
- Parsimonious Fit Measures.** Parsimony fit measures are indicators that assess whether the analyzed model is the simplest form without compromising its quality or performance. These measures can be evaluated using the normalized chi-square statistic (CMIN/DF) and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC).

Table 2. Goodness-of-Fit Test Table

Types of Measurement	Measurement	Value	Recommended Intake Limits	Conclusion
Absolute Fit Measure	P-value	0,000	≥ 0.05	Poor Fit
	GFI	0,852	≥ 0.9 or approaching 1	Marginal Fit
	RMSEA	0,070	$\leq 0,08$	Goodness Fit
Incremental Fit Measure	IFI	0,930	≥ 0.9 or approaching 1	Goodness Fit
	TLI	0,917	≥ 0.9 or approaching 1	Goodness Fit
	CFI	0,930	≥ 0.9 or approaching 1	Goodness Fit
	NFI	0,886	≥ 0.9 or approaching 1	Marginal Fit
	RFI	0,866	≥ 0.9 or approaching 1	Marginal Fit
Parsimonious of Fit	AGFI	0,811	$\leq$ nilai GFI	Goodness Fit
	CMIN/DF	2,410	Arrange 1 to 5	Goodness Fit

Source: Data analyzed using SEM AMOS 22

Based on the Goodness of Fit (GoF) analysis, this model has six indicators of good fit (RMSEA, TLI, CFI, AGFI, CMIN/DF, AIC), three indicators of marginal fit (GFI, NFI, RFI), and one indicator of poor fit (p-value). Since the majority of the results indicate a good fit or near-good fit, this model is deemed suitable for further analysis and hypothesis testing. The path diagram model in this study is presented in the following figure 1.

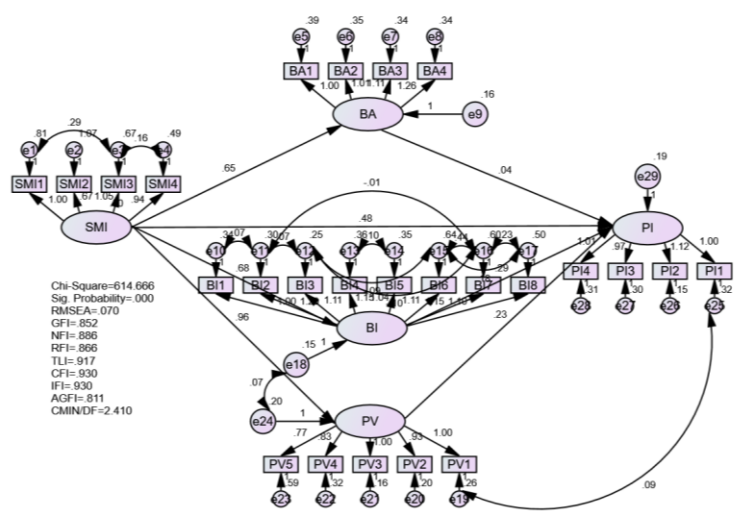


Figure 1. Research Model Framework (Source: Data analyzed using SEM AMOS 22)

The proposed framework in this research is a Parallel Multiple Mediation Model, and the authors assume that Social Media Influencer simultaneously influences Purchase Intention through three mediating variables, which are Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Perceived Value. However, modern adaptation of the Hierarchy-of-Effects theory suggests that in this digital landscape, with the massive use of social media influencer indicates that, establishing brand awareness is usually a prerequisite for developing other consumer perceptions such as brand image, attitude, perceived value, conviction, and brand liking before leading to intention to buy (Chakravarty, R and Sarma, 2022). Driven by this theoretical rationale, we suggest an alternative model using a Serial Mediation Model that puts Brand Awareness as an immediate cognitive response to the Social Media Influencer that triggers affective evaluation, namely Brand Image and Perceived Value, before ultimately leading to the Purchase Intention.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

The eight hypotheses in this study were tested to determine whether there is a positive and significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables, to reject H_0 and accept H_a , in accordance with the methodology (Sekaran, 2016; Space, n.d.)). The decision regarding the test is based on two main criteria: a comparison of the p-value with the alpha level of 0.05 and the estimate value to determine the direction of the effect. The hypothesis is considered supported if the p-value is ≤ 0.05 (indicating a significant relationship) and the estimate is positive (+), indicating a positive direction of influence; conversely, if the p-value is > 0.05 or the estimate is negative (-), then H_0 is accepted and the hypothesis is considered unsupported. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Results of a direct hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Estimate	P-Value	Decision
H1: Social Media Influencer Endorsements Have a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention	0,439	0,000	Supported
H2: Social Media Influencer Endorsements Have a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention Through Brand Awareness	0,024	0,375	Not Supported
H3: Social Media Influencer Endorsements Have a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention Through Brand Image	0,193	0,011	Supported
H4: Social Media Influencer Endorsements Have a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention Through Perceived Value	0,221	0,024	Supported

Source: Data analyzed using SEM AMOS 22

Analysis of the first hypothesis revealed that Social Media Influencer Endorsement has a direct, positive, and significant effect on consumer Purchase Intention (estimate = 0.439; p-value = 0.000). This empirical finding rejects H0 and accepts Ha, confirming the effectiveness of influencers in directly stimulating purchase intention. However, a different phenomenon emerged in the testing of the second hypothesis; the inclusion of Brand Awareness as a mediating variable resulted in a non-significant effect (estimate = 0.024; p-value = 0.375). This indicates that acceptance of H0 is unavoidable, suggesting that merely increasing brand awareness is not strong enough to bridge the influence of endorsements on purchasing decisions.

Conversely, consumer perception dimensions such as brand image and perceived value proved to be far more effective mediating channels. Tests of the third and fourth hypotheses successfully rejected H0 by showing that Brand Image (estimate = 0.193; p-value = 0.011) and Perceived Value (estimate = 0.221; p-value = 0.024) significantly mediate the positive influence of influencer endorsement on Purchase Intention. Based on this comparison, it can be concluded that the influence of influencers on consumer purchase intent will be most effective if the strategies employed can appeal to the emotional aspect, namely, a positive brand image, and emphasize the perceived benefits of the product to consumers. These findings show partial mediation since the direct path from Social Media Influencer to Purchase Intention is still significant alongside Brand Image and Perceived Value, which means that Social Media Influencer can instantly trigger the willingness to buy, but they also reveal subconscious entities of the brand, which are brand image and perceived value, before driving consumers to buy the brand.

Table 4. Results of the Moderation Hypothesis Test

Hipotesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H ₅ Green Skepticism (Low Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention	0,748	0,000	H ₅ is supported
H ₅ Green Skepticism (High Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention	0,438	0,000	
Probability Value Level: 0,037			
Hipotesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H ₆ Green Skepticism (Low Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Brand Awareness	0,404	0,000	H ₆ is supported
H ₆ Green Skepticism (High Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Brand Awareness	0,866	0,000	
Probability Value Level: 0,000			
Hipotesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H ₇ Green Skepticism (Low Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Brand Image	0,623	0,000	H ₇ is supported
H ₇ Green Skepticism (High Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Brand Image	0,318	0,000	
Probability Value Level: 0,000			
Hipotesis	Estimate	p-value	Decision
H ₈ Green Skepticism (Low Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Perceived Value	0,856	0,000	H ₈ is supported
H ₈ Green Skepticism (High Group): moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Perceived Value	0,734	0,000	
Probability Value Level: 0,001			

Source: Data analyzed using SEM AMOS 22

To test hypotheses 5-8, the authors conducted a multi-group moderation analysis by splitting the sample into low green skepticism and high green skepticism groups. All the interaction effects were supported across all hypothesis paths. It means that substantively, consumers' pre-existing skepticism towards a brand's environmental claims can disrupt the effectiveness of social media influencer endorsement on brand awareness, brand image, perceived value, and purchase intention. Brands must neutralize consumers' distrust to harness the potential of social media influencers as their marketing campaign.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Social media Influencer Endorsement Has a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention

The results of this study support the first hypothesis, which states that social media influencer endorsements positively affect purchase intention. This means that the more consumers are willing to buy eco-friendly mineral water because they have been influenced or recommended by social media influencers, and the better they can recall the brand of this mineral water, the more likely they are to purchase it, and the more they want to buy. The more frequently they intend to purchase eco-friendly mineral water products.

This is consistent with research by Veckalne (2025), which finds that the credibility and quality of an influencer's content positively affect purchase intention. This finding is also supported by Ge (2024), who shows that an influencer's authenticity and expertise in conveying product information can increase consumers' purchase intent. Furthermore, Fang (2024) found that influencers' personal appeal and the consistency of promotional messages significantly drive purchase interest. Research by Suryaputra et al. (2024) also demonstrates that recommendations from influencers who are perceived as informative and trustworthy have a positive influence on consumers' willingness to purchase products. In addition, Panopoulos (2023) also emphasizes that the psychological connection and interaction between influencers and their followers enhance the effectiveness of endorsements, thereby increasing purchase intention.

3.2.2. Social Media Influencer Endorsement Has a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention Through Brand Awareness

The results of this study do not support the second hypothesis, which states that social media influencer endorsements have a positive effect on purchase intention through brand awareness. These findings indicate that although influencer endorsements can shape consumers' brand awareness, the resulting increase in brand awareness is not strong enough to drive purchase intent. In other words, consumers can recognize, recall, and understand the characteristics and image of the brand promoted by influencers, but this does not increase their intention to purchase. In the context of green products, consumers may rely heavily on the credibility of the environmental claims of the brand and the trustworthiness of the influencer rather than mere recognition on the brand. It seems that social media influencers do not necessarily boost purchase intention by increasing brand recall or recognition. Furthermore, the environmental claims of a green product is a kind of attribute that is not easy to evaluate before or even after a purchase, so although consumers are familiar with the brand, they tend to depend on external sources such as influencers' recommendations that they trust. Recent research by Sokolova, K and Kefi, H (2020) found that repeated exposure to social media influencers' content increases emotional closeness and psychological attachment as well as perceived friendship that directly influence purchase intention. Using this as rationale and in the context of green products that is difficult to verify the environmental claims of a brand, it is presumed that consumers are more likely to trust the social media influencer than on mere familiarity with the advertised brand.

According to Ki & Kim (2019), the influence of social media influencers tends to work directly in persuading consumers to make purchases, particularly through the psychological mechanism of the desire to mimic, rather than simply introducing or building awareness of a brand. These results indicate that exposure to recommendations from social media influencers can indeed increase consumer recognition and recall of a brand; however, this increase in brand awareness does not automatically lead to the formation of purchase intent. This indicates that the influence of Social Media Influencers is more effective in directly influencing purchase decisions through the psychological drive to imitate (desire to mimic), rather than through the mere process of building brand awareness. Thus, although consumers can recognize and recall the mineral water brand promoted through Influencer content, that level of awareness is not yet strong enough to drive a purchase decision. This finding reinforces the research results that the indirect influence of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness is not significant, meaning that Brand Awareness does not function as a mediating variable as hypothesized.

3.2.3. Social Media Influencer Endorsement Has a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention Through Brand Image

The results of this study support the third hypothesis, which states that Social Media Influencer Endorsement has a positive effect on Purchase Intention through Brand Image. This means that the higher the number of followers and viewers, the greater the positive impact on brand image; the higher the influencer's credibility and appeal in conveying messages; and the greater the visual and narrative appeal displayed in product promotions, the more positive the brand image formed in consumers' perceptions. When consumers perceive a brand as more professional, higher quality, more modern, and more trustworthy as a result of

exposure to content from influencers, their tendency to like, consider, and ultimately intend to purchase products from that brand will increase. Thus, brand image acts as a mediating factor that strengthens the relationship between influencer endorsement and purchase intention.

This is consistent with research conducted by Hermanda (2019), which states that influencer endorsements can create a more positive brand image, thereby increasing consumers' purchase intent. Research by Siahaan (2025) also shows that the better the brand image created through influencer content, the greater its impact on purchase intent. In addition, (Dewi Tamara et al., 2021) found that brand image serves as a significant mediating variable in bridging the influence of influencers on consumer purchase intent, where a strong, consistent, and appealing brand image has a direct impact on increasing purchase intention.

3.2.4. Social Media Influencer Endorsement Has a Positive Effect on Purchase Intention Through Perceived Value

The results of this study support the fourth hypothesis, which states that social media influencer endorsements have a positive effect on purchase intention through perceived value. This means that the more consumers are influenced by recommendations from social media influencers promoting eco-friendly mineral water, the more they perceive the information provided by these influencers as consistent, useful, and an important source of information, which ultimately drives their intention to purchase.

This is consistent with research conducted by Hanifah (2024), which shows that consumers' perceived value increases through exposure to influencer content, thereby driving an increase in purchase intent. Research by Amalia & Nurlinda (2022) also states that Perceived Value is a key mediating factor in the influence of influencers on purchase intent, such that the greater the benefits and convenience perceived by consumers, the stronger the urge to buy. In addition, Lukito & Yustini (2019) found that influencer content deemed relevant, informative, and persuasive can enhance consumers' perception of a product's value, which ultimately contributes significantly to an increase in purchase intention.

3.2.5. Green Skepticism Moderates the Positive Effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsements on Purchase Intention

The results of this study support the fifth hypothesis, which states that Green Skepticism moderates the positive effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Purchase Intention. The influence of Social Media Influencers in recommending eco-friendly brands on consumers' intent to actually purchase them depends on how skeptical those consumers are. This is because when consumers have a low level of Green Skepticism, meaning they do not doubt the sustainability claims made by the Influencer and believe that the product truly offers environmental benefits, the influence of the Influencer's endorsement on purchase intent becomes stronger. Conversely, when consumers have high Green Skepticism and doubt the authenticity of the environmental messages conveyed in the influencer's content, the positive influence of the endorsement on purchase intention weakens because consumers tend to reject, question, or distrust the messages they receive. Thus, Green Skepticism acts as a moderating variable that determines the extent to which the influencer's endorsement can drive purchase intention.

This is consistent with research conducted by Luo (2020), which suggests that consumer skepticism toward eco-friendly claims can reduce the effectiveness of marketing messages conveyed by influencers. This finding is also supported by (Sarairoh, 2023), who states that lower levels of skepticism can strengthen consumers' positive response to environmentally focused promotional content. In addition, Fang (2024) found that Green Skepticism acts as a critical moderating factor in the relationship between marketing communication and purchase intention, such that a lack of trust in environmental claims can reduce the positive influence of influencer endorsements on purchase intention.

3.2.6. Green Skepticism Moderates the Positive Effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Brand Awareness

The results of this study support the sixth hypothesis, which states that Social Media Influencer Endorsement has a positive effect on Brand Awareness, and that this effect is moderated by Green Skepticism. This indicates that the impact of recommendations from Social Media Influencers on consumers' awareness of a brand depends on how skeptical those consumers are.

When consumers have low Green Skepticism, meaning they do not doubt the authenticity of the sustainability claims made by the Influencer, information about the product is easily accepted and processed positively, thereby strengthening the likelihood of Brand Awareness forming. Conversely, when consumers have high Green Skepticism and tend to doubt the validity of eco-friendly claims, they will perceive the Influencer's message as less credible or even potentially as "greenwashing," thereby weakening the Influencer's effectiveness in building Brand Awareness.

This finding is consistent with the research of Ktisti (2022), which states that the effectiveness of green advertising on social media is heavily influenced by consumer trust in environmental claims. They found that skepticism toward green messages can reduce attention, hinder consumers' cognitive processing of the brand, and lower the likelihood of strong brand awareness forming.

3.2.7. Green Skepticism Moderates the Positive Effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on Brand Image

The results of this study support the seventh hypothesis, which states that Social Media Influencer Endorsement has a positive effect on Brand Image, with Green Skepticism acting as a moderating variable. This indicates that the influence of recommendations from Social Media Influencers on a brand's image in the eyes of consumers depends on how skeptical those consumers are.

For consumers with low levels of skepticism, messages from influencers emphasizing sustainability are received positively and can reinforce the brand's image as ethical, modern, and responsible. Conversely, among consumers with high skepticism, sustainability claims are often viewed as exaggerated, questionable, or even not entirely true, thereby hindering the formation of a positive brand image. This situation causes the influencer's message to lose its persuasive effect, and the brand image fails to form optimally.

Research by de Sio (2022) supports this finding by showing that skepticism toward green advertising can reduce consumer trust in sustainability claims. When trust declines, consumers become less receptive to marketing messages, thereby diminishing the brand image that should be built through green communication strategies.

3.2.8. Green Skepticism Moderates the Positive Effect of Social Media Influencer Endorsements on Perceived Value

The results of this study support the eighth hypothesis, which states that Social Media Influencer Endorsement has a positive effect on Perceived Value and that this effect is moderated by Green Skepticism. This indicates that the influence of eco-friendly brand recommendations from Social Media Influencers on consumers' perceptions of such information (whether they view it as useful or not) depends on how skeptical the consumers are.

If consumers have low skepticism, they will accept eco-friendly claims as an added value and assess the product as more beneficial, more valuable, and more worth buying. Conversely, consumers with high skepticism tend to lower their expectations regarding the product's environmental benefits and view the claims as not entirely accurate, resulting in a lower perceived value even when the information is conveyed by an Influencer.

These findings align with previous research by Wang & Li (2022), which emphasizes that consumers' perceptions of the quality, clarity, and authenticity of green information are key determinants of their response. When consumers doubt the quality of the information or suspect exaggeration in environmental claims, Perceived Value does not increase, even if the message is packaged appealingly or delivered by a trusted influencer.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it is concluded that Social Media Influencer Endorsement has a direct positive effect on Purchase Intention, as well as an indirect effect mediated by Brand Image and Perceived Value. However, Brand Awareness was found to be unable to positively mediate this relationship. On the other hand, Green Skepticism was found to significantly moderate the positive influence of Social Media Influencer Endorsement on all main variables, including Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Value, and Purchase Intention itself.

When it comes to selecting social media influencers, brands need to find people who are genuinely authentic, credible, and tied to sustainability. Management can trace the social media influencers' timeline, such as their engagement with their followers to ensure that they do not just post environmental issues as a trend, but they are consistent in promoting pro-environmental behavior. Brands can also build collaboration with public figures or social media influencers who consistently show their green living and advocate sustainable consumption. When these people's daily lifestyles align with sustainability issues, instead of developing short-term contracts with these public figures, management can build long-term brand ambassadorship. Using environmental experts or dedicated activists as influencers can also become another strategy for the brand. In the end, brand managers need to invest time in a rigorous curation process to find social media influencers who are credible, have proven track records, and connect genuinely with sustainability.

To keep the environmental messages aligned, brands must guide influencer partners. The guidance should consist of the brand's core values, its sustainability goals, and the boundaries about environmental claims that influencers are allowed to make in their generated content so they remain focused and informative regarding the brand's pro-environmental identity.

This study focuses solely on the eco-friendly beverage category; therefore, the results may not necessarily apply to other eco-friendly products such as green cosmetics, eco-friendly cleaning products, or sustainable fashion. Each product category has distinct market characteristics, emotional motivations, and levels of consumer engagement, necessitating further research in other categories. This study focused on Purchase Intention as the outcome variable, which may not reflect consumers' real action. Future studies should examine actual buying behavior to confirm whether consumers really buy the environmentally friendly product endorsed

by social media influencers. Additionally, this study uses six variables, namely Social Media Influencers, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention, and Green Skepticism. Although these six variables are considered relevant in explaining consumer behavior toward eco-friendly products, there is still a possibility that other variables also influence purchase intention, such as brand trust, perceived authenticity, and attitude toward green products. Thus, future research could explore variations in product categories, adopt a longitudinal approach, and include additional variables such as trust and environmental concern.

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