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Green Influencer Marketing: The Impact of Eco-Label, Environmental Concern, and Credibility on Purchase Behavior

Khatesiree Sripoothorn[1*] and Rattana Sittioum[2]

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Abstract

This study explores how eco-labels and consumer environmental concerns affect consumer green purchase behavior, with a focus on the role of social media influencer credibility as a moderator. The study model is grounded in the theories of reasoned action and stimulus- organism- response, which explain how consumers respond to stimuli. The data was collected through a mall intercept survey located in three significant economic areas of Bangkok, Thailand, with the participation of 5 2 0 representative consumers. The collected data were analyzed using advanced statistical techniques, including structural equation modeling (SEM) and the PROCESS macro for moderation analysis. The study findings show that eco- labels and consumer environmental concerns have an impact on consumer purchase behavior through a green attitude. This study utilized the credibility of social media influencers to enhance the effectiveness of moderator roles for sustainable marketing initiatives. This marketing approach is suitable for modern digital consumers due to their preference for online content and influencer recommendations. The study results will assist eco- friendly businesses in developing customized advertising strategies to target environmentally conscious consumers. Moreover, it plays a crucial role in safeguarding the global ecosystem by promoting environmentally responsible consumer behavior.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Influencer Credibility, Social Media Marketing, Eco-labels, Environmental Concern

Introduction

Consumer interest in ecosystem sustainability has surged as a result of an increase in environmental catastrophes such as hurricanes, wildfires, and floods. The growing interest in this topic has resulted in a shift towards enterprises that prioritize environmental sustainability, use sustainable manufacturing practices, and offer eco-friendly products (De Silva et al., 2021; Siddiqui et al., 2022; Yuan et al., 2022)

Thailand also attended the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP28) in Dubai. The Thai

[1] Ph.D., Independent Scholar

[2] Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Faculty of Management Science, Pibulsongkram Rajabhat University

* Corresponding author: E-mail: khatesiree.s@psru.ac.th

government is open to receiving financial, technological, and scholarly assistance for climate change management and adaptation. Additionally, the government is modernizing the agricultural sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure consistent food availability. The objective of this collaboration is to attain climate change mitigation and environmental advantages (Nation, 2023). The present circumstances indicate substantial prospects for expansion in the eco-friendly sector in Thailand. Enterprises are implementing environmentally sustainable practices in order to adhere to sustainability regulations and fulfill their societal responsibilities. This involves offering eco-friendly products and services to their customers (De Silva et al., 2021).

Eco-friendly products are gaining attention for their nutritional balance, low carbon emissions, and minimal impact on land and water resources. For example, studies have shown that these products have a nutritional balance that benefits consumers' health, emit significantly lower carbon emissions than traditional products, and have minimal impact on precious land and water resources (Hedin et al., 2019; Rini et al., 2024). An eco-label, which serves as a sign to assist consumers in recognizing environmentally friendly products that have been recognized by the appropriate authorities, is usually seen on the product label. Simultaneously, it possesses a marketing advantage that can persuade consumers to make a purchase and impact their environmental attitude (Kumar & Basu, 2023). Furthermore, consumers' environmental concerns also play an important role in determining their attitudes and intentions (Wang & Scrimgeour, 2023).

Since the emergence of marketing 4.0, social media has emerged as a crucial platform for communication. Additionally, it serves as a marketing platform with the potential to reach a substantial customer base (Kotler et al., 2021). Influencer marketing significantly influences media viewers to conform. Nevertheless, in order to achieve success in this particular marketing strategy, it is imperative to depend on the influencer's credibility (Rodrigo & Mendis, 2023).

Plant-based alternatives provide a nutritious protein source with health benefits (Nezlek et al., 2023), unlike unsustainable livestock farming that leads to greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and resource depletion (Sestino et al., 2023). To promote long-term sustainability, dietary guidelines focus on reducing animal consumption to accommodate the projected global population by 2050. Retail markets are introducing various meat substitutes such as burgers, sausages, and meatballs to tackle food sustainability concerns (Verain & Dagevos, 2022). These products aim to replicate the taste and texture of traditional meat. Marketers need to take into account environmental factors and customer preferences, particularly within the green food sector (Mishra & Kaur, 2023).

However, there is a lack of studies that specifically investigate the relationship between green marketing and meat alternatives in urban areas, which have a stronger

influence on green marketing compared to rural regions (Panigrahi, 2015). It is important to study social media influencers to understand how their reputation impacts environmentally conscious buying habits and eco-friendly consumer behavior (Ladhari et al., 2019). Social media platforms affect customers' buying decisions by sharing updates on food trends, eco-friendly products, and creative recipes. Effective communication skills are necessary to bridge the gap between the product's advantages and the consumer's needs.

Furthermore, influencers should possess the capacity to effectively inspire viewers to generate ideas that lead to tangible actions. Hence, the study investigates the deficiencies identified in the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Theory of Stimulus-Organism-Response, Social Identity Theory, and the Source Credibility Model. The study aims to investigate the following research questions in a comprehensive approach:

Research Question 1: Do environmental concern and eco-labels significantly influence green attitudes?

Research Question 2: Do environmental concern, eco-labels, and green attitudes significantly influence green purchase intention?

Research Question 3: Does green purchase intention influence green purchase behavior?

Research Question 4: Do green attitudes significantly mediate green consumption in terms of environmental concern and intention?

Research Question 5: Do green attitudes significantly mediate green consumption in terms of eco-labeling and intentions?

Research Question 6: How does social media influencer credibility significantly and positively moderate the effect of green purchase intention on green purchase behavior?

Objectives

1. To investigates the impact of eco-labels, environmental concerns, green attitude, green purchase intention, and social media influencer credibility on green purchase behavior.

2. To determine the importance of the role of social media influencer credibility as a moderator.

Literature review and hypothesis development

1. Theory of reasoned action and theory of stimulus-organism-response

The Theory of Reasoned Action, was developed by psychologists Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975), also referred to as the Theory of Planned Behavior, is a cognitive framework that aids psychologists in understanding human behavior within specific contexts by considering attitudes and subjective norms. The

Theory of Reasoned Action has been extensively utilized to forecast and clarify diverse health habits (LaCaille et al., 2020) and green purchasing behaviors (Vu et al., 2022). The theories about the prediction of certain behaviors place significant emphasis on the function of intention. Green purchases and behavior are influenced by attitudes towards green purchasing, societal norms, and perceived behavior control or self- efficacy. However, the most significant influence on the intention to purchase sustainable items is exhibited by attitudes towards green products (Lin & Shi, 2022). Attitudes have a crucial role in green purchasing behavior. Consumers, who are at the center of decision-making, may face uncertainty and other obstacles due to the overwhelming amount of product information available (Amoako et al., 2020). There is a significant lack of study regarding the relationship between attitudes and intentions in sustainable consumer behavior (ElHaffar et al., 2020; Gidaković et al., 2024)

The stimulus- organism- response framework, which was first proposed by Thorndike and includes the rule of effect, is also known as the stimulus-response (S-R) theory (Thorndike, 1898). It says that behaviors that lead to good outcomes are more likely to persist and be triggered by similar stimuli (S) (Sultan et al., 2021). Mehrabian and Russell established the paradigm in 1974, which serves as a fundamental premise in the theory of environmental psychology, extending its application to the fields of organizational behavior and leadership research (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The stimulus-organism-response model identifies three elements: stimulus, organism, and response, which influence an individual's internal emotions, behavior, and decision-making process (Sugiarto et al., 2022).

2. The gap in attitude, intention, and behavior in sustainable consumption

Urban consumers in Thailand are increasingly prioritizing green products due to the growing popularity of environmentally- friendly practices. Additionally, more favorable government policies, global trade expansion, and technological advancements can link to the decrease in obstacles to purchasing green items. Therefore, the possibility of participating in environmentally friendly actions is increasingly dependent on an individual's viewpoints and their positive or negative attitudes towards purchasing green products. Using the Theory of Reasoned Action, researchers must understand the factors that reduce obstacles to the intention and behavior of purchasing green products. This study is based on the Theory of Reasoned Action, with a focus on the connection between attitudes towards environmental sustainability, the desire to purchase eco-friendly products, and actual eco-friendly purchase behavior.

This study examines the relationship between variables using the Theory of Reasoned Action. It suggests that customer views towards sustainability impact their intention and behavior to buy environmentally friendly items, including plant-based meat substitutes. The Theory of Reasoned Action suggests that an individual's inclination to buy environmentally friendly items stems from their green attitude, which includes

beliefs about the significance of environmental conservation and the benefits of these products. Individuals with favorable views towards environmentally-friendly items are more inclined to develop a heightened desire and intention to acquire them (Duong, 2023; Mishra & Kaur, 2023). Thus, in this context, intentions serve as reliable indicators of future expenditures and conduct (Ajzen, 1991; Tandon et al., 2020). For this study, we have decided to focus on one of the two closest causes of behavioral intention in the Theory of Reasoned Action. We anticipate that there will be a comparable connection between attitudes towards environmental sustainability, the intention to purchase green products, and actual green purchasing behaviors. We will retest this connection based on the following hypotheses:

H1: Green attitudes are positively associated with green purchasing intentions.

H2: Green purchasing intention and green purchase behavior have a positive relationship.

3. The eco-labels-attitudes-intention gap in green consumption

The study explores the influence of environmental concerns and eco-labels on consumers' intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products, utilizing the stimulus-organism-response hypothesis (Panopoulos et al., 2023). This sector pertains to the dynamic motivations, emotional states, subjective experiences, and mental processes of people. According to the stimulus-organism-Response model, the first stage in influencing an individual's green conduct is the presence of a green intention, which follows a stimulus. Moreover, a person's educational experiences, including both formal schooling and self-formed ideas and values, unquestionably have an impact on their consciousness, intentions, attitudes, perceptions, and cognition (Hoang Yen & Hoang, 2023).

Despite the frequent use of the stimulus-organism-Response paradigm in traditional marketing and consumer behavior research, its application to green and organic products remains limited (Sultan et al., 2021). In addition, a previous study suggests that eco-labels have a beneficial influence on attitudes (Kumar & Basu, 2023; Sultan et al., 2021) and purchase intentions (Kumar & Basu, 2023; Panopoulos et al., 2023; Yildiz et al., 2023). Likewise, environmental concern has a beneficial impact on attitudes (Lavuri et al., 2023; Wang & Scrimgeour, 2023) as well as their intentions to make purchases (Mishra & Kaur, 2023; Rashid & Lone, 2023; Wang & Scrimgeour, 2023). The abundance of environmental stimuli may account for the scarcity of research in this field, necessitating an investigation into the impact of eco-labels on customers' environmentally friendly purchases. Formally speaking, we can formulate our hypotheses as follows:

H3: Eco-labels have a positive correlation with green attitudes.

H4: Eco-labels positively correlate with green purchase intentions.

H5: Environmental concern positively correlates with green attitudes.

H6: Environmental concern positively correlates with green purchase intentions.

4. A green attitude as a mediator

Considering green consumption as a logical cognitive process, we can view green purchasing behavior as the final step, with attitudes towards green products and intents to make green purchases considered essential stages (Sun et al., 2022). Positioning the green attitude as a mediator is consistent with the stimulus-organism-response theory, which explains how stimuli influence attitudes and then drive intentions. These triggers might originate from both external and internal influences. Furthermore, prior research has examined the effect of stimuli on attitudes and their subsequent effects on consumer intention. Every study endeavor includes many stimuli, such as commercials or real environmental situations, that influence client perceptions and, consequently, their intentions (Duong, 2022; Lavuri et al., 2023). Recent research indicates that eco-labels have a dual impact on consumer behavior. They not only directly alter attitudes toward environmentally friendly items, but also have both direct and indirect effects on the intention to purchase such products (Kumar & Basu, 2023). In the same way, the level of care for the environment has both a direct and indirect influence on individuals' views towards environmentally friendly items, as well as their intentions to make green purchases (Hoang Yen & Hoang, 2023). Hence, both eco-labels and environmental concerns have a significant influence on green attitudes, resulting in a large impact on intentions to make environmentally friendly purchases.

The study found that green attitudes mediate two connections: the correlation between eco-labels and environmentally friendly purchase intention. This connection also applies to the relationship between environmental concern and the desire to make environmentally friendly purchase intention. Prior studies have shown that green attitudes can act as a mediator between other factors, such as subjective standards and perceived behaviour control, as well as the desire to make environmentally friendly purchases (Lavuri et al., 2023), attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise (Kareem (Kareem & Venugopal, 2023), as well as green product awareness (Wong & Tzeng, 2021).

Furthermore, empirical evidence supports the notion that eco- labels, environmental concerns, and green attitudes are strong predictors of green purchase intention. This indicates that green attitudes play a mediating role in the relationship between eco-labels and green purchase intention, as well as between environmental concern and green purchase intention (Kumar & Basu, 2023; Mishra & Kaur, 2023). The presence of eco-labels and environmental concerns among urban Thai customers may influence their desire for green purchases, potentially enhancing their actual green purchasing habits. Therefore, it is reasonable to set up the following hypotheses:

H7: Green attitude significantly mediates the relationship between eco-labels and green purchase intention.

H8: Green attitude significantly mediates the relationship between environmental concern and green purchase intention.

5. Social identity theory and source credibility model with social media influencer credibility as a moderator

Social Identity Theory explains intergroup relationships and social self, highlighting the connection between social categorization and an individual's social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It suggests individuals classify identities to reduce social ambiguity and enhance self-esteem (McGowan et al., 2022). Personal and social identities have significant impacts on in-group and out-group behaviors. Personal identity refers to the distinct categorization of oneself, while social identity determines the position an individual takes within a social group. Businesses have adopted the practice of tailoring products and marketing messages to match consumer personas (Lei et al., 2021). However, specific contexts influence the variations in identity-based purchases, which the theory fails to adequately explain.

The current literature lacks a comprehensive understanding of source credibility due to numerous dimensions. Wiedmann and von Mettenheim's Source Credibility Model addresses this by focusing on attractiveness, trustworthiness, and knowledge as key factors, ensuring information dependability and validity (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2021). Attractiveness also has a substantial impact on shaping favorable sentiments. However, empirical research provides conflicting results on the influence of these factors. Jin et al. (2021) suggest that we can expand and adapt the Source Credibility Model to accommodate a variety of communicators and products.

The study suggests using the Source Credibility Model to analyze social media influencers' influence on environmentally friendly purchasing behavior, focusing on attractiveness, trustworthiness, and knowledge, and highlighting the effectiveness of customized advertisements (McGowan et al., 2022). In order to do this, firms have resorted to using social media platforms for marketing purposes, given their extensive usage. Nevertheless, conventional mass advertising efforts on social media may not consistently produce the expected outcomes, given the varied interests and preferences of social media users (Kapoor et al., 2021). As a result, firms utilize social media celebrities to share their opinions, experiences, and judgments, establishing customer connections and effectively advertising products that align with their individual personalities (Wang & Liu, 2023).

The success of selecting social media influencers for advertising endorsements depends on their alignment with the recommended products and target audience, with fan following size, experience, beauty, trustworthiness, and personalities having an impact (Rodrigo & Mendis, 2023). Ohanian's Source Credibility Model assesses product

endorser effectiveness by analyzing credibility elements like safety, credentials, dynamism, authoritativeness, objectivity, likability, and character, which impact audience persuasion (Ohanian, 2013). Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H9: Social media influencer credibility positively moderates the impact of green purchase intention on green purchase behavior.

The hypotheses are illustrated in Figure 1

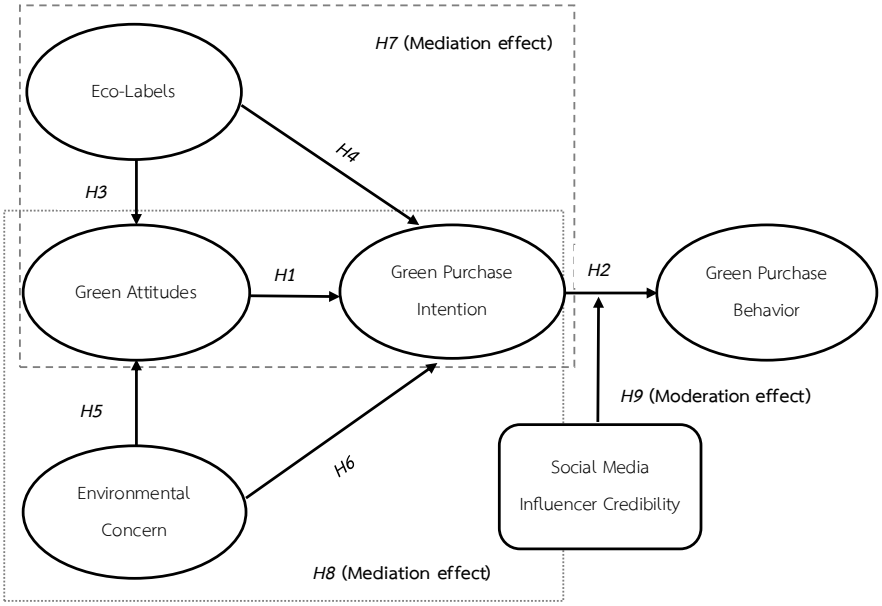

Figure 1 Research Framework

Methodology

1. Sample procedures and data collection

This research population consists of consumers who live in urban areas of Thailand. Consumers aged 18 and over living in urban areas of Thailand were the sample for this research. In research sampling, we have employed the non-probability sampling technique, which involves selecting a sample group where the probability of each unit being chosen is undetermined. The chosen sample is non-random, thereby preventing us from estimating the variability resulting from random sampling. We have employed a purposive sampling technique.

In order to examine the proposed framework and verify the assumptions, a survey was conducted in three strategically important urban regions: the Phra Nakhon region, Thonburi region, and the central business district (CBD) and downtown area. Inner Bangkok, Thailand is comprised of 21 districts, namely Phra Nakhon, Pom Prap Sattru Phai, Samphanthawong, Dusit, Thonburi, Khlong San, Bangkok Noi, Bangkok Yai, Phayathai, Ratchathewi, Pathumwan, Wattana, Khlong Toei, Bang Rak, Sathorn, Yannawa, Bang Kho Laem, Bang Sue, Huai Khwang, Chatuchak, and Din Daeng. In these regions, people lead urban lifestyles and encounter significant environmental challenges such as

air and water pollution, as well as hazardous waste disposal (Edelman, 2022). These customers are well educated and have a strong understanding of environmental concerns. They provide precise information throughout data collecting (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023).

The data gathering period extended from September to October 2023 and encompassed a mall- intercept survey administered by a team of five surveyors. Participants were thoroughly informed about the study's goals, which focused on ensuring confidentiality and excluding any commercial intentions. A total of 520 surveys were distributed to customers, covering six categories and comprising 26 questions. The sample size of 520 was determined based on recommendations by Hair et al. (2010) to apply the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) model (26*20=520). Table 1 presents the demographic information of the respondents.

2. Scales and questionnaire construction

The measurement scales in this analysis were adapted from previous studies, with slight modifications to ensure their relevance to our specific research context. The research instrument had measures pertaining to six variables: environmental concern, green attitude, eco-label, green product purchase intention, green purchasing behavior, and social media influencer credibility. A five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used in this research. Research by Wang and Scrimgeour (2023), and Yildiz et al. (2023) influenced the assessment of environmental concern. Research by Duong (2023), and Kumar and Basu (2023) contributed to the assessment of green attitude. The eco-label scale was from Kumar and Basu (2023), and the green product purchase intention assessment drew from studies by Duong (2023), Kumar and Basu (2023), and Lavuri et al. (2023).

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Consumers

		(*N* = 520)		
Variable		**F**	**%**	**CF**
Gender	Male	110	21.2	21.2
	Female	410	78.8	100.0
Age	18-25 years	286	55.0	55.0
	26-35 years	133	25.6	80.6
	36-45 years	33	6.3	86.9
	46-55 years	30	5.8	92.7
	56 years and above	38	7.3	100.0
Education	Below bachelor's degree	297	57.1	57.1
	Bachelor's degree	211	40.6	97.7
	Above bachelor's degree	12	2.3	100.0
Monthly income (in Thai baht)	Below 15,000 baht	318	61.2	61.2
	15,001-25,000 baht	93	17.9	79.0
	25,001-35,000 baht	39	7.5	86.5
	35,001-45,000 baht	28	5.4	91.9
	45,001 baht and above	42	8.1	100.0

Notes: *N*=520, 1 USD = 34.94 THB (exchange rate on 4 December 2023)
Source(s): The author's elaborations based on the researched data

The assessment of green purchasing behavior was based on studies by Duong (2023). The scale for social media influencer credibility was developed based on studies by Wiedmann and von Mettenheim (2021). The selected products were confirmed to be suitable for an economic context, particularly in Thailand. The appendix contains a detailed presentation of the questionnaire items.

Analysis and Results

1. Descriptive statistics and common method bias (CMB)

The analysis of descriptive statistics showed that the average and variability of the six variables across the 25 items were higher than 2.80, suggesting a significant correlation across the six factor assessment questions. All six factor evaluation items received positive feedback, as evidenced by their standard deviations. In order to evaluate the presence of common technique bias in the dataset, we utilized the Harman single-factor test. The results showed that one factor explained 47.808% of the overall variation, suggesting the absence of common dataset bias issues. More precisely, the study discovered that the variance was below 50 percent, in accordance with the recommendation of Podsakoff et al. (2003).

2. The measurement model

Before analyzing the measurement model, we evaluated the kurtosis and skewness coefficients for the items in the six constructs: environmental concern, green attitude, eco-labels, green purchasing intention, green purchasing behavior, and social media influencer credibility. The skewness values were all below |3|, and the kurtosis values were all below |8|, suggesting that the data distribution is satisfactory. Our research confirmed that the constructs follow a normal distribution, as supported by other studies (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

The analysis used AMOS for confirmatory factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha to evaluate the consistency and discriminant validity of the constructs. The factor loading study showed that EVC5 had a loading of 0.37. This loading value of 0.37 is below the recommended threshold of 0.5, as indicated by Hair et al. (2014). As a result of the low factor loading, this item was excluded from the environmental concern scale.

Additionally, the results of the measurement model demonstrated a high degree of fit indices: $\chi^2(254) = 703.184$; $\chi^2/df = 2.768$; $p < 0.001$; GFI = 0.903 > 0.9; AGFI = 0.876 > 0.8; CFI = 0.963 > 0.9; TLI = 0. 956>0.9; NFI = 0.943>0.9 and RMSEA = 0.058 < 0.08 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Cronbach's alpha, AVE, and CR for the constructs were significantly higher than the cut-off values of 0.63, 0.5, and 0.7, respectively, as recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999), indicating scale reliability and validity (Table 2).

3. Structural model: hypotheses results

The structural model was developed by incorporating the estimations derived from the measurement model. This model depicts the interconnections between latent and conceptual variables. The results indicate that the indices most relevant to the proposed model and sample data are within an acceptable range. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) produces the subsequent fit indices: The results of the analysis are as follows: $\chi^2(150) = 173.243$; $\chi^2/df = 1.155$; $p = 0.094$; GFI = 0.971 > 0.9; AGFI = 0.951 > 0.8; CFI = 0.998 > 0.9; TLI = 0. 996>0.9; NFI = 0.983>0.9 and RMSEA = 0.017 < 0.08 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 2 Results of Reliability and Validity

Measurement and Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE	Cronbach Alpha
Social Media Influencer Credibility		0.935	0.828	0.935
SI1	0.93			
SI2	0.90			
SI3	0.90			
Environmental Concern		0.895	0.681	0.895
EV1	0.74			
EV2	0.88			
EV3	0.90			
EV4	0.77			
Eco-Labels		0.925	0.713	0.926
EL1	0.84			
EL2	0.86			
EL3	0.86			
EL4	0.82			
EL5	0.84			
Green Attitudes		0.904	0.703	0.903
GA1	0.81			
GA2	0.88			
GA3	0.86			
GA4	0.80			
Green Purchase Intention		0.915	0.683	0.914
GI1	0.83			
GI2	0.86			
GI3	0.82			
GI4	0.82			
GI5	0.80			
Green Purchase Behavior		0.906	0.707	0.903
GB1	0.82			
GB2	0.89			
GB3	0.87			
GB4	0.78			

Source(s): The author's elaborations based on the researched data

The path analysis results show that most of the hypotheses (H1 to H6) were accepted with significance levels of $p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.05$, except for H4 (ELB ⟶ GPI; $\beta = 0.107$; $p > 0.001$) and H6 (EVC ⟶ GPI; $\beta = 0.051$; $p > 0.001$) in the current integrated paradigm of behavioral research. Significantly, a study revealed that having favorable views towards environmental sustainability had a strong impact on the intention to make green purchases (H1: $\beta = 0.308$; $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, the intention to make green purchases had a considerable influence on actual green purchasing behavior (H2: β =

0.995; $p < 0.001$). The study found that eco-labels had a positive effect on green attitudes (H3: $\beta = 0.306$; $p < 0.001$) but did not have a similar influence on green purchase intentions (H4: $\beta = 0.107$; $p > 0.001$). In addition, the study found that environmental concern had a substantial positive impact on green attitudes (H5: $\beta = 0.556$; $p < 0.001$). However, it did not have a significant effect on green purchasing intentions (H6: $\beta = 0.051$; $p > 0.001$) (Table 3, Figure 2).

Table 3 Hypotheses Results

Hypotheses	Research question	Path	Estimate	CR	Supported
H1	RQ2	GAT→GPI	0.308***	4.339	Yes
H2	RQ3	GPI→GPB	0.995***	20.958	Yes
H3	RQ1	ELB→GAT	0.306***	5.914	Yes
H4	RQ2	ELB→GPI	0.107	2.034	No
H5	RQ1	EVC→GAT	0.556***	10.167	Yes
H6	RQ2	EVC→GPI	0.051	0.740	No

Note(s): ***($p<0.001$); *($p<0.05$)

Source: The author's elaborations based on the researched data

The explanatory power of the dependent variables is elucidated as follows: 72.9% for GAT, 29.8% for GPI and 90.5% for GPB. Significantly, both EVC (environmental concern) and ELB (eco-labels) had a notable impact on individuals' green attitude, which in turn increased their intentions to make green purchases. Moreover, the inclination to make environmentally friendly purchases was found to be a strong indicator of green purchasing behavior.

4. Mediation analysis

To thoroughly analyze the importance of indirect effects, a bootstrapping technique was used. This technique involved generating 5,000 fixed bootstrap samples and employing Model 4 in the Macro PROCESS program developed by Hayes (2018).

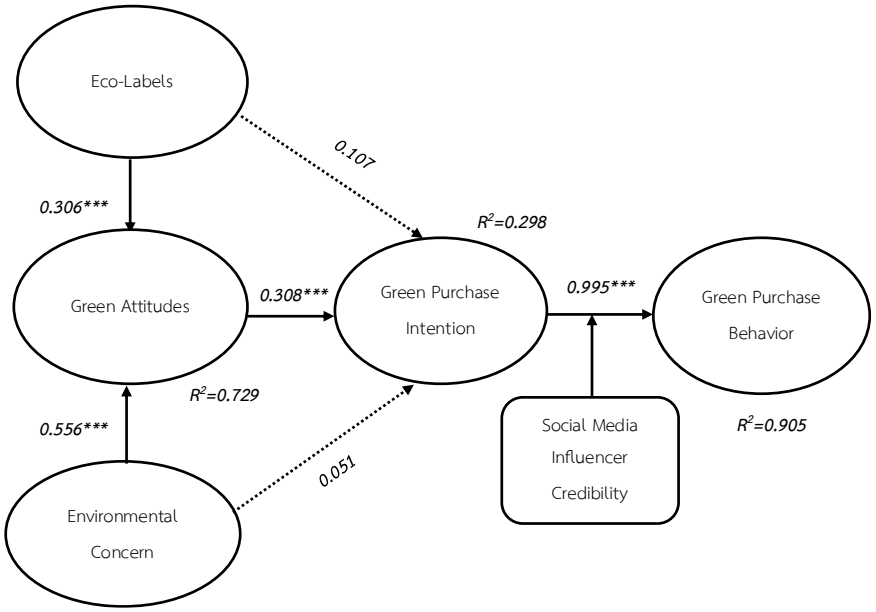

Figure 2 Hypotheses Results

The results in Table 4 show that the green attitude partially mediated the relationship between EVC and GPI, confirming hypothesis 7 (effect = 0.173, $p < 0.01$).

Table 4 Results of Mediation Analysis

	Mediation paths	Indirect effects	LLCI	ULCI	p-value	Mediation
H7 RQ4	EVC⟶GAT⟶GPI (VAF = 39.22%)	0.173	0.175	0.361	<0.01	Partial
H8 RQ5	ELB⟶GAT⟶GPI (VAF = 59.28%)	0.217	0.062	0.236	<0.01	Partial

Source(s): The author's elaborations based on the researched data

Note: EVC= Environmental concern, GAT= Green attitude, GPI= Green purchase intention, and ELB=Eco-labels

In addition, hypothesis 8 is confirmed, indicating a significant partially mediated influence of green attitude on the relationship between ELB and GPI (effect = 0.217, $p < 0.01$). The study used the Variance Accounted Factor (VAF) to demonstrate partial mediation. The VAF values for EVC on GPI and ELB on GPI were 39.22% and 59.28%, respectively, according to Hair et al. (2014).

5. Moderation analysis

In relation to the influence of moderation, Model 1 in the PROCESS macro was utilized to examine the moderating impacts of GPI and GPB on the moderation effect of SIC. The analysis entailed resampling the effects 5,000 times using bootstrapping, which resulted in the creation of interaction terms and their related 95% confidence intervals (Hayes, 2018). The three components of GPI, SIC, and GPB were subjected to standardization, and the values of the interaction variable were subsequently calculated

and verified using the criteria established by Sharma et al. (1981) Significantly, SIC played a role as a quasi-moderator in the relationship between GPI and GPB, as indicated by the statistical analysis (H5: β = -0.032; $p < 0.05$) (Table 5).

Table 5 Results of Moderation Analysis

		B	se	*t*	*P*	LLCI	ULCI	Moderation
H9 and RQ6	GPI*SIC→GPB	-0.032	0.014	-2.346	0.019	-0.059	-0.005	Yes
Conditional effect analysis at the values of moderator								
GPI→GPB (SIC as moderator)								
SIC	**Effect**	**se**		***t***	***P***	**LLCI**		**ULCI**
Low	0.494	0.031		15.948	0.000	0.433		0.555
Medium	0.460	0.032		14.482	0.000	0.398		0.523
High	0.429	0.038		11.416	0.000	0.356		0.503

Source(s): The author's elaborations based on the researched data

Note: GPI=Green purchase intention, SIC= Social media influencer credibility, and GPB= Green purchase behavior

Discussion

Internationally, especially in Thailand, increased environmental consciousness has resulted in the rise of eco-friendly enterprises and favorable government regulations. This study provides substantial contributions in multiple crucial domains:

1. Importance of Consumers' Green Attitudes: This research demonstrates the crucial role of consumers' green attitudes, showing how these attitudes can lead to purchasing intentions and environmentally friendly purchasing behaviors.

2. Filling Knowledge Gaps on Triggers: The study fills the existing knowledge gap by highlighting the effectiveness of eco-labels and environmental concerns in triggering green attitudes.

3. Supporting the Theory of Planned Behavior: The findings reinforce the importance of the Theory of Planned Behavior by showing that induced green attitudes can lead to environmentally friendly purchasing behaviors.

4. Supporting the Stimulus-Organism-Response Theory: The study's findings revealed that the two stimuli used influenced the motivation to adopt a green attitude.

5. Practical Applications: These research findings can be applied to marketing strategies, helping to effectively promote environmentally friendly products.

This study utilizes the Theory of Reasoned Action to investigate the interaction of crucial elements that affect customer purchasing behavior for ecologically friendly items, notably meat alternatives. The results confirm a direct correlation between green attitudes and the green purchases intention (H1), and subsequently, a beneficial influence of these green purchase intentions on green purchasing behavior (H2). The

findings align with previous studies (Lin & Shi, 2022; Xu et al., 2022), highlighting the significance of attitudes in shaping sustainable buying habits. The attitude component "AT2: I think that purchasing a meat substitute and an environmentally friendly product is important" is particularly important within the ATT construct. It reflects a shared global perspective on the significance of plant-based, ecologically friendly alternatives for preserving the environment.

The study utilizes the Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm to examine the impact of eco-labels and environmental concern on individuals' green views. Although eco-labels have a beneficial effect on green attitudes (H3), as shown by earlier research (Kumar & Basu, 2023; Sultan et al., 2021), they do not have a substantial direct impact on intentions to make green purchases (H4), which contradicts the findings of Dekhili and Nguyen (2021). In addition, the issue of environmental concern has a beneficial impact on green attitudes (H5), which is consistent with the findings of Lavuri et al. (2023), and Wang and Scrimgeour (2023). However, it has been discovered that environmental concern does not significantly influence green purchase intentions (H6), in contrast to the research by Kim and Lee (2023). The results suggest that green attitudes may act as an intermediary in the relationship between eco-labels and green purchasing intention (H7), which aligns with the findings of Kumar and Basu (2023). Furthermore, green attitudes act as a partial mediator in linking environmental concern to green purchase intentions (H8), as demonstrated by Mishra and Kaur (2023). The study emphasizes that eco-labeling and environmental concern contribute to shaping a pro-environmental mindset but do not directly lead to the intention to make green purchases. In order to develop a deeper comprehension of green consumption, the study identifies crucial factors that influence the use of Eco-Labels (Elbarky et al.). It emphasizes the importance of factors like how eco-labels inform about brands with desired eco-friendly traits (EL2) and act as a valuable source of information on environmentally friendly products (EL3). These findings indicate that consumers view eco-labels as signs of ecologically favorable items, with environmental concerns seen as linked to stability in their life.

Furthermore, the study's incorporation of Social Identity Theory and Source Credibility Model is very pertinent in the field of digital marketing, as it improves marketing effectiveness and encourages the acceptance of alternative meat as an environmentally friendly product. The results of the moderation analysis show that the credibility of social media influencers moderates the connection between green purchase intentions and behavior, acting as a quasi-moderator in this relationship (H9 and RQ6), consistent with Rodrigo and Mendis (2023) findings. When analyzing the factors affecting Social Influencer Credibility (SIC), it is clear that the attractiveness, charisma, and appearance of an influencer significantly influence audience response (SI1). The

study indicates that customers are inclined to react to influencers that possess distinct looks or personalities, hence impacting their future behavior.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes how green attitudes affect buying decisions and the connection between environmental care and eco-labels. It emphasizes leveraging social media influencers in marketing to encourage eco-conscious purchasing habits, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The findings are important for scholars, businesses, and governments to promote sustainable consumption. Future studies should explore a variety of demographic groups and locations to enhance the reliability and relevance of the findings.

Suggestion

1. Practical and policy implications

The study highlights the significance of sustainable goods, particularly focusing on meat alternatives, and the role of eco-labels in green marketing. It suggests that eco-labels indirectly influence green purchasing intentions by emphasizing environmental benefits through packaging design. Collaboration across sectors, including government, industry, and corporate social responsibility sectors, is crucial for environmental benefits. Legislation, campaigns, and marketing can influence social attitudes and promote sustainable practices in the context of eco-labels and green marketing. Furthermore, to effectively persuade consumers in marketing, it is necessary to focus on influencer credibility in order to effectively persuade consumers in marketing.

2. Theoretical implications

The results of this study offer compelling evidence that supports the attitude-intention-behavior framework in the field of environmentally friendly products. The Theory of Planned Behavior can also be used to clarify the phenomenon. Furthermore, the findings of the study can still be sufficiently clarified by employing the stimulus-organism-response theory. A crucial element of the theoretical process demonstrates that the organism section is an essential pathway that leads to a response. Therefore, it can be concluded that both theories remain academically stable, which can explain the phenomenon of this study.

3. Recommendations to future researchers

The study's findings, based on urban Thai consumers, may not be generalizable to a wider population due to the specific nature of the sample group. Future research should explore diverse age groups and geographic locations to broaden the study's scope. This will aid in creating tailored marketing approaches and gaining insights into the preferences and behaviors of communities in agriculture and livestock-dependent regions of Thailand, fostering ecological sustainability.

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Appendix. Scale items for questionnaire

Environmental Concern: EVC (Rusyani et al., 2021; Sestino et al., 2023; Wang & Scrimgeour, 2023; Yildiz et al., 2023)

EV1: Meat substitutes contribute to creating a more sustainable environment.

EV2: It is my duty to defend the environment.

EV3: The condition of the environment affects the quality of my life.

EV4: My actions have an impact on the environment.

EV5: It has been produced in a way that has not disrupted ecological balance.

Green Attitude: GAT (Ajzen, 2002; Arvola et al., 2008; Duong, 2023; Kumar & Basu, 2023)

GA1: I think that purchasing meat substitutes is interesting.

GA2: I think that purchasing a meat substitute and an environmentally friendly product is important.

GA3: I think that purchasing a meat substitute product is a good idea.

GA4: I think that purchasing a meat substitute is beneficial.

Eco-label: ELB (Kumar & Basu, 2023)

EL1: Eco-labels persuade people to buy meat substitutes.

EL2: Eco-labels tell me which brands have the eco-friendly features I am looking for.

EL3: Eco-label is a valuable source of information about environmentally friendly products.

EL4: I prefer to check the eco-labels and certifications of eco-friendly products before purchasing them.

EL5: I would prefer to gain substantial information about the makes and models of eco-friendly products before making a purchase.

Green product purchase intention: GPI (Arvola et al., 2008; Duong, 2023; Kumar & Basu, 2023; Lavuri et al., 2023)

GI1: I will consider purchasing meat substitutes because they will be less polluting in the coming years.

GI2: I will investigate converting to environmentally friendly companies for environmental concerns.

GI3: I plan to spend more on environmentally friendly products than conventional ones.

GI4: I definitely want to purchase a meat substitute product in the near future.

GI5: I am willing to purchase a meat substitute product for my household consumption.

Green purchase behaviour: GPB (Duong, 2023; Rahnama Haratbar et al., 2023)

GB1: When I want to purchase something, I scan the ingredient list to determine whether it contains anything harmful to the environment.

GB2: When the product attributes are comparable, I choose green items.

GB3: I choose to purchase ecologically friendly items.

GB4: I purchase green items, even if they are more expensive than non-green alternatives.

Social Media Influencer Credibility: SIC (Aw et al., 2023; Hugh et al., 2022; Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2021)

SI1: An influencer who is attractive, charismatic, and good-looking has an effective impact on my response.

SI2: An influencer who is knowledgeable, experienced, and expert in meat substitute products has an effective impact on my response.

SI3: An influencer who is dependable, honest, reliable, and sincere has an effective impact on my response.