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Predicting the Use of Excessive Product Packaging on Green Brand Equity with Greenwashing and Green Skepticism as Mediating Variables on Avoskin's Green Purchasing Behavior in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The increased public awareness and demand for environmentally friendly products have encouraged companies to pay more attention to green marketing practices. However, studies show that the practice of Excessive Packaging Product (EPP), Greenwashing and Green Skepticism (GS) can reduce the value of a company's green brand. This has a negative impact on consumer purchase interest in these green products. This study examines the effect of EPP, Greenwashing, on GBE and GPB consumers on Avoskin products in Indonesia. The theory used is Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) which focuses on the interaction between cognitive, behavioral and social environments holistically which influence each other. This research design is quantitative with associative research methods using cross sectional, by distributing a sample of 122 respondents and measured using a 5-point Likerts scale. The results of this study are expected that EPP has a positive effect on GBE, Greenwashing and GS act as mediating variables that weaken the effect of EPP on GBE. In addition, GBE has a positive effect on GPB. This study confirms that green marketing practices need to be carried out consistently, honestly, and transparently in order to maintain GBE and increase consumer purchasing interest.

Keywords: Excessive Packaging Product; Greenwashing; Green Skepticism; Green Brand Equity; Green Purchasing Behavior

1. Introduction

Along with increasing consumer awareness of environmental issues and the increasing number of environmentally friendly products, companies certainly need to adjust and utilize with their equity so that the image of the company is also increasing, Khandelwal et al., 2019. GBE is very attractive to consumers because it can actually influence them positively such as by means of word of mouth, attitude towards the brand and purchase behavior, (Bekk et al., 2016; Khandelwal et al., 2016; G Orska W et al., 2021). However, GBE practices can also have a negative impact if GBE is ignored by greenwashing and green skepticism, (Rust, 2002). In the opinion of Qayyum, 2022 EPP can increase greenwashing and GS which results in reduced GBE. Therefore, there are many responses regarding the increasing attention to environmental issues.

Chen, 2018 mentioned that companies began to focus on product packaging. It can now be said that many sellers are starting to market themselves by selling green products, Khandelwal et al., 2019. Meanwhile, in an increasingly competitive market share, companies often carry out EPP to improve their sales strategies in an effort to get a better brand image such as quality, good packaging and satisfactory service, Hammed et al., 2021.

According to data published by Sustainable Shoppers Buy the Change they Wish to See in the World 2020, there are 81% of global respondents implementing sustainability programs to improve the environment. 73% of consumers stated that they were ready to switch to environmentally friendly products while 40% stated that they chose products with natural and easily recyclable materials. According to Zero Waste Week research data statistics, 2021 reached 120 billion waste from the beauty industry every year. According to Great Pacific Garbage Patch data, the need for landfills destroys more than 72,843 square meters of forest each year. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency and the Indonesian Plastic Industry Association (INAPLAS), 2019 states that plastic waste from the beauty industry reaches 6.8 million tons per year. Not only the packaging problem, but the materials left in the bottle can pollute water and soil because they contain chemicals. Based on a statement from Waste for Change, by 2022 the beauty industry will be in high demand. Therefore, the solution in overcoming this problem is to conduct a recycling program through in-store recycle labeled with brands for recycling.

Avoskin is slowly switching from plastic products to glass bottles, which allows reducing the use of plastic by 35% per year, with glass packaging can be used on average 12 to 20 times. According to a study from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), 2019, shows that the demand for organic and environmentally friendly products rises up to 12% per year. Avoskin beauty cosmetic products integrate the Love Avoskin Love Earth program by ensuring its products use environmentally friendly ingredients and already use glass packaging for easy recycling. According to Sustainability Progress Update data from Avoskin's official website, 2024 states that 35,328 empty packaging is ready to be recycled and each consumer can claim a reward for each exchange with a glass bottle. Even so, there are still many who think that Avoskin only wants to increase its sales and many claims or issues regarding greenwashing and many question the authenticity that Avoskin really recycles its products

In this situations, consumers consider the seller to be the culprit of greenwashing that misleads buyers. Sometimes, consumers may feel suspicious when sellers make eco-friendly claims involved in EPPs. Hammed et al., 2021 stated that sellers sometimes hide facts and only promote the positive aspects of their products. Silva et al., 2020; Waris and Hammed 2020, stated that many companies are now making exaggerated green claims so that consumers feel skeptical about the company's green claims in the face of EPP products. This ambiguity doubts consumers and encourages consumers to question whether the seller is practicing true green marketing or not. With greenwashing and skepticism as predictors of GBE. So that when GBE is seen as positive, it will certainly increase consumer purchasing behavior. It can be concluded that there is a gap between what happens to avoskin products and consumers, so it is important for consumers to conduct research and consider in making a decision in buying avoskin products. Then, what about consumer perceptions of Avoskin product packaging that affects green brand image equity? In addition, is there a relationship between the level of greenwashing and GS perceived by consumers with Green Brand Equity in Avoskin products?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Cognitive Theory

This theory expands social learning from cognitive processes such as assessment, conception, consequences of others' behavior, and motivation. The theory interprets behavioral outcomes as influenced by personal environmental factors, while emphasizing the reciprocal interaction between personal cognitive factors, environment, and behavior. Schunk (2012) explains this. Wood and Bandura (1989) further explain its link to self-efficacy, where consumers have confidence in behaviors that encourage purchasing green products, but greenwashing can reduce this self-efficacy. Other variables also have justification for their relationship with SCT, such as the interaction between green company communication (environment), consumer skepticism (cognitive), and green purchasing behavior. Glanz et al., 2008, Baranowski et al., 2002 and Rosenstock et al., 1988 affirm this.

2.2 Excessive Packaging Product

Green marketing practices promote the self-image of green-labeled brands by responding positively to consumers, (Chung, 2020). Product packaging is part of the brand characteristics, (Kautish, 2018). In order to attract consumers, product packaging must be attractive, protect the contents and be easy to open and refer to ecological or environmentally friendly products made using recyclable packaging, (Chen, 2017; Zang and Zhao, 2012). Thus, consumer perceptions are formed by trust, value, consumer satisfaction that provide emotional value to environmentally friendly packaging that contributes to positive or negative consumer attitudes, Medeiros Janine F et al., 2013, Warsewicz Hanna et al., 2021.

2.3 Greenwashing

A phenomenon of deceptive environmental communication, (Torell, 2020). Watson, 2007 mentions that Greenwashing refers to exaggerated, dubious, disguised, and untrue claims. If consumers feel that Avoskin products are involved in greenwashing, it will certainly reduce brand trust and reputation. Sometimes, consumers who feel deceived by greenwashing claims certainly have negative perceptions that impact green brand equity and reduce their brand value, Names et al., 2022. With the issue of exaggerating naturalness, there are concerns about a product or service, causing investors and consumers to worry about environmental issues, Nicoleta Isac et al., 2023; Javed, 2022; Lyon and Montgomery, 2015.

2.4 Green Skepticism

Some researchers consider skepticism to be a personality trait, but regardless, consumer conditions are caused by situational factors, Vanhamme and Grobben, 2009; Patel et al., 2016. Sometimes consumers doubt the true environmental impact of their company's initiatives, but these initiatives are perceived as greenwashing tactics that only attract environmentally concerned consumers without any real change, Szabo and Webster, 2021; Lee and Johnson, 2022; Hernandez et al., 2023 mentioned that high levels of skepticism can hinder consumer acceptance of Avoskin products, and consumers need strong evidence and transparency to build trust so as to increase their green brand equity.

2.5 Green Brand Equity

Brand equity is the added value given to a product through marketing efforts Farquhar 1989. With equity, consumers will feel the knowledge of the mind regarding the experience gained

over time (Aaker, 1991). Brands conceptualize equity value as a multidimensional concept so that consumers will be formed of brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and other ownership assets, (Aaker, 1991). With the growth of brand image, high-quality packaging will enhance the brand image so as to encourage a strong relationship between consumers and the brand image, Medeiros and Ribeiro, 2021.

2.6 Green Purchasing Behavior

Mirani R et al., 2020; Chen and Chan, 2010 state that green products are safe to use because they can be recycled especially with packaging that is slightly in accordance with the contents. Customer green purchasing behavior is usually evaluated in terms of consumer intention and willingness to buy environmental products, then this intention turns into purchasing behavior which influences customer behavior to buy these green products. (Joshi and Rahman., 2015).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual model of this research is as follows:

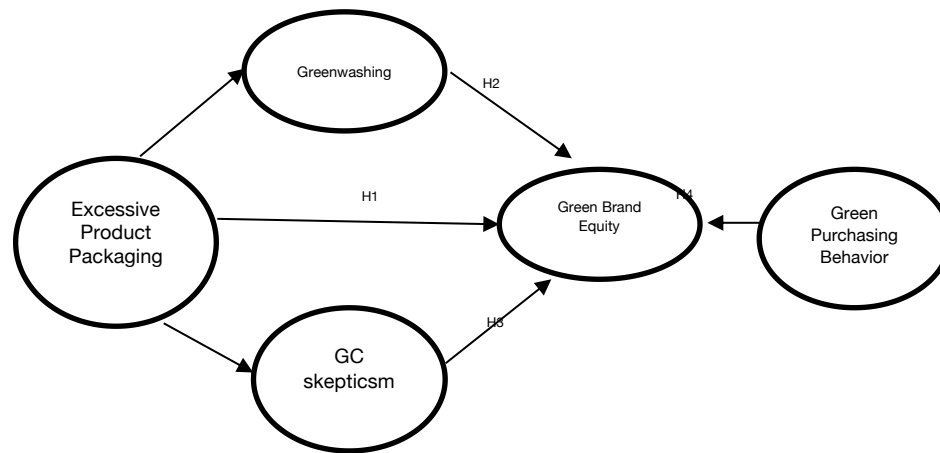


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

3.2 Hypotheses Development

Based on the argument in the literature review section, this study aims to build a conceptual model based on SCT theory. The independent variables to be tested in this study include Excessive Packaging Product to Greenwashing, Green Skepticism, with Green Brand Equity and Green Purchasing Behavior. The dependent variable is Green Brand Equity with factors that influence consumer behavior, namely the presence of Green Purchasing Behavior in skincare purchases in Indonesia. With these objectives, this study will investigate the following conceptual questions:

- What extent does the sustainability claim of Avoskin products impact the green brand image in the eyes of consumers?
- How does the level of consumer confidence in Avoskin's sustainability practices affect the value of green brand equity?

- How much influence does Green Skepticism have on consumer perceptions of green brand equity in Avoskin products?

By considering how exaggerated packaging, although often perceived as environmentally unfriendly, can attract consumers' attention and enhance their perception of the brand. When companies use striking and innovative packaging, consumers may associate the packaging with high quality and value, which in turn can enhance the green brand image. This is in line with the findings of Dangelico and Vocalelli (2017) which show that packaging can create added value for brands when there is clear evidence and transparency about sustainability, thereby increasing loyalty and building consumers' emotional connection with the brand, V Kumar and R Singh, 2019; Huang Y and T Rust, 2021; Chen, 2010. So, the hypotheses that can be developed are:

H1: Excessive Packaging has a positive effect on GBE

Greenwashing is a relative concept that develops the GBE index when companies are considered to greenwash, their brand image equity will decrease, F Baladassarre, 2015. According to Chen, 2016; Akuturan U, 2017 and A Fitrianingrum, 2020 state that greenwashing can have a negative impact directly or indirectly on EPP and GBE. This is due to inconsistent practices that can damage consumer confidence, Chen 2013. When companies claim to have green brand equity by using excessive packaging, consumers feel that the brand is not sincere in its sustainability efforts, Hammeed et al., 2021. Thus, greenwashing serves as a barrier that dilutes the positive relationship of EPP to GBE and consumer perceptions of environmentally friendly packaging, P Thomas, 2015; Chen, 2017; and Darmawan and Susana, 2021. Therefore, it can be proposed that greenwashing mediates the effect of EPP with GBE, with the following hypothesis:

H2: Greenwashing mediates the relationship between GBE and EPP

When consumers doubt the quality of green products, they tend to evaluate the product first, Chang, 2011. With environmental scepticism, consumers are reluctant to buy products and reduce consumers' positive perceptions of Avoskin's green brand equity. Hameed et al. (2021) state that consumers who are skeptical of green marketing practices tend to question the veracity of brand claims about green brand equity. In the case of excessive packaging, skeptical consumers may see the use of excessive packaging as an indication that the brand is not truly committed to sustainability, even though the brand claims to have green brand equity. This is in line with research conducted by Yang et al. (2021), which shows that consumers' distrust of environmental statements can cause them to feel green skepticism, the hypothesis that can be proposed is as follows:

H3: Green Skepticism mediates the relationship between GBE and EPP

Chen 2010 states that Green Brand Equity is the entire concept and understanding of a brand that comes to mind in customer memories that correlate with sustainability regarding environmental issues. Of course, it is natural for companies to claim that their products are made from recycled materials and are environmentally friendly so that consumers' quality perceptions can influence the improvement of brand images that are environmentally friendly, (Aaker and Jacobson, 2011). Although research on green marketing is very important, research on green branding is still very rare, Huang et al., 2014; Chen, 2010. Companies need to invest in green customer satisfaction, trust and green loyalty, (Misra and Panda, 2017). In this study, the relationship between brand equity and purchasing behavior is still very little researched, but several studies have concluded

that brand equity has a positive influence on purchasing behavior, therefore it can be assumed that what drives green equity such as satisfaction, trust, affection, and green perceived value will appear when there is consumer intention to buy green products, Chen and Chang 2012; Suki, 2016; Chang and Liu, 2009; Akturan, 2018; Huang et al., 2011; and Delafrooz, 2015. Therefore, the hypothesis that can be proposed is as follows:

H4: Green Brand Equity has a positive effect on Green Purchasing Behavior

3.3 Sample

The samples used in this study were individuals who care about sustainable environment in Indonesia with minimum purchase of Avoskin skincare products twice, aged 17 years and older. Because the exact number of respondents in this sample is not known, the method used in this study uses the Lemeshow formula, according to Riyanto and Hermawan, 2020. The minimum sample size used is 122 respondents to make the study more representative. The distributed questionnaires use a 5-point Likert scale, taking into account point 1: strongly disagree to point 5: strongly agree.

3.4 Measurement

The indicators in this study were taken based on previous literature, by making some adjustments regarding green brand equity. This questionnaire includes 5 variables with a total of 27 indicators adapted from several experts such as Rokka and Usitalo, 2008 for Excessive Product Packaging, Chen and Chang, 2013 for greenwashing, Chen 2010 for Greenskepticism, Green Brand Equity by Chen and Chang, 2018 and Green Purchasing Behavior by Chan and Lau 2002.

Table 1
Measurement items of constructs

Construct	Measurement items	
Excessive Product Packaging	E1	You need to spend time to open the product package
	E2	You think the product has excessive packaging
	E3	You think the product has a lot of unnecessary packaging
	E4	Product packaging is excessive to ensure safety
	E5	The attractiveness of the packaging depends on the product's excessive packaging
	E6	You need to spend time to open the product package
Greenwashing	G1	Does the company mislead with words about the environmental features of its products?
	G2	Most companies mislead with visuals of the environmental features of their brands.
	G3	Most companies make unclear environmental claims.
	G4	Are environmental claims unverifiable for their products?
	G5	Most companies exaggerate the environmental attributes of their products.
	G6	Most companies hide important information about the actual environmental attributes of their products
Green Skepticism	GS1	I doubt that this product is environmentally friendly.
	GS2	I feel this product is less harmful to the environment.
	GS3	I feel this product meets high environmental standards.
	GS4	I doubt if this product is better for the environment.
	GS5	Given there are many similar brands, it would be difficult to find a new product.
Green Brand Equity	GBE1	It makes sense to buy a brand in an ad over others due to its environmental commitment, even if the brands are similar.

Construct	Measurement items	
	GBE2	What if other brands have the same environmental features as the brand in the ad, would you prefer buying this brand?
	GBE3	If other brands' environmental performance is as good as the brand in the ad, would you prefer buying this brand?
	GBE4	If other brands' environmental care is no different than the brand in the ad, it seems smarter to buy this brand.
	GBE5	Can this brand be relied upon?
Green Purchasing Behavior	GPB1	When I buy a product, I look at its ingredient label to see if it contains materials that are harmful to the environment.
	GPB2	I prefer environmentally friendly products over non-green products even if their quality is the same.
	GPB3	I choose to buy environmentally friendly products.
	GPB4	I buy environmentally friendly products even if they are more expensive than non-green products.
	GPB5	I am more inclined to use materials that are biodegradable/recyclable.

3.5 Research Design dan Data Analysis

This study is a quantitative research method, with data collection using secondary and primary through online questionnaires distributed via google form cross sectionally in 2024. This research uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques to examine causal relationships, MacCallum and Austin, 2000; Karakaya-Ozyer and AksuDunya, 2018). The method used in this study is an associative method that explains the relationship between two or more variables in explaining, predicting and controlling a syntom.

6. Conclusion

In accordance with existing theory and based on the results of previous research, this study replicates and supports the findings of several previous studies regarding the effect of excessive packaging between Greenwashing and Green Skepticism. Excessive product paging adds that any heavy, bulky, and expensive packaging is considered excessive and only protects the product. However, excessive packaging is considered a root cause of waste that needs to be reviewed for sustainable development decision issues. Many consumers are often confused and blame that greenwashing is associated with insincere eco-friendly efforts, which certainly has a big impact on the product image as well. EPPs are claimed by sellers to be environmentally friendly but instead create an atmosphere of doubt or skepticism among consumers. Consumers are often confused and directionless with complex information, leading to positive or negative emotions if the green claims are misleading and reduce the seller's credibility and skepticism. The emergence of two feelings due to Greenwashing and green skepticism of consumers is said that Green Brand Equity is strongly influenced by perceptions of brand credibility and commitment to the environment, which is influenced by excessive packaging. It is necessary to show the importance of carrying out green marketing practices consistently and honestly to maintain brand value as a green brand in the minds of consumers so that the brand image will survive and be able to compete with similar products

Of course, due to greenwashing and green skepticism as well as excessive packaging, it can reduce consumers' interest and likelihood of green purchasing behavior. Consumers often hesitate to buy a beauty product that is perceived as less honest or environmentally conscious. This perception leads to consumer distrust of the brand's environmental commitment. It is important for companies in building brands to maintain their green image in order to influence

consumers' interest and purchase of environmentally friendly products. With this, green brand management can grow and develop in the future.

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