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The Impact of Green Brand Positioning, Green Brand Knowledge and Attitude toward Green Brand on Green Product Purchase Intention in Unilever Products, Indonesia

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Abstract:

As an FMCG company, Unilever Indonesia produces a green consumer product in order to reduce emissions and stabilize natural ecosystems through the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan (USLP) principles. Therefore, Unilever Indonesia applies green brand positioning to its products to have a competitive advantage in the minds of consumers. The study employed a quantitative method by distributing questionnaires and SEM analysis. The purposive sampling was used with 400 respondents. The results showed that green brand positioning, knowledge, and attitude toward green brands positively impacted green products purchase intentions. The results also indicated that a good green brand knowledge would also influence consumer attitudes towards green brands. Green brand knowledge had a positive but insignificant impact on moderating the relationship between brand positioning and green product purchase intentions. The study suggested that Unilever Indonesia could further develop green brand positioning containing the value of a green product attribute to attract many consumers leading to green purchase intention.

Keywords: Attitude toward green brands, green brand knowledge, green brand positioning, green product purchase intention, Unilever Indonesia

1. Introduction

Environmental pollution is a problem that has not been resolved. Hazardous environmental pollution arises from worldwide manufacturing activities (Chen, 2011). Therefore, besides focusing on profit, companies are rapidly exploring and researching new methods, developing new ideas, and planning new strategies to position their green brands as corporate social responsibility in environmental protection, which can be remembered by consumers and stay competitive in the market. Nowadays, more companies are easy to accept environmental protection as their social responsibility. The company's concern for environmental protection is carried out by implementing an environmentally friendly lifestyle system by showing that the entire life cycle of a product, from obtaining materials, production, sales, and consumption, to waste disposal, has minimal impact on the environment (Charter, 1991 in Wu and Chen, 2014).

Green brand is defined as a specific set of brand attributes that have benefits related to reducing the brand's influence on the environment by offering environmental benefits and being able to attract consumers to make green purchases (Lidia and Lisboa, 2017). As explained by Chen and Chang (2012), companies need to focus on reducing the risk that consumers will feel about green brands by providing reliable information to help build consumer trust and also increase the perceived benefits of consumers towards green brands, so that it will increase consumer purchase intentions to buy green brands offered by companies.

Companies that want to implement environmentally friendly or 'going green' practices can take advantage of ideas related to green marketing to generate and facilitate any exchange that is intended to meet consumer needs or wants (Marcus and Frenneth, 2009; Thogersen et al. 2015). Consumer awareness about the importance of preserving the environment has made many producers of various products begin to switch to using safe and environmentally friendly materials. Chen and Chang (2012) also suggest that green marketing efforts implemented by a company will lead to green purchase intention in consumers who are aware of the importance of environmentally friendly products. In this case, companies need to focus on reducing the risk that consumers will feel about green products by providing reliable information to help build consumer confidence and also increase the perceived benefits consumers feel about green products.

Unilever Indonesia is one of the most environmentally friendly Indonesian companies selected by the Indonesia Green Companies Award from the Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation. As the most environmentally friendly company in Indonesia, Unilever Indonesia works closely with its consumers to reduce environmental impact by offering environmentally friendly products and involving customers in environmental campaigns. Unilever Indonesia held a national water saving campaign. This campaign, Unilever Indonesia, is carried out through the media and digitally by asking the public to provide various unique tips and tricks to save water in their daily lives. In addition, Unilever Indonesia also presents the world's first innovation in the form of soap in the shower gel concentrate format, which is enough to use with only one drop (2-3 ml) for whole body use which is able to provide 10 times better protection against germs. Eco-friendly products from Unilever Indonesia use bottle packaging made of 100% recycled PET plastic and reduce the use of virgin plastic.

Previous research has investigated green marketing in several countries regarding green branding and green buying behavior (Suki, 2016; Huang et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2020; Chin et al., 2019; Thao et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019; Nguyen et al., 2020). Zhou et al. (2020) recommended that further research could be conducted in these countries to ascertain the impact of environmental knowledge on green purchase intentions. The aims of this study were threefold: to assess the effect of green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and consumer attitudes toward green brands on green product purchase intention; to investigate the influence of green brand knowledge on consumer attitudes toward green brands, and to examine the moderating impact of green brand knowledge on the relationship between green brand positioning and green product purchase intention. The empirical results of this study, including the assessment of the moderating impacts, would address the gap in the overall body of literature regarding the influence of green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and consumer attitudes toward green brands on green product purchase intention on Unilever Indonesia's green products. The study also offers new perspectives on the findings of previous studies.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Green Marketing

Green marketing is a marketing mix planning process by utilizing changes in consumer awareness of products/services that are more environmentally friendly by changing products, manufacturing and packaging methods that are more environmentally friendly to satisfy and meet consumer needs and reduce negative impacts on the environment and also invite consumers to more concerned about the environment (Yusiana and Widodo, 2015). One of the interesting challenges in green marketing is to start with the customer, which then discusses the needs of other company stakeholders in depth and also considers the needs of future generations of customers (Peattie and Crane, 2005).

2.2. Green Brand

Green brand is a specific collection of brand attributes and has benefits related to reducing the influence of the brand on the environment and is expected to be an environmentally friendly product. In running its business, the company is very focused on the brand at the market-product-level, the strength of a brand can increase the channel's effectiveness in communicating, and reduce the price sensitivity associated with the brand. There are several cases in which companies are carried out aggressively in the process of developing product brand images in a direction that is superior to several competitions by taking into account environmental interests (Darhlstorm, 2011). A green brand must be able to clearly explain the value of an environmentally friendly brand to the target group where consumers believe in the ecological performance of a brand which leads to a positive attitude of consumers towards the brand and in the end consumers use products from the brand (Lidia and Lisboa, 2017). Huang et al. (2014) in their research explains that green brands are influenced by several factors including green brand positioning, attitude toward green brands and green brand knowledge.

2.3. Green Brand Positioning and Green Product Purchase Intention

Green brand positioning is concerned with the value of an environmentally friendly product or service, and focuses on environmentally friendly brand features that are useful to consumers. Positioning a brand as a 'green brand' requires strong communication and differentiation from its competitors through an emphasis on environmentally friendly attributes. Green brand positioning is positioning the company's environmentally friendly products, which represent the image of a green product that can be felt by the public. This is characterized as part of the quality, price, and ecological value that affect the dependence of green consumers on green products. According to Lin and Chang (2012), consumers who have experience purchasing environmentally friendly products in the past and have knowledge about the environment tend to have a higher willingness to buy environmentally friendly products because the green brand positioning carried out by the company produces a competitive advantage in the minds of consumers. Suki (2016) explains that some green attributes through active communication campaigns can increase consumer perceptions of green products. Environmentally friendly product quality and successful green brand positioning, consumers with certain environmental knowledge as well as previous positive experience with purchasing environmental products are more likely to express consumers' strong intention to acquire green products. Suki (2016) also explains that the tendency of consumers to buy green products is based on the use of consumer products and their awareness of the green brand positioned in the market. Research conducted by Suki (2016), Huang et al. (2014), and Chin et al. (2019) found that green brand positioning has a significant impact on green product purchase intention. Based on the preceding literature, the following can be hypothesized:

- H1. Green brand positioning has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention.

2.4. Green Brand Knowledge and Green Product Purchase Intention

Green brand knowledge is referred to as 'green brand nodes in consumers' memories with various associations related to environmental commitments and environmental issues'. Green brand knowledge provides information about the unique brand attributes of a product and its benefits to the environment as a whole that can be used by consumers. The two types of brand knowledge are brand awareness and brand image (Suki, 2016). Many previous studies have explained that purchase intention and actual purchase intention can be influenced by environmental knowledge (Chen & Chang, 2012 and Yadav & Pathak, 2016). Huang et al. (2014) emphasized that consumers show a high intention to buy and consume green products if they have better environmental knowledge and attitudes towards green brands. Based on research conducted by Suki (2016), Huang et al. (2014) and Chin et al. (2019) found that green brand knowledge has a positive and significant effect on green product purchase intention. Based on the preceding literature, the following can be hypothesized:

- H2. Green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention.

2.5. Green Brand Knowledge and Attitude toward Green Brand

Green marketing studies emphasize the effects of cognitive persuasive strategies and assume that consumers' involvement with environmental issues becomes higher because consumers' environmental awareness has increased (Oliver and Lee, 2010). Past experience and current brand knowledge are part of consumer cognition involved in overall consumer evaluation. Most of the green marketing studies that focus on cognition have shown that environmental knowledge and awareness can significantly influence consumers' environmental attitudes (Mostafa, 2007). Mostafa (2007) found that perceived environmental knowledge is a good predictor of ecologically favorable attitudes, suggesting that high awareness and positive brand image can improve consumer brand attitudes. Based on research conducted by Suki (2016) and Huang et al. (2014) found that green brand knowledge has a positive and significant effect on attitudes toward green brands. Based on the preceding literature, the following can be hypothesized:

- H3. Green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact on attitude toward green brands.

2.6. Attitude toward Green Brand and Green Product Purchase Intention

Attitude towards a brand is related to consumer choice and overall evaluation of a brand, symbolizing the likes and dislikes of consumers. Felix and Braunsberger (2016) explain that purchasing decisions are usually based on consumer attitudes towards the environment. Positive feelings and images are the basic influences that shape consumer attitudes and influence their intention to buy environmentally friendly products (Schiffman and Wisenblit, 2014; Thøgersen et al., 2015). Mostafa (2007) stated that consumers with a positive attitude towards environmentally friendly products are more likely to develop a stronger tendency to buy these products by referring to environmentally friendly brands and rely heavily on the positioning of these environmentally friendly brands. Huang et al. (2014) emphasizes that consumers' intentions in making purchases of green products are influenced by consumer attitudes towards green brands. A positive consumer attitude towards a brand will lead to a consumer's desire to buy the green product. Based on research conducted by Suki (2016), Yadav and Pathak (2016) and Huang et al. (2014) found that attitude toward green brands has a positive and significant effect on green product purchase intention. Based on the preceding literature, the following can be hypothesized:

- H4. Attitude toward green brand has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention.

2.7. Green Brand Positioning and Green Product Purchase Intention with Green Brand Knowledge as Moderation

Brand knowledge can be a link between brand use either directly or indirectly so that consumers can remember brand identities such as symbols, colors, and names (Okada and Mais, 2010; Gan et al., 2008). According to Aulina and Yuliati (2017) green brand knowledge is the concept of providing information that changes consumer behavior to become more informed about an environmentally friendly product. Green brand knowledge is divided into two aspects (Chen, 2010). First, the introduction of environmentally friendly brands and attributes of environmentally friendly products. Green marketing can be used by companies with environmentally friendly brands in their portfolios to increase brand recognition. Companies can build awareness and provide information about environmental issues on environmentally friendly product brands. Second, the brand image of environmentally friendly products is described as a set of customer opinions about a particular brand related to the brand's commitment to the environment (Chen and Chang, 2012). Brand image forms a position in the minds of customers and gains a competitive advantage over competitors. In this way, green brands require communication and distinguishing characteristics that focus on environmental concerns. Green brand communication activities should lead to brand knowledge and consumer engagement (Marcus and Fremeth, 2009). The focus of the green positioning strategy should be on delivering information to consumers related to environmental concerns and brand quality, so that consumers can understand the brand's relationship to environmental concerns. Marketing communication creates a brand image that forms a good impression in the minds of consumers that can be used by companies to implement a green brand positioning strategy. This positive awareness will result in a better green brand positioning with the help of brand awareness and image. Davari and Strutton (2014) also explain that knowledge related to green products is a memory in the minds of consumers with associations related to environmental protection. Based on the preceding literature, the following can be hypothesized:

- H5. Green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact in moderates the relationship between green brand positioning and green product purchase intention.

Keeping in perspective the aforementioned literature and hypotheses, the following conceptual framework is proposed in this study showed in Figure 1.

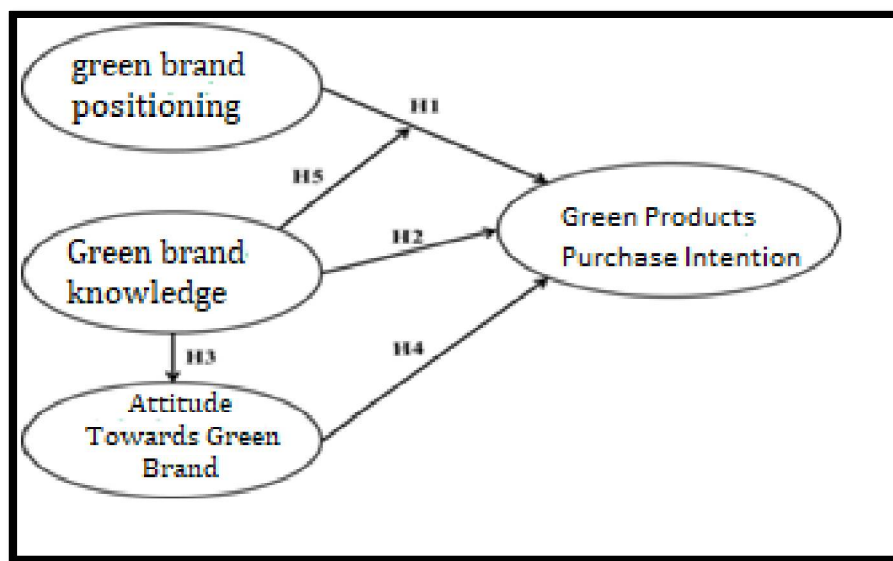


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

3. Research Methodology

A quantitative method was applied by distributing a structured self-administered questionnaire to Indonesian consumers who knew about Unilever Indonesia's green products via the purposive sampling technique over two weeks from 14-27 November 2021. The respondents of this study were aware of environmentally friendly products and had purchased experience of Unilever Indonesia's green products. After being screened, a total of 400 responses were found usable and valid as samples for analysis, correlating with a valid response. The questionnaire for this study encompassed general demographic questions such as gender, age, education level, and income per month. The concluding part of the questionnaire included questions on respondents' perception of green product purchase intentions with 18 measurement instruments. Green brand positioning, green brand knowledge, and attitude toward green brand were measured using five items, while three items were designed to measure their green product purchase intention. The measurement of these items was adapted from the following sources such as green brand positioning (Aaker, 2007; Patrick et al., 2005; Suki, 2016), attitude toward green brands (Patrick et al., 2005; Suki, 2016), green brand knowledge (Suki, 2016), and green product purchase intention (Chan, 2001; Suki, 2016). These items were designed on six-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating 'strongly disagree' to 6 'strongly agree'. The data were analyzed using with AMOS method, which is a type of covariance-based technique for the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis. AMOS was performed, utilizing two stages of data analysis, i.e. measurement model and structural models because this method will produce several solutions to the system of equations that relate the variance and covariance of the observed variables (manifest/indicators) to the model parameters (Haryono and Wardoyo, 2017).

4. Research Findings and Discussions

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Researchers will use descriptive analysis techniques to obtain information regarding the characteristics of respondents. Descriptive analysis is an analytical technique used to explain how the characteristics of data originating from an object of research can be described and understood properly. The discussion on the characteristics of respondents in this study will show several aspects of the respondents, such as based on gender, age, education level, and monthly income. From the gender perspective, out of 400 respondents, 46 percent were male and 54 percent were female (see Table 1). The majority of respondents in this study were between 25-40 years old. The majority of the respondents were well educated, with more than half (56.3 percent) of the respondents holding a Bachelor's degree and 7 percent having a Master's degree, whereas 27 percent had a Diploma and 9.8 percent had a middle/high school. In terms of respondent income, 17,8 percent of the respondents earned less than Rp 2,500,000 per month, 51.5 percent earned between Rp 2,600,000 and Rp 5,000,000; and 29.2 percent earned between Rp 5,100,000 and Rp 10,000,000, while 1,5 percent earned Rp 10,000,000 and above.

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	184	46%
	Female	216	54%
Age	20 - 24	110	27.5%
	25 - 40	185	46.2%
	41 - 59	103	25.8%
	60 and above	2	0.5%
Education level	High School	39	9.8%
	Diploma	108	27%
	Bachelors	225	56.3%
	Masters	28	7%
Income per month	Less than Rp 2,500,000	71	17.8%
	Rp 2,600,000 - Rp 5,000,000	206	51.5%
	Rp 5,100,000 - Rp 10,000,000	117	29.2%
	Rp 10,000,000 and above	6	1.5%

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

4.2. Measurement Model

This study implemented covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) to test the proposed research model using AMOS 23 software. The measurement model of this study used validity and reliability, which could be assessed through factor loadings that values should be greater be 0.5, average variance extracted (AVE) that value should be greater than 0.5, Cronbach alpha that value should be greater than 0.7, and composite reliability that value should be greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016). Table 2 predicted values show that all the values fulfill the criteria of recommended values.

Construct Name	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
GBP	GBP1	0.818	0.865	0.917	0.694
	GBP2	0.784			
	GBP3	0.878			
	GBP4	0.787			
	GBP5	0.884			
GBK	GBK1	0.835	0.835	0.891	0.625
	GBK2	0.797			
	GBK3	0.823			
	GBK4	0.701			
	GBK5	0.737			
ATG	ATG1	0.869	0.869	0.907	0.667
	ATG2	0.811			
	ATG3	0.837			
	ATG4	0.719			
	ATG5	0.840			
GPI	GPI1	0.890	0.798	0.872	0.700
	GPI2	0.806			
	GPI3	0.838			

Table 2: Measurement Model

Note: GBP-Green Brand Positioning, GBK-Green Brand Knowledge, ATG-Attitude towards Green Brand, GPI-Green Product Purchase Intention

4.3. Structure Model

After the analysis using a measurement model, the next step was to test the offered hypothesis by using a structural model. This study employed the RMSEA of 0.075 as the research model, within that acceptable range. Likewise, the 0.907 goodness of fit index (GFI), the 0.934 Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and the 0.952 comparative fit index (CFI) were all above the standard threshold of 0.90, implying an acceptable fit. The standardized path coefficients ranged from 0.163 to 0.684. All four paths estimated were significant. Therefore, H1, H2, H3, and H4 were all supported in this study.

Constructs	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	t-value	Results
Green brand positioning has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention	H1	0.203	3.289	Supported
Green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention	H2	0.371	4.845	Supported
Green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact on attitude toward green brands	H3	0.684	10.697	Supported
Attitude toward green brand has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention	H4	0,163	2,613	Supported

Table 3: Direct Relationship

Hu & Bentler (1998) explain that a test of moderation was conducted to find out how the moderating variable affects the relationship between endogenous and exogenous variables, in terms of strength and/or direction of the relationship. By referring to the path estimates and t-values, the moderating impact of green brand knowledge on the relationship between green brand positioning and green product purchase intention was insignificant. Thus, H5 was not supported.

Constructs	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	t-value	Results
Green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact in moderates the relationship between green brand positioning and green product purchase intention	H5	0.078	1.651	Not Supported

Table 4: Moderating Impacts

4.4. Discussions

Based on the research model, green brand knowledge is the variable that has the most critical factor that can influence consumers in purchasing green products. It implies that when consumers have knowledge about the advantages of consuming environmentally friendly products in accordance with good product performance, the level of awareness, interest and demand of consumers can change their buying behavior to a greener lifestyle (Huang et al., 2014). In conjunction with this, Suki (2016) revealed that green product purchase intention can be influenced by offering environmentally friendly products with the best quality at affordable prices that can compete with conventional products, indirectly increasing consumer awareness and knowledge that environmentally friendly products are good for health and the environment. Siyal et al. (2021) stated that when consumers have more detailed information about environmentally friendly products, consumers can direct their considerations in the purchasing decision-making process. This research results also support the research results by (Suki, 2016; Huang et al., 2014; Chin et al., 2019; Zhou et al., 2020) showing that green brand knowledge has a positive and significant impact on green product purchase intention.

Furthermore, the results of this study also revealed that green brand positioning is the second most important variable that can influence consumers in purchasing green products. Thus, it supported the research results by (Suki, 2016; Huang et al., 2014; Chin et al., 2019; Siyal et al., 2021). Based on the study findings, it can be stated that when a brand positions itself as an eco-friendly brand offering products and services to customers, it will tend to increase the green purchase intention among its customers. According to Liao et al. (2020), the extensive emphasis on green brand positioning results in higher levels of green products purchase intention among customers.

Additionally, the results of the study state that attitudes towards green brands determine the green purchase intentions although consumers lack attitudes in making choices to purchase environmentally friendly products from Unilever Indonesia. The study findings are supported by previous studies. For instance, Suki (2016) reported that consumer attitudes in purchasing green products consist of elements of reliability, dependability, and trustworthiness. Purchasing environmentally friendly products reflects that consumers feel responsible for the environment. However, the findings of this study indicate that consumers do not yet have the attitude reliability, dependability, and trustworthiness to purchase environmentally friendly products. Their appraisal to purchase green products is often based on their environmental attitudes (Yadav and Pathak, 2016; Lim et al., 2016; Aman et al., 2012; Paul et al., 2016).

Green brand knowledge is the most critical factor that can influence consumers in purchasing green products of Unilever Indonesia. Therefore, Unilever Indonesia must illustrate to consumers that they play an important role in practicing an environmentally friendly business environment in a competitive market. Unilever Indonesia must be able to explain the quality of environmentally friendly product brands to consumers to build consumer knowledge in helping consumers evaluate environmentally friendly products. In addition, Unilever Indonesia needs to build an outstanding green brand identity to strengthen the knowledge of environmentally friendly brands from consumers, so that they can easily distinguish the benefits of consuming environmentally friendly product brands compared to conventional product brands.

Most importantly, Unilever Indonesia should directly position, promote, and advertise their green products not just in campaigns and advertising through electronic media but also can use various marketing channels including creative product packaging through convincing eco-labeling, and via social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, and other social media. These efforts will help to disseminate the content of green marketing messages such as superior quality of green products, product ingredients, competitive prices and demonstrate product life cycles that have minimal impact on the environment, all of which will increase consumer awareness and encourage repeat purchases and satisfaction.

This study also found that consumers lacked attitudes in making choices to purchase green product of Unilever Indonesia's. This is due to the low reputation of green products and the lack of positioning of Unilever Indonesia's environmentally friendly products in the minds of consumers. There are also some consumers who think that environmentally friendly products will not keep their promises and responsibilities to protect the environment in their purchasing decisions. The low attitude of consumers in making purchase intentions towards green products of Unilever Indonesia is also caused by the price offered by Unilever Indonesia's green products which are considered more expensive than similar conventional products. Unilever Indonesia continues to strive to educate consumers about environmentally friendly products by promoting them through social media.

5. Summary and Conclusions

This study confirms that green brand knowledge is the most critical factor influencing consumers' intention to purchase environmentally friendly products. Therefore, companies need to build a distinctive green brand identity to strengthen the consumer's green brand knowledge in changing their buying behavior to a greener lifestyle. In this case, when consumers have more detailed information about environmentally friendly products, such as how they are produced, promoted, and packaged, they can rely on their considerations in the purchasing decision-making process.

5.1. Recommendations of the Study

This research was conducted at a Fast Moving Consumer Good (FMCG) company. In future research can be carried out with other environmentally friendly companies that can be used as comparisons in positioning environmentally friendly product brands in the minds of consumers. In addition, this study also suggested that Unilever Indonesia can further develop green brand positioning that contains the value of green product attributes by using green marketing, social media influencers, and digital media advertising to attract consumers' interest in making green product purchases intention.

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