



Green Social Identity VS Product Knowledge: Mediating Roles in Plant-Based Purchase Intention in Indonesia

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Abstract

To address the need for sustainable dietary transitions in emerging markets, this study aims to examine how social influence shapes green purchase intentions for plant-based foods in Indonesia, specifically evaluating the parallel mediating roles of Green Social Identity and Green Product Knowledge. Utilizing a quantitative explanatory design, data were collected from 253 consumers within Indonesian plant-based communities and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results reveal that social influence exerts no direct effect on green purchase intentions; rather, its impact is fully indirect. While both Green Social Identity and Green Product Knowledge act as significant mediators, the indirect effect driven by social identity is substantially stronger than the knowledge-based pathway. Theoretically, this demonstrates that identity-based mechanisms surpass mere product knowledge in translating social expectations into sustainable behavior, extending Social Identity Theory in the context of green consumption. Practically, these findings imply that plant-based food marketers must move beyond purely educational campaigns and prioritize fostering community identity—such as establishing plant-based clubs and grassroots initiatives to effectively leverage social belonging as a driver for sustainable consumption.

Keywords: *Social Influence, Green Social Identity, Green Product Knowledge, Green Purchase Intention, Plant-Based Food*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Food systems are increasingly recognized as a major source of environmental pressure, as greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation, and resource depletion are substantially increased by them. Consequently, the transition toward more sustainable consumption patterns has been made a critical priority so that global environmental and public health challenges can be addressed. Among the various strategies that have been proposed to support sustainable consumption, growing attention has been given to plant-based foods because environmental sustainability and human well-being can be promoted by them at the same time. Substantial environmental reductions have been associated with a shift toward plant-based dietary patterns, including decreases of up to 76% in diet-related land use, 49% in greenhouse gas emissions, 49% in eutrophication, and 14–21% in water consumption (Gibbs & Cappuccio, 2022).

Plant-based consumption is gaining relevance in Indonesia, as health, lifestyle, and sustainability are increasingly considered by consumers in their food choices. This emerging shift is supported by empirical evidence: in a study of 978 Indonesian consumers, it was found that intentions to consume plant-based meat were shaped by perceived cost, product value, critical mass, and health motivation, and these intentions were then translated into actual consumption (M. Yang et al., 2024). Similarly, it is indicated by evidence from 210 consumers in Jakarta that sustainable food consumption is significantly influenced by lifestyle behavior and health awareness, and a stronger effect is shown by lifestyle (Agustina et al., 2024). In addition to environmental benefits, lower obesity prevalence and reduced risks of chronic diseases and all-cause mortality are associated with plant-based dietary patterns (Gibbs & Cappuccio, 2022; Mambrini et al., 2025). Furthermore, the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals is supported by plant-based food consumption, as challenges related to food security, human health, water conservation, climate action, and ecosystem protection are addressed at the same time (Chen et al., 2022).

Despite these benefits, the adoption of plant-based food products by consumers is still difficult to encourage, so Green Purchase Intention (GPI) is considered an important area of investigation. It has been established in previous studies that actual green purchasing behavior is significantly predicted by GPI and that valuable insights are provided for the design of effective sustainability-oriented marketing strategies (Kamalanon et al., 2022; Wijekoon & Sabri, 2021). Although increasing attention has been given to sustainable consumption in Indonesia and considerable market potential is shown by plant-based food products (Arwanto et al., 2022), empirical evidence on consumers' intentions to purchase plant-based foods is still relatively limited.

The importance of understanding GPI is made even clearer when the persistent gap between intention and actual behavior is considered. Green Purchase Intention is generally considered an important step toward green purchasing behavior; however, the corresponding consumption choice is not necessarily made by consumers who have a favorable intention. A substantial group of consumers who expressed positive intentions toward green food products but did not complete the corresponding purchases was identified by Sio et al., (2024), and the persistence of the intention–behavior gap was highlighted. Similar challenges have been observed in the plant-based food sector, where purchase intentions are influenced by various psychological and contextual factors, including online brand trust, self-efficacy, health value, and environmental concern (Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024). It is suggested by these findings that the strengthening of consumers' intentions is still an essential step toward the promotion of sustainable food consumption and the narrowing of the gap between environmental concern and actual purchasing behavior.

Among the factors by which consumers' sustainable purchasing decisions are influenced, considerable scholarly attention has been given to Social Influence. The impact of family members, peers, media, and broader social networks on the shaping of individuals' consumption preferences, attitudes, and behavioral intentions is reflected by Social Influence. Its positive role in the encouragement of sustainable consumption has been consistently demonstrated by empirical evidence. In the context of plant-based foods, consumers' online purchase intentions have been shown to be significantly enhanced by Social

Influence (Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024). Similar findings have been reported in broader sustainable consumption settings, where sustainability consciousness and green purchase intentions are positively affected by social influence (Islam et al., 2024). Furthermore, environmentally responsible purchasing decisions have been found to be encouraged by social norms that are communicated through family, peers, media, and social networks (Schubert et al., 2021; X. Yang et al., 2021). In support of these findings, it was confirmed in a meta-analysis of 54 empirical studies that a strong positive influence on green purchase intention is exerted by subjective norms (Zhuang et al., 2021).

Although the positive relationship between Social Influence and GPI has been widely documented, the underlying mechanisms by which social influence is translated into sustainable purchasing intentions are still less clear. Consumers are unlikely to be influenced by social interactions only through direct persuasion. Instead, how environmental issues are understood by individuals and how they see themselves in relation to environmentally responsible consumption may be shaped by these interactions. It is suggested in the existing literature that sustainable purchasing intentions are more likely to be developed by consumers when their environmental knowledge is enhanced and their identification with environmentally responsible groups is strengthened by social interactions. Through Green Product Knowledge, the environmental attributes and benefits of sustainable products are better understood by consumers, so their willingness to purchase such products is increased (M. Zheng et al., 2023). In the context of plant-based foods, product knowledge has been identified as one of the most influential determinants of consumers' purchase decisions (Venter de Villiers et al., 2024). Similarly, green food purchase intentions and sustainable food consumption have been shown to be positively influenced by Green Social Identity, as individuals are encouraged to align their consumption choices with their environmental values and social identities (Gravelines et al., 2022; C. Zheng et al., 2023). Together, it is suggested by these findings that important roles may be played by knowledge-based and identity-based mechanisms in the translation of social influence into consumers' intentions to adopt sustainable food products.

Although research on sustainable consumption and green purchasing behavior has been expanded considerably, the mechanisms behind these relationships are still not sufficiently understood, particularly in emerging markets. Previous studies have mainly been focused on developed countries and a limited number of emerging economies, so knowledge on sustainable consumption behavior is unevenly distributed geographically (Patiño-Toro et al., 2024). Social Influence has increasingly been recognized as an important determinant of Green Purchase Intention, yet limited clarity is provided by the existing evidence on how this influence is translated into purchasing intentions. In recent studies in Indonesia and Vietnam, social influence has been linked to green intentions, but identity-based pathways have not been distinguished from knowledge-based pathways (Hoang et al., 2026; Yoharis et al., 2025). Indirect mechanisms involving green trust, social capital, and customer inspiration have been suggested in other studies, although these pathways are still context-specific (Van Hoang et al., 2025; Zhao & Furuoka, 2025). Although Green Social Identity and Green Product Knowledge have each been associated with sustainable consumption, their relative roles in the translation of Social Influence into Green Purchase Intention have rarely been examined at the same time. This gap is particularly relevant in Indonesia's plant-based food context, where empirical evidence is still limited. Therefore, a more detailed explanation of how green purchase intentions are influenced by social influence can be provided by the examination of these two pathways, and sustainable consumption research can be extended to an emerging-market setting.

Therefore, how consumers' Green Purchase Intention toward plant-based foods is shaped by Social Influence is investigated in this study, and the mediating roles of Green Social Identity and Green Product Knowledge among consumers in Indonesia are examined.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Identity Theory

In Social Identity Theory (SIT), it is proposed that a sense of self is developed by individuals through their interactions with social groups, so self-concepts are formed that reflect the characteristics and values associated with collective group

identities (Shao et al., 2023). These self-concepts are derived from a combination of knowledge, values, and emotions that are embedded in an individual's membership in a social group (Zhang & Li, 2022). Through repeated social interactions and shared experiences, identities that match the social categories to which they belong are gradually built by individuals (Mittal et al., 2022). Self-enhancement may also be produced by this process, as individuals try to distinguish their collective identity from that of others and positive value is gained from group membership (Casidy et al., 2024). These dynamics occur because identity-consistent paradigms are often used as interpretive frameworks through which individuals think, feel, and behave (Shao et al., 2023; Ukrainets & Homburg, 2021). Accordingly, it is assumed in SIT that two interconnected levels of identity are possessed by individuals: personal identity and social identity (Ukrainets & Homburg, 2021). The formation and evaluation of these identities are shaped by three basic components of identification, namely the cognitive, evaluative, and emotional components (Shao et al., 2023).

2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), a comprehensive framework is provided in which sustainable consumption is conceptualized not as an impulsive act but as a highly deliberate and planned cognitive process (Laheri et al., 2024; Ngo et al., 2025). Within this theoretical paradigm, behavioral intentions are treated as the primary antecedent of actual environmental actions, and these intentions are systematically driven by three core psychological constructs. First, the consumer's positive or negative cognitive evaluation of the utility and attributes of eco-friendly products is captured by attitude. Second, the perceived social pressures and normative expectations exerted by external reference groups are denoted by subjective norms. Finally, an individual's self-assessed capability and resource availability to successfully perform the targeted action are represented by perceived behavioral control (Li & Shan, 2025; Nguyen et al., 2024). When these basic elements operate together, a strong explanatory and predictive model is established, by which the complex social and psychological mechanisms involved are clarified. Consequently, it is effectively demonstrated by the TPB how underlying environmental awareness, intrinsic values, and objective knowledge are translated into definitive green purchasing decisions and broader sustainable consumption behaviors across various market contexts (Cui et al., 2024; Wu & Chiang, 2023).

2.3 Social Influence and Green Purchase Intention

The extent to which individuals' consumption intentions are shaped by people and groups that are important to them, including family, peers, media, and social networks, is reflected by Social Influence. Through this influence, consumers can be encouraged to consider environmentally responsible choices when their purchase intentions are formed. A positive association between social influence and green purchase intention has been reported in previous studies across sustainable consumption contexts, including plant-based food products (Islam et al., 2024; Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024). Sustainable food choices and environmentally responsible purchasing behavior can also be encouraged by social networks and interpersonal interactions (Schubert et al., 2021; X. Yang et al., 2021). Consistent with these findings, it was found in a meta-analysis of 54 empirical studies that green purchase intention is positively influenced by subjective norms (Zhuang et al., 2021). Therefore, a greater intention to purchase plant-based food products is expected to be shown by consumers who experience stronger social influence.

2.4 Social Influence and Green Social Identity

Green Social Identity can be shaped by Social Influence, as social norms, shared values, and behavioral cues are provided to individuals, by which what is considered appropriate within a particular group is defined. Through repeated interaction with family, peers, and environmentally oriented communities, consumers may be encouraged to internalize sustainability-related values and to include them in their self-concept. This process is particularly relevant to plant-based consumption, where dietary choices can be made expressions of group membership and shared environmental values. It is indicated in previous research that environmentally oriented identities can be strengthened and sustainable food choices can be encouraged by social environments and group norms (Judge et al., 2022; Schubert et al., 2021; Zinn et al., 2023). In addition, identification with environmentally responsible groups has been associated with stronger intentions toward green food consumption (Filippelli et

al., 2025; C. Zheng et al., 2023). Thus, consumers' Green Social Identity is expected to be strengthened by social interactions in which sustainability-oriented norms are reinforced.

2.5 Social Influence and Green Product Knowledge

The development of Green Product Knowledge may be supported by Social Influence, as individuals are exposed to information, experiences, and recommendations that are shared through social networks. Through interactions with family members, peers, media, and other reference groups, opportunities are provided for consumers to learn about the environmental attributes and benefits of sustainable products. It has been shown in previous studies that sustainable food choices and green purchasing behaviors are significantly affected by social norms and interpersonal influences (Schubert et al., 2021; X. Yang et al., 2021). Similarly, an important role in the shaping of food-related decisions among younger consumers is played by family members and social influencers (Zorell, 2022). Although product knowledge has been identified as a stronger determinant of plant-based food choices than social influence itself (Venter de Villiers et al., 2024), social interactions may be used as an important channel through which this knowledge is gained. Therefore, Green Product Knowledge is expected to be positively influenced by Social Influence.

2.6 Green Social Identity and Green Purchase Intention

Green Social Identity is considered a key determinant of Green Purchase Intention because consumption behaviors that are consistent with their self-concept and group affiliations are more likely to be adopted by individuals. A stronger tendency to adopt and support eco-friendly goods and habits is shown by individuals whose self-concept is aligned with environmental values. It has been found in empirical studies that social identity is positively associated with green food purchase intention and that sustainable food consumption behavior is supported by green self-identity (Gravelines et al., 2022; C. Zheng et al., 2023). Similarly, it is indicated in research on plant-based consumption that consumers' willingness to choose plant-based foods can be strengthened by identity-related factors and group identification (Filippelli et al., 2025; Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024). Together, Green Social Identity is established by these findings as a strong predictor of Green Purchase Intention.

2.7 Green Product Knowledge and Green Purchase Intention

Green Product Knowledge is considered a key antecedent of Green Purchase Intention because favorable purchase intentions are more likely to be developed by consumers when the environmental attributes, benefits, and value of sustainable products are understood. Through knowledge, uncertainty is reduced, consumers' evaluations of green products are enhanced, and confidence in sustainable purchasing decisions is strengthened. A positive association between product knowledge and purchase intention has been reported in previous studies across green consumption contexts, including sustainable food and other environmentally friendly products (Jakubowska et al., 2024; Witek & Kuźniar, 2024; M. Zheng et al., 2023). It is further indicated by evidence from green product research that consumers with greater knowledge are better able to evaluate product attributes and to develop favorable purchase intentions (Kamalanon et al., 2022; Patak et al., 2021). Together, the essential role of Green Product Knowledge in the driving of Green Purchase Intentions is highlighted by these findings.

2.8 Mediating Role of Green Social Identity

Green Purchase Intention may be enhanced by Social Influence through the development of Green Social Identity, as consumption behaviors are often aligned by individuals with the values, norms, and identities of the groups to which they belong. From a social identity perspective, individuals are encouraged by social interactions and normative influences to internalize environmentally responsible values, by which sustainable purchasing intentions are then shaped. It has been shown in previous research that social identity is positively associated with green food purchase intention and that the translation of group-related processes into sustainable consumption responses can be explained by it (C. Zheng et al., 2023). It is also indicated in research on sustainable food choices that consumers can be encouraged by group norms and identification with environmentally oriented groups to adopt behaviors that are consistent with their social identity (Filippelli et al., 2025; Judge et al., 2022). Thus, it is suggested by the accumulated evidence that identity-based processes are an important pathway through which social influence is translated into green purchasing intentions.

2.9 Mediating Role of Green Product Knowledge

Green Purchase Intention may be influenced by Social Influence through the development of Green Product Knowledge, as social interactions are often used as important channels for information exchange and learning about sustainable products. Through exposure to information from family members, peers, media, and other reference groups, consumers’ understanding of product attributes, environmental benefits, and sustainability-related values can be enhanced, and purchasing intentions may then be strengthened. Environmental knowledge and related cognitive factors have been identified in previous research as important components of sustainable consumption decisions (Parker et al., 2023; Saari et al., 2021). Product knowledge has also been associated with consumers’ intentions to purchase sustainable and green food products (Jakubowska et al., 2024; Witek & Kuźniar, 2024). It is suggested by these findings that purchase intention may be influenced by social interactions not only through direct social influence but also through the improvement of consumers’ understanding of green products. Therefore, the relationship between Social Influence and Green Purchase Intention is expected to be mediated by Green Product Knowledge.

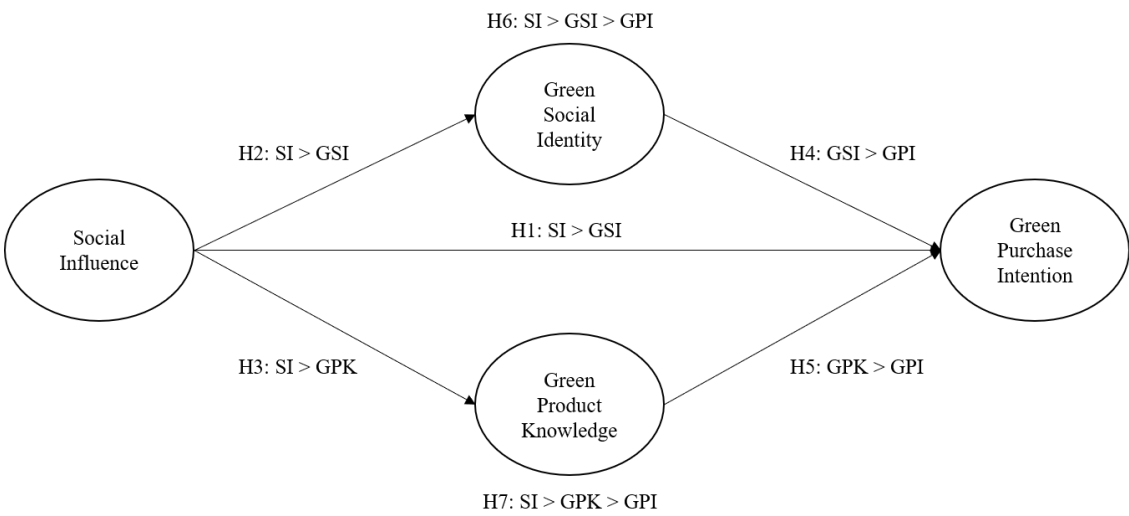


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

- The hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows:
- H1: Green Purchase Intention is positively influenced by Social Influence.
 - H2: Green Social Identity is positively influenced by Social Influence.
 - H3: Green Product Knowledge is positively influenced by Social Influence.
 - H4: Green Purchase Intention is positively influenced by Green Social Identity.
 - H5: Green Purchase Intention is positively influenced by Green Product Knowledge.
 - H6: The relationship between Social Influence and Green Purchase Intention is mediated by Green Social Identity.
 - H7: The relationship between Social Influence and Green Purchase Intention is mediated by Green Product Knowledge.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

An explanatory quantitative design was adopted in this study, and Indonesian consumers who are actively involved in plant-based communities (e.g., by participating in events, bazaars, and campaigns) and who follow vegan or vegetarian diets were targeted. Dedicated community members were intentionally sampled so that respondents who genuinely possess a Green Social Identity could be captured; thus, construct validity was ensured for identity-driven theoretical testing, for which general consumers would be unsuitable. Primary data were collected from a non-probability sample of 253 respondents through a structured online questionnaire. Ethical protocols were strictly followed; digital informed consent was provided by the participants after voluntary involvement, complete anonymity, and response confidentiality were assured. The constructs were measured on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree” to 4 = “strongly agree”) so that central tendency bias and ambiguous midpoint responses could be avoided and clear consumer positions could be obtained (Sugiyono, 2013). The data were analyzed

using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS 3.0, which was selected because of its strong power in the evaluation of complex dual-mediation paths, its robustness against non-normal data distributions, and its adequacy for the sample size.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULTS

The respondent characteristics of the 253 individuals are outlined in Table 1. Females were the dominant group at 61.66% (n = 156), while the remaining 38.34% (n = 97) were males. In terms of age distribution, the largest proportion of respondents was from Generation Z (13–28 years), with 148 respondents (58.50%), followed by Millennials (29–44 years), with 91 respondents (35.97%), and Generation X (45–60 years), with 14 respondents (5.53%). Geographically, the respondents were distributed across 20 provinces in Indonesia, and the highest representation was from the Riau Islands (Kepulauan Riau), with 49 respondents (19.37%), followed by DKI Jakarta, with 44 respondents (17.40%), and West Java (Jawa Barat), with 39 respondents (15.42%). Regarding occupational status, the largest group was formed by employees, with 155 respondents (61.26%), followed by students, with 49 respondents (19.37%), unemployed respondents, with 28 respondents (11.07%), and business owners, with 21 respondents (8.30%). Overall, it is indicated by the respondent profile that the sample was mainly female, Generation Z, and employed, while a geographically diverse distribution across Indonesia was also reflected.

Table 1 | Respondent Profile

Category	Description	Quantity	Percentage
Gender	Male	97	38.34%
	Female	156	61.66%
Age	13 – 28	148	58.50%
	29 – 44	91	35.97%
	45 – 60	14	5.53%
Province	Banten	24	9.49%
	DI Yogyakarta	8	3.16%
	DKI Jakarta	44	17.40%
	Jambi	1	0.40%
	Jawa Barat	39	15.42%
	Jawa Tengah	22	8.70%
	Jawa Timur	24	9.49%
	Kalimantan Selatan	3	1.19%
	Kalimantan Timur	3	1.19%
	Kepulauan Riau	49	19.37%
	Lampung	5	2.00%
	Maluku	3	1.19%
	Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam	2	0.80%
	Nusa Tenggara Barat	3	1.19%
	Nusa Tenggara Timur	2	0.80%
	Riau	6	2.38%
	Sulawesi Selatan	7	2.77%
	Sulawesi Tengah	1	0.40%
	Sumatera Selatan	4	1.58%

Category	Description	Quantity	Percentage
Job	Sumatera Utara	3	1.19%
	Business Owner	21	8.30%
	Employee	155	61.26%
	Student	49	19.37%
	Unemployed	28	11.07%

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The results of the convergent validity assessment based on the outer loading values of each measurement indicator are presented in Table 2. The adequacy of reflective indicators can be assessed through their outer loadings, and values of 0.70 or higher are regarded as acceptable for the representation of the intended latent construct (Hair et al., 2024). The factor loadings for all reflective indicators in Table 2 range from 0.728 to 0.871, so the required criteria are met. Among the indicators, the highest loading (0.871) is recorded by SI3, so its strong contribution to Social Influence is reflected, whereas the lowest loading (0.728) is shown by GSI1. Although it is the lowest, the GSI1 loading is still above the recommended threshold. The adequacy of the measurement indicators is supported by the overall pattern of indicator loadings, and the convergent validity of the measurement model is confirmed.

Table 2 | Outer Loading

	Green Product Knowledge	Green Purchase Intention	Green Social Identity	Social Influence
GPK1	0.791			
GPK2	0.840			
GPK3	0.790			
GPI1		0.774		
GPI2		0.823		
GPI3		0.770		
GPI4		0.840		
GPI5		0.800		
GSI1			0.728	
GSI2			0.789	
GSI3			0.774	
GSI4			0.746	
GSI5			0.746	
GSI6			0.754	
GSI7			0.808	
GSI8			0.762	
GSI9			0.798	
GSI10			0.734	
SI1				0.822
SI2				0.748
SI3				0.871
SI4				0.851

Source: Data Processed (2026)

In line with (Hair et al., 2024), robust construct reliability is demonstrated by threshold values above 0.70 for Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability, whereas convergent validity is supported by an AVE above 0.50, as shown in Table 3. In the present analysis, Cronbach's alpha coefficients range from 0.732 to 0.921, rho_A values range from 0.731 to 0.921, and composite reliability coefficients range from 0.848 to 0.934 across the constructs. The recommended threshold is exceeded by all three reliability measures, so satisfactory internal consistency is supported across the constructs. The AVE values also exceed the recommended threshold, ranging from 0.584 to 0.679, so more than 50% of the variance of its measurement items is explained by each construct, and convergent validity is supported. Overall, satisfactory reliability and convergent validity are demonstrated by Green Product Knowledge, Green Purchase Intention, Green Social Identity, and Social Influence.

Table 3 | Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, rho_A, and AVE

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Green Product Knowledge	0.732	0.731	0.848	0.651
Green Purchase Intention	0.861	0.864	0.900	0.643
Green Social Identity	0.921	0.921	0.934	0.584
Social Influence	0.843	0.855	0.894	0.679

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The discriminant validity assessment results based on the Fornell–Larcker criterion are displayed in Table 4. Discriminant validity is established when the square root of the AVE of each latent variable is higher than any inter-construct correlation involving that variable (Hair et al., 2024). As shown in Table 4, the square root of the AVE values for Green Product Knowledge (0.807), Green Purchase Intention (0.802), Green Social Identity (0.764), and Social Influence (0.824) are consistently higher than their inter-construct correlations. The correlations range from 0.511 to 0.751, whereas the diagonal values representing the square roots of the AVE are higher for each construct. The distinctiveness of the constructs within the measurement model is supported by these findings, and sufficient evidence of discriminant validity is provided.

Table 4 | Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Green Product Knowledge	Green Purchase Intention	Green Social Identity	Social Influence
Green Product Knowledge	0.807			
Green Purchase Intention	0.702	0.802		
Green Social Identity	0.708	0.751	0.764	
Social Influence	0.511	0.529	0.648	0.824

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The discriminant validity assessment based on the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio is presented in Table 5. Based on the commonly used criterion, satisfactory discriminant validity is indicated by HTMT values below 0.90. In this study, the HTMT values range from 0.614 to 0.880, and the highest value is found between Green Product Knowledge and Green Purchase Intention (0.880). Because all values are below the specified threshold, the constructs can be regarded as empirically distinguishable within the measurement model. Thus, satisfactory discriminant validity is demonstrated by Green Product Knowledge, Green Purchase Intention, Green Social Identity, and Social Influence.

Table 5 | HTMT Criterion

	Green Product Knowledge	Green Purchase Intention	Green Social Identity	Social Influence
Green Product Knowledge				
Green Purchase Intention	0.880			
Green Social Identity	0.864	0.839		
Social Influence	0.639	0.614	0.722	

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The R^2 values for the endogenous variables are displayed in Table 6, and the proportion of variance explained by their predictor constructs in the structural model is shown. It is shown by the results that an R^2 of 0.261 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.258$) is obtained by Green Product Knowledge, so 26.1% of its variance is explained by the predictors in the model. An R^2 of 0.623 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.618$) is recorded for Green Purchase Intention, so 62.3% of the variance in this construct is explained by the model. Meanwhile, an R^2 of 0.419 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.417$) is obtained by Green Social Identity, so 41.9% of its variance is explained by its predictors. Among the evaluated endogenous variables, the highest level of explained variance is shown by Green Purchase Intention, so different explanatory capacities of the model across the constructs are reflected.

Table 6 | R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Green Product Knowledge	0.261	0.258
Green Purchase Intention	0.623	0.618
Green Social Identity	0.419	0.417

Source: Data Processed (2026)

An SRMR of 0.112 is produced by the structural model, as reported in Table 7. Because the 0.08 guideline is exceeded, it is shown by this value that the correlation structure implied by the model differs to some extent from the observed sample correlations. Meanwhile, the NFI value of 0.776 is below the commonly suggested benchmark of 0.90. Overall, it is suggested by these results that the conventional global fit criteria are not fully met by the model. However, the structural model can still be interpreted and can be further assessed through the evaluation of path coefficients and R^2 .

Table 7 | SRMR

	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.112
d_ULS	3.201
d_G	0.613
Chi-Square	795.583
NFI	0.776

Source: Data Processed (2026)

The results of hypothesis testing using the path coefficient, t-statistic, and p-value are presented in Table 8. H1 is not empirically supported, as no significant relationship with Green Purchase Intention is shown by Social Influence ($\beta = 0.044$, $t = 0.630$, $p = 0.529$). By contrast, H2 is supported, as Green Social Identity is positively and significantly associated with Social

Influence ($\beta = 0.648$, $t = 15.292$, $p < 0.001$). H3 is also supported, as Green Product Knowledge is positively and significantly associated with Social Influence ($\beta = 0.511$, $t = 8.803$, $p < 0.001$). H4 is also supported, and it is indicated that Green Purchase Intention is positively influenced by Green Social Identity ($\beta = 0.484$, $t = 6.083$, $p < 0.001$), and a significant positive effect of Green Product Knowledge on Green Purchase Intention is shown for H5 ($\beta = 0.336$, $t = 4.966$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, both H6 and H7 are supported by the indirect effects, as Green Purchase Intention is significantly affected by Social Influence through Green Social Identity ($\beta = 0.314$, $t = 5.686$, $p < 0.001$) and through Green Product Knowledge ($\beta = 0.172$, $t = 4.518$, $p < 0.001$). Overall, it is indicated by the findings that Green Purchase Intention is not directly affected by Social Influence but is influenced indirectly through Green Social Identity and Green Product Knowledge.

Table 8 | Hypothesis Testing Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Results
H1: SI -> GPI	0.044	0.043	0.070	0.630	0.529	Not supported
H2: SI -> GSI	0.648	0.650	0.042	15.292	0.000	Supported
H3: SI -> GPK	0.511	0.514	0.058	8.803	0.000	Supported
H4: GSI -> GPI	0.484	0.484	0.080	6.083	0.000	Supported
H5: GPK -> GPI	0.336	0.338	0.068	4.966	0.000	Supported
H6: SI -> GSI -> GPI	0.314	0.315	0.055	5.686	0.000	Supported
H7: SI -> GPK -> GPI	0.172	0.174	0.038	4.518	0.000	Supported

Source: Data Processed (2026)

4.2 DISCUSSION

4.2.1. Social Influence and Green Purchase Intention

A non-significant direct pathway from Social Influence to Green Purchase Intention was revealed by the empirical analysis, so H1 was rejected. This outcome is different from the established consensus, as subjective norms and peer networks have traditionally been positioned in many studies as direct and independent drivers of sustainable buying behaviors (Islam et al., 2024; Schubert et al., 2021; Teangsompong & Sawangproh, 2024; X. Yang et al., 2021; Zhuang et al., 2021). In most mainstream B2C contexts, a momentary purchasing reflex is often triggered by external pressure alone.

However, the absence of a direct effect in this study is likely explained by the unique composition and psychological maturity of the sampled group. Because the participants are already firmly embedded in active vegan and vegetarian circles, direct persuasive power is no longer exerted by superficial social endorsements. For these deeply engaged consumers, social interaction is used as a basic foundation by which deeper psychological processing is shaped, rather than as a simple behavioral trigger.

4.2.2. Social Influence and Green Social Identity

The application of Social Identity Theory (SIT) within a sustainable consumption context is strongly validated by the robust positive link between Social Influence and Green Social Identity. An individual's sustainability-oriented self-concept is fundamentally shaped by interpersonal engagements and normative community standards (Filippelli et al., 2025; Judge et al., 2022; Zinn et al., 2023). It is confirmed by these findings that social environments are not merely passive backgrounds but active settings in which green identities are developed.

Psychologically, a deep internalization process is illustrated by this dynamic. Through continuous engagement with pro-environmental reference groups, such as participation in bazaars and advocacy campaigns, ecological values are smoothly

integrated by consumers as core components of their collective identity. Consequently, dietary choices are no longer seen as mere consumer preferences but are developed into clear markers of group belonging and shared moral values.

4.2.3. Social Influence and Green Product Knowledge

At the same time, a substantial positive association with Green Product Knowledge was shown by Social Influence, so it was confirmed that interpersonal environments are used as important hubs for information exchange (Schubert et al., 2021; X. Yang et al., 2021; Zorell, 2022). This knowledge acquisition is fully aligned with the basic premise of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), in which green consumption is conceptualized as a highly deliberate cognitive effort (Laheri et al., 2024; Ngo et al., 2025).

Within this framework, the essential information needed by consumers to build objective knowledge about sustainable products is provided by social networks. Instead of complex nutritional or ecological data being researched independently, the selected experiences, recommendations, and factual discussions shared in their trusted communities are heavily relied on by consumers so that reliable knowledge about plant-based alternatives can be built.

4.2.4. Green Social Identity and Green Purchase Intention

Based on the theoretical premises of SIT, Green Purchase Intention is directly driven by the strong identity alignment that is formed through social interactions. This result is fully consistent with prior evidence, in which it was confirmed that B2C decisions that reflect their established group affiliations and internalized values are naturally preferred by buyers (Gravelines et al., 2022; Keoy et al., 2023; C. Zheng et al., 2023).

When sustainable consumption is viewed as an intrinsic expression of the self, the intention to purchase plant-based products is greatly increased. The behavioral drive is shifted from external compliance to internal consistency; green products are actively sought by consumers not to impress others but to satisfy their own internally validated identity standards and to maintain consistency with their chosen community.

4.2.5. Green Product Knowledge and Green Purchase Intention

Based on the cognitive framework of TPB, as specific details are absorbed by individuals through their social ties, the tangible health and ecological benefits of plant-based alternatives are carefully evaluated. Through this precise cognitive evaluation, favorable attitudes are built and perceived behavioral control is increased (Li & Shan, 2025; Nguyen et al., 2024). This finding is supported by extensive empirical literature, in which product knowledge is identified as an essential precursor of sustainable dietary choices (Jakubowska et al., 2024; Witek & Kuźniar, 2024; M. Zheng et al., 2023).

Through the accumulation of accurate product knowledge, common B2C market barriers, such as skepticism about nutritional adequacy or environmental impact, are effectively removed. When a high degree of cognitive clarity is possessed, consumers feel empowered and capable of performing the behavior, and a clear and confident purchase intention is directly formed.

4.2.6. Mediating Role of Green Social Identity

The validation of this indirect route is considered a central theoretical contribution of this study. It is clearly shown by the evidence that purchasing intent is developed by external influences mainly through the formation of social identities (Filippelli et al., 2025; Islam et al., 2024; C. Zheng et al., 2023). SIT is fundamentally extended by this mediation path, as the exact mechanism by which external social expectations are translated into actionable and sustainable market behavior is demonstrated.

Notably, the mediating effect of Green Social Identity was much larger than that of the knowledge pathway. This dominance is highly logical given Indonesia's strong collectivist culture and active community-level activism. In such deeply interconnected B2C environments, isolated cognitive product evaluations are often overridden by communal harmony and loyalty to shared norms, so it is shown that identity-based mechanisms are significantly amplified by cultural contexts.

4.2.7. Mediating Role of Green Product Knowledge

Parallel to the identity pathway, it is confirmed by the findings that the gap between social influence and purchase

intention is successfully bridged by knowledge acquisition (Parker et al., 2023; Saari et al., 2021; Van Hoang et al., 2025). Through the integration of TPB into this dual-mediation model, it is revealed that the maximum behavioral impact of factual knowledge is achieved when it is structurally supported by a social environment in which information sharing is actively facilitated.

For industry practitioners, it is confirmed that marketing strategies cannot be based on education alone. This dual mechanism must be recognized by marketers, and transparent, educational product messaging that can be easily circulated by community hubs should be provided. The provision of the exact cognitive tools needed by consumers to evaluate product benefits, while the social spaces in which that information is discussed are also fostered, is considered the optimal blueprint for the capture of green purchase intentions.

5. CONCLUSION

The mechanisms through which Green Purchase Intention toward plant-based foods in Indonesia is driven by Social Influence were investigated in this study. It is revealed by the empirical findings that no direct effect on purchase intentions is exerted by social influence; instead, it operates fully through a dual-mediation framework involving Green Social Identity and Green Product Knowledge.

The main theoretical contribution of this study is found in how Social Identity Theory (SIT) is extended by this dual-mediation model within the context of sustainable consumption. Through the integration of SIT with the cognitive framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), it is demonstrated that external social influence must be internalized either as a collective group norm (identity) or as a cognitive evaluation of product attributes (knowledge) so that purchasing intentions can be effectively shaped.

Furthermore, a critical practical contribution is offered by this study, as it is clearly demonstrated by the findings that identity-based strategies are more effective than knowledge alone, as evidenced by the substantially stronger mediating role of Green Social Identity. For practitioners and marketers, it is implied that behavioral change cannot be driven only by the dissemination of educational product information. Instead, community identity formation should be prioritized in sustainable marketing strategies, such as the establishment of plant-based clubs, the organization of grassroots campaigns, and the development of supportive social environments, while educational product information is used as a secondary, supporting pillar to justify consumption choices.

6. LIMITATION AND IMPLICATION

These findings must be interpreted in light of several methodological limitations, by which clear directions for future research are also provided. First, the current sample was limited to existing members and active supporters of plant-based communities. Although a highly relevant group for the examination of green identity was provided, the generalizability of the findings to the broader Indonesian population is limited. In future research, broader consumer samples, including mainstream consumers or those newly transitioning to flexitarian diets, should be prioritized so that this dual-mediation model can be validated across more diverse demographic segments.

Second, a cross-sectional design was used in this study, and consumer perceptions were captured at a single point in time, so definitive causal relationships between the constructs cannot be established. To address this issue, longitudinal studies are recommended for future investigations. Through such approaches, how green social identity and product knowledge change over time and, importantly, how they are translated from purchase intentions into actual purchasing behavior could be tracked, so the established intention–behavior gap could be bridged.

Finally, although the parallel roles of identity and knowledge were successfully captured in this study, it is suggested by the complexity of sustainable consumption that other psychological factors may also be involved. In future research, this

framework is highly encouraged to be expanded through the inclusion of other mediators or moderators, such as environmental concern and self-efficacy, so that a more complete understanding of the drivers of plant-based food consumption can be provided.

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