

**GEN Z'S PERCEPTION OF GREEN MARKETING THAT SELLS: A CASE STUDY OF
#SejauhManaKamuPeduli BY SEJAUH MATA MEMANDANG**

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ABSTRACT

The increasing awareness of environmental problems has recently become a concern that has caused many people to take action to use environmentally friendly components. These actions include how companies use green marketing to promote green products. Therefore, the term greenwashing has become more common, raising questions and causing skepticism among consumers. This research aims to examine how skeptical behavior emerges as a response to green marketing that sells in the case of #SejauhManaKamuPeduli by Sejauh Mata Memandang. This research uses the theory of Green Marketing by Hennion & Kinnear, Greenwashing by Jay Westerveld, and Skepticism by Hurtt using qualitative methods and case study Pattern Matching analysis methods, as well as collecting data through interviews with three Gen Z informants. This research shows that skeptical behavior by Gen Z towards green marketing that sells green products begins when someone is exposed to green marketing actions and they're seeking information about the green product. When information about the green products they are looking for does not meet their expectations, skeptical behavior will emerge.

Keywords: Green Marketing, Greenwashing, Skeptical Behavior, Gen Z, *Sejauh Mata Memandang*.

ABSTRAK

Meningkatnya kesadaran terhadap permasalahan lingkungan hidup akhir-akhir ini menjadi suatu kekhawatiran yang menyebabkan banyak orang mengambil tindakan untuk menggunakan komponen ramah lingkungan. Tindakan ini mencakup bagaimana perusahaan menggunakan pemasaran ramah lingkungan untuk mempromosikan produk ramah hijau. Oleh karena itu, istilah *greenwashing* sudah menjadi hal yang umum sehingga menimbulkan pertanyaan dan menimbulkan skeptis di kalangan konsumen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana perilaku skeptis muncul sebagai respon dari *green marketing* yang menjual pada #SejauhManaKamuPeduli oleh Sejauh Mata Memandang. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori *Green Marketing* oleh Hennion & Kinnear, *Greenwashing* oleh Jay Westerveld, dan *Skepticism* oleh

Hurtt dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan metode analisis Pattern Matching studi kasus, serta pengumpulan data melalui wawancara terhadap tiga orang informan Gen Z. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perilaku skeptis oleh Gen Z terhadap *green marketing* yang menjual produk hijau dimulai ketika seseorang terpapar dengan tindakan *green marketing* dan mencari informasi mengenai produk hijau tersebut. Ketika informasi mengenai produk hijau yang mereka cari tidak memenuhi ekspektasi, maka perilaku skeptis akan muncul.

Kata Kunci: *Green Marketing, Greenwashing, Skeptical Behavior, Gen Z, Sejauh Mata Memandang.*

BACKGROUND

This recent days where the increasing of awareness towards environmental has become a concern which led to many actions using green components and the emergence of an environmentally friendly product or also known as green product (Gomes et al., 2023a). There's a theoretical and practical evidence that notice if a generation have larger tendencies towards these reality, they will generate the desire to pay more for an environmentally products (Gomes et al., 2023a). Generation Z, is considered as one of the generation that has more environmental concern and green-friendly that has the desire to pay more for eco-friendly product (Gomes et al., 2023). Generation Z itself refers to the generation that was born between 1997 and 2012 which is after millennials. They grew up in an age of social media and also the internet (Nicholas Kardaras, 2016). Other than that, the growing of consumers in sustainability issue drives fashion brands and also retailers to take action by providing consumer market for a "sustainable fashion" (Dangelico et al., 2022).

Since the attention towards sustainability issues especially in fashion industry increased, it is necessary to motivate consumer to buy sustainable fashion (Lenk et al., 2021). By that, it consequently leads to a slight development of green fashion and upward the trend of green marketing (GM) (Chan & Wong, 2012). With the introduction of

a green marketing, marketers are nowadays flooded consumers with environmentally-friendly products and it was found that consumer prefer a brand that respond to environmental issues (Lenk et al., 2021). Therefore, companies tried to improve their ecological status by implementing various types of green marketing claims (Hagman et al., 2017).

The use of #SejauhManaKamuPeduli hashtag is the main characteristic of the green marketing by Sejauh Mata Memandang which is shown mostly on each of their posts and profile description. The hashtag itself facilitates discussion on sustainability which fostering a sense of community to increase consumer's awareness towards how much does consumer's care about the environment. This has become an emblematic of a broader movement to promote sustainable fashion and environmentally friendly consumerism among today's youth.

Green marketing has become a crucial strategy to gain advantage in a market where greenwashing also become more common (Lu et al., 2022). Greenwashing itself can be understood as "a practice of deceiving consumers about a company's environmental policies, environmental performances, or positive environmental communication" (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020). These misleading claims often cannot be distinguished from the

real claims such using arguments of “100% natural”, “recyclable”, “biodegradable”, and “chemical free” where in fact, it is false and not the real environmental significance (Brouwer, 2016).

When implemented properly, green campaigns have the potential to give positive impact for the environment by encouraging consumers to adopt more ecologically conscious lifestyles. Undertaking green marketing and expecting a product is considered as a green product are frequently violated by the perception that the products are low-quality or fall short of their environmental claims.

Since Gen Z emerges as a dominant force in consumer markets, understanding their perception with green marketing that sells nowadays becomes very important. This case study aims to provide a description of how skeptical behavior emerges as a response of green marketing that sells. Explaining the intricate dynamics between green marketing, greenwashing perception, and skeptical behavior in the context of Gen Z. By that, this study seeks to understand how skeptical behavior emerges as a response of green marketing that sells in the case of #SejauhManaKamuPeduli by Sejauh Mata Memandang

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is a way of thinking about general structure, methodology, and findings of three streams in research (Muslim, 2015). The Constructivist paradigm is utilized in this research where constructionists view that every phenomenon—the social and natural worlds in particular, are “constructed” or given meaning by human and their cultural process (Jha, 2012).

State of The Art

State of the art includes related research relevant to this research topic. Several previous studies that discussed perceived greenwashing and its impact on product perception were researched by Szarena Szabo and Jane Webster who found that perceived greenwashing relates not only to environmental and product perception but also to consumer's happiness while interacting with the website (Szabo & Webster, 2021)

Green Marketing

The first definition related to Green Marketing back in the 1970's when (Hennion & Kinnear, 1976) highlights about how ecological marketing is described as “*Concerned with all marketing activities that served to help the environmental problem and served to provide remedy for the environment*” Other than that, green marketing is also described as a comprehensive marketing idea where services are produced, used, and marketed in a way that is less harmful to the environment (Sarkar, 2012).

There are a few indicators used to measure green marketing by Sharma and Vredenburg (1998) in (Chamorro & Bañegil, 1999), such as:

1. Written environmental plan
2. Integration of environmental issues in areas of the firm/distribution of responsibilities
3. Commitment of resource to environmental protection
4. Environmental training of employees
5. Generating formal and structured reports, or environmental audits, to monitor environmental performance
6. Explicit consideration of environmental issues in the design of products and processes
7. Formulate an ecological purchasing policy and evaluate ecological performance of suppliers

8. Participatory programmes in environmental protection for customers, associations and other firms
9. Evaluate impact of firm's activity throughout entire life cycle
10. Specific activities to protect environment (recycling materials, saving measures, etc)
11. Reduction of environmental risks
Formulation of clearly defined environmental objectives/strategies.

Greenwashing

A greenwashing itself can be understood as “the intersection between two behavior: poor environmental performances and the positive communication about environment” (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020b). Greenwashing was first accused in the year of 1986 by an activist named Jay Westerveld when it was thought as a company conservation strategy but didn't have any environmental actions with more significant environmental impact (de Freitas Netto et al., 2020b).

Adopting from Horiuchi and Schuchard (2009) in (Chen & Chang, 2013a), there are several ways to measure greenwashing such as:

1. The product misleads with words in its environmental feature
2. The product misleads with visuals or graphics in its environmental features
3. The product possesses a green claim that is vague or seemingly un-provable
4. The product overstates or exaggerates how its green functionality actually is
5. The product leaves out or masks important information that makes the green claim sounds better than it is.

Skepticism

The Skeptical attitude were based on Hurtt Skepticism (Hurtt, 2010). The U.S. Auditing Standards define skepticism as an attitude that includes questioning mind and a critical assessment of audit evidence (K. Hurtt et al.,

2008), Several perspectives on skepticism have been presented by academic audit research including the idea that skepticism is being the opposite of trust (Quadackers, 2009).

There are six characteristic as the indicators according to (R. K. Hurtt, 2010) such as:

1. A questioning mind
2. The suspension of judgement
3. A search for knowledge
4. Interpersonal understanding— associated with the disposition of a person to be skeptical by the evidence obtained
5. Self-confidence
6. Self-determination

RESEARCH METHOD

The research done with a qualitative research method. According to Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey (Hennink et al., 2020) Qualitative research uses a specific collection of research tools including life histories or biography, in-depth interviews, focus group observation, content analysis, and visual methods to investigate people's experience towards such issues (Mudjiyanto, 2018).

The type of research that is used in this research is a case study research. According to (Baškarada, 2014), case studies provides an opportunity for the researcher to receive a deep perspective of the research problem or the situation. Case study allows a deductive and inductive findings where it can be based on a single or multiple cases in a form of exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory and have been describe for such specific method when “how” and “why” are posed (Baškarada, 2014).

Research Subject

The study successfully comprehended the perspective from Gen Z aged 19-23 years old and were familiar with Sejauh Mata Memandang

DISCUSSIONS

The skeptical behavior rooted from a perceived lack of transparency on Sejauh Mata Memandang's part where consumer that has environmental conscious are not satisfied with the message where they crave for specific details about Sejauh Mata Memandang's manufacturing processes, the environmental impact of their materials, as well as the data on the actual sustainability benefits of their initiative. This absence ignites skepticism that leads consumer to questioned the campaign authenticity and alignment with Sejauh Mata Memandang's true environmental commitment.

Moreover, beneath the surface of #SejauhManaKamuPeduli, skepticism emerged as well highlighting exclusivity and the factor of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). This skepticism rooted from a perceived sense of inclusivity by the brand where sustainable fashion often championed by luxury brands as well as a unaffordable price tag that is seen as serving to a niche audience who can afford the premium sustainable clothing. In consequence, this perception

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ignites skepticism that leads the consumer to questioned the sustainability efforts whether it become a genuine call to action or a ploy to capitalize sustainable trends while inaccessible to majority of people.

CONCLUSION

Gen Z nowadays prioritize environmental responsibility and seek brands that genuinely align with their values. Thus, when they are engaged with green marketing by a sustainable brand, they will critically seeks out information about the product, the materials used, as well as the transparency of the brand's sustainability actions. In consequence, if it didn't met their expectancy, it leads to consumers skepticism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Understanding how such perception emerge can also provide retailers to develop effective green marketing or campaign and inspire future marketers to explore the landscape of green marketing platforms and their impact on consumer behavior to avoid greenwashing perceptions as well as skeptical behavior.

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