

# The Effect of Green Attribute on Green Trust: Self-Congruence Theory

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## ABSTRACT

The concept underpinning the research is that a brand's or product's extent in personal identity and reflected values can affect consumers' acceptance of green products. The research explored self-congruence theories to investigate the greater depth of the attributes of green products that boost green trust. In this investigation, survey methods were combined with a quantitative methodology. Using a purposive sample procedure, 200 respondents who consumed drinking water products under the names of Ades, Aqua, Le Minerale, Nestle, and Vit were selected for participation in the research and provided feedback. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was conducted utilizing SmartPLS 3.0. The research findings show that green packaging and advertising do not affect green trust. Meanwhile, green packaging significantly raises green satisfaction and consequently expands green trust. The research contributes to the body of knowledge on self-congruence with a brand or product by exploring symphony and synergy, which show that both positive feelings connected with self-congruence may foster customer happiness and strong brand loyalty. Representing, enforcing, and strengthening the genuine self-concept is the essential role of the self-element. Furthermore, these findings can also provide insight for future researchers, especially regarding the importance of self-congruity values in strengthening brand loyalty.

**Keywords:** green attribute, green trust, self-congruence theory

## INTRODUCTION

Research on ecological awareness is growing recently in developing nations (Amoako et al., 2020; Testa et al., 2019). Environmental conservation has gained recognition as a global necessity for individuals in realizing the importance of ensuring the environment and integrating it into consistent business operations. Therefore, it is essential to adapt through sustainable marketing guidelines that encourage both manufacturing and consumer behaviors that are generally accepted in the perspectives of businesses and consumers.

Green marketing highlights ecological and social well-being (Sharma & Trivedi, 2016). Green advertising (Kao & Du, 2020) and green advertising (Hao et al., 2019) are the primary elements of green

marketing activities. When developing sustainable consumers' profiles, it is fundamental to combine perceived variations in consumer preferences with reliable data concerning socially responsible production (Jaiswal et al., 2021).

It is indicated that consumers frequently favor products with environmentally conscious claims stated in the packaging and advertising (Khandelwal & Singh, 2023; Martins, 2022). Presenting information on a product's ecological responsibility with regard to the respectability of green messages and the credibility of green brands and involvement in green advertising may influence consumer recognition and habits and, in turn, build green trust. On the contrary, it is found that a high degree of trust may have been more significantly generated by green packaging and green advertising (Davis, 1993). Furthermore, the trend

toward sustainability drives consumers to emphasize more on potential risks in addition to the quality of goods.

A few studies have examined how consumers perceive themselves in an ideal state to generate confidence over time. Congruity is consequently key to helping consumers to perceive the green product's characteristics more positively. The research, which is different from previous studies, aims to learn more about the characteristics of environmentally conscious goods as an element of self-sustainability from the self-congruence perspective. The research model can be seen in Figure 1.

The theory of self-congruence is proposed by Sirgy (1986). The basic theory is that self-articulation in memories can be represented by the self-image that individuals construct personally. Individual structures are a set of internalized ideas that people each apply to recall their thoughts and articulate themselves. When the details of a product contradict its green claims, information about these can have a consequence on its competitiveness. Therefore, the decision to focus on leveraging green packaging, green advertising, and perceived quality as determining processes is crucial to enhance inspired green trust based on self-congruence for several reasons. First, self-congruence elucidates the cognitive mechanisms that determine whether the values expressed by a product (in this case, green objectives) align with one's self-concept clarity or not (Furchheim et al., 2020). Second, green marketing campaigns play a vital role in addressing the current global need, making it appropriate to influence demand and purchasing attitudes towards green products, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia. Third, it is in line with the environmental trend, which serves as an economic driving force impacting the rules of business competition (Ren et al., 2022).

Green packaging is a strong attribute that aims to influence purchase decisions and connect them with the possibilities offered by the product. Utilizing green packaging materials is a fundamental way to ensure the sustainability strategy angle of those materials. The environmentally friendly nature of the packaging will provide better information and value to consumers and facilitate their purchasing decisions. Additionally, it serves as a communication medium that links the product's image with the background of the company (Rajendran et al., 2019). Thus, packaging is an important factor that can have post-purchase impacts such as satisfaction, loyalty, and trust. Furthermore, green packaging serves as a communication tool that provides education and positive consumer experiences. It provides an opportunity for consumers to make environmentally conscious choices. Therefore, the researchers can propose the following hypothesis.

H1: Green packaging has a significant positive effect on green trust.

Green advertising encourages and empowers consumers to make informed choices aligned with their values. Providing clear information about the environmental benefits allows consumers to assess the sustainability credentials of a brand and make conscious purchasing decisions. This empowerment enhances trust as consumers feel they have the ability to contribute to positive environmental change through their choices (Amoako et al., 2022). Therefore, the researchers can propose the following hypothesis.

H2: Green advertising has a significant positive effect on green trust.

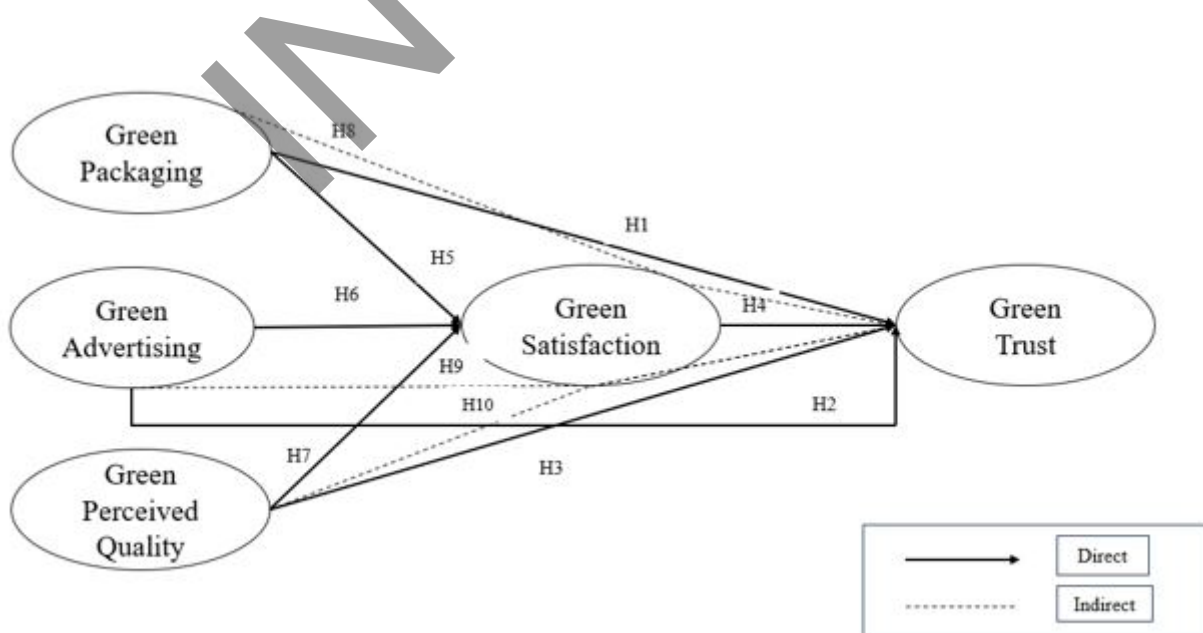


Figure 1 Research Model

Since consumers' assessments and considerations are always based on complete information, consumer trust is always contingent upon perceived product quality, which is viewed as a signal to consumers. On the other hand, consumer expectations can be confirmed when the offered product quality truly satisfies consumer needs. If consumers receive products through exaggerated or misleading product claims, they are likely to be reluctant to trust those products again (Luo et al., 2020). On the contrary, positive confirmation will result in perceived satisfaction from the green performance of the product. With satisfaction, consumers tend to focus on steps that can evoke their attitudes. In this context, green satisfaction serves as an affective response representing the totality of pleasure aiming to fulfill consumers' green needs (Kautish & Sharma, 2018). Thus, the concept of green satisfaction is utilized as the primary foundation for developing subsequent consumers' affective responses towards more sustainable options (White et al., 2019). The researchers propose the following hypothesis.

- H3: Green perceived quality has a significant positive effect on green trust,
- H4: Green satisfaction has a significant positive effect on green trust.

Next, products labeled with green packaging can signal to consumers that the product or brand has superior quality or greater innovativeness. It can raise consumer expectations regarding the product and ultimately enhance their level of satisfaction when those expectations are fulfilled (De Sousa et al., 2020). Furthermore, consumers often associate eco-friendly packaging with positive values conveyed in green advertisements, such as environmental concern, social responsibility, and superior product quality. It influences consumer perceptions of the value of the product and ultimately reflects the company's commitment to sustainability, thereby enhancing brand satisfaction (Lin & Zhou, 2022).

Moreover, consumers perceive environmentally friendly products to have higher quality through the environmental value perception they associate with them. They view product quality as a direct outcome of the company's efforts in producing environmentally friendly products. If consumers perceive environmentally friendly products to have superior quality in terms of performance, reliability, or aesthetics, they are more likely to experience satisfaction with the product (Roh et al., 2022). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

- H5: Green packaging has a significant positive effect on green satisfaction,
- H6: Green advertising has a significant positive effect on green satisfaction,
- H7: Green perceived quality has a significant positive effect on green satisfaction.

Moreover, consumers who identify their preferences towards eco-friendly packaging may feel more satisfied when selecting and using products or brands that utilize green packaging. Eco-friendly packaging can evoke positive emotions and fulfill their sustainability values, thereby enhancing their satisfaction (Liao et al., 2020). Consumer satisfaction can reinforce the belief that the brand or company fulfills its promises and commitments to sustainability. When consumers are exposed to advertisements highlighting the brand's or company's environmental efforts and sustainability, it can evoke positive emotions and trigger consumer satisfaction when they choose and use the products or brands. Consumer satisfaction can strengthen the belief that the brand truly cares and is responsible for the environment (Alamsyah et al., 2020).

Consumers who value and identify the quality of environmental products tend to feel more satisfied when choosing and using such products. If consumers are satisfied with a product or brand that has environmentally friendly product quality, they are likely to develop higher trust in the brand (Papista & Dimitriadis, 2019). Consumer satisfaction with environmental product quality can reinforce the belief that the brand is trustworthy in fulfilling its environmental commitments. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed.

- H8: Green packaging has a positive significant influence on green trust through green satisfaction,
- H9: Green advertising has a positive significant influence on green trust through green satisfaction,
- H10: Green perceived quality has a positive significant influence on green trust through green satisfaction.

## METHODS

The information is gathered from consumers who consume bottled water products with a green value orientation. The research adopts a quantitative method. The sampling technique employs purposive sampling, with 200 participating respondents. The selected respondents are those who have purchased environmentally oriented drinking water products. The questionnaire has 27 items and measures for gender, age, and brand.

The items taken from the previous study are modified to make it easier for respondents to fill out the questionnaires. Firstly, green packaging is adapted from Jakomin et al. (2022). This construct involves (1) innovative product design, (2) appealing colors, (3) the use of natural materials, (4) the inclusion of green logos, (5) pro-environment product information, and (6) durability compared to conventional packaging. The second construct of green advertising is from Shin and Ki (2019), identifying (1) advertisements

displaying recycling logos, (2) advertisements emphasizing the attainment of green benefits, (3) advertisements featuring labels from green product accreditation institutions, (4) advertisements promoting the company's image, (5) advertisements promoting pro-environment donation events, and (6) clarity regarding green claims. Third, green perceived quality is adopted by Hashish et al. (2022) to measure green perceived quality, including: (1) This product's environmental functions provide very good value, (2) this product's environmental performance meets my expectations, (3) I purchase this product because it has environmental concern than other products, (4) I purchase this product because it is environmentally friendly, and (5) I purchase this product because it has more environmental benefit than other products. Fourth, green satisfaction based on Oliver (2014) includes 1) I am pleased with my decision to choose this product due to its environmental functionality, (2) I believe that I am doing the right thing by purchasing this product because of its environmental performance, (3) Overall, I am satisfied with buying this product because of its eco-friendliness, and (4) Overall, I am satisfied with this product due to its environmental concern. Last, green trust is based on Chen (2013), indicating that (1) I feel that the environmental function of this product is generally reliable, (2) I feel that the environmental performance of this product is generally reliable, (3) I feel that the environmental arguments of this product are generally trustworthy, (4) the environmental concern of this product meets my expectations, (5) the product fulfills promises and commitments to environmental protection, and (6) I feel that the environmental benefits of this product stimulate my willingness to engage in environmental conservation.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is an analytical approach that offers a realistic measurement of causal relationships among variables (Hair et al., 2019). The variance-based technique, Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), is considered the most comprehensive and robust system (Sarstedt et al., 2014). It involves two stages of analysis: a measurement model and a structural model. The measurement model is constructed using SmartPLS 3.0. To conduct a factor analysis and determine causal connections among variables. Meanwhile, the structural framework is developed using SPSS 26.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After distributing the questionnaires, the characteristics of the research respondents are analyzed. It is found that 53% of the respondents are female, while the remaining 47% are male. The research indicates a higher proportion of female users compared to male users of green products. Furthermore, concerning the age of the respondents, the two highest age ranges are between 31–35 years (36%) and 36–40 years (18%). Most of the users in

these age groups are health-conscious. Therefore, they are more aware of the value and benefits associated with products that support their daily activities and maintain their health as they age. The respondents' profiles can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Respondents' Profiles

Description	N	%
Gender		
Male	94	47
Female	106	53
Age		
20–25	20	10
26–30	28	14
31–35	75	38
36–40	40	19
41–45	24	12
46–50	13	7
Brand		
Ades	48	24
Aqua	54	27
Le Minerale	33	17
Nestle	46	23
Vit	19	9

The aim of the measurement model evaluation is for all constructs to meet the criteria by demonstrating satisfactory convergent and discriminant validity. Loading factor, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and composite reliability are evaluated to assess the measurement model's reliability. A latent construct is considered to have good convergent validity if the loading factor is greater than 0.7 or statistically significant. In the initial phase of scale development research, loading factors between 0.5 and 0.6 are deemed sufficient (Hair et al., 2019). From Table 2, the outer loading values are above 0.5, indicating that the indicators have passed the convergent validity test.

Reliability testing is used to demonstrate the accuracy, consistency, and precision of the instrument in measuring the constructs. If the AVE values produced by all constructs with reflective indicators are above 0.5, and Cronbach's Alpha and D.G Rho values are above 0.60, it indicates good reliability. From Table 2, all variables meet the criteria (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)

Table 3 shows the results discriminant of validity calculations. It states that the square root of the AVE between each factor reveals a higher estimated correlation between the factors. Thus, its discriminant validity is acceptable.

Furthermore, according to table 4 of green packaging, green advertising and green perceived quality constructions have a 2.3% influence on the

green satisfaction construct. In contrast, the remaining 97.7% of the construct is influenced by other constructs not included in the research. In contrast, green trust has an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of 0.513, indicating that the concepts of green packaging, green advertising, green perceived quality, and green satisfaction influence the green trust construct by 51.3%. The additional factors not included in the research influence the remaining 48.7%.

In Table 5, the results demonstrate that H1 is rejected. The research result contradicts Amin and Tarun (2021) that the functional advantages of a good's physical performance attributes, such as the packaging, features, or similar practical qualities, can be utilized to evaluate its functional value. For instance, if goods are distinguished by their packaging, it can be determined whether it includes an environmental claim. According to Delmas et al. (2017), this basic information highlights the relevance of credibility as an essential consideration in consumers' purchasing choices.

Since ecological advertising possesses no impact on green trust, H2 is also rejected. The outcomes of the research reinforce the results of Kim et al. (2019). Because green advertising is essential for promoting the environmental image and the attributes

of environmental products, it influences people's feelings towards commercials and their desire to be environmentally conscious. Eliminating uncertainty about promotion and having a better influence on purchasing choices can be accomplished by putting a greater value on advertising efforts involving superior communication about the features of products and their ecological impact.

Differentiation may strengthen the quality argument and create higher consumer trust by highlighting the benefits of a product, like value, efficacy, or quality (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Therefore, advertising alone is sufficient for establishing persistent trust. It needs to be supplemented with a distinctive green advertising style that highlights the beneficial effects of the environmentally-conscious product. In this way, the benefits that consumers acquire can more significantly impact the advantages of ecological marketing and the consequences of advertising (Kao & Du, 2020).

From H3, there is a significant positive relationship between green perceived quality and green trust. H3 is accepted. This finding is in alignment with Pooya et al. (2020). Perceived ecological friendliness is viewed as an essential requirement. Perceived quality can be trusted to carry out ethical procedures

Table 2 The Results of Validity and Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Green Advertising	0.900	0.916	0.923	0.666
Green Packaging	0.897	0.904	0.920	0.659
Green Perceived Quality	0.989	1.009	0.994	0.989
Green Satisfaction	0.772	0.631	0.832	0.627
Green Trust	0.921	0.926	0.938	0.718

Table 3 The Results of Discriminant Validity

Variables	Green Advertising	Green Packaging	Green Perceived Quality	Green Satisfaction	Green Trust
Green Advertising	0.816				
Green Packaging	0.781	0.812			
Green Perceived Quality	-0.039	0.006	0.994		
Green Satisfaction	0.052	0.000	0.169	0.792	
Green Trust	0.659	0.700	-0.009	-0.001	0.847

Table 4 The Results of R-Square

Variables	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Green Satisfaction	0.038	0.023
Green Trust	0.522	0.513

since it offers consumers concrete proof that it affects their brand perceptions and experiences (Wasaya et al., 2021).

In addition, the result supports H4 by demonstrating that green satisfaction significantly boosts green trust. H4 is accepted. Creative and distinctive goods remain above conventional ones that emphasize ecological characteristics. Although sustainable products offer inherent value, consumers with strong ecological beliefs tend to recognize enjoyment in them. Customers who select and utilize items with ecological effects into consideration feel like they have positively impacted the environment. Consequently, it can determine the level of consumer fulfillment and lead to green trust (Wu et al., 2018).

The results of H5 confirm the significant positive impact of green packaging on green satisfaction. H5 is accepted. It is proposed that by influencing perceived value, perceived risk, and ecological satisfaction, product packaging that mainly focuses on package material studies, design, and functionality encourages consumers' preferences toward buying environmentally friendly goods significantly (Pan et al., 2021). Thus, stimulating demand for green satisfaction involves comprehension of environmental consciousness and, particularly, environmental attributes of goods (Zameer & Yasmeen, 2022).

On the other hand, when it comes to the reliability of environmental messages, the reputation of ecological brands, ecological commercials, ecological businesses, commitment to ecological advertisement, attitudes toward ecological products, and buying intent, green advertising with a high value on goods

knowledge and benefits possesses a greater effect on environmental claims (Shin & Ki, 2019). Therefore, in line with previous research, the results of H6 of green advertising on green satisfaction are accepted.

In line with Gil and Jacob (2018), H7 is accepted, demonstrating a significant positive impact of perceived green quality on green satisfaction. The long-term consumer relationships and ecological intentions to buy are both influenced by perceived quality. Therefore, consumer perceptions of a product's overall excellence are considered to be replicated on its green perceived quality, which facilitates environmental behavior (Alamsyah et al., 2021).

In Table 6, it is acknowledged that H8, demonstrating that sustainable packaging raises green satisfaction and green trust, is genuine. Consumers feel happier about trusting goods when they are educated about their advantages, beneficial features, and ecological impact. Alternatively, if consumers believe their purchases will help the environment and enhance the well-being of humans, they will increase future purchases in that approach. According to Arsanti and Böhme (2018), green packaging is essential for user confidence and awareness of environmentally conscious goods.

In the same way, when green advertising effectively communicates the advantages of the goods that align with its claims, it provides consumers satisfaction. In contrast, the goods fulfill their requirements and desires. Ultimately, it strengthens beliefs in the product's authenticity, ethics, capacity, and legitimacy (Chen, 2010). Hence, the results for H9 of green advertising on green satisfaction by the green trust are acceptable.

Table 5 The Results of the Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	T-Statistics (O/STDEV)	P - Values
Green Advertising → Green Satisfaction (H6)	0.153	0.710	0.478
Green Advertising → Green Trust (H2)	0.291	3.268	0.001
Green Packaging → Green Satisfaction (H5)	-0.121	0.560	0.575
Green Packaging → Green Trust (H1)	0.472	5.734	0.000
Green Perceived Quality → Green Satisfaction (H7)	0.176	1.532	0.126
Green Perceived Quality → Green Trust (H3)	0.003	0.041	0.967
Green Satisfaction → Green Trust (H4)	-0.017	0.179	0.858

Table 6 The Results of Indirect Effects

Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	T-Statistics (O/STDEV)	P - Values
Green Packaging → Green Satisfaction → Green Trust (H8)	0.002	0.106	0.916
Green Advertising → Green Satisfaction → Green Trust (H9)	-0.003	0.122	0.903
Green Perceived Quality → Green Satisfaction → Green Trust (H10)	-0.003	0.129	0.897

Nevertheless, green satisfaction possesses no influence on green perceived quality, which in turn no influence on green trust too. Overall, consumer satisfaction with using high-quality goods enhances their trust in purchasing ecologically conscious goods (Gil & Jacob, 2018). Putting it differently, when a product that's considered to be of superior quality may acquire an abundance of trust by fulfilling the needs of customers. H10 is rejected.

## CONCLUSIONS

Green perceived quality and awareness expressed in green packaging and advertising are the most powerful elements of green goods. Based on the research, brands ought to emphasize sustainable values and sustainability claims that are clear and sustainable. As a way to cultivate high gratitude and a green trust in the fulfillment of appropriate personal values, deeper concentration and clarity are vital. Additionally, when both sustainability requirements are successfully met, customers' sense of green loyalty is strengthened, and they may be supported toward meeting their environmental commitments by a sustainable evaluation. Therefore, adapting self-congruence is an integral viewpoint that can thus build on previous research.

The research looks at the management implications for businesses regarding green trust that leads to sustainability trust. The effect of putting a high value on the efficacy of green communication suggests that green satisfaction serves as a solid foundation for creating and improving green trust. It may result in consumer loyalty, a positive image of the brand, and assistance for the brand or business in its initiatives to become a sustainable self-identity. Theoretically, the research improves the understanding of green attributes in terms of self-congruity.

Research on participants who mainly homogeneously consume green goods manner is few. Therefore, to enable a greater generalization of the findings, future research attempts should replicate the research's paradigm by involving additional variables as mediating factors. Moreover, more participants who utilize sustainable goods can be included to broaden the research results.

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