



## The Impact of Anthropomorphism, Consumer Trust, And Consumer Attitude on Purchase Decisions of Environmentally Friendly Products

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### ABSTRACT

Environmentally friendly product purchase behavior is receiving increasing attention in the current marketing literature because understanding it is critical to the growing number of companies developing and marketing green products. However, only some know the importance of environmentally friendly products that can reduce adverse environmental effects. This study aims to analyze the factors that can increase consumer purchasing decisions for this environmentally friendly product. This study examines anthropomorphism, consumer trust, and attitudes toward purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products. Sampling was conducted on 200 respondents who use environmentally friendly products in Bandung. The data analysis used is a structural equation model based on partial least squares (SEM-PLS) with the help of SmartPLS 3.0. All hypotheses in this study were accepted based on the data processing results. It means that anthropomorphism can have a positive effect on consumer trust and consumer attitudes. In addition, anthropomorphism, consumer trusts, and consumer attitudes can also directly influence the purchasing decisions of environmentally friendly products.

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## INTRODUCTION

It is widely believed that the production and consumption of environmentally friendly products will reduce the industry's negative impact on the surrounding ecosystem, as well as contribute to reducing the use of hazardous materials, saving energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and preventing land erosion (He et al., 2019). Many eco-friendly products are being developed worldwide to reduce the negative impact of production and consumption on the environment. Some examples include organic and recycled products. However, people may need to fully understand the importance of environmentally friendly products because some people still think that environmentally friendly products are of lower quality than ordinary products. As a result, the public has not entirely accepted the acceptance of environmentally friendly products (Sandi et al., 2021).

The company plays a role in educating the public as consumers and users of these environmentally friendly products. Their task is to introduce and provide information about the value of an environmentally friendly product. Apart from that, warning or awareness of the increasingly threatened environmental situation is the duty of the company and the government. Therefore, academics are trying to gain an understanding of the elements that influence consumer behavior and find solutions to encourage the increased use of environmentally friendly products. One way to increase consumer behavior toward green products is to use anthropomorphism in advertising (Tong et al., 2020). In addition to the role of anthropomorphism, consumer trust and consumer attitudes are essential factors in determining consumer behavior toward environmentally friendly products (Liu & Tao, 2022; Mostafa & Albloushy, 2021).

Anthropomorphism attributes human traits and attributes to non-human beings or entities, such as animals, goods, brands, and nature (Han, 2021). Anthropomorphism often occurs in marketing because few marketers characterize products with human traits and sometimes because consumers quickly see humans as non-humans (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012). For example, products are given human-like characteristics to make them more distinctive and memorable or to assign certain qualities that exemplify what they stand for. A product is sometimes considered to have a soul or genetic code, just like humans (Aggarwal & McGill, 2012). Anthropomorphism makes people feel more connected to anthropomorphic products, increases user engagement, encourages exciting interactions, and influences consumer decision-making (Han, 2021).

Consumer trust is a consumer's willingness to depend on other parties based on expectations resulting from the ability, reliability, and benevolence of that party (Lam et al., 2016). Trust was also an important factor influencing consumer choice of environmentally friendly products. Consumer trust in green products refers to the willingness of consumers to rely on products or services from a brand based on their trust in the brand's credibility, benevolence, and environmental capabilities, as Chen (2013) suggested. This factor can significantly impact the decision to purchase environmentally friendly products, as noted by Doszhanov & Ahmad (2015), who highlighted the critical role of trust in environmentally friendly brands in influencing consumer buying behavior. The concept of consumer trust is complex and multifaceted, with various factors influencing it. For example, marketing mix elements such as brand, price, promotion, product quality, trust, and environmental issues have been found to affect consumer intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products, according to Tarabieh (2021), illustrating the diverse nature of this concept. However, this study considers green trust an essential measure of green purchasing behavior, as emphasized by Kwok et al. (2015). In other words, consumer trust is a crucial indicator of consumers' willingness to engage in green buying behavior.

Consumer attitudes towards the environment are general tendencies that occur in a person and are formed or learned when responding consistently or indeed to environmental conditions based on perceptions and knowledge of environmental problems. This attitude is formed or learned when a person responds consistently or definitely to environmental conditions in the form of likes or dislikes (Lukiarti & Ming, 2019). Based on these factors, this tendency is formed or learned when responding consistently to environmental conditions in the form of likes or dislikes. According to Sumarwan (2011), the attitude held by consumers is an important aspect that plays a role in the decisions made by consumers. The concept of behavior is closely related to trust (trust), which is closely related to attitude (behavior). Attitude is an expression of consumer feelings toward an object, regardless of whether consumers like the object or not. Attitudes can also describe consumer trust in various characteristics and advantages of objects. Consumer awareness of an item, its quality, and its advantages are fundamental to maintaining their trust in the item (Keren & Sulistiono, 2019).

Based on the results of previous studies, there is still little research on anthropomorphism in Indonesia; besides that, previous studies conducted limited experimental studies examining the role of anthropomorphism on buying behavior. Therefore, this study wants to broadly fill in the

role of consumer attitudes and trust in buying behavior of environmentally friendly products. For this reason, it is crucial to investigate the effect of anthropomorphism on consumer trust, consumer attitudes, and purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products. This study aims to find solutions to the factors influencing the decision to purchase environmentally friendly products. Furthermore, this study aims to validate the effect of anthropomorphism on consumer trust and attitudes and purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products. The findings of this research will significantly help marketers as they provide an overview of how green advertising and marketing tactics can be designed to be more effective. This is done so that consumers can be provided with helpful information about environmentally friendly products efficiently and effectively. In addition, the purpose of this research is also to encourage environmental sustainability by reducing negative impacts on the environment and increasing consumer buying behavior towards environmentally friendly products.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The study gathers primary data by administering a research instrument consisting of several questions to consumers who have used environmentally friendly products and live in Bandung and its surroundings. The required sample size for the study was determined based on the number of parameters. According to Ghazali (2011) there, a minimum of 200 respondents were selected for data analysis using PLS structural equation modeling with SmartPLS 3.0 software.

Based on Sander (2014), smartPLS is classified as a variance-based modeling technique that relies on a theoretical foundation and hypotheses to construct a model of variables and their corresponding indicators. These variables and indicators are interconnected through paths within the model, which serve as a fundamental element for the underlying theory, ultimately explaining the causal mechanism. A key benefit of using SmartPLS is the ability to visually explore the construct and simplify the research process by enabling scientists to measure the relationship between indicators and variables, allowing them to test the hypothesis. However, an inherent risk associated with the approach is that the model may need to be more accurate to simplify the complex reality. That leads to a disconnect between the measured data and actual phenomena, which could reduce the model's value (Sander, 2014).

Using a seven-point Likert scale, the research instrument measures anthropomorphism variables, consumer trust, attitudes, and purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products. The validity and reliability of the research constructs were assessed using various methods, including factor loading, AVE, convergent and discriminant validity, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability, with each question item categorized under the relevant variable through factor weight testing.

Based on the results of previous research conducted by Pak et al. (2012); Cheng et al. (2022); Kim-Pong et al. (2013); Lee & Oh, (2021) ; Amin & Tarun (2020); and Ain & Ratnasari (2015); can be hypothesized as follows: H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive influence between anthropomorphism and consumer trust, H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive influence between anthropomorphism and consumer attitudes, H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive influence between anthropomorphism and purchase decisions, H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive influence between consumer trust and purchase decisions, H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive influence between consumer attitudes toward purchase decisions

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the respondents, a summary is obtained based on the results of the respondent's data. The information provided by the respondents was broken down into the categories of gender, age, frequency of seeing eco-friendly advertisements, and types of eco-friendly products used (see Table 1). The information provided by the

respondents was broken down into the categories of gender, age, frequency of seeing eco-friendly advertisements, and types of eco-friendly products used. Based on the summary results, most respondents are female, totaling 137 people, or 68.5%. Most respondents are aged between 21-25 years, with a total of 116 people or 58.0%. Most respondents stated that they frequently saw impressions of environmentally friendly advertisements, totaling 98 people or 49.0%. Finally, the environmentally friendly products that respondents most used were cutlery and drinking utensils, with 86 people or 43.0%.

**Table 1. Description of Respondent**

Characteristics	Description	Amount	Percentage
Gender	Man	63	31,5
	Woman	137	68,5
Age	17-20 Years	39	19,5
	21-25 Years	116	58,0
	26-30 Years	24	12,0
	31-35 Years	12	6,0
	36-40 Years	6	3,0
	> 40 Years	3	1,5
Frequency of Viewing Environmentally Friendly Ads	Rarely	72	36,0
	Quite Often	98	49,0
	Frequently	30	15,0
Types of Environmentally Friendly Products Used	Reusable Bag	81	40,5
	Cutlery & drinking utensils	86	43,0
	Home Care	33	16,5

Source: Data Processing Results (2023)

Based on Table 2, convergent validity is used to determine how valid each variable is. This evaluation forms the basis for measuring its validity. Each factor weight must be higher than 0.5. The table shows constructs, factor weights, t-statistical values, p-values, and descriptions. Based on the findings of the validity test, each indicator of anthropomorphism, consumer trust, consumer attitudes, and purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products has a factor weight value greater than 0.5 and a t-statistic value greater than the t-table (> 1.97).

**Table 2 . Validity Test**

Construct	Factors Weight	t-statistics (t-table=1.97)	p -values
<b>Anthropomorphism</b> (AVE=0.668)			
A1	0.815	25.947	0.000
A2	0.897	47.849	0.000
A3	0.820	19.413	0.000
A4	0.769	16.708	0.000
A5	0.871	34.203	0.000
A6	0.716	11.182	0.000
<b>Consumer Trust</b> (AVE=0.754)			
CT1	0.873	48.932	0.000
CT2	0.839	26.436	0.000
<b>Consumer Attitude</b> (AVE=0.558)			
CA1	0.733	13.550	0.000

CA2	0.741	13.331	0.000
CA3	0.727	12.453	0.000
CA4	0.786	28.734	0.000
<b>Purchase Decision</b> <b>(AVE=0.732)</b>			
PD1	0.840	30.095	0.000
PD2	0.847	18.320	0.000
PD3	0.837	31.853	0.000
PD4	0.898	47.923	0.000

Source: Data Processing Results (2023)

Table 3 presents the results of the convergence validity analysis, which indicates that all variables are valid for further analysis, as shown by the average extract variance (AVE) value greater than 0.5 for all construct variables. The reliability test results, also presented in Table 2, provide information on the correlation value between variables, the significance of the relationship between constructs, and the R-square value of the relationship, which is crucial for the PLS research model. Specifically, the R-square value of each dependent variable is used to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, and a higher value indicates a more significant impact.

**Table 3. Reliability Test**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Anthropomorphism	0.900	0.923
Consumer Trust	0.893	0.925
Consumer Attitude	0.763	0.835
Purchase Decision	0.878	0.916

Source: Data Processing Results (2023)

Table 4 displays the estimated R-square values obtained from PLS analysis, which reveals that anthropomorphism can only explain 5.1% of consumer trust, indicating that other variables outside the research model play a more substantial role in explaining consumer trust. Moreover, the R-square value of 0.108 for the consumer attitude variable indicates that anthropomorphism can explain consumer attitudes by 10.8%. In contrast, other variables outside the research model can explain consumer attitudes by 89.2%. In summary, both tables provide critical information on the validity, reliability, and impact of various variables on the research model, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the results. Furthermore, the R-Square value associated with purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products is 0.563. This shows that anthropomorphism, consumer trust, and consumer attitudes can explain 56.3% of the intention to purchase environmentally friendly products. In comparison, the remaining 43.7% of the variable purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products can be influenced by other factors not included in this research model.

**Tabel 4. R-Square**

Construct	R-Square	R Square Adjusted
Consumer Trust	0,051	0,046
Consumer Attitude	0,108	0,104
Purchase Decision	0,563	0,556

Source: Data Processing Results (2023)

Table 5 shows the results of the testing hypothesis. The findings of this study indicate that the anthropomorphism variable on consumer trust has an estimated value of 0.225 and a sig. < 0.05 (t-statistic 2.231). It means the anthropomorphism variable positively influences consumer trust; therefore, this study supports hypothesis 1. Then, the effect of anthropomorphism on consumer attitudes has an estimated value of 0.329 with a sig level. < 0.01 (t-statistic 3.852). This means there

is a positive influence on the role of anthropomorphism on consumer attitudes; Therefore, this study supports hypothesis 2. Furthermore, the findings show that anthropomorphism positively affects purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products with an estimated path analysis value of 0.180 and sig. < 0.01 (t-statistic 3.038). This shows a positive and significant influence between anthropomorphism on the decision to purchase environmentally friendly products; Therefore, this study supports hypothesis 3. Furthermore, this study shows that consumer trust positively affects purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products with an estimated path analysis value of 0.248 and sig. < 0.01 (t-statistic 4.410). This shows a positive and significant influence on consumer trust in purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products; Therefore, this study supports hypothesis 4. Finally, this study found the effect of consumer attitudes on purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products with an estimated path analysis value of 0.463 and sig. < 0.01 (t-statistic 7.208). Thus it can be concluded that consumer attitudes can directly influence purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products, and this study supports hypothesis 5.

**Table 5. Results of Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Original Sample	Means	T-Statistics	P -Values	Description
H1: Anthropomorphism → Consumer Trust	0.225	0.240	2.231	0.013	Accepted
H2: Anthropomorphism → Consumer Attitude	0.329	0.345	3.852	0.000	Accepted
H3: Anthropomorphism → Buying decision	0.180	0.183	3.038	0.001	Accepted
H4: Consumer Trust → Buying decision	0.289	0.285	4.410	0.000	Accepted
H5: Consumer Attitude → Buying decision	0.463	0.462	7.208	0.000	Accepted

Source: Data Processing Results (2023)

### **Anthropomorphism on Consumer Trust**

Based on data analysis regarding the role of anthropomorphism on consumer trust, we found that anthropomorphism has a positive effect on consumer trust. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Chi & Hoang Vu (2022) on bank and telecommunications customers in Vietnam which argues that individuals who interact with anthropomorphic devices based on intelligent agents can increase consumer trust. Aggarwal & McGill (2012) confirmed the role of anthropomorphic characteristics in creating customer trust. The social responsibility of anthropomorphic characters can create human-like communication. Chen & Park (2021) found that consumer trust depends on anthropomorphic characteristics and that anthropomorphism allows a person to show social interest. In concurrence with this, Pak et al. (2012), who conducted an experimental study on respondents in the USA, found that consumer trust would increase when using anthropomorphic compared to non-anthropomorphic. Large et al. (2019) conducted a study exploring the reliability of using anthropomorphic objects that use conversational language to generate user trust. This approach is motivated by an understanding of the role of anthropomorphism in helping conversations in interactions, which can build trust and strengthen positive relationships with other interlocutors.

### **Anthropomorphism on Consumer Attitudes**

The findings of this study conclude that anthropomorphism has a positive impact on consumer attitudes. This means that the higher the role of anthropomorphism marketers use, the higher consumer attitudes towards environmentally friendly products will be. Therefore, it can be concluded that anthropomorphism has a positive influence on consumer attitudes. According to,

anthropomorphism will increase consumer attitudes towards non-human objects, especially moral attitudes towards nature. When an object is designed to contain human anthropomorphic traits or characters, it will encourage feelings related to objects used by non-humans. In addition, Kim-Pong et al. (2013) explained that a person's attitude towards environmental issues increases when anthropomorphic messages about ecosystems' challenges are presented. Displaying images of trash or weeping trees with human characteristics can elicit a robust attitudinal response from consumers and possibly persuade them to contribute to nature. This finding is also supported by Williams et al. (2021), who argue that anthropomorphism can strengthen consumer intentions to use green products and attitudes towards green products.

#### **Anthropomorphism on Purchase Decision to Environmentally Friendly Products**

This study's results indicate that anthropomorphism can encourage potential consumers to increase their buying behavior towards environmentally friendly products. This finding is supported by Agrawal et al. (2021), who explained that anthropomorphisms in advertisements such as multi-media magazines, television, and radio significantly impact consumers' purchasing behavior. Agreeing with this, the study of Lee & Oh, (2021) explains that anthropomorphism is a simple description of non-human entities with human characteristics. The results of two experiments as an anthropomorphic tactic show that customers prefer anthropomorphic hotel advertisements to non-anthropomorphic hotel advertisements, so that the role of anthropomorphism can influence consumer purchase intentions. Furthermore, the study conducted by Wölfl et al. (2019), investigating the effect of anthropomorphism on buying behavior from online stores, concluded that the findings from this study indicate that anthropomorphism encourages buying behavior of environmentally friendly products. Agree with that, based on a study conducted by Gupta & Jain (2019) found that anthropomorphism can form a significant positive differential effect on consumer feelings, attitudes towards advertisements, attitudes towards brands, and buying behavior. Furthermore, the study conducted by Wölfl et al. (2019) investigating the effect of anthropomorphism on buying behavior from online stores concluded that the findings from this study indicate that anthropomorphism drives buying behavior.

#### **Consumer Trust in Purchasing Decisions of Environmentally Friendly Products**

This study also shows that customer trust influences purchasing decisions for eco-friendly products in a profitable way. This shows that the higher the customer trust, the more likely green consumers will make purchases. Therefore, it can be said that customer trust has a significant and beneficial influence on purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with Chinomona & Chivhungwa (2019), which state that consumer trust has the highest score compared to other variables on product purchases. The results obtained in this study can be attributed to the fact that most companies identified as go-green companies rely on producing environmentally friendly products and the trust that consumers have in such products. The analysis of the hypothesis conducted in this study reveals that consumer trust has a direct impact on the purchase of environmentally friendly products, which is in line with the findings of Wang et al. (2019), whose research also identified consumer trust as a key variable. The hypothesis testing further established that consumer trust and purchasing decisions are mutually reinforcing, and consumer trust partially mediates the relationship between environmentally friendly products and consumer purchases. Specifically, consumer trust plays a critical role in transforming knowledge into a level of trust that generates purchase intentions and decisions among consumers. This is because consumers who possess a good understanding of environmentally friendly products are likely to be more confident in their use and appreciate their impact on the environment, thus influencing their purchasing decisions positively.

### Consumer Attitudes Towards Purchasing Decisions of Environmentally Friendly Products

This study found that consumer attitudes positively impact purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly products. This finding is supported by Kim (2011), who argues that consumer attitudes toward the environment are an essential determinant of green purchasing behavior. Their attitude towards environmental problems determines the ecological consumption of essential consumers. That is, consumers with high environmental attitudes are more willing to buy products that are considered environmentally friendly. Zhuang et al. (2021) confirmed this finding by explaining that consumer attitudes significantly influence green purchasing behavior. In addition, perceived behavioral control perceived consumer effectiveness, and subjective norms also strongly impact green purchasing behavior. Munamba & Nuangjamnong (2021) argue that consumers' increasing green buying behavior has a strong attitude towards green products. Therefore, consumer attitudes can positively and significantly influence consumers' green buying behavior. Then, consumers who buy and consume products making their purchase decisions are influenced by their perceptions of product quality and their attitudes towards these products. This is because consumer attitudes are a determining element in purchasing decisions.

## CONCLUSION

This study examines the effect of anthropomorphism on consumer trust and attitudes and the influence of anthropomorphism, consumer trusts, and consumer attitudes on purchasing decisions for environmentally friendly goods. According to these findings, anthropomorphism benefits customer trust, consumer attitudes, and purchasing decisions regarding environmentally friendly goods. As a result, anthropomorphism is essential in attracting customers' attention by incorporating non-human goods with human attributes as their personality. Consumers aware of what is happening in their environment will realize that they need environmentally friendly products, thus increasing their knowledge about environmental sustainability, interest in environmentally friendly products, and the habit of using these goods. Then, consumer attitudes will support the purchase of goods that are considered ecologically beneficial. Green consumer trust can make an appeal to consumers so that it can encourage purchasing behavior of environmentally friendly products. Based on this, marketers who apply anthropomorphism in advertising will have the potential to create consumer trust and consumer attitudes, thereby giving consumers interest in purchasing environmentally friendly products. This study has limitations in the research sample, which was only conducted on respondents in Bandung, so it cannot be generalized to a broader scope. Therefore, suggestions for further research can be generalized to a broader scope of coverage. In addition, it is necessary to carry out further research by including other variables such as pro-environmental orientation, perceived green values, and the effectiveness of green advertising.

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