

Perceived Authenticity in Digital Green Marketing: Its Influence on Green Trust and Purchase Intention Towards Eco-Friendly Products

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Abstract: The rapid expansion of digital media has changed how brands communicate environmental responsibility and promote eco-friendly products. Consumers are increasingly exposed to sustainability claims through social media, websites, digital advertising, online reviews and other digital channels. In this environment, the perceived authenticity of green marketing communication may influence whether consumers trust a brand's environmental claims and develop an intention to purchase eco-friendly products. This study examines the relationship between perceived authenticity in digital green marketing, green trust and green purchase intention. A quantitative research design is adopted using a structured questionnaire with 20 five-point Likert-scale statements. The study considers perceived authenticity, green trust and green purchase intention as the principal constructs. A 50-response dataset is used for the statistical demonstration, with descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, Pearson correlation, regression and mediation analysis. The results in this working manuscript indicate positive associations among the three constructs and support the proposed role of green trust as a potential mechanism linking perceived authenticity with purchase intention. Because the 50-response dataset used here was generated for analysis demonstration rather than collected from actual participants, the numerical findings must be replaced with genuine responses before the manuscript is represented as an empirical study.

Keywords: Digital Green Marketing; Perceived Authenticity; Green Trust; Green Purchase Intention; Eco-Friendly Products; Green Marketing Communication; Greenwashing; Sustainable Consumption.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has become an increasingly visible component of marketing communication. Brands use digital platforms to communicate environmental initiatives, product attributes, certifications, responsible sourcing, recyclable packaging and other sustainability-related information. Digital communication provides opportunities for rapid interaction, but it also makes environmental claims easier for consumers to compare and question.

The credibility of a green claim is therefore important. Consumers may distinguish between communication that appears genuine and communication that is perceived as exaggerated, incomplete or primarily promotional. Perceived authenticity in this study refers to the extent to which consumers regard a brand's digital environmental

communication as genuine, credible, honest, transparent and consistent with its practices.

Green trust refers to consumers' confidence in a brand's environmental claims and commitments. Green purchase intention refers to the willingness or likelihood of choosing eco-friendly products. The relationship among these constructs is relevant because authentic communication may build trust, while trust may reduce uncertainty and support purchase intention. The present article is designed as a focused supporting study for the broader PhD research topic, "Digital Marketing Communication Strategies for Promoting Eco-Friendly Products: A Study of Select National and Global Brands." It concentrates on one important dimension of digital green communication—perceived authenticity—and examines its relationship with trust and purchase intention.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

➤ Brand and Green Marketing Authenticity

Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualised brand authenticity as an integrative construct involving dimensions such as credibility, integrity, continuity and symbolism. In a green marketing context, authenticity can be understood through the consumer's perception that environmental claims are genuine and aligned with the brand's actions.

Ewing, Allen and Ewing (2012) examined authenticity as meaning validation in the context of green products. Kaur et al. (2021) examined green advertisement authenticity and reported that authenticity-related perceptions can contribute to pro-environmental consumer responses.

➤ Green Trust

Chen and Chang (2012) examined green perceived value, green perceived risk and green trust and established the relevance of green trust to green purchase intentions. Chen and Chang (2013) further examined greenwashing and green trust, showing why consumers' confidence in environmental claims is important when evaluating green products.

Rasool et al. (2022) examined green marketing components, brand image, brand trust and purchase intention. Evans et al. (2022) examined green advertising skepticism and trust, providing further evidence that trust can be important when consumers evaluate green communication.

➤ Digital Green Marketing and Purchase Intention

Sun et al. (2021) examined green advertising and intentions to purchase eco-labelled products. Nguyen-Viet (2022) investigated eco-labels and green advertising in relation to green purchase intention. Fang (2024) examined greenwashing versus green authenticity in social-media communication, while Wu and Long (2024) examined information usefulness, green trust and eco-friendly purchase intention in a social-media context.

➤ Research Gap

Existing studies have examined green advertising, greenwashing, authenticity, trust, social-media communication and purchase intention from different perspectives. However, there is scope for a focused framework that places perceived authenticity at the beginning of the consumer response process and examines green trust as a possible mechanism connecting authenticity with green purchase intention.

➤ Objectives of the Study

- To examine consumers' perceptions of authenticity in digital green marketing communication.
- To examine the relationship between perceived authenticity and green trust.
- To examine the relationship between green trust and green purchase intention.
- To examine the relationship between perceived authenticity and green purchase intention.
- To examine whether green trust mediates the relationship between perceived authenticity and green purchase intention.

➤ Hypotheses

- H1: Perceived authenticity in digital green marketing is significantly related to green trust.
- H2: Green trust is significantly related to green purchase intention.
- H3: Perceived authenticity in digital green marketing is significantly related to green purchase intention.
- H4: Green trust significantly mediates the relationship between perceived authenticity and green purchase intention.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ Research Design

The study adopts a quantitative, descriptive and analytical research design. Descriptive analysis is used to summarise respondents' perceptions, while inferential techniques are used to examine the relationships among the constructs.

➤ Data Source and Instrument

Primary data are designed to be collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contains 20 statements measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The items are grouped into perceived authenticity (Q1–Q7), green trust (Q8–Q13) and green purchase intention (Q14–Q20).

➤ Sample and Sampling

The study uses a sample size of 50 respondents for the present analytical demonstration. A purposive sampling approach is proposed because respondents should have some exposure to digital communication about eco-friendly or environmentally responsible products.

➤ Variables

Table 1 Variables

Variable	Role	Items	Description
Perceived Authenticity	Independent	Q1–Q7	Perceived genuineness, credibility, honesty, transparency and consistency of digital green communication
Green Trust	Mediator	Q8–Q13	Confidence in environmental claims and green practices
Green Purchase Intention	Dependent	Q14–Q20	Intention or willingness to purchase eco-friendly products

➤ *Statistical Tools*

- Frequency and percentage analysis
- Mean and standard deviation
- Cronbach's alpha reliability test
- Pearson correlation coefficient
- Simple and multiple regression
- Mediation analysis
- 5% significance level

IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- Data note: The following 50-response dataset is synthetic and was generated to demonstrate the analysis structure. It must not be represented as responses collected from actual participants. For publication, the tables and statistical conclusions should be recalculated using genuine survey responses.

➤ *Demographic Profile*

Table 2 Demographic Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	21	42.0
Gender	Male	29	58.0
Age	18–25	14	28.0
Age	26–35	17	34.0
Age	36–45	15	30.0
Age	Above 45	4	8.0
Education	Other	7	14.0
Education	Postgraduate	26	52.0
Education	Undergraduate	17	34.0

The illustrative sample contains 50 records. The demographic distribution is included to show the format for reporting the actual sample.

➤ *Descriptive Statistics*

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics

Construct	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perceived Authenticity	50	2.991	0.670
Green Trust	50	3.023	0.687
Green Purchase Intention	50	3.014	0.676

➤ *Reliability Analysis*

Table 4 Reliability Analysis

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived Authenticity	7	0.904
Green Trust	6	0.882
Green Purchase Intention	7	0.904

➤ *Pearson Correlation Analysis*

Table 5 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variables	Perceived Authenticity	Green Trust	Green Purchase Intention
Perceived Authenticity	1.000	0.427	0.492
Green Trust	0.427	1.000	0.532
Green Purchase Intention	0.492	0.532	1.000

In the illustrative dataset, perceived authenticity and green trust were positively correlated ($r = 0.427$, $p = 0.0020$). Green trust and green purchase intention were

positively correlated ($r = 0.532$, $p = 0.0001$). Perceived authenticity and green purchase intention were also positively correlated ($r = 0.492$, $p = 0.0003$).

➤ *Regression Analysis*

Table 6 Regression Analysis

Relationship	Beta	R ²	t	p
Perceived Authenticity → Green Trust	0.438	0.183	3.274	0.0020
Green Trust → Purchase Intention	0.524	0.283	4.349	0.0001
Perceived Authenticity → Purchase Intention	0.497	0.242	3.917	0.0003

➤ *Mediation Analysis*

Table 7 Mediation Analysis

Path	Coefficient	p-value
Perceived Authenticity → Green Trust (a)	0.438	0.0020
Green Trust → Purchase Intention controlling for Authenticity (b)	0.387	0.0036
Indirect effect (a × b)	0.170	0.0252

For the final empirical article, bootstrap confidence intervals for the indirect effect are preferable to relying only on the Sobel test.

V. DISCUSSION

The framework suggests that consumers' perceptions of authenticity may influence their confidence in a brand's environmental communication. This is consistent with literature that emphasises credibility, authenticity and trust in green marketing. If consumers perceive a sustainability message as transparent, consistent and genuine, they may be more willing to regard the associated environmental claims as trustworthy.

The relationship between green trust and purchase intention is consistent with the broader green marketing literature. Consumers face information uncertainty when evaluating environmental claims, and trust can reduce perceived uncertainty. In digital environments, this issue may be particularly important because consumers can encounter both brand-created content and independent information.

The proposed mediating role of green trust provides a useful extension of the basic authenticity–purchase intention relationship. Rather than assuming that authenticity directly produces purchase intention, the framework suggests that authenticity may first contribute to trust, which may then influence purchase-related intentions.

VI. FINDINGS

- The study develops an integrated framework linking perceived authenticity, green trust and green purchase intention.
- The questionnaire operationalises perceived authenticity through seven items, green trust through six items and green purchase intention through seven items.
- The illustrative dataset shows positive associations among all three constructs.
- The proposed mediation model positions green trust as an explanatory mechanism between perceived authenticity and purchase intention.

- The small sample size makes the study exploratory and limits generalisation.

➤ *Managerial Implications*

- Brands should communicate environmental claims with clear and verifiable evidence.
- Digital green communication should be consistent with actual sustainability practices.
- Transparency about materials, sourcing, certifications, production processes and environmental impacts may strengthen consumer confidence.
- Brands should avoid exaggerated environmental claims because perceived inconsistency can weaken trust.
- Digital content should allow consumers to access supporting information rather than relying only on promotional statements.

VII. LIMITATIONS

- The proposed sample size is limited to 50 respondents.
- Purposive sampling reduces the ability to generalise the results.
- The study measures purchase intention rather than actual purchase behaviour.
- The study relies on self-reported perceptions.
- The numerical dataset currently used in this draft is synthetic and must be replaced by genuine survey responses before publication.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Digital green marketing is not only a matter of communicating environmental benefits; it also involves establishing credibility and trust. Perceived authenticity provides a useful lens for understanding how consumers evaluate whether sustainability communication is genuine and consistent. The present study proposes that authentic digital green communication may strengthen green trust and that green trust may contribute to purchase intention towards eco-friendly products.

The article provides a focused supporting study for the broader PhD research on digital marketing communication strategies for promoting eco-friendly products. Future research can extend the framework by incorporating environmental concern, green perceived value, greenwashing perception, consumer scepticism, influencer credibility, environmental knowledge and social-media engagement.

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APPENDIX

➤ *Questionnaire Framework*

The questionnaire uses a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. The 20 items are grouped into perceived authenticity (Q1–Q7), green trust (Q8–Q13) and green purchase intention (Q14–Q20). The exact questionnaire should be attached as an appendix in the final submission.

Data integrity statement: The 50-response dataset supplied with this working article is synthetic/illustrative. It is provided for demonstrating analysis, table preparation and article structure. It should not be represented as data collected from human participants.