

Green consumption: the role of perceived symbolic value and personal innovativeness

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to explore the relationship between personal innovativeness, perceived symbolic value and green purchase intentions within the context of sustainable consumption. Specifically, it investigates how personal innovativeness influences both green purchase intentions and perceived symbolic value and examines whether perceived symbolic value mediates the relationship between personal innovativeness and green purchase intentions.

Design/methodology/approach – Using a survey-based quantitative approach, data were collected from a sample of Indonesian consumers using online panels via SurveyMonkey®. The study used Rogers' diffusion theory to conceptualize personal innovativeness and drew on theories of symbolic consumption to frame perceived symbolic value. Partial least square structural equation modeling was used to test the proposed hypotheses and explore the relationships among the constructs.

Findings – The results indicate that personal innovativeness positively affects green purchase intentions and enhances the perceived symbolic value of green products. Moreover, perceived symbolic value influences green purchase intentions and partially mediates the relationship between personal innovativeness and green purchase intentions. These findings underscore the critical role of symbolic value in the adoption of green products and highlight personal innovativeness as a key driver in sustainable consumer behavior.

Originality/value – This research contributes to the sustainable consumption literature by integrating personal innovativeness with symbolic value considerations in green purchasing decisions, offering a novel insight into how individual traits and product symbolism interact to influence consumer behavior in the context of environmental sustainability.

Keywords Emerging markets, Personal innovativeness, Symbolic value, Electric vehicle, Sustainable consumption, Green purchase

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1. Introduction

The contemporary discourse on sustainable consumption has evolved, driven by growing global awareness of environmental challenges and their implications on both consumption and business practices (Sharma *et al.*, 2021; Vidal-Ayuso *et al.*, 2023). This awareness has catalyzed the promotion of green products, resonating with consumer demands and representing corporate sustainability commitments (Birindelli and Palea, 2022; Wang *et al.*, 2024). A key focus within this realm is the symbolic value attributed to green products (He *et al.*, 2021), which not only fulfill functional needs but also convey individual and collective values and aspirations (Leggett, 2020).

The increasing focus on sustainable business models has been well-documented in recent literature, emphasizing the integration of societal, stakeholder and consumer interests in cleaner business decisions. Rajagopal (2020) highlighted that sustainable choices create competitive differentiation, enabling companies to enhance their social impact and inspire consumer loyalty through emotional responses. This comprehensive approach to sustainability, including the circular economy, eco-innovation and social entrepreneurship, provides researchers with innovative concepts for sustainable business modeling. Similarly, Bahinipati *et al.* (2022) argued for a shift in public policy from supply-side energy conservation methods to behavioral interventions, emphasizing the complexity of factors influencing household energy consumption. These studies collectively underscore the importance of sustainable practices in emerging markets and the need for reorienting public policies toward sustainability.

Recent studies have delved into the dynamics of consumer emotions and perceived value in adopting green technologies, revealing a complex interplay that drives sustainable consumption. Wang *et al.* (2021) highlighted how emissions trading systems enhance urban green productivity through improved energy efficiency and green innovation, underscoring the role of policy in shaping sustainable practices. Building on this, Sharma *et al.* (2024a) demonstrated that consumer emotions mediate the relationship between radical green innovation and purchase intentions. This mediation underscores the profound impact of emotional responses on consumer attitudes toward green technologies.

Further, Sharma *et al.* (2024b) identified that various values, including conditional, functional and epistemic, influence attitudes toward BECs, emphasizing the crucial role of emotional connections and supportive policies in fostering green product adoption. Ye *et al.* (2023) expanded this understanding by discussing how global supply chain pressures and oil prices affect inflation, advocating for green energy and technology to counter these impacts. Collectively, these studies illustrate that consumer emotions, perceived value and innovative policies are pivotal in advancing sustainable consumption and the adoption of green technologies, highlighting the need for a multifaceted approach to encourage environmentally friendly behaviors.

Despite the recognition of symbolic value in sustainable consumption (Aggarwal *et al.*, 2024; Dieleman, 2017), gaps remain, particularly in understanding the dynamics between personal innovativeness, perceived symbolic value and green purchase intentions. This lack of clarity presents a critical area for research, suggesting a need to explore how consumer innovativeness interacts with the symbolic value of green products (Sharma, 2022; Sharma *et al.*, 2022). Such insights could be invaluable for businesses, environmentalists and policymakers, as green products often express personal identities and environmental stances (Kautish and Dash, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2020).

Our study adds to the literature by explicitly focusing on the interplay between personal innovativeness and the symbolic value of green products. Existing research has predominantly explored the functional and emotional aspects of green product adoption (Sharma *et al.*, 2024b; Wang *et al.*, 2021), with less attention given to how personal innovativeness interacts with

symbolic consumption. By exploring the relationship between personal innovativeness, perceived symbolic value and green purchase intention, our research addresses a critical area in sustainable consumption.

This study also contributes to explaining the interplay between personal innovativeness and the symbolic value of green products (Merli *et al.*, 2023; Shanmugavel and Micheal, 2022). Additionally, it extends the application of diffusion theory by incorporating the socio-psychological aspects of symbolic consumption (Belk *et al.*, 1982; Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Furthermore, the study offers practical insights for businesses and policymakers on leveraging symbolic value to promote sustainable consumption (Kautish and Khare, 2022; Rahman and Koszewska, 2020). Hence, this study posits the following research questions:

- RQ1. Does personal innovativeness influence green purchase intention?
- RQ2. Does personal innovativeness influence perceived symbolic value?
- RQ3. Does perceived symbolic value influence green purchase intention?
- RQ4. Does perceived symbolic value mediate the association between personal innovativeness and green purchase intention?

This study aims to bridge the research gap by exploring the relationship between personal innovativeness, perceived symbolic value and green purchase intention, addressing a key area in sustainable consumption research. Motivated by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Kautish and Sharma, 2020), our research offers both a robust theoretical framework and practical insights to inform green marketing strategies and promote sustainable consumer behaviors. By elucidating these relationships, we contribute to responsible production and consumption, facilitating positive societal and environmental impacts.

The article is structured as follows: the Section 2 delineates the key theories and concepts underlying the study and constructs the conceptual framework. Section 3 outlines the research methodology, including data collection techniques and analytical tools. Section 4 presents a detailed analysis of the data, interpreting the findings within the context of established theoretical constructs. Section 5 synthesizes the study's implications and offers conclusions that encapsulate the broader impacts on sustainable consumption research and practice.

2. Theoretical framework

Grounded in Rogers' (1962) diffusion theory, which has been instrumental in understanding how innovations shape individual behaviors within societal frameworks, this study delves into the dynamics of personal innovativeness, symbolic value and green purchase intention. Motivated by the SDG, our research seeks to shed light on the adoption of eco-conscious consumption practices and the factors influencing green purchase decisions (Kautish *et al.*, 2019; Kautish and Sharma, 2018, 2020).

Rogers identified five essential characteristics of innovations – relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability – that govern their adoption. Applied to green products, these determinants offer insights into consumer acceptance (Kautish *et al.*, 2019). For instance, the relative advantage, encompassing environmental benefits and long-term savings, acts as a catalyst for adoption (Cohen, 2016). Similarly, compatibility with consumers' ethos and lifestyles shapes purchase intent (Shin *et al.*, 2018), while trialability and observability influence adoption dynamics.

However, the traditional diffusion theory has been criticized for its focus on practical aspects, overlooking symbolic or socio-psychological value. In the context of green consumption, symbolic value, reflecting identity affirmation and personal values, becomes crucial (Bakiş and Kitapçı, 2023; Kautish and Sharma, 2019). For eco-conscious consumers, green products symbolize alignment with environmental and societal ideals (Kautish *et al.*, 2021). The intersection of green consumption, personal innovativeness and symbolic value is further explored through frameworks of symbolic consumption and consumption values (Belk *et al.*, 1982; Bhat and Reddy, 1998; Sheth *et al.*, 1991). Symbolic consumption suggests that individuals view green products as reflections of their environmental stewardship, transcending utility to represent personal values and self-expression (Seelig *et al.*, 2021).

Personal innovativeness plays a pivotal role in this narrative, as innovative individuals perceive eco-friendly alternatives as aligned with their avant-garde consumer identity (Merli *et al.*, 2023; Shanmugavel and Micheal, 2022), amplifying the symbolic value of green products. Additionally, consumption values theory reveals the multi-dimensional nature of values driving consumer choices (Sheth *et al.*, 1991), where ecological values align seamlessly with green products for environmentally conscious consumers (Khare and Kautish, 2020). This alignment is further magnified by personal innovativeness, creating a unique interplay between symbolic value and green consumption.

3. Conceptual model and hypotheses

3.1 Personal innovativeness and green purchase intention

Personal innovativeness is a multifaceted construct that characterizes an individual's propensity to engage with and adopt new technologies and ideas. This trait is deeply rooted in Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory (Rogers, 1962), which identifies innovativeness as a key predictor of technology acceptance and the subsequent diffusion process within a community (Bouteraa *et al.*, 2022). Personal innovativeness extends this concept to the realm of green products, emphasizing an individual's readiness not only to try new products but also to embrace those that contribute positively to environmental sustainability (Merli *et al.*, 2023).

In the context of green consumer behavior, personal innovativeness can be seen as a leading indicator of one's likelihood to prioritize and choose environmentally friendly products over conventional alternatives (Kautish and Sharma, 2020). This propensity is crucial as it relates to products that are often perceived as new or different from traditional offerings in the marketplace.

Individuals who score high on measures of personal innovativeness are typically more open to new experiences and less averse to the risks associated with novel products (Ali, 2019). This openness often leads them to be early adopters of sustainable technologies and practices, positioning them as pioneers in the ecological movement within consumer markets. Furthermore, these innovative consumers are generally more aware and knowledgeable about environmental issues, which influences their purchasing decisions (Li *et al.*, 2021). Their choices are often guided by a deep-seated belief in the importance of sustainability and a personal responsibility toward reducing environmental impacts, which aligns with the adoption of green products.

Additionally, the role of personal innovativeness in shaping market trends cannot be underestimated. Innovators often serve as role models or opinion leaders, influencing the purchase behaviors of others in their networks toward more sustainable options (Vrain *et al.*, 2022). This influence is crucial for the widespread adoption of green products, which often rely on community acceptance and the visibility of benefits to gain traction. Hence, we propose:

H1. Personal innovativeness exerts a positive influence on green purchase intentions.

3.2 *Personal innovativeness and perceived symbolic value*

Personal innovativeness, deeply embedded in consumer behavior literature, reflects an individual's tendency to adopt innovative products or services, often before these become mainstream within their social circles (Rogers, 1962). Over time, this concept has evolved beyond the mere pursuit of novelty. Li *et al.* (2021), for instance, suggests that personal innovativeness involves a strategic alignment where individuals resonate with products that reflect and amplify their social identities and values.

Symbolic value plays an essential role in how individuals construct their identities and express themselves (McLeay *et al.*, 2022). Those with high levels of personal innovativeness often use products as tools of self-expression, selecting items that not only stand out for their novelty but also articulate their personal ethos and deeply held values (Byun *et al.*, 2018). This selection process is driven by an intrinsic desire for unique experiences and conceptual paradigms, which are symbolic rather than merely utilitarian (Tan and Sie, 2015).

The desire for distinctiveness is a fundamental component of social identity theory (Turner and John, 2004). Innovative consumers seek to carve out unique niches for themselves while maintaining a connection to their broader social groups. This balance between individuality and belonging is crucial in their product choices. Innovative individuals often gravitate toward products that offer a sense of uniqueness and align with their cherished principles and identity (Palash *et al.*, 2022).

In today's diverse consumer landscape, individuals face a plethora of choices that require navigation through both functional needs and symbolic desires (Solomon and Panda, 2004). For innovative consumers, this navigation is not merely about addressing immediate needs but also about finding products that resonate with their socio-cultural contexts, aspirations and envisioned identities (Edward *et al.*, 2021). This dual quest emphasizes the importance of symbolic value in the choices of innovative consumers. Therefore, we suggest:

H2. Personal innovativeness positively influences perceived symbolic value.

3.3 *Perceived symbolic value and green purchase intention*

Perceived symbolic value is a complex construct that extends beyond mere utility, deeply rooted in the theory of conspicuous consumption (Veblen, 1899). Veblen's insights reveal that goods are often consumed not just for their functionality but also as markers of social status and distinction. This foundational idea has evolved to incorporate contemporary concerns such as ecological sustainability and social responsibility, mirroring societal transitions toward more sustainable practices (Kautish and Khare, 2022).

In the context of green products, their consumption transcends traditional utilitarian purposes. Schouten and McAlexander (1995) discuss the concept of products attaining a "sacralized" status within certain communities, thereby holding a value that far exceeds their objective worth. For eco-conscious consumers, green products symbolize a commitment to environmental stewardship and reflect broader societal ideals, effectively making these choices profound statements of personal beliefs and societal orientation (Copeland and Bhaduri, 2019; Griskevicius *et al.*, 2010).

The role of cultural capital further enriches this discourse (Bourdieu, 1984). Individuals endowed with significant cultural capital continually seek products that not only display their refined tastes but also echo their societal ethos (Lavuri *et al.*, 2023). This search for products is not driven solely by novelty but by a desire to find items that resonate with an individual's self-image and societal stance, effectively balancing innovation with responsibility (Abrar *et al.*, 2021; Holt, 1998).

Brands play a crucial role in this narrative, not as passive elements but as active amplifiers of a product's symbolic value. According to [Kapferer and Bastien \(2012\)](#), brands construct and convey powerful narratives that can transform a product, elevating it beyond its material essence to become a symbol of larger societal values, such as sustainability and progressiveness ([Key et al., 2023](#)).

Drawing on [Belk's \(2013\)](#) perspective, possessions are seen as extensions of the self, linked to our identity, ambitions and the roles we assume within society ([Wagner et al., 2021](#)). This conceptualization underscores the significant influence that perceived symbolic value has on consumption behaviors, particularly in how individuals choose to represent themselves through their purchasing decisions. Hence, we propose:

H3. Perceived symbolic value influences green purchase intentions.

3.4 Mediating role of perceived symbolic value

Consumption values theory provides a broad framework for understanding the interplay between consumer values and their purchasing decisions, emphasizing how intrinsic values, particularly regarding environmental sustainability and societal welfare, shape consumer behavior ([Sheth et al., 1991](#)). Recent extensions of this theory highlight the growing prominence of sustainable consumption in contemporary markets, stressing the changing priorities of consumers ([Kautish et al., 2022](#); [Park and Ha, 2014](#)).

In the realm of green products, their symbolic significance goes beyond mere functional attributes ([Rahman and Koszewska, 2020](#)). These products serve as tangible representations of the consumer's commitment to sustainability, societal betterment and responsible consumption patterns ([Chen et al., 2014](#)). Consequently, green products transform from simple commodities into powerful symbols that reflect the consumer's ideological and ethical stances, effectively serving as markers of dedication to environmental stewardship ([Maxwell-Smith et al., 2018](#)).

[Liu et al. \(2021\)](#) discuss how the symbolic perception of green products can influence consumer decisions. This influence is particularly pronounced among consumers who exhibit high levels of personal innovativeness and a propensity for risk-taking, indicating a complex relationship where personal traits and perceived product symbolism interact dynamically. [Buerke et al. \(2017\)](#) complement this perspective by suggesting that while personal innovativeness may initially attract consumers to green products, it is the symbolic value attributed to these products that is likely to trigger actual purchase decisions.

The theory of symbolic consumption supports the notion that consumers engage in purchases not only to satisfy functional needs but also to express personal beliefs, values and identities ([Sahin and Nasir, 2022](#)). For innovative consumers, the adoption of green products is influenced heavily by the perceived symbolic value of these products, which should reflect more than just innovative attributes; they should represent a lifestyle choice, an ideology and a broader commitment to sustainability ([Grønhøj and Thøgersen, 2017](#)). Hence, we suggest:

H4. Perceived symbolic value assumes a partial mediating role in the relationship between personal innovativeness and green purchase intention.

4. Method

4.1 Research context

This study is conducted in Indonesia, a Southeast Asian nation facing significant challenges such as widespread poverty, stark economic disparities and uneven access to quality education

(Hill, 2021). Indonesia's status as a developing economy makes it an intriguing setting for this research, especially as Electric Vehicles (EVs) emerge as a novel and environmentally sustainable option within the market. The introduction of EVs into this context suggests a need for a consumer base with a considerable innovative orientation. Although this research is tailored specifically to the Indonesian context, the principles and findings are applicable to other countries with similar socio-economic conditions and development patterns. In Indonesia, EVs are considered a luxury item, which indicates that consumers likely weigh the symbolic value represented by their purchase decisions heavily. This study primarily aims to explore the factors that influence consumer intentions to adopt these innovative vehicles, using the intention to adopt EVs as an indicator of green purchase intentions.

4.2 Data collection

We conducted this research using online panels via SurveyMonkey® and purposive sampling to ensure relevance and accuracy. The study design and survey instruments were ethically reviewed and approved by the university's ethics committee. Participants could withdraw from the survey at any time if they had concerns. The demographic profile of the survey respondents is characterized by a nearly even distribution between men (50%) and women (49.3%). The age distribution indicates that the majority of participants fall within the age brackets of 45 to 60 years (46.3%), with the next prominent segment comprising individuals aged 18 to 29 years (28.3%). A noteworthy proportion of respondents (55.9%) report monthly incomes ranging from IDR 3,500,000 (approximately US\$241.5) to IDR 11,000,000 (approximately US\$759) and a substantial 63.3% of the participants possess a bachelor's degree. For a comprehensive depiction of the participants' demographic characteristics, refer to [Table 1](#).

4.3 Measurement items

The criteria for the level of innovativeness were adopted from [Yang et al. \(2012\)](#) and we used four symbolic benefits from [Schuitema et al. \(2013\)](#) and [Noppers et al. \(2014\)](#). We use three factors to measure pro-environmental behavior as demonstrated by green purchase intention ([Barbarossa et al., 2015](#)). All components were modified to suit the context of the investigation. We also evaluated gender, age, income and education as control variables. First, the measurement items were translated into Bahasa Indonesia. To ensure linguistic accuracy, the translated version was reviewed alongside two Indonesian academics.

5. Findings and analysis

5.1 Measurement model

This study used a partial least squares structural equation model ([Hair et al., 2021](#); [Sarstedt et al., 2019](#)). The computation was done using SmartPLS 3 ([Ringle et al., 2015](#)). To mitigate the potential influence of common method bias – a critical concern in empirical research – this study adopted a collinearity assessment approach. This entailed the calculation of variance inflation factors (VIF) for each independent variable incorporated within the regression model. It is imperative to highlight that rigorous adherence to a specified VIF threshold of 3.3, as established by [Kock \(2017\)](#), was observed. The outcome of this assessment unequivocally indicated the absence of substantial multicollinearity among the variables, thereby providing substantial reassurance that common method bias did not exert a dominant influence on the analytical outcomes. This methodological rigor was implemented to augment the validity and reliability of our research findings, with the overarching objective of ensuring that the relationships delineated among the variables were not predominantly driven by shared method variance.

Table 1. Respondents' profiles

Demographic variables	Frequency	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	136	50
Female	134	49.3
Prefer not to say	2	0.7
<i>Age</i>		
18–29	77	28.3
30–44	50	18.4
45–60	126	46.3
> 60	17	6.3
Prefer not to say	2	0.7
<i>Monthly income</i>		
< Rp 3.5 mio (< US\$ 241.5)	38	14.1
Rp 3.5 mio to Rp 6 mio (US\$ 241.5 to US\$ 414)	91	33.5
Rp 6 mio- to Rp 11 mio (US\$ 414 to US\$ 759)	61	22.4
Rp11 mio to Rp 17 mio (US\$ 759 to US\$ 1,173)	39	14.3
> Rp 17 mio (> US\$ 1,173)	43	15.8
<i>Education</i>		
Senior high	77	28.31
Undergraduate	173	63.60
Masters	15	5.51
PhD	4	1.47
Prefer not to say	3	1.10

Source: Authors' Work

Furthermore, to meet the minimum acceptable standards, the study computed indicator loadings for each item nested within the constructs. The pivotal criteria of internal consistency were scrutinized and met, with adherence to established metrics (Hair *et al.*, 2021; Sarstedt *et al.*, 2022; Taber, 2018). Specifically, this entailed an examination of Cronbach's alpha, ρ and composite reliability. Furthermore, our model robustly satisfied the criterion of convergent validity, a key facet assessed through the average variance extracted (AVE) metric. The details of these indicators, central to the evaluation of construct validity and reliability, are outlined in Table 2.

To assess discriminant validity, we used the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Henseler *et al.*, 2015), both of which are recognized as sound techniques for this purpose. The outcomes of these discriminant validity assessments are presented in Table 3 and Table 4, respectively, thereby attesting to the robustness and validity of the measurement constructs under scrutiny.

5.2 Structural model

We looked at the structural model (R^2 , Q^2 , Q^2_{predict} and significance level) and measurement model (loading, internal consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity) to assess our hypotheses (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The entire sample of 272 respondents is used to assess both the structural and measurement models. After the requirements for the measurement model were met, we used BCa bootstrap with 500 subsamples to evaluate the structural model. The following indicators demonstrate the model's acceptable structural fit: VIF < 3,

Table 2. Measurement model results

Construct	Items	Loadings	C.A	ρA	CR	AVE
Green purchase intention	Next time I buy a <i>vehicle</i> , I will consider buying EV	0.750	0.787	0.810	0.875	0.701
	I expect to <i>drive/ride</i> EV in the near future	0.877				
	I have the intention to <i>drive/ride</i> EV in the near future	0.878				
Personal innovativeness	If I heard about a new product, I would look for ways to experiment with it	0.894	0.874	0.883	0.922	0.798
	I like to experiment with new products	0.919				
<i>Perceived symbol</i>	Among my peers, I am usually the first to explore new products	0.867				
	I would feel proud of driving innovativeness	0.863	0.827	0.829	0.897	0.743
	EV shows who I am EV enhances my social status	0.883 0.839				

Notes: CA = Cronbach's Alpha; ρA = rho_A; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted

Source: Authors' Work

Table 3. HTMT results

Path	Original sample	Sample mean	10.0%	90.0%
Personal innovativeness → green purchase intention	0.575	0.574	0.485	0.664
Perceived symbolic value → green purchase intention	0.730	0.730	0.670	0.792
Perceived symbolic value → personal innovativeness	0.590	0.588	0.501	0.681

Source: Authors' Work

Table 4. Fornell–Larcker Results

Fornell-Larcker	Green purchase intention	Personal innovativeness	Perceived symbolic value
Green purchase intention	0.837		
Personal innovativeness	0.489	0.894	
Perceived symbolic value	0.595	0.503	0.862

Source: Authors' Work

$R^2 = 0.473$, $Q^2 > 0$ (blindfolding with seven omission distance), SRMR 0.1 and $Q^2_{\text{predict}} > 0$ (PLS_{predict} with 10 folds). The process is then proceeded by evaluating the relevance of our proposed hypotheses' path coefficients (Table 5).

Perceived innovativeness influences both green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.253$, $t = 3.996$, $p < 0.01$) and perceived symbolic value positively ($\beta = 0.503$, $t = 8.432$, $p < 0.01$), therefore, supporting *H1* and *H2*. Additionally, perceived symbolic value influences positively green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.468$, $t = 8.509$, $p < 0.01$), thus *H3* is supported. Perceived symbolic value partially mediates the relationship between perceived innovation and green purchase intention ($\beta = 0.235$, $t = 6.468$, $p < 0.01$), thus, supporting *H4*. Therefore, all hypotheses in this study are supported (Figure 1).

6. Discussion

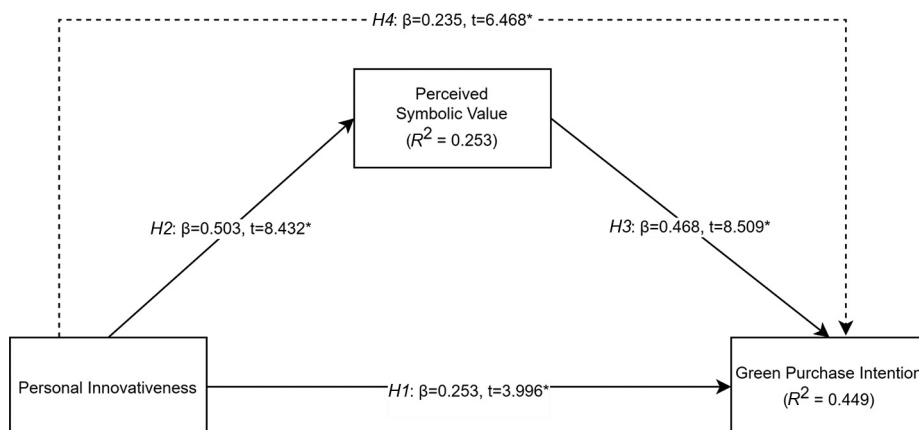
The findings of this study demonstrate that personal innovativeness influences green purchase intentions and perceived symbolic value. Moreover, the perceived symbolic value not only directly impacts green purchase intentions but also serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between personal innovativeness and green purchase intentions. These results underscore the pivotal role of symbolic value in green consumption, highlighting that

Table 5. Structural model results

Path	Path estimate	t-value
<i>H1</i> : Personal Innovativeness → Green Purchase Intention	0.253	3.996*
<i>H2</i> : Personal Innovativeness → Perceived Symbolic Value	0.503	8.432*
<i>H3</i> : Perceived Symbolic Value → Green Purchase Intention	0.468	8.509*
<i>H4</i> : Perceived Innovativeness → Perceived Symbolic Value → Green Purchase Intention	0.235	6.468*

Note: * $p < 0.01$

Source: Authors' work



Note: $*p < 0.01$

Source: Authors' work

Figure 1. Structural model results

individuals who exhibit higher levels of personal innovativeness are more likely to perceive green products as reflective of their values and societal aspirations, thereby driving their intention to purchase such products.

6.1 Theoretical implications

This study adds to the literature on sustainable consumption by linking personal innovativeness, perceived symbolic value and green purchase intentions, thus addressing a critical gap identified in prior research (Aggarwal *et al.*, 2024; Dieleman, 2017). By integrating Rogers' diffusion of innovations theory with the socio-psychological dimensions of symbolic consumption, our research offers a nuanced understanding of how individual traits and product symbolism converge to influence consumer behavior in the context of environmental sustainability.

First, our findings corroborate the assertions of previous studies that highlight the importance of personal innovativeness in adopting green products. For instance, Merli *et al.* (2023) and Shanmugavel and Micheal (2022) emphasized that innovative consumers are more inclined toward products that align with their forward-thinking identities. Our study extends this by showing that such innovativeness not only directly influences green purchase intentions but also enhances the perceived symbolic value of these products, thereby enriching the discourse on how innovativeness can be a driver of sustainable consumption.

Second, the study's exploration of perceived symbolic value as a mediator provides robust support for the theories of symbolic consumption (Belk *et al.*, 1982; Bhat and Reddy, 1998). We find that symbolic value impacts green purchase intentions, echoing the work of Kautish and Khare (2022), who argued that green products are often perceived as markers of social status and environmental commitment. This reinforces the idea that consumers are motivated by more than just the functional benefits of green products; they also seek to express their identity and values through their purchases (Seelig *et al.*, 2021).

Moreover, our research aligns with the findings of Sharma *et al.* (2024a) and Sharma *et al.* (2024b), who demonstrated the role of consumer emotions and values in shaping attitudes toward green technologies. We extend these insights by focusing on the symbolic value

aspect, thereby providing a more comprehensive view of the emotional and psychological factors that drive green purchase intentions. This integration of personal innovativeness and symbolic consumption perspectives offers a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of sustainable consumer behavior.

Additionally, the study contributes to the literature on the role of cultural capital and social identity in consumption choices. Bourdieu's (1984) concept of cultural capital is reflected in our findings, where individuals endowed with higher levels of innovativeness and a desire for distinctiveness are seen to place significant symbolic value on green products. This underscores the interplay between personal innovativeness and symbolic value, providing empirical support to theories that suggest consumers use products to construct and communicate their social identities (Holt, 1998; Lavuri *et al.*, 2023).

6.2 Managerial implications

First, businesses should recognize the critical role of personal innovativeness in driving green purchase intentions. Innovative consumers are early adopters who can influence broader market trends. Managers should therefore target these consumers by highlighting the novel and cutting-edge aspects of their green products, which align with the consumers' forward-thinking and risk-taking dispositions. Tailoring marketing campaigns to emphasize innovation and pioneering sustainability can attract these influential early adopters, potentially accelerating market penetration for green products.

Second, the study underscores the importance of perceived symbolic value in green purchase decisions. Green products are not only seen as environmentally beneficial but also as symbols of social status and personal values. Therefore, companies should invest in building strong brand narratives that link their products to broader societal ideals and personal identity. By positioning green products as not just functional items but also as embodiments of environmental commitment and social consciousness, managers can enhance their appeal to consumers who value symbolic consumption. For instance, storytelling that emphasizes the environmental impact of purchasing a green product can resonate deeply with consumers' values and reinforce their purchasing decisions.

Moreover, the mediating role of symbolic value suggests that marketing strategies should integrate messages that appeal to both the functional and symbolic attributes of green products. Promotional campaigns should highlight how green products align with the consumers' self-image and societal ideals. This dual approach can be particularly effective in emerging markets where social and economic factors are rapidly evolving. Managers should leverage social media and other digital platforms to create and disseminate content that showcases real-life stories and testimonials from consumers who have adopted green products, thus enhancing the symbolic value associated with these products.

Additionally, the insights from this study suggest that businesses should engage in educational initiatives that elevate consumers' awareness and knowledge about the environmental benefits of their products. Innovative consumers are typically more informed and knowledgeable about environmental issues, and companies can capitalize on this by providing detailed information about the ecological benefits and sustainability credentials of their products. This could include transparent communication about sourcing practices, production processes and the overall environmental impact, thereby fostering trust and reinforcing the symbolic value of green products.

Finally, policymakers can draw from these findings to design and implement policies that encourage sustainable consumer behavior. By creating incentives for the adoption of green products and supporting public awareness campaigns that highlight the symbolic and functional benefits of these products, policymakers can facilitate a broader shift toward

sustainable consumption. Collaboration between businesses and governments can amplify these efforts, creating a supportive ecosystem for green innovations to thrive.

6.3 Limitation and future research

This study has several limitations that open avenues for future research. One limitation is the geographic focus on Indonesia, which provides unique insights into the adoption of green technologies in a developing country but may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different economic, cultural or environmental dynamics. Future research could replicate this study in various geographical settings to compare and contrast consumer behaviors toward green products across cultures and development stages.

The reliance on self-reported measures of purchase intentions rather than actual purchase behavior is another limitation. While intentions are strong predictors of behavior, they do not always translate directly into action due to factors such as availability, affordability and situational influences. Future studies could use longitudinal designs to track how green purchase intentions manifest into real purchase behaviors over time and under different conditions.

Additionally, the research centers on personal innovativeness and its interaction with symbolic value, potentially overlooking other psychological traits that might influence sustainable consumption, such as environmental concern, altruism or social influence. Future research could explore a broader set of variables to provide a more comprehensive model of consumer behavior in the context of sustainability.

Finally, the study's conceptual framework focuses on the positive aspects of green consumption without deeply examining the barriers or negative perceptions that might deter consumers. Future research could investigate obstacles such as perceived higher costs, lack of information or distrust in corporate green claims. Understanding these barriers could help marketers and policymakers design more effective interventions to promote sustainable consumption.

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