



Unpacking Eco-Conscious Footwear: How Brand Activism and Credibility Drive Advocacy and Usage Continuity

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors driving continuous usage intention and brand advocacy for eco-friendly footwear made from recycled materials. Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), data were collected from 271 respondents, primarily Millennials and Gen Z, who engage in running and golf. The model examines the impact of environmental knowledge, environmental concern, and brand competence on brand-related outcomes, with brand ambassador credibility, brand activism, self-brand congruence, and mindful consumption as mediators. Findings reveal significant relationships among all variables, with environmental knowledge emerging as the strongest predictor of brand activism. Furthermore, brand activism significantly influences mindful consumption, underscoring the role of activism in fostering sustainable consumer behaviors. These results highlight the importance of brand activism and credibility in shaping brand loyalty and sustainability perceptions among eco-conscious consumers. The implications offer valuable insights for brands aiming to enhance their advocacy and engagement strategies in the sustainable footwear market.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of growing environmental concerns and the pressing need for sustainable solutions, the role of consumer behavior in driving sustainability has become increasingly critical. The fashion and sports apparel industries, known for their environmental impact, are at the forefront of this shift, with eco-friendly products gaining popularity, especially among younger consumers. This urgency is aligned with global initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 12), which emphasize the importance of responsible consumption and production. Younger generations, particularly Gen Z and millennials, are championing this change, increasingly demanding brand transparency, ethical practices, and environmental responsibility. As these consumers engage more with brands that reflect their values, their purchasing choices, such as opting for eco-friendly sports shoes, reflect a broader movement toward sustainable living that has far-reaching implications for businesses and the planet.

In recent years, younger generations, particularly Gen Z and Millennials, have demonstrated an increasing commitment to sustainability in their purchasing decisions. This shift is particularly evident in markets like Singapore and other parts of Asia, where studies indicate that Gen Z consumers are more likely to invest in products from companies that actively support environmental causes. For example, a 2021 study by Nielsen [1] found that 73% of global Gen Z consumers are willing to pay a premium for products that support sustainability and ethical practices. Similarly, a report from 2022 [2] highlighted that 65% of Singaporean Gen Z

consumers would avoid purchasing from companies perceived as harming the environment, further emphasizing their preference for brands that align with their values. These trends demonstrate how Gen Z is influencing market dynamics by prioritizing sustainability, leading companies to reevaluate their environmental practices to cater to this influential consumer segment.

This study focuses on eco-friendly footwear since it is a relevant and important category due to the growing consumer demand for sustainable products and the urgent need for industries to reduce their environmental impact. The fashion and footwear industry significantly contributes to environmental degradation, with elevated levels of resource consumption, waste, and carbon emissions. As consumers, particularly younger generations, become more aware of the environmental footprint of their purchases, they increasingly prioritize products that align with their values of sustainability [3]. Eco-friendly shoes offer a practical solution by utilizing sustainable materials and production methods, thereby reducing environmental harm while meeting consumers' functional and aesthetic needs [4]. By focusing on this product category, this research addresses a pressing global challenge and taps into a rapidly growing market segment, making it highly relevant for brands aiming to differentiate themselves through sustainability initiatives.

The choice to focus on sports footwear in this study is driven by several factors that make this category particularly relevant for examining sustainable consumer behaviors. In the larger sports business, the sports footwear market is one of the biggest and most competitive. The global sports footwear

market was estimated to be worth USD 95.4 billion in 2022, and it is projected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.7% between 2023 and 2030 according to research [5]. A key product area in the sports sector, footwear is growing due to a mix of lifestyle changes, rising health consciousness, and advancements in sports shoe design.

Sports footwear offers a wide variety of specialized products, each designed for distinct functions, which is another reason it was selected as the focus of this study. For example, running shoes alone are subdivided into categories for sprinters, marathon runners, and even ultra-marathon runners, each requiring different performance attributes such as cushioning, stability, and support. Additionally, there are specific footwear options for activities like golf, basketball, and tennis, with each sport demanding specialized footwear for optimum performance. These variations in consumer needs create a dynamic market that offers brands numerous opportunities to cater to niche demands. However, it also introduces complexity in terms of consumer decision-making, which makes sustainability initiatives particularly valuable.

The footwear market is also less regulated compared to other sectors, such as apparel or food, which makes it an ideal category for examining the impact of sustainability on consumer behavior. As environmental concerns grow, more consumers are looking for brands that are transparent about their environmental impact, yet the lack of stringent industry regulations allows brands to position themselves more easily as eco-friendly. This creates both an opportunity and a challenge for consumers, who must navigate a marketplace that is often flooded with eco-friendly claims, many of which are not necessarily substantiated.

Given these factors, sports footwear presents a promising category for studying how sustainability impacts consumer behavior. The market is large, competitive, and diverse, with a wide range of products and a growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers. By focusing on this category, this research aims to provide valuable insights for brands looking to leverage sustainability as a key differentiator while responding to increasing consumer demand for eco-friendly products.

Currently, the eco-friendly fashion and sports apparel sectors face significant challenges, including the overwhelming influence of fast fashion, which perpetuates a cycle of overconsumption and waste. This phenomenon contradicts the principles of sustainability and creates a disconnect for young consumers who aspire to engage in mindful consumption. The desire to purchase sustainably often clashes with the accessibility and allure of rapidly produced, inexpensive alternatives, leading to confusion and mixed messages regarding responsible choices [6]. Moreover, inadequate environmental education can result in limited awareness of the consequences of consumer behaviors, affecting individuals' ability to make informed decisions that align with their values [7].

To address these challenges, brands can adopt a mindfulness perspective by implementing educational campaigns that emphasize the importance of sustainable consumption. By providing resources and information about the environmental impacts of their products, brands can empower consumers to make informed choices. Research indicates that increasing environmental awareness can lead to more consistent mindful consumption behaviors and enhance brand loyalty [8]. Additionally, integrating practices such as transparent supply chains and sustainable production methods

can foster a sense of authenticity and trust, encouraging consumers to become advocates for eco-friendly brands. Thus, fostering mindfulness aligns consumer behavior with sustainability and strengthens the bond between brands and their audiences.

In recent years, researchers have increasingly explored mindful consumption, highlighting its role in promoting sustainable behavior and encouraging ethical purchasing decisions. Studies have demonstrated that consumers who engage in mindful consumption tend to have a greater awareness of the environmental and social impacts of their choices, leading to more sustainable purchasing practices [9]. However, existing literature often overlooks the specific branding elements that can enhance mindful consumption behaviors. Most research has focused on general consumer attitudes or intentions without deeply examining how brand strategies can effectively foster mindfulness among consumers. This gap presents a critical opportunity to explore how specific branding concepts can influence and enhance mindful consumption practices.

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) can be synthesized to provide a robust theoretical foundation for understanding mindful consumption in the context of eco-friendly footwear. TPB explains the intention, and it is well-suited to model consumer decisions based on environmental concerns and social pressures to adopt sustainable products. However, TPB alone may not fully capture the intrinsic motivations that influence sustainable behavior. This is where SDT becomes relevant, as it emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation, particularly the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which can drive consumers to make eco-conscious choices not just due to external factors but because they align with their internal values [10]. Integrating SDT into the TPB framework allows a deeper understanding of how external influences (like brand competence) and intrinsic motivations (like environmental concern and environmental knowledge) shape mindful consumption behaviors, leading to more robust brand advocacy and loyalty. This approach creates a more comprehensive model for analyzing consumer behavior, particularly among young, environmentally conscious consumers.

To address this gap, the inclusion of brand activism [11] and brand self-congruence [12] as focal variables provide a more nuanced understanding of consumer behavior in the context of mindfulness consumption. Brand-induced political activism can challenge consumption, production, policy, and ideologies, promoting brand development and positioning [13]. In contrast, brand self-congruence reflects the alignment between a consumer's self-concept and the brand, consisting of personality, beliefs, interests, social roles, aspirations, and abilities [14]. By examining these two concepts, this research can shed light on how brands can authentically engage with consumers, fostering both mindful consumption and long-term loyalty. This dual focus deepens the understanding of consumer motivations and provides actionable insights for marketers aiming to build stronger relationships with their audience in an increasingly eco-conscious market.

Including environmental concern and environmental knowledge as independent variables, alongside brand competence is essential for understanding the multifaceted nature of mindful consumption in eco-friendly footwear. Environmental concern refers to the extent to which consumers are aware of and worried about environmental

issues, which directly influences their desire to engage in sustainable behaviors [15]. Customers are more inclined to look for goods that reflect their values when they care about the environment, such as eco-friendly shoes [16]. Environmental knowledge, on the other hand, empowers consumers with the information needed to make informed decisions [17]. It enhances their ability to discern genuinely sustainable products and those that merely claim to be. When combined with brand competence, the perceived ability of the brand to deliver high-quality and environmentally responsible products. These variables form a comprehensive model that captures both the emotional and cognitive aspects of consumer decision-making.

The contribution of this research is particularly novel in the context of the Indonesian market, where environmental awareness is growing but still varies significantly across different consumer segments. By integrating environmental concern, environmental knowledge, and brand competence, this study provides a deeper understanding of how Indonesian consumers engage with eco-friendly brands, particularly in the sports footwear industry. Unlike Western markets, where environmental awareness may be more established, Indonesia presents unique challenges in terms of consumer education and market readiness for sustainable products. This research can offer insights into how Indonesian footwear brands can better communicate their environmental efforts and product quality, making it relevant for local and international players looking to penetrate or expand in this market.

In the context of eco-friendly sports footwear, this survey research attempts to explore how brand competency, environmental concern, and environmental understanding impact mindful consumption, which in turn propels brand advocacy and continuous usage intention. Specifically, this study proposes a modification model. It examines the combined effects of the variables in the model on consumer behavior, focusing on how young Indonesian consumers perceive and interact with sustainable brands. By doing so, the research seeks to provide actionable insights for marketers on effectively positioning eco-friendly products and fostering stronger consumer-brand relationships with Indonesian consumers. The study's result will help brands design more effective marketing strategies that resonate with Indonesian consumers' growing environmental consciousness while ensuring their products are perceived as competent and eco-friendly.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Unpacking eco-conscious footwear involves understanding how numerous factors drive advocacy and continuous usage. This literature review explores the theoretical frameworks underlying these dynamics, focusing on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by examining independent variables like environmental knowledge, concern, and brand competence, which influence dependent variables such as continuous usage intention and brand advocacy. Mediators in this process include brand ambassador credibility, brand activism, self-brand congruence, and mindfulness consumption.

The TPB provides a robust framework for conceptualizing,

measuring, and identifying factors determining behavioral intentions and actual behaviors. According to Ajzen [18], TPB emphasizes three key components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These elements collectively predict a person's likelihood of engaging in specific actions. Environmental knowledge and concern significantly influence attitudes and subjective norms in the context of eco-conscious footwear. For instance, studies have shown that individuals with higher environmental knowledge exhibit stronger intentions to engage in environmentally friendly practices [19].

The theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) effectively predicts consumer intentions to purchase eco-friendly products, and its predictive power is enhanced by incorporating additional constructs such as environmental concern, perceived behavioral control, and willingness to pay a premium [20]. A popular framework for forecasting and comprehending customer intents and behaviors, such as buying eco-friendly products, is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) [21]. This synthesis explores how TPB has been applied and extended in numerous studies to predict eco-friendly purchase intentions better. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is useful in predicting young consumers' intention to purchase green products and incorporating environmental concern and environmental knowledge improves its predictive utility [22].

The psychological paradigm known as Self-Determination Theory (SDT) strongly emphasizes how both internal and external motivation influence behavior. The use of SDT to promote environmentally friendly behavior has been studied recently, especially in environmental education and sustainable food choices. When appropriately measured with the right tools, this Self-Determination Theory (SDT)-based courses on the Amotivation subscale showed that, compared to traditional courses, students with a less emphatic orientation had lower motivation and higher environmental motivation [23].

Brand activation strategies also play a critical role in both theories. By leveraging credible ambassadors and emphasizing the benefits of sustainable choices, brands can foster a sense of community and shared responsibility among consumers. Studies indicate that practical branding efforts can increase brand loyalty and drive long-term commitment to sustainable practices [24]. Furthermore, mindfulness consumption, a mediator influenced by self-brand congruence, encourages consumers to reflect on their purchases, ensuring alignment between personal values and brand identity [25].

Brand ambassador credibility is a vital mediator linking independent variables to dependent outcomes. Authentic endorsements from trusted figures reinforce perceptions of brand reliability and integrity, thus influencing continuous usage intentions and fostering brand advocacy [26]. Research supports the notion that authentic communication from influencers can significantly boost consumer confidence in making sustainable choices.

Additionally, brand activism stands out as another influential mediator. Campaigns promoting ethical manufacturing processes and reducing waste resonate deeply with environmentally conscious consumers. Such initiatives underscore the company's commitment to sustainability, further solidifying its reputation and encouraging prolonged engagement with eco-friendly products [27].

Lastly, self-brand congruence ensures that consumers perceive the brand as reflecting their values and lifestyle. When there is harmony between individual preferences and

brand messaging, consumers experience heightened satisfaction, leading to increased loyalty and ongoing support for sustainable footwear brands [28].

By examining these interrelated concepts through the lenses of TPB and SDT, it gains deeper insights into how environmental knowledge, concern, and brand competence interact with mediation factors like brand ambassador credibility, activism, congruence, and mindfulness consumption to shape continuous usage intentions and brand advocacy in the context of eco-conscious footwear.

2.2 Environmental concern, brand activism, and self-brand congruence

Environmental concern refers to awareness and consideration of environmental issues and the willingness to take action to address them. It encompasses attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors aimed at protecting the environment and promoting sustainability [29]. Brand activism refers to a brand's commitment to taking a public stance on societal, environmental, or political issues [30].

Research indicates that heightened environmental concern among consumers drives brands to adopt more initiative-taking and visible green initiatives. This alignment with consumer values enhances brand reputation and fosters deeper consumer engagement [31]. Moreover, environmental concern significantly impacts self-brand congruence, where consumers seek alignment between their values and the brands they support. High congruence between the environmental issue and the product category in green advertising leads to positive consumer responses, including better ad attitude, sponsor attitude, and behavioral intentions. The perceived green reputation of the product also moderates these effects [32].

H1: Environmental Concern has a positive influence on brand activism.

H2: Environmental Concern has a positive influence on self-brand congruence.

2.3 Environmental knowledge, brand activism, and self-brand congruence

Environmental knowledge refers to an individual's understanding and awareness of environmental issues, including the functioning of natural ecosystems, environmental challenges, and how human actions impact the environment [33]. Self-brand congruence refers to the congruence between an individual's self-concept and perceived brand image [34].

The impact of environmental knowledge on brand activism is a growing area of interest, particularly as consumers become more environmentally conscious and demand greater accountability from brands. This synthesis explores how environmental knowledge influences consumer behavior and brand loyalty in the context of brand activism. Environmental activism contributes to the development of green knowledge, but new types of interaction and communication spaces are needed to prevent it from being incorporated into the dominant culture [35]. The relationship between environmental knowledge and self-brand congruence is critical in understanding consumer behavior towards pro-environmental brands. This synthesis explores how consumers' environmental knowledge impacts their alignment with brands that promote sustainability, influencing their purchase intentions and brand evaluations. Knowledge about the

environmental impact of products can reduce consumer skepticism towards climate change, leading to higher purchase intentions for pro-environmental brands [36].

H3: Environmental knowledge has a positive influence on brand activism.

H4: Environmental knowledge has a positive influence on self-brand congruence.

2.4 Brand competence and brand ambassador credibility

Brand competence refers to the consumer's perception that the brand can fulfill its promises and function according to the brand's perceived ability to deliver reliable and high-quality products or services with efficiency, skill, and confidence [37]. Brand Ambassador Credibility refers to the Attractiveness and trustworthiness of celebrity endorsers enhancing brand attitudes, brand credibility, and purchase intentions [38].

Research indicates that a brand's perceived competence significantly enhances the credibility of its ambassadors. Consumers are more likely to trust and engage with brand ambassadors when they believe the brand is capable and dependable, strengthening its overall image [39].

H5: Brand competence has a positive influence on brand ambassador credibility.

2.5 Brand ambassador credibility, brand activism, and self-brand congruence

Research indicates that when brand ambassadors are perceived as credible, consumers are likelier to see the brand as aligned with their values, enhancing self-brand congruence. This alignment strengthens the emotional connection between consumers and the brand, promoting loyalty and advocacy [40].

H6: Brand ambassador credibility has a positive influence on brand activism and self-brand congruence.

H7: Brand Ambassador Credibility has a positive influence on self-brand congruence.

2.6 Brand activism and mindfulness consumption

Mindfulness consumption refers to making wise, considered, and ethical choices in consuming products and services. This practice includes awareness of the environmental, social, and personal impacts of consumption behavior, with a focus on sustainable and responsible actions [41].

The relationship between brand activism and mindfulness consumption is an emerging marketing and consumer behavior research area of interest. Mindfulness fosters sustainable consumption by disrupting routines, promoting congruence between attitudes and behaviors, nurturing non-materialistic values, enhancing well-being, and fostering prosocial behavior. These mechanisms collectively support the idea that mindfulness can lead to more sustainable and mindful consumption patterns [42].

H8: Brand activism has a positive influence on mindfulness consumption.

2.7 Self-brand congruence and mindfulness consumption

Self-brand congruence positively influences mindfulness consumption by fostering a deep alignment between consumers' values and the brands they support. When

consumers perceive that a brand reflects their self-identity and values, they are more likely to engage in mindful consumption practices, consciously considering the ethical implications of their purchases [43]. This alignment encourages consumers to make intentional choices that resonate with their beliefs, leading to more sustainable consumption behaviors and a more significant commitment to brands that embody their ideals.

Furthermore, the connection between self-brand congruence and mindfulness consumption emphasizes the role of authenticity in consumer behavior. Brands that successfully communicate their values and foster a sense of congruence with consumers can inspire them to adopt more mindful consumption patterns as individuals seek to express their identity through responsible purchasing decisions [44]. This dynamic enhances consumer satisfaction and promotes loyalty and advocacy for brands that align with their self-concept, contributing to a more sustainable marketplace.

H9: Self-brand congruence has a positive influence on mindfulness consumption.

2.8 Mindfulness consumption, brand advocacy, and continuous usage intention

Brand Advocacy refers to the active promotion of a brand by consumers through positive word-of-mouth, often because of high satisfaction and emotional attachment to the brand [45]. Continuous usage intention refers to using a product, service, or system over time. This intention reflects the decision to continue using something after initial use, which is often driven by satisfaction, perceived usefulness, and ease of use [46].

Mindfulness consumption has positively influenced brand advocacy by fostering deeper connections between consumers and the brands they support. The mindfulness-based intervention led to greater well-being and suggested a decline in materialistic value orientations but showed no evidence of direct effects on sustainable consumption behavior [47]. This alignment enhances consumer loyalty and encourages active participation in promoting the brand through word-of-mouth recommendations and social media endorsements. For instance, research indicates that mindfulness can reduce impulsive buying behaviors, increasing the likelihood of sustained engagement with eco-friendly products and services [42]. Consequently, this heightened awareness among consumers translates into increased brand advocacy efforts.

Moreover, mindfulness consumption positively influences continuous usage intention by encouraging thoughtful decision-making. By being present and engaged during everyday experiences, consumers develop greater self-awareness about their needs and preferences, which leads to more intentional purchasing habits [41]. This reflective approach helps consumers evaluate product features and sustainability aspects more critically, driving long-term commitment to using environmentally responsible products. Furthermore, studies suggest that mindfulness interventions enhance sustainable behavior by reducing materialism and increasing connectedness to nature, thus reinforcing pro-environmental actions over time [44]. Therefore, integrating mindfulness into daily consumption patterns supports ethical considerations and ensures consistent adherence to preferred brands.

H10: Mindfulness consumption has a positive influence on brand advocacy.

H11: Mindfulness consumption has a positive influence on continuous usage intention.

3. METHODOLOGY

According to Sekaran and Bougie [48], this study employs a non-probability sampling technique, meaning that not every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen for the sample. Since the study's goal is to measure perceptions and a generalizable concept model is the intended result, this approach is frequently employed in marketing research. However, obtaining a thorough sample frame is frequently challenging [49]. In this study, the purposive sampling strategy was used. The sampling technique known as "purposive sampling" chooses members of a population according to a pre-established target group. This approach is taken under the presumption that the chosen sample will be able to supply pertinent and essential data to meet the goals of the study. The selection of the sample is based on whether the person satisfies specified predetermined criteria or possesses the necessary information [50]. The following criteria were applied in this purposive sampling: First, the respondents continue to participate in sports, particularly marathons and golf. Second, Millennials and Gen Z are the age groups that respondents are most interested in. Third, the Greater Jakarta Area is where the respondents call home.

The variables were measured using questionnaire items adapted from prior studies, utilizing a 1-5 Likert scale: environmental concern [51], environmental knowledge [52], brand competence [53], brand ambassador credibility [54], brand activism [55], self-brand congruence [56], mindfulness consumption [57], brand advocacy [58], and continuous usage intention [59].

The sample size or number of samples used in this study was determined according to existing recommendations. According to references, in multivariate research with a new generation, namely partial least square - structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), it is recommended to calculate the minimum sample using the power analysis method. The software used to calculate the number of samples is G* Power [49].

In the calculation to determine the number of samples needed, G * Power version 3.1 was used. In this calculation, the medium f² was determined to be 0.15 with a power of 90%, alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$) and with the number of predictors as many as 7 variables. From the results of calculations using power analysis using the G*Power software, the results obtained were the minimum sample size needed, which was 130 respondents. The results of the questionnaires that had been distributed in this study were 271 respondents who could be used as the total sample in this study.

A panel of three professionals with expertise in digital consumer behavior and marketing assessed the face validity of the questionnaire after all items were expertly translated from English to Indonesian. Before data collection, 71 respondents participated in a readability and clarity test of the questionnaire. After making the required changes in response to their input, the final version was made available online to qualified participants, who were guaranteed the anonymity of their answers. The information gathered was only utilized for scholarly studies.

In this study, we chose to use Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) over Covariance-

Based SEM (CB-SEM) for several reasons. First, our research is causal-predictive, aiming to predict the consequences of independent variables on dependent variables. We focused on evaluating the predictive power of the model using metrics such as R^2 , Q^2 , and CVPAT, which are well-suited to PLS-SEM. Secondly, the model's complexity, involving three independent variables, four mediators, and two dependent variables, made PLS-SEM the more appropriate choice. This method can manage complex models with many relationships and is robust even with smaller sample sizes. Initially, we had not planned to use PLS-SEM, but upon analyzing the data, we discovered that the distribution was not normal. Given that CB-SEM assumes multivariate normality, this deviation from normality led us to shift to PLS-SEM, which does not have such strict assumptions and is better suited to managing the data characteristics of our study.

In structural modeling, the simultaneous analysis of higher-order constructs (HOC) and lower-order constructs (LOC) using a reflective-reflective measurement model is crucial for capturing the complexity of consumer behavior relationships. HOCs aggregate various LOCs into a unified conceptual framework, which enhances the understanding of underlying constructs [60]. This approach provides a more detailed exploration of the interaction between emotional and cognitive factors, offering more profound insights into the drivers of consumer engagement and brand love. Becker et al. [61] argue that the disjoint two-stage method for testing LOCs and HOCs in PLS-SEM is more effective than the repeated indicators approach, as it provides a more apparent distinction between constructs, resulting in more accurate relationship estimates and better model interpretability.

4. RESULT

4.1 Respondent profile

Table 1 presents the demographic data for the study's participants, who comprise 271 individuals. The demographic profile of the respondents indicates a slight male predominance over female participants, reflecting a diverse yet slightly skewed gender representation. Most respondents remain active in sports, particularly enjoying running and golf, which suggests an engagement with fitness and outdoor activities. Geographically, a massive portion of the participants reside in the Greater Jakarta area, highlighting the urban context of the study. Regarding educational background,

the majority hold bachelor's degrees, indicating a well-educated respondent pool. Furthermore, brand preferences are notably balanced between Adidas and Nike, suggesting that both brands effectively cater to this demographic group's sporting needs and tastes.

Table 1. Respondents profile

Description	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	145	46.5%
	Female	126	53.5%
Age	12 - 27 years old	92	33.9%
	28 - 43 years old	151	55.7%
Domicile	44 - 59 years old	24	8.9%
	60 - 78 years old	4	1.5%
Education	Greater Jakarta	247	91.1%
	Sumatera	5	1.8%
Favorite Brand	Jawa	11	4.1%
	Kalimantan	4	1.5%
Owned Footwear	Sulawesi	2	0.7%
	Papua	2	0.7%
Education	High School	11	4.1%
	Bachelor's degree	219	80.8%
Favorite Brand	Master's degree	39	14.4%
	Doctoral degree	2	0.7%
Favorite Brand	Adidas	129	47.6%
	Nike	124	45.8%
Owned Footwear	Puma	18	6.6%
	1 - 2 pairs	99	36.7%
Footwear	3 - 4 pairs	124	45.6%
	Over five pairs	48	17.8%

4.2 Measurement model (Outer model)

The first phase of the outer model assessment focused on evaluating the reliability and validity of the lower-order constructs (LOCs), which include environmental concern, environmental knowledge, and brand competence (refer to Table 2). This involved analyzing the outer loadings of each construct's indicators, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold, confirming individual solid reliability. The composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.825 to 0.920, indicating high internal consistency. Additionally, all constructs' average variance extracted (AVE) surpassed the 0.50 threshold, signifying adequate convergent validity. These results demonstrate that the LOCs are reliable and valid, laying a solid foundation for analyzing higher-order constructs (HOCs) (refer to Figure 1).

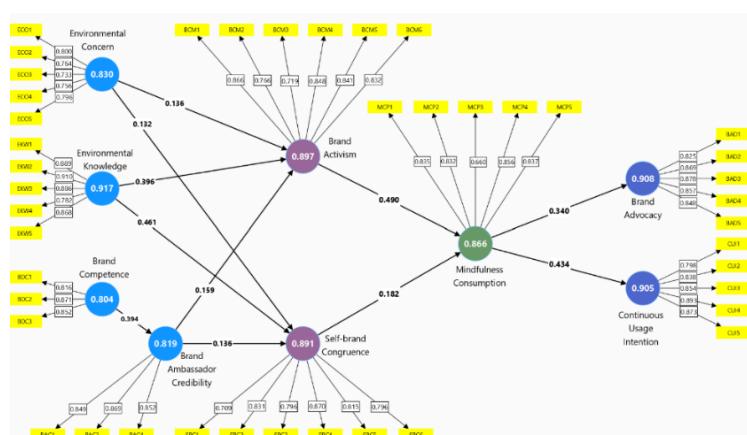


Figure 1. Measurement model (Outer model)

Table 2. Construct reliability and validity

Latent Construct	Codes	CA	Outer Loading	CR	AVE
Environmental Concern	ECO1		0.800		
	ECO2		0.764		
	ECO3	0.830	0.733	0.838	0.593
Environmental Knowledge	ECO4		0.756		
	ECO5		0.796		
	EKW1		0.889		
	EKW2		0.910		
	EKW3	0.917	0.886	0.920	0.753
Brand Competence	EKW4		0.782		
	EKW5		0.868		
	BDC1		0.816		
	BDC2	0.804	0.871	0.825	0.717
Brand Ambassador Credibility	BDC3		0.852		
	BAC1		0.849		
	BAC2	0.819	0.869	0.822	0.734
	BAC4		0.852		
Brand Activism	BCM1		0.866		
	BCM2		0.766		
	BCM3		0.719		
	BCM4	0.897	0.848	0.902	0.662
	BCM5		0.841		
	BCM6		0.832		
Self-Brand Congruence	SBC1		0.709		
	SBC2		0.831		
	SBC3		0.796		
	SBC4	0.891	0.870	0.905	0.647
	SBC5		0.815		
	SBC6		0.796		
Mindfulness Consumption	MCP1		0.835		
	MCP2		0.832		
	MCP3	0.866	0.660	0.889	0.652
	MCP4		0.856		
	MCP5		0.837		
	BAD1		0.825		
Brand Advocacy	BAD2		0.869		
	BAD3	0.908	0.878	0.910	0.732
	BAD4		0.857		
	BAD5		0.848		
	CUI1		0.798		
	CUI2		0.838		
Continuous Usage Intention	CUI3	0.905	0.854	0.910	0.725
	CUI4		0.893		
	CUI5		0.873		

Note: CA = Cronbach's Alpha, CR = Composite Reliability, AVE = Average

Table 3. Discriminant validity (HTMT)

	BCM	BAD	BAC	BDC	CUI	ECO	EKW	MCP	SBC
Brand activism	1								
Brand Advocacy	0.474								
Brand Ambassador Credibility	0.394	0.382							
Brand Competence	0.337	0.239	0.475						
Continuous Usage Intention	0.568	0.654	0.415	0.362					
Environmental Concern	0.298	0.357	0.413	0.290	0.214				
Environmental Knowledge	0.524	0.568	0.386	0.404	0.690	0.218			
Mindfulness Consumption	0.641	0.366	0.303	0.243	0.474	0.306	0.503		
Self-brand Congruence	0.538	0.509	0.388	0.349	0.600	0.310	0.577	0.450	

Notes: BCM = brand activism, BAD = brand advocacy, BAC = brand ambassador credibility, BDC = brand competence, CUI = continuous usage intention, ECO = environmental concern, EKW = environmental knowledge, MCP = mindfulness consumption, SBC = self-brand congruence

In the next phase, the evaluation focused on the HOCs, such as brand ambassador credibility, brand activism, self-brand congruence, mindfulness consumption, brand advocacy, and continuous usage intention. Reflective HOCs exhibited strong reliability and validity, with outer loadings for each dimension exceeding the 0.65 threshold. High composite reliability (CR) values indicated consistent internal reliability for the HOCs,

while AVE values surpassed the 0.50 standard, confirming adequate convergent validity.

This research utilized the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) test to assess discriminant validity, following the guidelines outlined by Erdem and Swait [39]. The HTMT approach is commonly applied in marketing research to ensure that each construct in the model is empirically distinct from

the others. The HTMT value should be below 0.90 to indicate sufficient discriminant validity. The findings are summarized in Table 3, where the HTMT ratios and confidence intervals for each construct pair are presented.

The Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CPVAT) was employed to measure predictive validity, as recommended by Dwivedi et al. [40]. The results demonstrate the model's predictive solid ability across constructs. The PLS-SEM model outperformed all constructs' Indicator Average (IA) model, significantly improving predictive accuracy. For instance, in the brand activism construct, the PLS loss (0.426) was lower than the IA loss (0.508), with an average loss difference of -0.082 ($p = 0.001$), indicating superior predictive performance. Similarly, the Brand Advocacy construct also showed a significant improvement, with a PLS loss of 0.556

compared to the IA loss of 0.604, yielding an average loss difference of -0.048 ($p = 0.000$) (as shown in Table 4).

The PLS-SEM model also performed better than the Linear Model (LM) in most constructs. While the difference between the PLS and LM losses was minimal in some cases, such as brand activism (average loss difference of -0.039, $p = 0.000$), the overall model still showed robust predictive ability. The overall model's performance with a PLS loss of 0.368 compared to the IA loss of 0.547 and LM loss of 0.468 further supports the model's predictive validity. These findings affirm the model's robustness and effectiveness in predicting dependent variables across all constructs. The model SRMR is found to be 0.057 which means that the model can be categorized as a fit model because it's lower than 0.080.

Table 4. Cross validated predictive ability test (CVPAT)

Construct	PLS-SEM vs. Indicator Average (IA)			PLS-SEM vs. Linear Model (LM)				
	PLS Loss	IA Loss	Average Loss Difference	p-value	PLS Loss	LM Loss	Average Loss Difference	p-value
Brand Activism	0.426	0.508	-0.082	0.001	0.426	0.465	-0.039	0.000
Brand Advocacy	0.556	0.604	-0.048	0.000	0.556	0.505	0.050	0.056
Brand Ambassador Credibility	0.432	0.476	-0.044	0.088	0.432	0.453	-0.022	0.216
Continuous Usage Intention	0.528	0.595	-0.067	0.000	0.528	0.459	0.069	0.019
Mindfulness Consumption	0.467	0.541	-0.074	0.000	0.467	0.470	-0.003	0.872
Self-Brand Congruence	0.432	0.537	-0.106	0.000	0.432	0.454	-0.022	0.023
Overall Model	0.473	0.547	-0.073	0.000	0.473	0.468	0.005	0.625

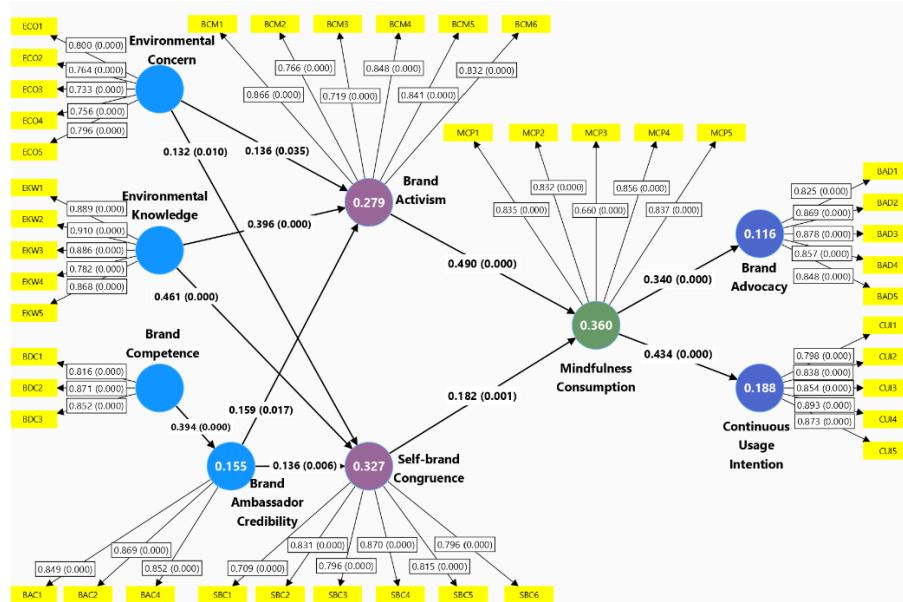


Figure 2. Structural model (Inner model)

4.3 Structural model (Inner model)

Figure 2 presents the results of the second stage bootstrapping for the PLS-SEM inner model. The quality of the proposed research model is assessed by looking at the internal variance inflation factor value (VIF), R^2 , f^2 , and $Q^2_{predict}$.

The inner VIF values found in all constructs are below threshold three, so they are categorized as ideal. This finding eliminates the possibility of multicollinearity, which can be a disruptive predictive ability model. Structural models show

the value of $R^2 = 0.116$ for Brand Advocacy and $R^2 = 0.188$ for Continuous Usage Intention as the dependent variable. $R^2 = 0.360$ for Mindfulness Consumption.

Q^2 for both dependent variables (Brand Advocacy and Continuous Usage Intention) include medium relevance, which is between 0.250 and 0.500, while f^2 for the dependent variables such as Brand Advocacy = 0.131, which is almost a medium effect size and f^2 of Controlled Usage = 0.231 which is medium effect size and the value is greater than 0.15.

The vast table presented in Table 5 results shows various correlational relationships between environmental concern,

environmental knowledge, brand competence, brand ambassador credibility, brand activism, self-brand congruence, mindful consumption, brand advocacy, and continuous usage intention. Based on the findings, Hypothesis 1, or H1, asserts that activism has a strong enhancement over Mindfulness Consumption with a value of beta 0.490 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that activism, when done right, markedly improves Mindfulness Consumption.

Hypothesis 2 (H2) demonstrates that brand ambassador credibility also positively influences brand activism ($\beta = 0.159$, p-value = 0.017), indicating that choosing the exemplary ambassador helps consumers be aware of brand activism. In Hypothesis 3 (H3), Brand Ambassador Credibility is found to have a positive effect on Self-brand Congruence ($\beta = 0.136$, p-value = 0.006), emphasizing the importance of ambassador credibility in fostering emotional connections with brands.

Hypothesis 4 (H4) further supports this by revealing a positive impact of Brand Competence on Brand Ambassador Credibility ($\beta = 0.394$, p-value = 0.000), underscoring that the competence of the brand is more likely to testify by the brand

ambassador Hypothesis 5 (H5), Environmental Concern, show the good effect on brand activism ($\beta = 0.136$, p-value = 0.035), suggesting that consumer concern for the environment will be engaged in activism of the brand. Hypothesis 6 (H6): Environmental Concern positively affects Self-brand Congruence ($\beta = 0.132$, p-value = 0.010).

Hypothesis 7 (H7) indicates a robust positive effect of Environmental knowledge on Brand activism ($\beta = 0.396$, p-value = 0.000), highlighting that knowledge connects with brand activism. Hypothesis 8 (H8) reveals that Environmental Knowledge positively impacts Self-brand Congruence ($\beta = 0.461$, p-value = 0.000), suggesting that knowledge consumers will affect self-alignment with the brand.

Hypotheses 9 (H9) and 10 (H10) show that Mindfulness Consumption has a robust positive impact both on Brand Advocacy ($\beta = 0.340$, p-value = 0.000) and Continuous Usage Intention ($\beta = 0.434$, p-value = 0.000). Hypothesis 11 (H11) indicates that self-brand congruence impacts mindfulness consumption ($\beta = 0.182$, p-value = 0.001).

Table 5. Hypothesis test result

Hypothesis	Standard Coefficient	P-values	Confidence Interval		Result	f^2
			Lower 5%	Upper 95%		
H1	Brand Activism -> Mindfulness Consumption	0.490	0.000	0.381	0.600	Supported 0.288
H2	Brand Ambassador Credibility -> Brand Activism	0.159	0.017	0.038	0.287	Supported 0.028
H3	Brand Ambassador Credibility -> Self-brand Congruence	0.136	0.006	0.046	0.225	Supported 0.022
H4	Brand Competence -> Brand Ambassador Credibility	0.394	0.000	0.284	0.514	Supported 0.183
H5	Environmental Concern -> Brand Activism	0.136	0.035	0.016	0.263	Supported 0.023
H6	Environmental Concern -> Self-brand Congruence	0.132	0.010	0.044	0.230	Supported 0.023
H7	Environmental Knowledge -> Brand Activism	0.396	0.000	0.275	0.506	Supported 0.192
H8	Environmental Knowledge -> Self-brand Congruence	0.461	0.000	0.375	0.546	Supported 0.278
H9	Mindfulness Consumption -> Brand Advocacy	0.340	0.000	0.231	0.452	Supported 0.131
H10	Mindfulness Consumption -> Continuous Usage Intention	0.434	0.000	0.327	0.543	Supported 0.231
H11	Self-brand Congruence -> Mindfulness Consumption	0.182	0.001	0.085	0.281	Supported 0.040

5. DISCUSSION

Environmental concern, environmental knowledge, brand competence, brand activism, brand ambassador credibility, self-brand congruence, and continuous usage intention are the correlations evaluated in this study. Continuous usage intention and self-brand congruence have substantial associations with Brand activism, indicating a strong link. Additionally, studies indicate that strong environmental orientation promotes Brand activism. This suggests that brand activism is discouraged by disregard for environmental understanding. Additionally, there is evidence that maintaining a brand's reputation as an activist brand benefits consumers' intentions to use it consistently.

The analysis also shows that brand competence (0.804) contributes significantly to brand ambassador credibility (0.819), which in turn affects self-brand congruence (0.891). This pathway highlights the importance of a brand's perceived competence in establishing credible ambassadors who resonate with consumer identities. The positive relationship between brand activism and brand ambassador credibility underscores the role of brand values in shaping consumer perceptions of authenticity and relevance. Hypotheses related to the direct impacts of environmental concern and environmental knowledge on brand activism are supported, illustrating that environmentally conscious consumers are

likelier to align with brands that demonstrate a commitment to social issues. These findings reinforce the significance of environmental awareness and brand activism in fostering consumer loyalty and advocacy.

The novelty of this research lies in brand antecedents of mindfulness. Furthermore, it demonstrates that mindful consumption simultaneously influences both brand advocacy and continuous usage intention in the context of eco-friendly sports shoes. This finding highlights a unique dual impact where young consumers, driven by sustainability values, continue using eco-friendly products and actively promote them to others. This study underlined that, unlike traditional consumption patterns, mindful consumption reflects a deeper engagement where consumers feel ethically responsible for their choices, aligning with Self-Determination Theory [62-64]. Young consumers today, especially Generation Millennial and Z, are increasingly concerned with how their purchasing behaviors impact the environment, leading them to advocate for and remain loyal to brands that align with their values [65].

The new contribution of this study arises from the shifting trend in consumer behavior among younger generations, who prioritize quality and sustainability in their purchase decisions. In this context, mindfulness consumption goes beyond mere use; this study confirms that it translates into active advocacy as these consumers feel motivated to influence their peers and

communities toward eco-friendly products. This study is consistent with previous research that shows Gen Z and millennials are currently more likely to engage in advocacy behaviors for brands that reflect their values [16], and a sense of moral obligation and environmental awareness strengthens their continuous usage intention. This dual effect highlights elements of loyalty, where advocacy is as essential as repeated purchases in building a strong brand relationship.

Since many young people place a high value on social cohesion and environmental preservation, brand activism initiatives—in this case, specifically those about the marketing of athletic footwear—help to promote conscious consumption because they align with the previously mentioned recommendations. These results support recent research that indicates brand activism is a sign of a company's willingness to engage in social issues like environmental conservation, which improves the company's relationship with customers who are more likely to act in an environmentally conscious manner. This connection, in turn, fosters a sense of shared accountability, encouraging customers to behave and think in a way that is purposeful and in line with their moral principles. However, while brand self-congruence—the alignment of the brand with the consumer's image—is significant, it could not inspire the same level of proactive activity in the direction of sustainability. According to the survey, young consumers are, therefore, more inclined to adopt mindful consumption when they perceive a company as actively supporting environmental preservation initiatives instead of using it to express who they are. This knowledge ought to help marketers see how their brand values might impact the attitudes and actions of their target audience.

This study suggests that rather than depending only on self-congruence tactics, firms hoping to promote eco-friendly behaviors—particularly in sportswear—should highlight their active position on environmental concerns. Young, environmentally conscious consumers are drawn to brands that demonstrate authenticity and a dedication to sustainability. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, when customers' attitudes are influenced by outside norms and cues, such as brand activism, which increase their perceived behavioral control, they are more likely to conduct their plans. This change implies that activism-focused marketing tactics can more directly and significantly influence the promotion of conscious consumption, resulting in higher levels of brand loyalty and sustained engagement.

To enhance digital marketing through brand activism, companies can focus on user-generated content (UGC) by encouraging young consumers to share their sustainable practices using branded hashtags, fostering a sense of community and engagement. Partnering with eco-conscious influencers who align with the brand's sustainability values can amplify authentic storytelling. Additionally, sustainability-focused ads highlighting the brand's environmental efforts, such as sourcing eco-friendly materials and innovative eco-processes, can be distributed across platforms like TikTok and Instagram to match the targeted consumers.

An interesting finding of this study is that environmental knowledge has been shown to exert a more decisive influence on brand activism than mere stimulation provided by a brand ambassador because it taps directly into consumers' cognitive awareness and values. This result conforms to the theory of planned behavior [18]. Individuals well-informed about environmental issues are more likely to feel personally

responsible and take actions aligned with their values, such as supporting brands that advocate for sustainability. This result is consistent with Previous Empirical research indicating that environmental knowledge heightens the internalization of eco-friendly values. Thus, consumers are more sensitive to the authenticity of a brand's activism than they are to the external appeal of celebrity endorsements [66-67]. In contrast, while effective at attracting attention, brand ambassadors often serve as temporary stimuli that may not trigger lasting behavioral change, as they lack the depth of value alignment that environmental knowledge provides.

The implication of this finding is to understand and facilitate the critical role of consumer education in driving authentic brand activism. Companies should prioritize educational content in their digital marketing strategies, providing consumers with information on environmental issues and how their product choices contribute to sustainability. This can be done by shifting the focus from celebrity-driven campaigns to creating a knowledgeable consumer base that is more likely to engage in long-term activism and brand loyalty. By leveraging environmental knowledge, brands can build a deeper, more value-driven connection with their audience, enhancing mindful consumption and brand advocacy.

Finally, this study result indicates the positive but modest influence of brand competence through a brand ambassador on brand activism, and its subsequent impact on mindful consumption leading to loyalty reflects a pathway where consumers perceive a brand's expertise as credible and trustworthy. Even if the direct effect of a brand ambassador is more minor, their role can still be enhanced by brand competence by personifying the brand's values and activism efforts due to the product category related to durability. This finding aligns with a study by Xie et al. [68] that when consumers view a brand as competent and authentically engaged in activism, they are more likely to engage in mindful consumption because they trust that the brand aligns with their values. This trust fosters loyalty over time, as the brand's activism resonates with the consumer's ethical considerations. Thus, while brand ambassadors have a low effect on driving mindfulness, they enhance the perception of competence, which fuels activism-driven loyalty. Therefore, marketers need to be selective when choosing exemplary brand ambassadors.

6. Conclusion

This study on eco-conscious footwear offers a meaningful framework to understand how brand activism and credibility can influence consumer actions like Brand Advocacy and Continuous Usage Intention. Some of the R^2 values fall into the weak category, and Q^2 close to medium predictive relevance, suggesting limited explanatory power of the model in those areas. The innovative approach, Cross Validated PAT, has confirmed that the model has predictive validity. To confirm the model capability, the PLS POS procedure needs to run to the unobserved heterogeneity of the model.

Fostering Continuous Usage Intention and Brand Advocacy requires mindful consumption. Mindful consumers are more likely to support and stick with companies that exhibit environmentally conscientious principles. This partnership demonstrates how customers form deeper and more enduring relationships with brands when they carefully examine their

choices' ethical and environmental consequences. In addition to increasing brand loyalty, these relationships motivate customers to spread the word about the company on social media, which encourages advocacy and consistent use.

Though brand activism has a greater influence, self-brand congruence and brand activism are crucial factors in conscious consumption. Customers are more receptive to brands that actively promote social or environmental reasons, which increases their likelihood of engaging in mindful consumption. Although it encourages thoughtful consumption, the effect of self-brand congruence aligning a consumer's identity with the brand's image is not as strong. According to this, a brand's active engagement in societal concerns has a greater impact on promoting eco-conscious habits than a personal connection with the brand.

Brand activism and self-brand congruence are supported by environmental concern, environmental knowledge, and brand competency, with environmental knowledge having the greatest impact. Customers who are more knowledgeable about environmental issues are more inclined to support companies that share their beliefs and participate in activism. Although brand competency and environmental care certainly play a role, a consumer's environmental knowledge level strongly encourages them to interact with and support eco-friendly firms. This emphasizes how crucial educational programs are for boosting brand activism and consumer value alignment.

One limitation of this study is the potential for social desirability bias in the survey responses. Since participants may feel inclined to provide answers they believe align with social norms or expectations, this could affect the accuracy of the data, especially in areas related to sustainability where there may be a general inclination to present oneself as environmentally conscious. To address this, we made efforts to clarify each variable by providing detailed explanations at the start of the survey, giving participants a better understanding of the concepts being asked about. Additionally, we included product visuals and contextual images to guide respondents in comprehending the questions more clearly, hoping to reduce confusion and provide a more accurate reflection of their attitudes and behaviors. However, the reliance on self-reported data, even with these aids, remains a limitation to the study's findings.

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