

“How does green perceived value drive green purchase intention? The parallel mediating roles of green trust and customer engagement”

AUTHORS	Nguyen Van Dat  Pham Ngoc Duong  Vo Thi Hoang Quanh 
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Vo Thi Hoang Quanh, 2026

Nguyen Van Dat, Ph.D., Faculty of
Business Administration, Ho Chi Minh
University of Banking, Vietnam.

Pham Ngoc Duong, Ph.D., Associate
Professor, Head of Logistics
Department, Faculty of Commerce
and Tourism, University of Finance –
Marketing, Vietnam. (Corresponding
author)

Vo Thi Hoang Quanh, Master's Student,
School of Industrial Engineering
and Management, Ho Chi Minh
International University, Vietnam
National University, Ho Chi Minh City,
Vietnam.

Nguyen Van Dat (Vietnam), Pham Ngoc Duong (Vietnam),
Vo Thi Hoang Quanh (Vietnam)

HOW DOES GREEN PERCEIVED VALUE DRIVE GREEN PURCHASE INTENTION? THE PARALLEL MEDIATING ROLES OF GREEN TRUST AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Abstract

Vietnam's green consumption transition is accelerating under national policy pressure (the 2021–2030 Green Growth Strategy targets 30% green product penetration by 2030) yet actual purchasing behavior remains constrained by psychological barriers that price-focused explanations cannot resolve. This study examines how green perceived value and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) receptivity shape green product purchase intention through the mediating roles of green trust and customer engagement. Data were collected in October 2024 via an online survey of 324 consumers in Ho Chi Minh City who had purchased or intended to purchase green products and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling. Measurement reliability was strong across all constructs (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.779$ – 0.841). The structural model confirmed adequate fit (CMIN/df = 2.001, CFI = 0.928, RMSEA = 0.056). Green trust was the strongest direct driver of purchase intention (std. $\beta = 0.584$, $p < 0.001$), followed by customer engagement (std. $\beta = 0.460$, $p < 0.001$). Green perceived value influenced intention exclusively through the indirect pathways of green trust (indirect std. $\beta = 0.143$) and customer engagement (indirect std. $\beta = 0.096$), with a significant total indirect effect (unstd. $\beta = 0.162$, 95% CI [0.084, 0.249]) and VAF = 94.2%, confirming full mediation. eWOM Receptivity showed no significant effect on trust ($p = 0.687$), engagement ($p = 0.430$) or intention ($p = 0.380$). Demographic analyses (T-test, ANOVA) found no significant differences in purchase intention across gender ($p = 0.863$), occupation ($p = 0.617$), age ($p = 0.072$) or income ($p = 0.249$). Green marketing strategies should therefore prioritize verifiable transparency and long-term customer engagement over digital information exposure alone.

Keywords

eWOM receptivity, green perceived value, green trust, customer engagement, green purchase intention, green products, Vietnam

JEL Classification

M31, D12, Q56

INTRODUCTION

Vietnam's green product market expanded at roughly 15% annually between 2021 and 2023, driven by rising urban incomes and sustained government intervention (Ministry of Industry and Trade, as cited in Nguyen, 2023). The 2021-2030 National Green Growth Strategy targets 30% green product penetration by 2030 and Decision No. 889/QĐ-TTg (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2022) set binding milestones including the elimination of non-biodegradable plastic bags from supermarkets by that date. Consumer sentiment appears to support this trajectory: Nielsen surveys report that 86% of Vietnamese consumers express willingness to pay a premium for environmentally friendly products.



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The purchase data tell a different story. In Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, only 12% to 18% of consumers regularly choose green products (Vietnam News, 2024). Green items typically cost 20% to 50% more than conventional alternatives and most buyers will absorb no more than a 5% to 10% premium before switching back. Price alone, however, does not fully account for the gap. The same survey identifies a second constraint: consumers cannot reliably distinguish genuine environmental performance from marketing claims, because Vietnam still lacks a standardized national eco-label system.

This verification problem is playing out in a market that is overwhelmingly digital. By early 2025, Vietnam had 79.8 million active internet users and 76.2 million active social media accounts, with users spending an average of 6.4 hours online daily (We Are Social, 2025). Online channels now account for 45% of green product distribution and digital word of mouth has replaced family and in-store sales staff as the primary source of green product discovery. Yet high digital exposure has not closed the attitude-behavior gap. Consumers encounter both credible peer reviews and unverified corporate green claims through the same channels and the resulting skepticism appears to suppress rather than stimulate purchasing decisions.

What remains unclear is the psychological mechanism through which these digital-era conditions operate. Specifically, whether perceived value shapes purchase intention through trust, through customer engagement, or through both as parallel psychological mechanisms has not been tested in this context.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The relationship between green perceived value, consumer trust, engagement and purchase intention has attracted sustained scholarly attention across emerging markets, yet the precise mechanisms linking these constructs remain contested. Most early models tested each predictor in isolation, treating green trust or perceived value as standalone antecedents of behavioral intention. More recent work integrates multiple pathways within a single structural framework, revealing that the route from value perception to purchase is rarely direct. Three interconnected theoretical traditions inform how these pathways are conceptualized and measured in the present study.

The Theory of Reasoned Action holds that behavioral intention is shaped by attitudes toward the behavior and by subjective norms governing it (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In green consumption research, this framework has been extended to incorporate environmental concern and self-identity, constructs that strengthen the attitude-intention link in contexts where moral obligation supplements social pressure (Lavuri, 2021). Collectivist cultures such as Vietnam

show stronger subjective norm effects than individualist settings, meaning peer expectations carry disproportionate weight in purchase decisions (Nguyen-Thi-Phuong et al., 2022; Cuc et al., 2026). The Information Acceptance Model complements this by explaining how consumers evaluate online information before incorporating it into their beliefs (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). Applied to eWOM Receptivity, it predicts that perceived usefulness and source credibility jointly determine information adoption, which shapes green attitudes and intentions (Ngo et al., 2024). However, the model assumes a relatively neutral information environment - an assumption that breaks down in markets where greenwashing is widespread and eco-label verification is weak, causing consumers to discount even credible-seeming claims and attenuating eWOM Receptivity's predicted effect (Gattupalli et al., 2025). Building on both frameworks, Customer Engagement Theory frames engagement as a consumer's cognitive, emotional and behavioral investment in brand interactions that extends beyond single transactions (Hollebeek, 2011; van Doorn et al., 2010). Brodie et al. (2013) established that engagement is simultaneously a product of perceived value and an antecedent of loyalty and advocacy, a dual role that positions it as a mediating mechanism rather than a terminal outcome.

Turning to the construct-level evidence, green perceived value captures a consumer's net assessment of environmental, health and social benefits relative to the price and effort required (Chen & Chang, 2012; Zeithaml, 1988). The empirical record consistently shows that this construct does not drive purchase intention directly. Amin and Tarun (2021) demonstrated across a Bangladeshi sample that consumption values influence green purchase intention only through green trust, confirming a full mediation structure. Nguyen et al. (2023) replicated this pattern in Vietnam, finding that perceived value shapes both trust and intention but that the trust-mediated path carries the dominant coefficient. Roman-Augusto et al. (2022) extended this chain further, showing that green perceived value feeds green satisfaction, which then reinforces green trust and word-of-mouth behavior in sequence. The indirect pathway through customer engagement is equally consistent: Hoang and Tung (2024) showed that among Vietnamese young consumers, green perceived value influences purchase intention through attitude as a full mediator, with perceived behavioral control playing no significant role – a finding that challenges symmetric predictor assumptions in TPB and suggests that value functions as a distal antecedent whose effect must be psychologically internalized before it can generate intention. Pansari and Kumar (2016) established theoretically that perceived value motivates engagement and Itani et al. (2019) confirmed this empirically in service contexts, supporting the hypothesis that value and engagement operate in the same upstream-downstream sequence observed for value and trust.

Green trust functions as a credence attribute: consumers cannot verify environmental claims at the point of purchase, making trust a risk-reduction mechanism that substitutes for direct product inspection (Chen, 2013; Harris & Goode, 2010). When trust is strong, psychological barriers to purchase fall; when it erodes through greenwashing or inconsistent messaging, purchase intention declines sharply regardless of perceived value (Wasaya et al., 2021). Recent evidence decomposes trust into competence and benevolence dimensions with meaningfully different effects. Waites et al. (2020) found that competence trust responds more strongly to expert signals, while benevolence

trust is more responsive to warmth-based green advertising. Zhang et al. (2024) replicated this pattern, showing that advertising appeal moderates which dimension is activated. In collectivist markets, benevolence trust dominates because consumers are more sensitive to whether a brand shares their values than to whether it possesses technical expertise (Graça & Kharé, 2024). For Vietnam specifically, this implies that demonstrated commitment to environmental outcomes matters more than certification credentials alone – a conclusion reinforced by evidence that eco-labels and third-party verification strengthen the trust-intention link (Agarwal et al., 2025); other work has modelled this as part of a longer serial pathway (Gil & Jacob, 2018), whereas the present study specifies trust and engagement as parallel mediators. Conversely, greenwashing awareness severs the link between value perception and trust formation, a pattern confirmed across FMCG, dairy and cosmetics sectors in the Vietnamese market (Dhakirah et al., 2026).

Customer engagement has emerged as both a mediating mechanism and an independent driver of green purchase intention. As a mediator, it translates perceived value into sustained behavioral commitment by deepening the consumer's psychological connection to the brand (Brodie et al., 2013; France et al., 2016). As a direct antecedent, engagement converts favorable attitudes into concrete purchase actions through mechanisms that satisfaction and loyalty constructs do not fully capture (Bowden, 2009; Elvarina & Murhadi, 2023). The directional relationship between engagement and eWOM is itself debated in the literature. Lee et al. (2012) found that engaged customers are more likely to share positive brand experiences online and Beckers et al. (2018) showed that company-initiated engagement raises organic advocacy, evidence consistent with engagement as an antecedent of eWOM generation. Other work, however, treats online information as an input that shapes engagement rather than an output of it (Wang et al., 2022). Demographic moderators shape this pattern: Sesar and Martinčević (2025) demonstrated that sustainability knowledge raises attitude, which elevates engagement and ultimately intention, with age moderating each step; among Vietnamese consumers, younger cohorts engage more readily through digital channels, but

their engagement is more volatile and more sensitive to perceived authenticity (Duong et al., 2025).

The role of eWOM Receptivity is where the literature is most divided. Positive online reviews and ratings drive green purchase intention across product categories in digitally active urban populations (Nga & Khoi, 2024; Van Phuong et al., 2025), typically through a pathway that runs through trust: eWOM Receptivity credibility raises brand confidence, which then drives intention (Mahmud et al., 2020; Rao & Rao, 2019). However, boundary conditions attenuate or eliminate this effect under specific conditions. Gattupalli et al. (2025) showed that information usefulness drives intention for utilitarian products while credibility matters more for hedonic ones, meaning uniform eWOM Receptivity strategies misallocate persuasive effort. Jaini et al. (2020) found that eWOM Receptivity's moderating effect on personal norms operates only when the source is perceived as homophilous. In markets with high greenwashing prevalence, consumers apply heightened scrutiny to all online environmental claims, discounting eWOM Receptivity regardless of source quality (Giang et al., 2026; Verma et al., 2023). This skepticism dynamic has a specific structure in Vietnam: Nguyen et al. (2023) found that while perceived value significantly mediated the eWOM Receptivity-intention path, eWOM Receptivity's direct effect on intention was statistically weak once trust entered the model. Parveen and Chaudhary (2025) similarly found that attitude and subjective norms partially mediated the eWOM Receptivity-intention relationship, but the mediated paths were substantially smaller than the direct trust path. These patterns are consistent with information saturation theory, which predicts that in high-eWOM Receptivity environments, consumers' marginal response to additional online information decreases as cognitive load increases (Khawaja & Zaman, 2020). Ho Chi Minh City – the most digitally connected city in a market with 76.2 million active social media accounts and users spending an average of 6.4 hours online daily (We Are Social, 2025) – represents precisely this kind of saturated environment, which gives the present study a theoretically motivated reason to anticipate a null or near-null effect for eWOM Receptivity. The table in Appendix section summarizes the key empirical studies that inform the

conceptual model organizing them by construct, regional context, methodology and core finding.

The evidence reviewed above converges on three conclusions that motivate the present study's model. First, green perceived value functions as a distal antecedent whose effect on purchase intention requires psychological mediation – either through green trust, customer engagement or both. Second, green trust and customer engagement are the proximate drivers of intention, with trust operating as a risk-reduction mechanism and engagement as a relationship-deepening one. Third, eWOM Receptivity's influence is bounded by credibility conditions and information saturation dynamics, suggesting its effect may be attenuated or absent in high-volume digital markets where consumers have developed defensive skepticism toward online environmental claims.

Building on prior evidence of mediation effects (Amin & Tarun, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2023; Hoang & Tung, 2024), this study proposes that green perceived value and eWOM Receptivity influence green product purchase intention partly through two psychological mechanisms. Green trust reduces perceived uncertainty toward green products, whereas customer engagement strengthens consumers' psychological involvement and translates favorable evaluations into purchase intention. These mechanisms suggest two parallel mediation paths. Green trust captures the risk-reduction process, while customer engagement captures the relational process through which consumers respond to perceived value and online information.

The aim of this study is to examine how green perceived value and eWOM receptivity influence green product purchase intention among consumers in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, and to test whether green trust and customer engagement operate as parallel mediators of these relationships. Based on the theoretical arguments and empirical evidence reviewed above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: *Green Perceived Value has a positive impact on Green Product Purchase Intention.*
- H2: *Green Perceived Value has a positive impact on Green Trust.*

- H3: Green Perceived Value has a positive impact on Customer Engagement.
- H4: eWOM Receptivity has a positive impact on Green Trust.
- H5: eWOM Receptivity has a positive impact on Green Product Purchase Intention.
- H6: eWOM Receptivity has a positive impact on Customer Engagement.
- H7: Customer Engagement has a positive impact on Green Product Purchase Intention.
- H8: Green Trust has a positive impact on Green Product Purchase Intention.
- H9: Green Trust mediates the relationship between Green Perceived Value and Green Product Purchase Intention.
- H10: Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between Green Perceived Value and Green Product Purchase Intention.
- H11: Green Trust mediates the relationship between eWOM Receptivity and Green Product Purchase Intention.

H12: Customer Engagement mediates the relationship between eWOM Receptivity and Green Product Purchase Intention.

This study proposes a research model grounded in TRA, IAM and engagement theory. The model links Green Perceived Value, eWOM Receptivity and Customer Engagement to Green Trust and Purchase Intention (Figure 1).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a sequential mixed-methods design. A qualitative phase preceded quantitative data collection to refine the theoretical model and ensure the cultural and linguistic suitability of measurement instruments. In the qualitative phase, conducted in May 2024, the research team reviewed prior domestic and international literature, proposed a draft conceptual model and convened group discussions with academics and practitioners familiar with green consumption behavior in Vietnam. These discussions evaluated item wording, construct boundaries and scale relevance within the local market context, resulting in a finalized Vietnamese-language questionnaire.

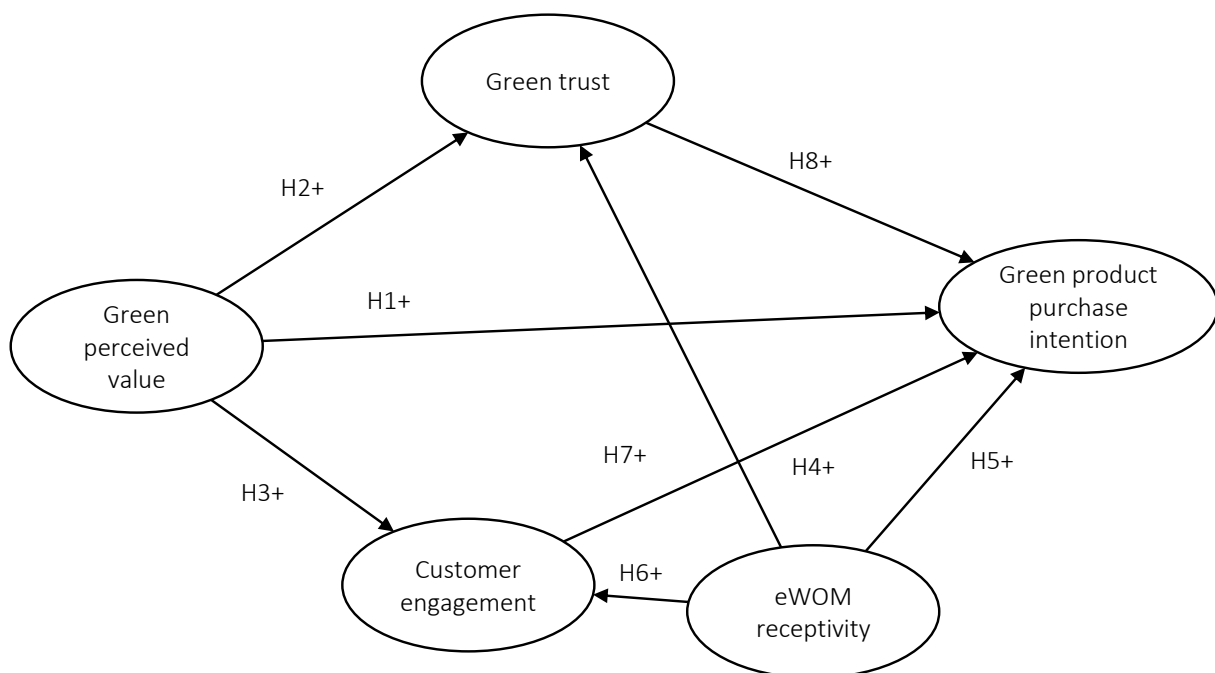


Figure 1. Research model

The quantitative phase collected primary data through an online survey administered via Google Forms. Respondents were residents of Ho Chi Minh City who had purchased or expressed intention to purchase green products. Ho Chi Minh City was selected as the sampling site because it is Vietnam's largest urban consumption center, accounts for a disproportionate share of green product transactions and has the highest digital connectivity density in the country – conditions that make it the most relevant setting for examining how eWOM Receptivity, perceived value and engagement jointly shape purchase intention. Data collection took place in October 2024, a period chosen to avoid seasonal purchasing distortions associated with the Lunar New Year cycle and to capture stable consumption patterns in the post-pandemic recovery phase. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used for all measurement items. Data were collected in October 2024, but the findings remain relevant. Vietnam's formal eco-label system remained limited, with only 13 additional products certified during 2024–2025. Restrictions on the provision of single-use plastic products in supermarkets and shopping centers took effect only from 2026 (Nguyen, 2025). Thus, limited formal verification continued during and after the data collection period, which may explain consumers' reliance on green trust. Perceived value, trust, engagement, and purchase intention are also likely to change more slowly than market indicators. However, wider use of eco-labels may reduce reliance on brand-based trust as consumers gain access to stronger institutional verification. Future studies should examine whether this change alters the mediation pattern identified here.

Non-probability convenience sampling was applied given the practical constraints of online distribution through social media and digital networks. Sample size was determined using the formula $n \geq 50 + 8m$, where m equals the number of independent variables. With 20 observed variables, the minimum required sample was 210, consistent with thresholds recommended for CFA reliability (Hair et al., 2009). A total of 336 responses were received; after removing incomplete or inconsistent entries, 324 valid questionnaires were retained for analysis – exceeding the minimum threshold and supporting the application of multivariate structural techniques (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the survey sample

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	200	61.7
Male	124	38.3
Occupation		
Student	195	60.2
Worker/officer	56	17.3
Housewife	19	5.9
Freelancer	34	10.5
Retired	1	0.2
Others	19	5.9
Age group		
Under 18	46	14.2
18–25	182	56.2
26–39	81	25
40–65	15	4.6
Income		
Below 5 million VND	129	39.8
5-10 million VND	96	29.6
10-15 million VND	64	19.8
Above 15 million VND	35	10.8
Purchase frequency		
Daily	30	9.2
2-4 times/week	89	27.5
Once/week	139	42.9
1-2 times/month	66	20.4
Purchase location		
Traditional markets	18	5.5
Supermarkets	102	31.5
Convenience stores	58	17.9
Specialty stores	40	12.3
E-commerce platforms	99	30.6
Others	7	2.2

The measurement instrument was constructed by adapting validated scales from prior peer-reviewed studies. The eWOM Receptivity scale drew on Chang (2015) and Guerreiro and Pacheco (2021); the Green Perceived Value scale on Chen and Chang (2012) and Cheung et al. (2015); the Customer Engagement scale on Guerreiro and Pacheco (2021); the Green Trust scale on Chen and Chang (2012); and the Green Purchase Intention scale on Chen and Chang (2012), Cheung et al. (2015) and Guerreiro and Pacheco (2021). These scales were selected because they have been validated in green consumption contexts and share theoretical alignment with the TRA, IAM and Customer Engagement Theory frameworks underpinning this study. All items were translated from English into Vietnamese by the research team and reviewed by two bilingual academics for semantic

equivalence prior to the group discussion phase. This study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles governing research with human participants. Participation was entirely voluntary; no incentives were offered and respondents were free to withdraw at any point without consequence. The survey instrument did not collect any personally identifiable information, ensuring full anonymity. An informed consent statement was displayed at the opening of the Google Forms and progression past this screen constituted implicit consent to participate. To preserve objectivity, no leading language was used in item wording and the research team had no direct relationship with respondents. The dataset reported here has not been used in any other publication and is reported exclusively in this study.

Data were processed using SPSS 20 and AMOS 24 in a sequential analytical procedure. Scale reliability was first assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a threshold of 0.70. Exploratory Factor Analysis was then conducted to reduce items and identify latent factor structures, with items loading below 0.50 removed across three refinement rounds. Confirmatory Factor Analysis using AMOS evaluated measurement model fit against established indices: $CMIN/df \leq 3.0$, $CFI \geq 0.90$, $TLI \geq 0.90$, $GFI \geq 0.90$ and $RMSEA \leq 0.06$. Structural Equation Modeling was finally applied to test the eight hypothesized causal relationships at a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Supplementary t-tests and ANOVA examined whether green purchase

intention differed across demographic groups including gender, age, occupation and income. The indirect effects associated with *H9-H12* were assessed using Monte Carlo confidence intervals based on 100,000 replications (Preacher & Selig, 2012), a distribution-of-the-product approach whose confidence limits are comparable to those obtained from resampling methods (MacKinnon et al., 2004). The simulation used the unstandardized path coefficients and corresponding standard errors reported in Table 8 to generate the sampling distributions of the indirect effects. This approach provides inference comparable to bootstrap-based mediation testing and is suitable for maximum-likelihood CB-SEM estimates. The Sobel (1982) test was also conducted as a supplementary normal-theory check.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

All five measurement scales demonstrate acceptable internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.779 for Green Perceived Value to 0.841 for Green Trust, each exceeding the 0.70 threshold (Table 2). No item was retained with a corrected item-total correlation below 0.45 and no deletion of any single item would have raised Alpha by more than 0.05, confirming that all items contribute meaningfully to their respective constructs.

Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted separately for independent and dependent variables. KMO values of 0.837 and 0.775, respectively, con-

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha results for the constructs in the research model

Observed variable	Items content	Mean if item deleted	Variance if item deleted	Corrected item-total correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM Receptivity) scale: $\alpha = 0.800$					
Adapted from Chang (2015), Guerreiro and Pacheco (2021)					
eWOM1	I would consider purchasing green products if I read positive reviews from previous customers on the Internet.	15.90	9.635	0.534	0.776
eWOM2	Reading detailed descriptions of green products on the Internet makes me intend to purchase them.	16.06	8.656	0.646	0.740
eWOM3	Positive online reviews of green products strengthen my trust in those products.	16.00	9.458	0.535	0.776
eWOM4	To ensure that I choose the right green product, I usually read online reviews from previous customers.	15.83	9.101	0.654	0.741
eWOM5	I would change my purchase intention if I read negative comments about green products.	16.12	8.765	0.554	0.773

Table 2 (cont.). Cronbach's Alpha results for the constructs in the research model

Observed variable	Items content	Mean if item deleted	Variance if item deleted	Corrected item-total correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
Perceived Value (GTCN) scale: $\alpha = 0.779$					
Adapted from Chen and Chang (2012), Cheung et al. (2015)					
GTCN 1	I feel that purchasing green products contributes to environmental protection.	19.46	12.911	0.455	0.762
GTCN 2	I believe that green products are of good quality and provide health benefits.	19.53	11.426	0.560	0.737
GTCN 3	The non-toxic ingredient information of green products meets my expectations.	19.52	12.120	0.540	0.742
GTCN 4	I intend to use green products for a long time if I perceive their benefits.	19.44	12.346	0.512	0.749
GTCN 5	I intend to purchase green products because I believe they provide greater social value than conventional products.	19.46	11.865	0.584	0.731
GTCN 6	I feel that green products are worth the money I spend on them.	19.67	12.427	0.505	0.751
Customer Engagement (GKKH) scale: $\alpha = .797$					
Adapted from Guerreiro and Pacheco (2021)					
GKKH 1	I consider myself a loyal customer of green products.	14.50	10.486	0.466	0.793
GKKH 2	I intend to purchase green products because I am passionate about using services from green brands.	14.56	9.695	0.607	0.749
GKKH 3	Feeling comfortable with the customer care services of green brands makes me want to purchase their products more frequently.	14.44	9.696	0.628	0.743
GKKH 4	I tend to purchase green products from brands with which I feel emotionally connected.	14.43	9.515	0.595	0.753
GKKH 5	I am willing to purchase green products over a long period of time.	14.49	9.799	0.598	0.752
Green Trust (NTX) scale: $\alpha = .841$					
Adapted from Chen and Chang (2012), Cheung et al. (2015)					
NTX 1	I believe that the environmental safety claims of green products are generally trustworthy.	11.76	5.343	0.688	0.792
NTX 2	I believe that the environmental performance of green products is reliable.	11.71	5.532	0.628	0.818
NTX 3	The environmental concern shown by green brands meets my expectations.	11.62	5.170	0.714	0.781
NTX 4	Green products fulfill their promises and commitments to environmental protection and consumer health.	11.55	5.642	0.670	0.801
Dependent variable – Green Purchase Intention (YDM) scale: $\alpha = .787$					
Adapted from Chen and Chang (2012), Cheung et al. (2015), Guerreiro and Pacheco (2021)					
YDM 1	My intention to purchase green products would change if my belief in their ability to protect consumer health were weakened.	11.36	6.027	0.570	0.746
YDM 2	I expect to purchase green products in the future because they receive positive online evaluations.	11.52	5.606	0.654	0.704
YDM 3	I prioritize purchasing green products because they are environmentally friendly.	11.48	5.470	0.669	0.696
YDM 4	I prioritize purchasing green products from brands due to their concern for the environment.	11.46	5.877	0.496	0.787

Table 3. Result of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett's test for independent and dependent factors

Statistic	Independent variable	Dependent variables
KMO measure of sampling adequacy	0.837	0.775
Bartlett's test of sphericity		
Approx. Chi-square	2186.200	377.326
df	190	6
Sig.	0.000	0.000

firm sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant in both cases ($p = 0.000$), indicating that the correlation matrices are suitable for factor extraction (Table 3).

After three refinement rounds, four items were removed: GKKH1, GTCN1, GTCN3 and GTCN6. All four failed to meet the minimum factor load-

ing threshold of 0.50. The final solution retains 20 observed variables loading cleanly onto five factors, with total variance explained reaching 62.54% for the independent variable block and 61.51% for the dependent variable block (Tables 4 and 5). No cross-loadings above 0.40 were detected, supporting discriminant validity at the item level.

Table 4. Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) – factor loadings (final solution)

Observed items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
eWOM4	0.806				
eWOM2	0.803				
eWOM5	0.711				
eWOM1	0.707				
eWOM3	0.698				
NTX3		0.823			
NTX4		0.815			
NTX1		0.779			
NTX2		0.755			
GKKH4			0.802		
GKKH5			0.800		
GKKH3			0.705		
GKKH2			0.697		
GTCN2				0.835	
GTCN5				0.795	
GTCN4				0.748	
YDM2					0.837
YDM3					0.828
YDM1					0.770
YDM4					0.694

Table 5. Total variance explained by EFA

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
Independent variables						
1	3.958	24.736	24.736	3.958	24.736	24.736
2	2.878	17.990	42.726	2.878	17.990	42.726
3	1.786	11.162	53.889	1.786	11.162	53.889
4	1.384	8.649	62.537	1.384	8.649	62.537
5	0.757	4.732	67.269			
Dependent variable (YDM)						
1	2.460	61.505	61.505	2.460	61.505	61.505
2	0.681	17.020	78.525			
3	0.447	11.166	89.690			
4	0.412	10.310	100.000			

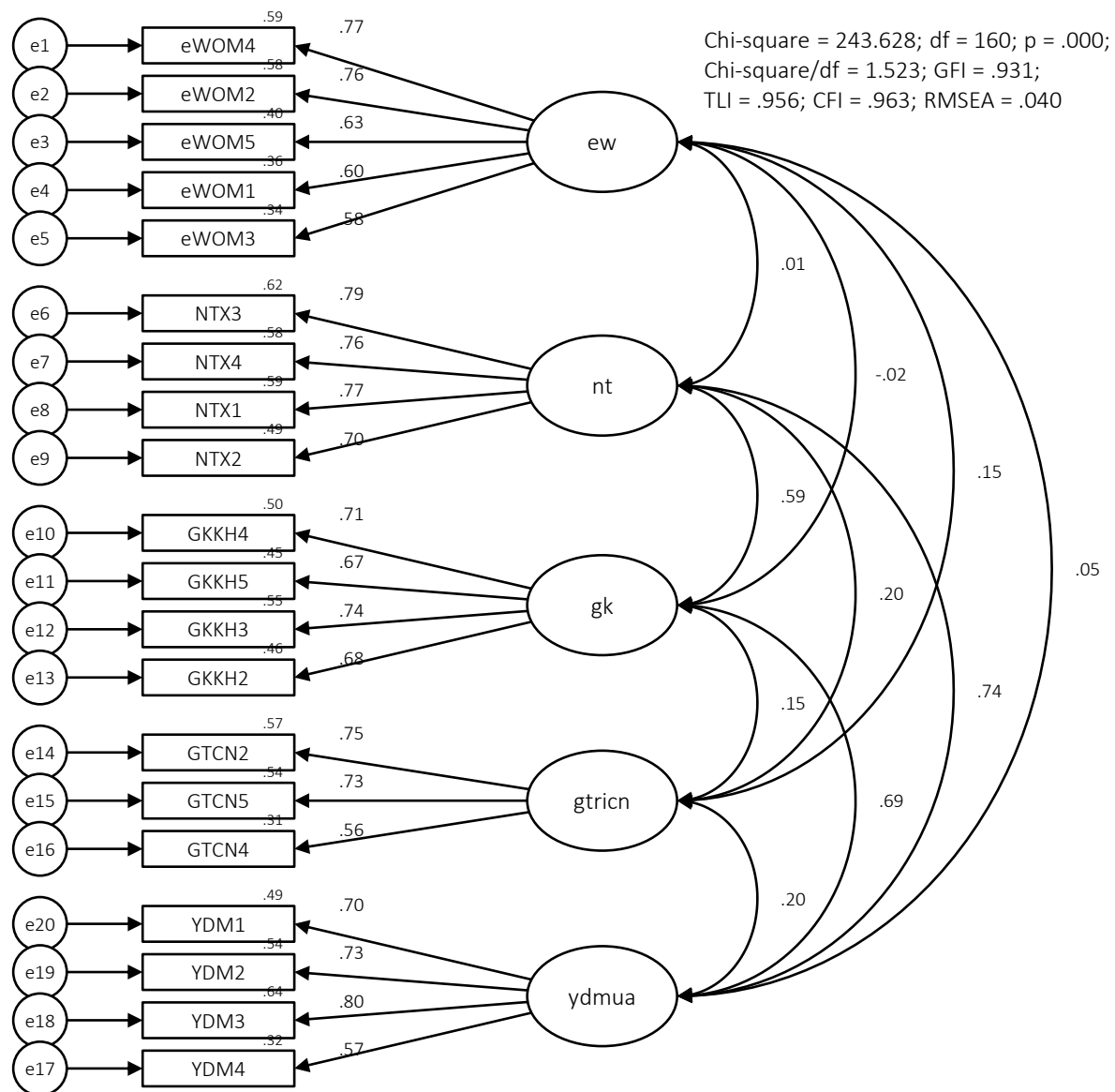


Figure 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of research model

CFA was conducted in AMOS 24 on the 20-item, five-factor structure retained from EFA. All fit indices meet recommended thresholds: CMIN/df = 1.523 (≤ 3.0), CFI = 0.963 (≥ 0.90), TLI = 0.956 (≥ 0.90), GFI = 0.931 (≥ 0.90) and RMSEA = 0.040

(≤ 0.06), with $p = 0.000$ (Table 6). Standardized factor loadings for all retained items exceed 0.50, confirming convergent validity. The measurement model provides an adequate basis for structural estimation.

Table 6. Confirmatory Factor Analysis results

Fit index	Value	Evaluation
CMIN	243.628	–
df	160	–
CMIN/df	1.523	Good
CFI	0.963	Very good
GFI	0.931	Good
TLI	0.956	Very good
RMSEA	0.040	Good
p-value	0.000	Acceptable

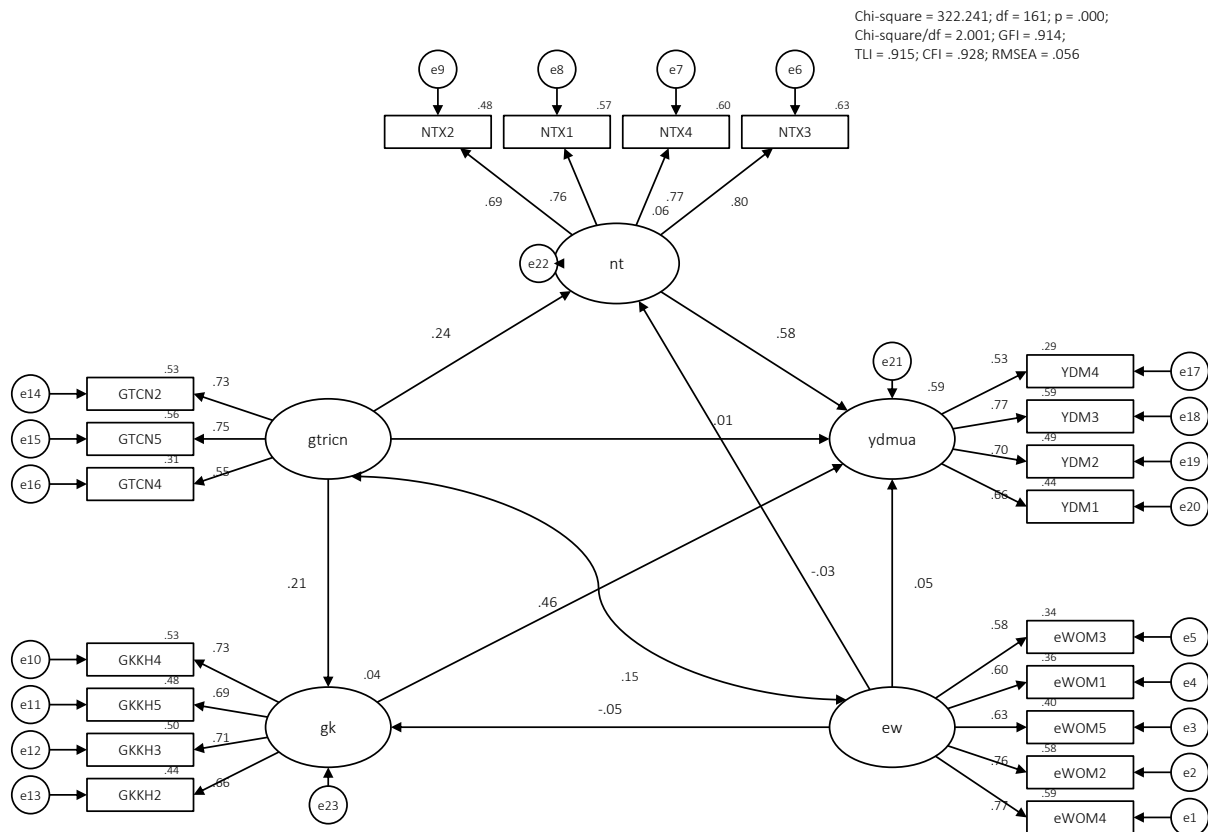


Figure 3. SEM result for research model

The structural model was estimated in AMOS 24. Goodness-of-fit indices satisfy all recommended thresholds: CMIN/df = 2.001, CFI = 0.928, TLI = 0.915, GFI = 0.914 and RMSEA = 0.056 (Table 7), consistent with criteria proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999) and Hair et al. (2009).

Table 7. Goodness-of-fit indices for the SEM model

Fit index	Observed value	Recommended threshold	Evaluation
CMIN/df	2.001	≤ 3.0	Good
CFI	0.928	≥ 0.90	Good
TLI	0.915	≥ 0.90	Good
GFI	0.914	≥ 0.90	Good
RMSEA	0.056	≤ 0.06	Good
p-value	0.000	< 0.05	Acceptable

Figure 3 visualizes the SEM estimation results.

Table 8 reports both unstandardized and standardized regression estimates for all eight hypothesized paths. Four hypotheses are supported (three at $p < 0.001$ and one at $p < 0.01$) and four are rejected.

From the results presented in Table 9, H9 and H10 were supported. Green trust and customer engagement each transmitted a significant indirect effect of green perceived value on green product purchase intention. The combined indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.162$, 95% CI [0.084, 0.249]), whereas the direct effect was not ($\beta = 0.010$, $p = 0.818$). The VAF value of 94.2% indicates that most of the total effect operated through the two mediators. Under Zhao et al.'s (2010) classification, this pattern is consistent with indirect-only mediation. H11 and H12 were rejected because electronic word-of-mouth receptivity had no significant indirect effect on green product purchase intention through either green trust or customer engagement. The contrast between the two indirect effects was also nonsignificant ($\Delta = 0.032$, $SE = 0.042$, $z = 0.765$, $p = 0.444$), indicating no statistical difference in their relative magnitudes.

Green Trust exerts the strongest direct effect on Green Purchase Intention (std. $\beta = 0.584$, $p < 0.001$), followed by Customer Engagement (std. $\beta = 0.460$, $p < 0.001$). Green Perceived Value influences intention exclusively through these two

Table 8. Hypotheses testing results

Hypothesis	Path	Unstd. β	Std. β	S.E.	C.R.	p-value	Decision
H2	GTCN $\rightarrow$ NTX	0.229	0.244	0.069	3.338	***	Supported
H3	GTCN $\rightarrow$ GKKH	0.203	0.208	0.074	2.766	0.006	Supported
H8	NTX $\rightarrow$ YDM	0.425	0.584	0.06	7.06	***	Supported
H7	GKKH $\rightarrow$ YDM	0.321	0.46	0.054	5.997	***	Supported
H1	GTCN $\rightarrow$ YDM	0.01	0.015	0.043	0.23	0.818	Rejected
H4	eWOM Receptivity $\rightarrow$ NTX	-0.029	-0.027	0.072	-0.403	0.687	Rejected
H5	eWOM Receptivity $\rightarrow$ YDM	0.039	0.05	0.044	0.877	0.38	Rejected
H6	eWOM Receptivity $\rightarrow$ GKKH	-0.061	-0.055	0.077	-0.789	0.43	Rejected

Note: *** indicates $p < 0.001$.

Table 9. Indirect, direct, and total effects (Monte Carlo, 100,000 replications)

Hypothesis	Path	Unstd. estimate	S.E.	Sobel z	p	95% MC CI	Std. estimate	Decision
H9	GPV $\rightarrow$ GT $\rightarrow$ GPI	0.097	0.032	3.005	0.003	[0.038, 0.166]	0.143	Supported
H10	GPV $\rightarrow$ CE $\rightarrow$ GPI	0.065	0.026	2.491	0.013	[0.018, 0.121]	0.096	Supported
H11	eWOM $\rightarrow$ GT $\rightarrow$ GPI	-0.012	0.031	-0.402	0.688	[-0.074, 0.048]	-0.016	Rejected
H12	eWOM $\rightarrow$ CE $\rightarrow$ GPI	-0.020	0.025	-0.785	0.432	[-0.071, 0.029]	-0.025	Rejected
Total indirect (GPV)		0.162	0.042	3.870	<0.001	[0.084, 0.249]	0.238	-
Direct (GPV)		0.010	0.043	0.230	0.818	[-0.074, 0.094]	0.015	-
Total effect (GPV)		0.172	0.060	2.866	0.004	[0.057, 0.293]	0.253	-
Total indirect (eWOM)		-0.032	0.040	-0.799	0.424	[-0.111, 0.046]	-0.041	-

mediators – via Green Trust (indirect std. $\beta = 0.143$, unstd. $\beta = 0.097$, 95% CI [0.038, 0.166]) and Customer Engagement (indirect std. $\beta = 0.096$, unstd. $\beta = 0.065$, 95% CI [0.018, 0.121]) – with its direct path to intention non-significant (std. $\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.818$) and total effect significant (unstd. $\beta = 0.172$, 95% CI [0.057, 0.293]), confirming a full mediation structure (VAF = 94.2%; H9 and H10 supported). eWOM Receptivity produces no significant effect on Green Trust (std. $\beta = -0.027$, p

= 0.687), Customer Engagement (std. $\beta = -0.055$, $p = 0.430$) or Purchase Intention (std. $\beta = 0.050$, $p = 0.380$), leading to the rejection of H4, H5 and H6. The final validated structural model retaining only significant paths is presented in Figure 4.

Green Purchase Intention was examined across four demographic variables using independent-sample t-tests for gender and one-way ANOVA for occupation, age and income. Levene's test con-

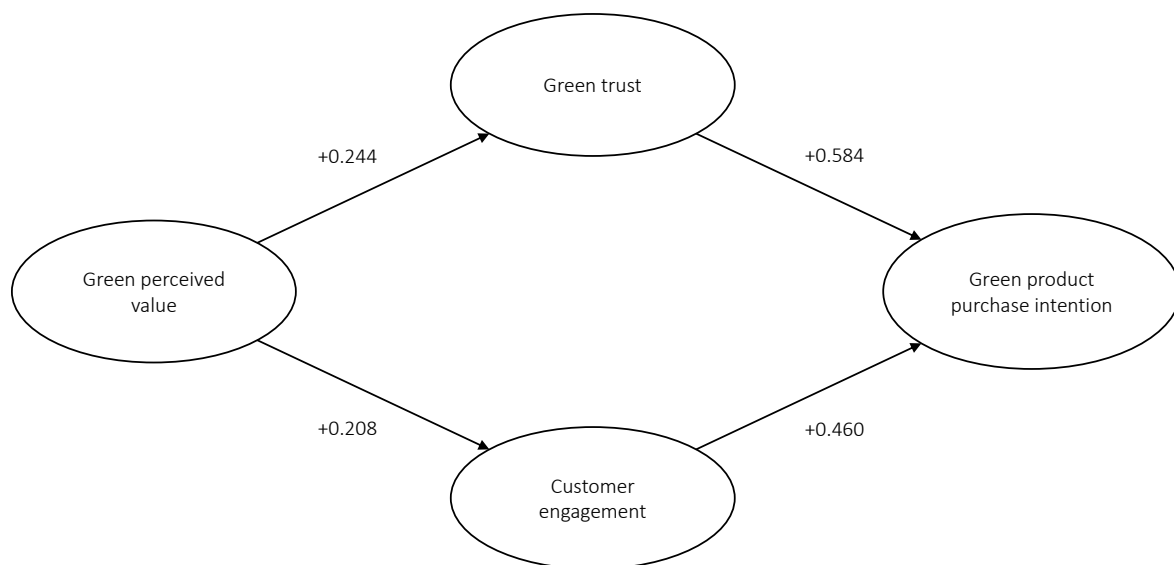
**Figure 4.** Final structural model with standardized path coefficients

Table 10. Summary of demographic difference tests for green purchase intention

Demographic factor	Statistical test	Sig. value	Conclusion
Gender	Independent sample t-test	0.863	No significant difference
Occupation	One-way ANOVA	0.617	No significant difference
Age	One-way ANOVA	0.072	No significant difference
Income	One-way ANOVA	0.249	No significant difference

firmed variance homogeneity in all four cases before parametric tests were applied. As reported in Table 10, no statistically significant differences in mean Purchase Intention scores were detected across any demographic group, with significance values ranging from 0.072 (age) to 0.863 (gender). The stability of Purchase Intention scores across gender, occupation, age and income groups suggests that the psychological mechanisms identified in the structural model operate consistently across the demographic profile of the sample.

4. DISCUSSION

The structural results confirm that green trust and customer engagement are the proximate psychological mechanisms through which urban Vietnamese consumers translate environmental value perceptions into purchase decisions. This finding aligns with the theoretical prediction of the Theory of Reasoned Action that intention is driven by internalized psychological states rather than by external information exposure alone and it extends prior empirical work by demonstrating that these states operate as two parallel mediating mechanisms, each carrying a statistically significant indirect effect from perceived value to intention (Table 9).

Green trust emerges as the strongest direct driver of green purchase intention in this sample (std. $\beta = 0.584$, $p < 0.001$). This magnitude is consistent with Chen and Chang (2012), who established trust as the central mediating construct in green purchase models and with Wasaya et al. (2021), who confirmed the trust-intention link across multiple product categories. The theoretical interpretation is straightforward: green products are credence goods whose environmental attributes cannot be verified at the point of purchase, making trust a cognitive substitute for direct inspection. What the present finding adds is contextual specificity. In Ho Chi Minh City, where national

eco-label standards remain underdeveloped and greenwashing incidents have received public attention, the risk-reduction function of trust carries greater weight than in markets with mature certification infrastructure. Waites et al. (2020) showed that benevolence trust – the belief that a brand genuinely shares the consumer's environmental values – is more persuasive than competence trust in green advertising contexts. This pattern is consistent with the present results: when institutional verification is absent, consumers rely on relational signals of brand authenticity rather than on technical claims and any perceived deception severs the trust formation process before it reaches intention.

Customer engagement produces the second strongest direct effect on purchase intention (std. $\beta = 0.460$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the theoretical position of Brodie et al. (2013) that engagement translates relationship depth into behavioral commitment. This result extends Joshi and Srivastava (2019), who found significant engagement effects on green apparel purchase intention, to a broader product category context in an emerging market. The mechanism is distinct from trust. Where trust reduces perceived risk, engagement generates motivational momentum – consumers who are cognitively and emotionally invested in a green brand act on that investment rather than passively evaluating product attributes. Beckers et al. (2018) quantified the downstream consequences of this dynamic at the firm level, showing that company-initiated engagement raises organic advocacy behavior. The present findings suggest the upstream consequence is equally significant: engagement formed through consistent brand interaction converts favorable green attitudes into concrete purchase intention independent of any single information episode.

Green perceived value shows no direct effect on purchase intention (std. $\beta = 0.015$, $p = 0.818$) but exerts significant indirect effects through green

trust (std. $\beta = 0.244$, $p < 0.001$) and customer engagement (std. $\beta = 0.208$, $p = 0.006$), confirming a full mediation structure. This pattern replicates Amin and Tarun (2021), who found that consumption values influence intention exclusively through green trust in a Bangladeshi sample and Nguyen et al. (2023), who observed the same pathway in Vietnam with perceived value carrying no residual direct effect once trust entered the model. Hoang and Tung (2024) further showed that attitude fully mediates the value-intention path among Vietnamese young consumers, with perceived behavioral control contributing nothing – a finding structurally analogous to the present result in that value requires psychological transformation before it generates intention. Roman-Augusto et al. (2022) demonstrated a serial version of this pathway – value feeding satisfaction, which feeds trust, which feeds intention – raising the question of whether the two parallel mediators identified here are themselves sequentially ordered, a question the present cross-sectional design cannot address. The practical implication is that value propositions communicated through advertising or labeling do not independently move consumers toward purchase; they must first generate trust or deepen engagement before any behavioral consequence follows.

The null result for eWOM Receptivity across all three hypothesized paths – toward trust (std. $\beta = -0.027$, $p = 0.687$), engagement (std. $\beta = -0.055$, $p = 0.430$) and intention (std. $\beta = 0.050$, $p = 0.380$) – is reported here as an empirical observation that warrants cautious interpretation. It contradicts mainstream eWOM literature, which generally reports positive effects of online reviews on both trust and purchase intention (Mahmud et al., 2020; Rao & Rao, 2019). Several competing explanations may account for this pattern, and the present data cannot adjudicate between them. Nguyen et al. (2023) found that eWOM Receptivity's direct effect on green purchase intention in Vietnam became statistically weak once trust was controlled and Parveen and Chaudhary (2025) reported that the attitude and subjective norm paths mediated by eWOM Receptivity were substantially smaller than the direct trust path in their Indian sample. Giang et al. (2026) documented a related pattern in Ho Chi Minh City's fashion market, where high

greenwashing awareness led consumers to discount eWOM Receptivity signals regardless of their apparent quality. Two non-exclusive mechanisms account for these boundary conditions. First, information saturation: Khwaja and Zaman (2020) argued that in high-eWOM Receptivity environments, consumers' marginal cognitive response to additional online information decreases as processing load increases, effectively flattening the persuasion curve. Ho Chi Minh City, the digital hub of a market with 76.2 million active social media accounts and 6.4 hours of daily online activity per user (We Are Social, 2025), represents precisely such an environment. Second, credibility discounting: Gattupalli et al. (2025) showed that information usefulness and credibility operate differently depending on product type and for credence goods – the category to which green products belong – consumers apply heightened scrutiny to all claims, including peer reviews, because they cannot independently verify the underlying attributes. Information saturation and credibility discounting offer plausible theoretical accounts, but a third, non-theoretical explanation cannot be ruled out: as discussed in the Limitations, the eWOM Receptivity items conflate exposure to online reviews with the trust- and intention-related reactions those reviews may produce. Distinguishing genuine boundary conditions from measurement confounding requires an instrument that separates these components, and this study is not in a position to make that distinction.

The demographic analysis adds a boundary condition of a different kind. Green purchase intention shows no statistically significant variation across gender ($p = 0.863$), occupation ($p = 0.617$), age ($p = 0.072$) or income ($p = 0.249$). This stability suggests that the psychological pathways identified in the structural model – value internalized through trust and engagement – operate consistently regardless of sociodemographic profile within this urban sample. This contrasts with studies in other emerging markets that found significant gender and generational moderation effects (Sesar & Martinčević, 2025) and may reflect the relative homogeneity of digitally active urban consumers in Ho Chi Minh City compared to more demographically diverse national samples.

This study has several limitations. The sample was collected only in Ho Chi Minh City and included mainly young, educated, and digitally active consumers, so the findings may not apply to other groups or regions (Sesar & Martinčević, 2025). Future studies should include consumers from smaller cities and rural areas, where access to green products and digital skills may differ.

The measures of eWOM receptivity and green purchase intention also require caution. Some eWOM items measured reactions to online reviews, such as increased trust or purchase intention, instead of review features such as exposure, credibility, or valence. Two purchase-intention items were also conditional and partly linked to online reviews. Although both scales showed ac-

ceptable reliability, this overlap may have affected the estimated relationships. Future studies should use clearer and more independent measures of eWOM, trust, and purchase intention.

The cross-sectional design does not support causal conclusions or show how trust and engagement change over time. Longitudinal studies could test whether green trust and customer engagement work in parallel or in sequence. Future research should also examine different green product categories, include greenwashing awareness and review credibility as moderators, and separate customer engagement into cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions (Brodie et al., 2013; van Doorn et al., 2010; Gattupalli et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study examined how green perceived value and eWOM receptivity affect green product purchase intention through green trust and customer engagement. Green trust and customer engagement had significant positive effects on purchase intention, while green perceived value influenced intention only through these two mediators. eWOM receptivity had no significant effect on trust, engagement, or purchase intention, and purchase intention did not differ across the demographic groups tested. The findings suggest that perceived green value alone does not directly lead to purchase intention. Consumers are more likely to form purchase intention when perceived value creates trust and stronger engagement. The two indirect effects were similar in size, so trust and engagement should be treated as parallel mechanisms. However, the null eWOM result should be interpreted with caution because some scale items overlapped with trust and purchase intention. Replication with clearer and more separate measures is needed.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Pham Ngoc Duong.
 Formal analysis: Nguyen Van Dat, Vo Thi Hoang Quanh.
 Funding acquisition: Pham Ngoc Duong.
 Investigation: Nguyen Van Dat, Vo Thi Hoang Quanh.
 Methodology: Nguyen Van Dat.
 Project administration: Nguyen Van Dat.
 Resources: Pham Ngoc Duong.
 Software: Pham Ngoc Duong.
 Supervision: Nguyen Van Dat.
 Validation: Pham Ngoc Duong, Vo Thi Hoang Quanh.
 Visualization: Pham Ngoc Duong, Nguyen Van Dat.
 Writing – original draft: Nguyen Van Dat.
 Writing – review & editing: Pham Ngoc Duong, Vo Thi Hoang Quanh.

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APPENDIX A

Table A1. Summary of key empirical studies informing the conceptual model

Study	Region	Method	Key constructs	Core finding
Amin and Tarun (2021)	Bangladesh	CB-SEM	GPV, green trust, purchase intention	GPV influences intention fully through green trust
Nguyen et al. (2023)	Vietnam	CB-SEM	eWOM Receptivity, GPV, green trust, intention	eWOM Receptivity direct effect on intention weak; trust dominant mediator
Hoang and Tung (2024)	Vietnam	PLS-SEM	GPV, attitude, PBC, intention	Full mediation via attitude; PBC non-significant
Roman-Augusto et al. (2022)	Peru	PLS-SEM	GPV, green satisfaction, trust, WOM	Serial mediation: value – satisfaction – trust – intention
Gil and Jacob (2018)	Spain	PLS-SEM	Green quality, trust, satisfaction, intention	Three-path serial mediation confirmed
Waites et al. (2020)	USA	Experiment	Competence trust, benevolence trust	Benevolence trust stronger with green advertising appeals
Zhang et al. (2024)	China	Survey-SEM	Green advertising, trust dimensions, intention	Ad appeal moderates which trust dimension activates
Graça and Kharé (2024)	Germany, Brazil	PLS-SEM	GPV, trust, satisfaction, intention	Benevolence trust dominant in collectivist-leaning markets
Dhakirah et al. (2026)	Indonesia	PLS-SEM	GPV, green trust, satisfaction, loyalty	Green trust and satisfaction serially mediate GPV-loyalty
Brodie et al. (2013)	Multi-context	Qualitative-SEM	Engagement, trust, advocacy	Engagement is product of value and driver of loyalty
Beckers et al. (2018)	Netherlands	Archival-SEM	Engagement behavior, firm value, WOM	Engagement raises organic advocacy and shareholder value
Sesar and Martinčević (2025)	Croatia	PLS-SEM	Knowledge, attitude, engagement, intention	Serial mediation; age moderates each step
Duong et al. (2025)	Vietnam	PLS-SEM	Green intention, WTP, generational differences	Younger cohorts more digitally engaged but more volatile
Gattupalli et al. (2025)	India	PLS-SEM	eWOM Receptivity usefulness, credibility, product type, intention	Product type moderates which eWOM Receptivity attribute drives intention
Jaini et al. (2020)	Malaysia	PLS-SEM	eWOM Receptivity, personal norms, green behavior	eWOM Receptivity moderates personal norms only with homophilous source
Parveen and Chaudhary (2025)	India	PLS-SEM	eWOM Receptivity, attitude, subjective norms, intention	Attitude and norms partially mediate eWOM Receptivity; trust path stronger
Giang et al. (2026)	Vietnam	PLS-SEM	eWOM Receptivity credibility, trust, fashion purchase intention	High greenwashing awareness discounts all eWOM Receptivity signals
Nguyen-Thi-Phuong et al. (2022)	Vietnam, Korea	Multi-group SEM	Cultural values, subjective norms, intention	Collectivist norms amplify subjective norm effects
Agarwal et al. (2025)	India	PLS-SEM	Eco-labels, green trust, wellbeing, intention	Eco-labels strengthen trust - intention serial path