



The Effect of Corporate Social Responsibility on Online Purchase Intention of Sustainable Fashion Products: A Mediated and Moderated Model

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Keywords

Sustainable fashion;
online purchase intention;
perceived CSR;
environmental
consciousness; SMI
endorsers

Abstract

This study aims to clarify the mediating role of perceived CSR and the moderating effect of environmental consciousness regulating the relationship between SMI endorsers and purchase intention in the online sustainable fashion industry based on the extended planned behaviour and social learning theory. A total of 323 sample sizes were collected and data analysis was done employing the PLS-SEM. The results from the study are: (1) customers can enhance their purchase intention of sustainable fashion products by perceived CSR mediating role from the inspiration of SMI endorsers (2) the moderating effect of environmental consciousness on purchase intention while for SMI endorsers and for perceived CSR with purchase intention both do not support hypotheses (3) perceived CSR has a direct influence on intentional sustainable purchase. This research will help improve fashion retailers' understanding of consumers and how combining activities can enhance consumer purchase intent in the 4.0 technology age.

1. Introduction

The fashion industry's trend of valuing sustainability has been growing (Henninger et al., 2016). Consumer behaviour studies focus on sustainable manufacturing and consumption habits of apparel and fashion accessories (Laura Grazzini et al., 2021). Research has mainly focused on the consumer perspective (Laura Grazzini et al., 2021), leaving a gap in the literature regarding interactions between consumers, retailers, and other intermediaries in the context of online retail (Johnstone & Lindh, 2021), as well as actions fashion shops can take to encourage or preserve sustainable customer conduct (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). Purchase intention of sustainable products is higher when consumers are exposed to CSR information (Newton et al., 2015). Current research has presented a hazy image of how sustainability values are translated into consumer purchasing behaviour (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). Between their expanding

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sustainability principles and beliefs and their fashion desires or requirements about environmental consciousness, consumers in the fashion business face a conflict of ethics (Yoo et al., 2021).

With more than five billion internet users worldwide, an increasing number of people shop online (Statista, 2023). According to the Vietnam E-commerce White Paper (2022), Vietnam has up to 74.8% of internet users shopping online, in which group of clothing, footwear and cosmetics items are the most purchased online (69.0%) (VCCI, 2023). Thereby, customers can improve their understanding of online purchase intentions and make informed and accurate decisions about their purchases on social commerce platforms using knowledge, information, beliefs and social experiences (Akram et al., 2021). Marketers are beginning to view social networking sites as their principal channel for connecting with and interacting with larger global audiences (Chetioui et al., 2020). Social media influencers (SMIs) as an influencer marketing tool have become influential in influencing followers (Le & Hancer, 2021). They can shape the thoughts, attitudes, or behaviours of others through self-generated content, interactions, and relationships with their audiences, especially their followers (Borchers & Enke, 2021). Indeed, influencer marketing in the fashion industry has received more attention and thought (Chetioui et al., 2020). Businesses can collaborate with SMIs on significant social concerns, such as guaranteeing the success of CSR projects (Chen et al., 2023). Research is still in its infancy regarding how SMI endorsement promotes sustainable purchasing behaviour associated with CSR initiatives (Chen et al., 2023), particularly concerning the proposed interest in social media fashion marketing trends and sustainability in fashion management (Kim & Kim, 2020). Many green marketing scenarios have been the subject of many studies examining environmental consciousness in consumer behaviour (Chuah et al., 2020) but ignore the impact of SMIs in that relationship. The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) has been used to comprehend the variables (Han et al., 2010; Kumar et al., 2022; Si et al., 2020). Thereby showing that the relevance of SMI to CSR perceived by consumers in terms of sustainability and purchase intention has not yet been studied.

Based on social learning theory, SMI can influence the views and behaviour of other users as observers, using knowledge to make decisions easier (Bandura, 1971). Therefore, fashion buyers can love and copy their millions of followers on social media (Bandura, 1971). This study uses social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) to assess the impact of influencers on perception, presenting social media influencers as a source of knowledge on social networks. Customer perception of CSR with CSR communication and CSR perceived values from the influence of SMIs, which are based on fashion industry trends, can more effectively encourage sustainable purchase intention. The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is also incorporated to assist this study because we also suggest that these correlations are regulated by environmental consciousness. This study applies a combination of TPB and social learning theory to support this study because we also suggest that these correlations are regulated by environmental consciousness. The findings of the study assist fashion marketers in selecting the most motivated social media influencers to interact with customers and influence their purchasing intentions.

2. Online purchase intention of sustainable fashion products

Sustainable fashion products have been viewed as a slow fashion process where businesses work to incorporate ethical, environmentally friendly, and sustainable practices into their designs (Pookulangara & Shephard, 2013). To influence consumers' purchasing decisions, manufacturers position the environmental advantages of their products in their minds (Rex & Baumann, 2007). Consumer behaviour studies have raised questions about factors stimulating individuals to

adhere to sustainable fashion consumption (Dhir et al., 2021). One of the foundations underpinning the buying process as a purchase intention is navigating it (Prentice et al., 2019). TPB (Ajzen, 1991) indicates that an increase in intention represents an increased chance of performing the behaviour (Chetioui et al., 2020). Online purchase intention is a gauge of a consumer's propensity to complete a transaction over the Internet because of a variety of internal and external motivating factors (Ventre & Kolbe, 2020; Akram et al., 2021). Although buy intentions have been researched in various contexts, there has yet to research on purchasing intention of sustainable fashion that target both consumers and retailers (Ahmad & Zhang, 2020; Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). Thus, this study focuses on how consumer consciousness, education of sustainable firms and society influence the purchase of sustainable fashion intention, represented by environmental consciousness, SMI endorsers, and perceived CSR.

3. Hypothesis development

3.1 Impact of SMI Endorsers on Perceived CSR

Consumers' motivation to emulate SMIs has a beneficial effect on their behaviour, as evidenced by the influencer marketing literature (Cheng et al., 2021). In the sustainable fashion industry, using influencers as a communication tool (Esteban-Santos et al., 2018) is increasingly essential, as it is interactive and attracts consumers through personal identity and status. Several studies have also found that consumers with a higher need for social interaction are more likely to engage in online conversations, thanks to the influence of influencers on fashion purchases (Chetioui et al., 2020; Masuda et al., 2022).

According to SMI campaigners, customers' desire to imitate SMI activism about corporate CSR programs leads to the desired consumer behaviour for CSR. At the same time, SMI makes it simple for customers to comprehend how businesses act while enabling interested consumers to share, co-create, and analyse CSR information with one another (Cheng et al., 2021). The relationship between a retailer's online presence and consumers in an online society is indirectly considered the role of influencers promoting the perceived CSR impact of consumers (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). However, in this study, we consider the direct effect. We further argue that SMI endorsers promote consumer perception of accepting CSR initiatives on sustainable fashion through CSR communication and a sense of CSR self-worth through participation, thereby promoting generating purchase intention. Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses are obtained:

Hypothesis 1: SMI endorsers positively impact perceived CSR

Hypothesis 2: SMI endorsers are positively associated with online purchase intention

3.2. Effect of perceived CSR on purchase intention of sustainable fashion products

The person's perception and assessment of the firm's CSR practices are called "perceived CSR" (Hu et al., 2020). Customers who perceive firms' CSR as sincere and authentic are more inclined to support these firms and purchase their products and services (Huang et al., 2021). Bianchi et al. (2019) suggested how consumers perceive CSR can affect purchase intentions and a company's reputation. Several studies have reported a positive relationship between perceived CSR and purchase intention (Gatti et al., 2012; Lee & Lee, 2015; Lee & Shin, 2010). The literature has yet to demonstrate the importance of sustainability-driven retailers in informing customers' online purchase intentions and reflecting the growing relevance of sustainability (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). The third hypothesis tests the assumption that online sustainable fashion customers' perceived CSR shows some degree of appreciation. We wanted to discover

that sustainable fashion shoppers value socially responsive fashion retailers when it comes to making purchasing decisions:

Hypothesis 3: Perceived CSR positively affects online purchase intention

3.3. The mediating role of perceived CSR between SMIs endorsers and sustainable purchase intention

Customers' desire to emulate SMI endorsers' behaviour in response to knowledge about CSR initiatives leads them to infer that business behaviour is reliable and satisfying. Consequently, they ascribe altruistic, supportive behaviour and purchase company items (Cheng et al., 2021). According to social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), when consumers view SMI endorsers as leaders in opinion and preferences as well as attitude and behaviour motivators, they expect to imitate SMIs by accepting the CSR initiative initiated by her/ him promotes and forming a better-perceived level of CSR (Cheng et al., 2021). Then, the consumer who responds positively to his/her CSR activities tends to support and engage in buying behaviour. Johnstone & Lindh (2021) proved state that information gained from peer and expert online reviews via intermediate electronic communication channels serves as a mediator for a firm's CSR. Therefore, we posit that perceived CSR acts as a mediator between the relationship between SMI endorsers and online purchase intention of sustainable fashion products, proposing the subsequent hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Perceived CSR mediates the relationship between SMI endorsers and online purchase intentions.

3.5. The moderating role of environmental consciousness in the relationship of SMIs endorsers, perceived CSR, and online purchase intention of sustainable fashion products

Environmental consciousness is a non-egoistic value that describes how concerned a person is about the environment (Dunlap & Jones, 2002). Based on TPB, prior studies have shown that environmental consciousness and purchase intention are closely linked (Haj-Salem et al., 2022; Kautish et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2014). Haj-Salem et al. (2022) indicated that environmental consciousness moderated attitude towards and intention to purchase green products. Harjadi & Gunardi (2022) bridged the gap between environmental consciousness and perceived behavioural control to act on eco-purchase intentions. Moreover, it has affirmed that there is a positive relationship between environmental consciousness and attitude towards sharing the content of companies (both commercial and CSR information) as those who predict the intentions of individuals to share the content of companies on a specific social media platform (Martínez et al., 2022). Consumer environmental consciousness improves the prediction value of TPB and beyond its fundamental constructs (Ahmad et al., 2020). Johnstone & Lindh (2022) argued that the impact of fashion consciousness on online retail fashion purchase intentions of customers (millennials) is reinforced through influencers as marketing intermediate channels, while the results showed that fashion consciousness and influence of influencers have a positive effect and that CSR has a weak significant adverse effect on purchase intention. Furthermore, to improve how customers perceive CSR content and sustainable consumption patterns, we argue that environmental consciousness moderates the relationship between green social media influencers, being micro-celebs, and can become new endorsers promoting perceived CSR and online purchase intention. That is, the more environmentally conscious, the more attracted to SMI endorsers, the higher the perceived CSR, and the higher the orientation towards online

purchase intention of sustainable fashion products and vice versa. The formal conclusions of this investigation are as follows:

Hypothesis 5a. Environmental consciousness moderates the relationship between SMI endorsers and perceived CSR.

Hypothesis 5b. Environmental consciousness moderates the relationship between SMI endorsers and online purchase intention

Hypothesis 5c. Environmental consciousness moderates the relationship between perceived CSR and online purchase intention.

Figure 1 shows the proposed hypothesised research model.

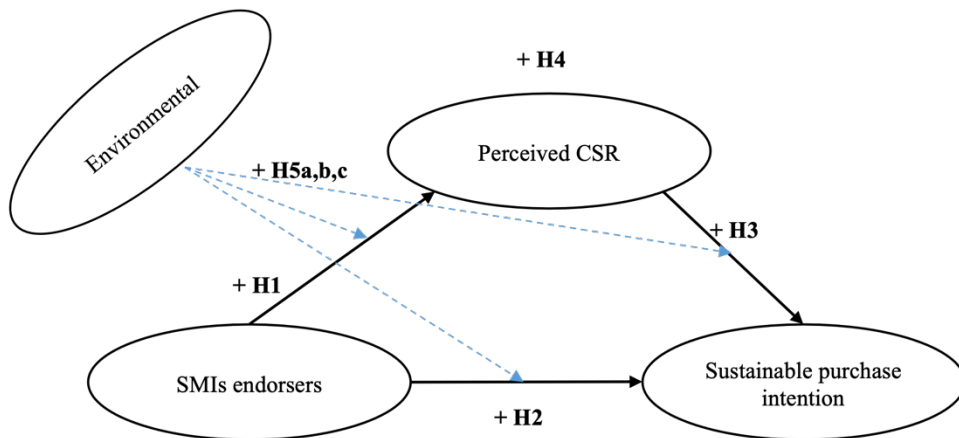


Fig 1. The proposed research model.

4. Research Methodology

This study aims to understand better how a sustainable business model can be achieved and what it means for existing marketing theory assumptions in the growing online business landscape. This makes sense considering the context of sustainable fashion for online consumers due to more pressures on environmental consciousness, environmental industry scandals and even the rising trend of SMIs. Based on previous research, the study applies the partial least square structural equation model (PLS-SEM) approach to achieving that goal. The methods used in the study are detailed in the following subsections. The present study follows the reflective modelling approach (Hair et al., 2017).

4.1. Scale and design of questionnaires

The questions are formulated to test the research model of online purchase intention as a dependent variable and environmental consciousness, SMI endorsers and perceived CSR as independent variables. A five-point scale was used to evaluate the measurement and structural models according to PLS-SEM analysis (1 – disagree, 5 – strongly agree). While most variables relate to single sets of measures, SMI endorsers and perceived CSRs have subconstructs.

A survey questionnaire was created to collect information on online sustainable fashion consumers' education, age, and income levels in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Although scale development was not the aim of this study, the scales adapted from Johnstone & Lindh 2022's proposed set of sustainable consumption pattern scales and previous research work. These scales

include online purchase information of sustainable fashion products (5 items) designed based on research by Johnstone & Lindh (2022); CSR perceived scale (6 items) developed based on research by Lee & Shin (2010) and Kim & Ferguson (2018) and finally, environmental consciousness scale (6 items) based on research by Kilbourne & Pickett (2008). In particular, inspired by study by Krishen et al. (2019), Ki & Kim (2019) and Johnstone & Lindh (2022), the following items were used to measure SMIs endorsers (7 items): *SMIs serve as an important role model, guide, and reference channel for others their social media channels; SMI sharing what looks good with his/her followers through their social media channels becoming part of an online community is very important to me; Seeing the information shared and rated by people online with similar taste values (worn or used) is important to me; I follow many celebrities, bloggers and/or online influencers (e.g. celebrities, TikToker, blogger, YouTuber, online reviewer and promoter) in my sustainable fashion choices; SMI endorsers often share information, advice and recommendations to her followers about sustainable fashion apparel with a social media influencer who is very important to me; I am more likely to buy a sustainable fashion product if the SMI endorser has a positive review of the product; I'm more likely to like a sustainable fashion brand if an online influencer (SMI endorser) rates the brand positively.* In addition, prior studies used proven conceptual frameworks (TPB and social learning theory) with a priori structural factors, so we immediately implemented PLS-SEM with two phases (measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation) using SmartPLS 4.0. Although all scales were standardized, some items were dropped because they were very similar or the previous test was not relevant to the respondent to be more contextually relevant to increase the tool's reliability (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Table 2 contains detailed information about rate items.

4.2. Data collection process

The data collection process uses convenient sampling. The reason for choosing Mekong Delta is that it was chosen to promote urban development and fight climate change and protect the environment. Before final data collection, a preliminary survey was conducted by distributing 11 questions to 6 lecturers and 5 combined students based on their recommendations. Table 1 contains the demographic details of the respondents. The study's target audience is educated consumers in the Mekong Delta urban areas, as they can efficiently respond to the survey due to their better knowledge and acceptance of sustainable products (Johnstone & Lindh, 2022). The sample size required for this study is much larger than that proposed for structural equation modelling (Hair et al., 2017). After eliminating incomplete questionnaires, the final sample size contained responses from 323 respondents. The entire data collection process took three months.

Table 1. Describing sample characteristics

| Gender | Freq. | % | Income per month | Freq. | % |
|---------------|-------|------|---|-------|------|
| Male | 130 | 40.2 | Under 15 million VND | 114 | 35.3 |
| Female | 193 | 59.8 | From 15 to 25 million VND | 123 | 38.1 |
| Total | 323 | 100 | From 25 - 45 million VND | 58 | 18.0 |
| Age | Freq. | % | Over 45 million VND | 28 | 8.7 |
| 18 → 24 | 69 | 21.4 | Total | 323 | 100 |
| 25 → 34 | 95 | 29.4 | The ratio of online fashion consumption to monthly income | Freq. | % |
| 35 → 44 | 84 | 26.0 | <15 % income | 158 | 48.9 |
| 45 → 54 | 45 | 13.9 | <=20% income | 142 | 44.0 |
| 55 → 64 | 22 | 6.8 | <=25% income | 11 | 3.4 |
| Over 65 | 8 | 2.5 | >25% income | 12 | 3.7 |
| Total | 323 | 100 | Total | 323 | 100 |
| Education | Freq. | % | | | |
| Undergraduate | 112 | 34.7 | | | |
| Graduate | 199 | 61.6 | | | |
| Post-graduate | 10 | 3.1 | | | |
| Professional | 2 | 0.6 | | | |
| Total | 323.0 | 100 | | | |

5. Data analysis and results

Partial least squares structural equation modelling approach (PLS-SEM) and SmartPLS 4 software were applied to check both the accuracy of the scale and the structural model.

Table 2. Assessing reliability and convergent validity

| | Outer Loadings | Cronbach's alpha | CR | AVE |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|-------|-------|
| Environmental consciousness | 0.735-0.854 | 0.867 | 0.882 | 0.603 |
| Perceived CSR | 0.747 -0.865 | 0.898 | 0.901 | 0.664 |
| SMIs Endorsers | 0.747-0.873 | 0.917 | 0.919 | 0.669 |
| Sustainable Purchase Intention | 0.789-0.872 | 0.856 | 0.856 | 0.699 |

5.1. Scale accuracy analysis

Analysis of scale accuracy of research structures includes assessment of reliability and validity. Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability (CR) were used to evaluate reliability while extracted mean-variance (AVE) and load factor were used to evaluate convergence validity. The validity of discrimination was tested with (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) criteria and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) values. The results in Table 2 show that Cronbach's Alpha and CR values

are greater than 0.7, showing that the scales are reliable. In addition, most load factors are more significant than 0.7 and AVE values are more significant than 0.5. The convergence value of these structures is sufficient.

Table 3. *Assessing discriminant validity by Fornell-Larker Criterion*

| | Environmental consciousness | Perceived CSR | SIMs Endorsers | Sustainable Purchase Intention |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Environmental consciousness | 0.777 | | | |
| Perceived CSR | 0.602 | 0.815 | | |
| SIMs Endorsers | 0.428 | 0.520 | 0.818 | |
| Sustainable Purchase Intention | 0.530 | 0.597 | 0.577 | 0.836 |

The comparison evaluated the discriminant validity of the structure means values of the square root of AVE (Fornell-Larker Criterion) and HTMT values. The square root of the AVE values in each construct is greater than their maximum correlation with the other constructs (see Table 3). Besides, in Table 4, the HTMT values are below 0.90. The bootstrap confidence intervals of these HTMT values also do not include 1. This proves that the discriminant values between the studied structures are valid.

Table 4. *Discriminant validity assessment by HTMT ratios*

| | Environmental consciousness | Perceived CSR | SIMs Endorsers | Sustainable Purchase Intention | Environmental consciousness x SIMs Endorsers | Environmental consciousness x Perceived CSR |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Environmental consciousness | | | | | | |
| Perceived CSR | 0.674 | | | | | |
| SIMs Endorsers | 0.486 | 0.572 | | | | |
| Sustainable Purchase Intention | 0.604 | 0.681 | 0.648 | | | |
| Environmental consciousness x SIMs Endorsers | 0.576 | 0.397 | 0.255 | 0.378 | | |
| Environmental consciousness x Perceived CSR | 0.616 | 0.478 | 0.307 | 0.496 | 0.876 | |

5.2. Structural model evaluation

To evaluate the quality of the research model, we considered the decision coefficient (R^2) and the predictive relevance, respectively (Stone-Geisser indicator $-Q^2$), to prove the explanatory power and in-sample predictive ability of endogenous structures (Hair et al., 2020). As shown in Table 5, the results of R^2 on perceived CSR (0.450), Sustainable purchase intention (0.507) are all significant (Henseler et al., 2009), thus revealing the predictive power of endogenous structure in the present model. In addition, according to the variables, the Q^2 result of perceived CSR and sustainable purchase intention is greater than 0, thus exhibiting the predictive relevance of other latent variables.

The diagnosis of multicollinearity was evaluated through the internal VIF of each path. All VIF values are below the strict threshold of 3.0 (Hair et al., 2020) (see Table 5); multicollinearity is not an issue in this study. Collectively, the above analysis revealed that there was a qualified structural model. Furthermore, after calculating the t-test from 5000 samples of bootstrapping analysis, the Cohen indicator in Table 5 was used to evaluate the effect size (f^2) of the relationships of the structure (Henseler et al., 2009) with values ranging from 0.075 to 0.155, manifesting that a fairly good degree of latent variable relationships has medium and strong effect sizes (Hair et al., 2017). All three direct relationships exerted significant positive effects; thus, H1, H2, and H3 were all supported.

Zhao et al. (2010) suggested that applying the bootstrapping test (5,000 samples) in the PLS-SEM approach can test for mediation and moderation effects to replace Baron-Kenny's procedure and Sobel's test. The results in Table 5 and Figure 2 show that most of the hypotheses among the latent variables are statistically significant (Except for H5a). Specifically, the impact level of the mediating variable of H4 ($\beta = 0.084$, $t = 2.899$, $p = 0.004 < 0.05$) is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, so H4 is supported.

This study examined environmental consciousness's moderation (interaction effect) and the correlation between sustainable purchase intention and its antecedent factors (perception of CSR, SMI endorsers). SmartPLS 4.0 software was used in this study to test the interaction (Hair et al., 2016). Hypothesis H5a is not supported ($\beta = -0.043$, $t = 1.379$, $p = 0.168 > 0.05$), suggesting that environmental consciousness does not moderate the relationship between SMI endorsers and online purchase intention. On the other hand, hypothesis H5b, which proposes that environmental consciousness moderates the impact of SMI endorsers and sustainable purchase intentions, is also accepted ($\beta = 0.130$, $t = 2.387$, $p = 0.017 < 0.05$). Hypothesis H5c, which proposed that environmental consciousness moderates the impact of perceived CSR and sustainable purchase intention, is also supported ($\beta = -0.165$, $t = 3.698$, $p = 0.000 < 0.001$). Therefore, the results of this study indicate that environmental consciousness only strengthens the relationship between SMI endorsers and online purchasing intention, while being environmentally conscious reduces the relationship between perceived CSR and online purchase intention of sustainable fashion products.

Table 5: *Assessment of structural model*

| Hypothesis | Path relationships | Std. Beta | Std. Error | t-value | P-Value | Bias Corrected Confidence | | VIF | f ² |
|--------------------------------|---|----------------------|------------|---|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|--------|----------------|
| | | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | | |
| <i>Direct effects</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| H1: supported | SMI endorsers → Perceived CSR | 0.321 | 0.060 | 5.388 | 0.000 ^a | 0.203 | 0.437 | 1.224 | 0.153 |
| H2: supported | SMI endorsers → Sustainable purchase intention | 0.329 | 0.060 | 5.509 | 0.000 ^a | 0.205 | 0.439 | 1.412 | 0.155 |
| H3: supported | Perceived CSR → Sustainable purchase intention | 0.261 | 0.068 | 3.872 | 0.000 ^{***} | 0.131 | 0.396 | 1.860 | 0.075 |
| <i>Mediating effects</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| H4: supported | SMI endorsers → Perceived CSR → Sustainable purchase intention | 0.084 | 0.029 | 2.899 | 0.004 ^{**} | 0.036 | 0.149 | | |
| <i>Moderating effects</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| H5a: <i>insignificant</i> | Environmental consciousness x SMIs Endorsers → Perceived CSR | - 0.043 | | 0.031 | 1.379 | 0.168^{ns} | | -0.096 | 0.029 |
| H5b: supported | Environmental consciousness x SMIs Endorsers → Sustainable Purchase Intention | 0.130 | | 0.054 | 2.387 | 0.017 [*] | | 0.022 | 0.237 |
| H5c: supported | Environmental consciousness x Perceived CSR → Sustainable Purchase Intention | - 0.165 | | 0.045 | 3.698 | 0.000 ^{ns} | | -0.262 | - 0.085 |
| Endogenous constructs | | R² | | Predictive Relevance (Q²) | | | | | |
| Perceived CSR | | 0.450 | | 0.291 | | | | | |
| Sustainable purchase intention | | 0.507 | | 0.343 | | | | | |

Note: ^{***} p ≤ 0.001, ^{**} p < 0.05, ^{*} p < 0.10, N = 323, Bootstrap sample size: 5,000.

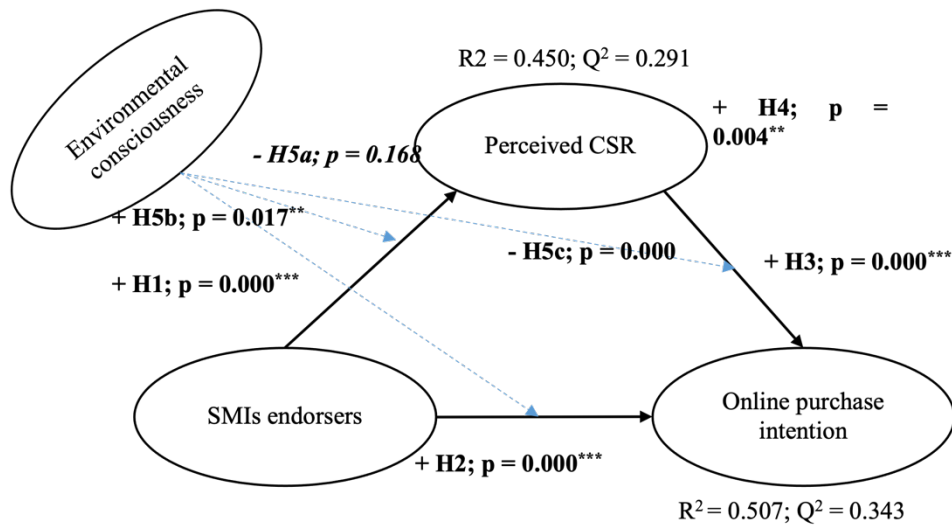


Fig 2. Research framework and hypothesis-testing results

6. Discussion and implications

This paper contributes some theoretical and managerial implications as follows:

It is consistent with the findings of Esteban-Santos et al. (2018) and Masuda et al. (2022) that SMI endorsers directly have a favourable impact on perceived CSR and online purchase intention. Fully consistent with Johnstone & Lindh (2022)'s argument, the online presence of retailers and consumers in online society is indirectly seen as the role of SMI endorsers in driving impact. The finding also indicates a favourable correlation between perceived CSR and online purchasing intent. This outcome is consistent with earlier research from Gatti et al. (2012), Lee & Lee (2015), and Lee & Shin (2010). Additionally, in response to a query presented by Johnstone & Lindh (2022), socially responsible fashion businesses support online purchasing intentions favoured by buyers of sustainable fashion products. In addition, this study illustrates that the association between SMI endorsers and online purchasing intention is mediated by perceived CSR. This outcome is in line with the earlier research by Johnstone & Lindh (2021). Show how information acquired from peer and expert online reviews acted as a mediator for CSR information by using intermediary electronic communication channels.

Another core contribution of this study lies in examining the regulatory role of environmental consciousness. The results show that environmental consciousness does not interact with SMI endorsers on perceived CSR. However, it reinforces the positive relationship between SMI endorsers and predicted online purchase intention of sustainable fashion products, which is relevant to the results of previous studies such as Haj-Salem et al. (2022), Kautish et al. (2019) and Wang et al. (2014). Environmental consciousness reduces the positive relationship between perceived CSR and online purchase intention, which contradicts the results of Martínez et al. (2022). In addition, perceived CSR does not affect the sense of online purchase intention when consumers show high environmental consciousness. The present study contributes to the literature by providing new insight into the role of SMI endorsers and their influence on pro-environmental behaviours. This study demonstrates that fashion retailers are now at the forefront of the shift to more sustainable business models to encourage sustainable consumer

behaviour, in addition to focusing on production and/or customers (inside-out approach). The study expanded the TPB theory and social learning theory combo to support consumer marketing, particularly the newly emerging fields of influencer marketing, internet markets, and the perspective of sustainable fashion for retailers. Combining the primary marketing literature for the fashion industry as the practical background also adds to the growing literature on sustainable fashion.

The current study offers pertinent conclusions that might help marketers create proper marketing plans to promote sustainable clothing, particularly in a developing market like Vietnam. This study demonstrates that perceived CSR and SMI endorsers had the most incredible effects on consumers' intentions to purchase sustainable clothing. Creating communication through SMI endorsers is worthwhile for increasing customer environmental knowledge and reinforcing favourable attitudes toward sustainable consumption. Marketers must realise that sustainable fashion is an alternative to reduce environmental harm and enhance social well-being. They should only make correct statements, though, as these can backfire.

The constraints of this study still need to be addressed in the future, notwithstanding the theoretical and managerial implications that were discussed above. The Mekong Delta was the site of the authors' convenience sampling data collection. Therefore, further investigations using the probability sampling method and higher sample sizes are required to increase the generalizability of the suggested research model and make it more applicable to a wider range of scenarios.

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