

# Sustainable Consumption Intention Among Generation Z College Students: The Mediating Role of Attitudes and the Moderating Role of Price Sensitivity

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## **Abstract:**

*This research examines how social media usage and environmental concerns influence the sustainable consumption intentions of Generation Z college students in China. The study delves into the mediating role of attitude in linking these two exogenous variables to sustainable consumption intention. Additionally, it examines the moderating influence of price sensitivity on the relationship between environmental concern and sustainable consumption intention, providing a nuanced understanding of the factors driving sustainable consumer behavior. Data was collected through a survey questionnaire administered to 350 Generation Z college students in Yunnan Province, China, using purposive sampling. The measurement model and the proposed mediation-moderation framework were assessed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).*

*The findings indicate that environmental concern has a significant impact on attitudes and intentions toward sustainable consumption, whereas social media usage plays a substantial role in shaping sustainable consumption intentions. Moreover, Price sensitivity serves as a key moderating factor in the relationship between environmental concern and the inclination toward sustainable purchasing. Given the escalating global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, this research underscores the growing importance of understanding sustainable consumption behavior.*

*The research findings contribute meaningful insights that can guide researchers in advancing theoretical frameworks, assist practitioners in refining their strategies, and support policymakers in formulating effective regulations and initiatives, emphasizing the roles of environmental concern and social media in promoting sustainable consumption intentions. By addressing existing research gaps, this study integrates the above-mentioned factors into a cohesive framework, aligning with United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). This comprehensive approach not only deepens the understanding of the interplay between these variables but also surpasses previous models in its scope and detail.*

**Key words:** Environmental concern, social media use, price sensitivity, sustainable consumption intention, SDG 12, SDG 13

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The intensifying environmental crises, especially the alarming acceleration of climate change, have become a pressing global concern demanding immediate attention. (United Nations Climate Change, 2022). 2023 was found to be The year recorded the highest global mean surface temperature to date, soaring to 1.45°C above levels observed prior to the industrial era (UN News, 2024; World Meteorological Organization, 2024). The alarming rise in global temperatures has led to an increased the occurrence and severity of extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, floods, droughts, and wildfires. These phenomena have profoundly disrupted ecosystems, human livelihoods, and vital infrastructure (NASA Science, 2023; World Meteorological Organization, 2024). Additionally, biodiversity loss and habitat destruction have further destabilized ecological systems, posing significant threats to environmental sustainability (The Royal Society, 2024). Air pollution, driven by increasing greenhouse gas emissions, has also surged, contributing to a rise in respiratory and cardiovascular health problems (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, 2022). China, which ranked 15th in the world for air pollution, has faced significant challenges in controlling its air quality.

Beijing's PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels was found to be almost 40% higher than those in the worst polluted areas of the US (NUMBEO, 2024; VOA, 2024).

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are the primary cause of the interrelated crises of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change (UN Environment Programme, 2022). These practices not only threaten natural resources but also exacerbate socioeconomic inequalities and undermine public health (Cohen, 2020). It is imperative to implement effective and immediate strategies aimed at advancing sustainable consumption and production, as these measures are crucial for addressing pressing environmental challenges and ensuring long-term economic and social sustainability.

Consuming organic food is becoming more widely acknowledged as a crucial component of sustainable living and a major factor in environmental preservation among the several strategies for promoting sustainability (Jhamb et al., 2023; Rizzo et al., 2020). Several studies have looked at how social media affects consumers' actions, but little is known about how specifically it might promote environmentally conscious purchase (Armutcu et al., 2023). Furthermore, previous research has not thoroughly examined the moderating effect of price sensitivity on the connection between environmental concern and intentions to make green purchases (Yue et al., 2020a).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which provides important insights into the underlying reasons driving these choices, is often used to anticipate customers' intentions to purchase sustainable and eco-friendly goods (Chaudhary & Bisai, 2018; Sun & Wang, 2019a). Critiques of the TPB has been noted for its limited capacity to provide comprehensive explanations, as it overlooks the influence of emotional and environmental factors (Berki-Kiss & Menrad, 2022; Lopes et al., 2019). To get around these limitations, this research combines the TPB with the S-O-R model. A more thorough knowledge of the factors affecting consumers' aspirations toward sustainable consumption is the goal of this integrated approach by making ethical issues like environmental concern and external influences like social media involvement the main stimulus.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Sustainable consumption intention**

The concept of "sustainability" was first introduced in the early 1970s, providing a foundational analysis of human development (Kidd, 1992). The 1972 UNCHE (United Nations Conference on the Human Environment) was the first time sustainability was openly discussed as a global issue and its importance was further emphasized. It was described as a means of fulfilling current needs while preserving the ability of future generations to meet their own to fulfill their own fundamental resource requirements (Kuter et al., 2009; Pelit, 2015). To attain long-term sustainability, (Ruckelshaus, 1989) emphasized the need of balancing ecological constraints with economic development. Emphasizing sustainable consumption, it refers to the responsible utilization of resources and services aimed at meeting fundamental human needs, improving living standards, and minimizing ecological harm like resource depletion, pollution, and waste, the Oslo Symposium (1994) broadened this concept while safeguarding future generations' demands.

Green consumption intentions (SCI), also known as sustainable consumption intentions (Kristia et al., 2023; Shamsi et al., 2022), have been the subject of extensive studies in a number of different fields. These include food consumption (Zahra et al., 2022), energy use (Duong, 2024), transportation (Yang et al., 2020), housing and construction (Lee et al., 2023), waste management (Bigdeloo et al., 2021), textiles and apparel (Burton & Eike, 2023), tourism and leisure (Akram et al., 2024), energy-efficient appliances (Waris & Hameed, 2020), and green purchasing behaviors (Thi Tuyet Mai, 2019).

### **Environmental concern**

It is often accepted that environmental concern (EC) is a primary motivator for environmentally conscious conduct. It is essential in influencing people's decisions to buy ecologically friendly products and do other conscientious acts (Felix et al., 2018; Nguyen et al., 2021). Although this notion was first studied in the 1960s, its definition and measurement were inconsistent since early research often viewed environmental concern as a general attitude rather than a specific construct (Pienaar et al., 2013; Roberts & Bacon, 1997). While some scholars believe that environmental concern is an innate reaction, others point out that there

isn't a universally accepted definition of it, which causes different study approaches (Dunlap et al., 2000; Fujii, 2006).

This study used the S-O-R paradigm, which stands for "stimulus-organism-response," to consider environmental concern as a stimulus. Its substantial influence on pro-environmental behaviors, particularly in influencing customers' inclinations to purchase eco-friendly items, has been repeatedly highlighted by recent study (De Canio et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2023). Environmental concerns not only shape customer behavior but also drive organizational changes, encouraging companies to embrace sustainable practices and minimize their ecological footprint (Liu et al., 2023). The role that environmental concerns have in influencing perceptions of sustainability has been emphasized by several empirical investigations. For instance, noted its important importance in encouraging the purchasing of sustainable clothing (Dhir et al., 2021). Similarly, a research by (Mishra & Kaur, 2023a) found that consumer attitudes and environmental concern were significantly positively correlated, emphasizing how crucial environmental concerns are to encouraging sustainable buying habits. The following hypothesis is put out in light of this knowledge:

H1a. Environmental concern has a positive relationship with attitude.

H1b. Environmental concern has a positive relationship with sustainability consumption intention.

### **Social media usage**

Social media, grounded in Web 2.0 technology, it supports the generation of user-driven content and the exchange of information, exerting significant influence on behaviors and societal trends (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In this study, social media usage (SMU) encompasses activities such as creating and sharing content, as well as participating in online discussions. As per the S-O-R paradigm, which stands for Stimulus, Organism, Response, these behaviors are considered stimulus components (Keles et al., 2020a; Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017).

Despite the complexity of its impacts, social media's influence on several facets of life is well known. For example, moderate use of social media fosters social connections and offers emotional support, whereas excessive use has been associated with adverse effects such as anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues (Keles et al., 2020b; Ostic et al., 2021). Similarly, its influence on academic performance is dual-faceted: moderate engagement enhances learning by improving access to resources, whereas excessive usage often causes distractions and hampers academic achievement (Ansari & Khan, 2020; Xu et al., 2022).

Social media is progressively seen as an essential platform for promoting sustainable consumption practices by influencing consumer attitudes towards environmental awareness and environmentally responsible behaviors. It serves as a platform for disseminating sustainability-related information, thereby influencing green consumption decisions (Gong et al., 2023; Xie & Madni, 2023). According to (Pop et al., 2020a) social media alters consumer perceptions, encouraging attitudes that support environmentally friendly consumption. Similarly, (Sun & Wang, 2020) argue that fosters positive shifts in attitudes, which subsequently promote green purchasing behaviors. The following hypothesis is put out in light of this knowledge:

H2a. Social media usage is positively related to attitude.

H2b. Social media usage is positively relationship to the sustainable consumption intention

### **Price sensitivity**

Price sensitivity (PS) describes the extent of consumers' responsiveness to changes in prices across various goods and services, making it a critical concept in consumer behavior research (Anderson, 1996; Ghali-Zinoubi & Toukabri, 2019; Goldsmith et al., 2005). Customers' willingness to spend more for eco-friendly items is a factor in the field of sustainable consumerism (Hsu et al., 2017; Kotler & Zaltman, 1971).

Numerous studies underscore the importance of price sensitivity as a key factor influencing green purchasing decisions, either directly or through its role as a moderating variable (Ghali-Zinoubi & Toukabri, 2019). For instance, in the automobile industry, the influence of price sensitivity is significant in shaping the relationship between consumer attitudes, social factors, and the motivation to purchase hybrid cars (Bhutto et al., 2022). Research on circular economy products indicates that price sensitivity significantly impacts attitudes, perceived behavioral control and Purchase intentions as conceptualized within the framework of the TPB, with the price sensitivity effect being especially pronounced among consumers in Thailand

(Kongarchapatara, 2021). Price sensitivity serves two roles in the eco-friendly clothing market. It predicts purchase intentions and acts as a moderating factor in the connection between environmental concern and the willingness to purchase sustainable apparel. Additionally, it impacts significant aspects of the TPB model, such as perceived behavioral control (PBC), individual attitudes, and prevailing social norms (Kumar & Mohan, 2021a). The following hypothesis is put out in light of this knowledge:

H3. Price sensitivity moderates the relationship between environmental concern and sustainable consumption intention.

### **Attitude**

A key component of consumer behavior, attitude (ATT) describes a person's assessment, whether positive or negative, regarding the execution of certain behaviors, such as buying a product or changing their behavior (Chen & Deng, 2016). Attitude is a mental process that forms likes or dislikes toward an item or activity (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). This research defines attitude in terms of behavioral beliefs, based on the idea that people are more likely to have good attitudes about an activity if they believe it will result in beneficial outcomes (Ajzen, 1980; Hoang Yen & Hoang, 2023). According to the TPB paradigm, having a positive outlook is essential for increasing people's intentions to do eco-friendly or sustainable behaviors (Ajzen, 1991), with attitudes of customers having a vital impact in changing their actions and purchase intentions (Ajzen, 1991). This is especially important in green buying situations, where customers often face decision-making obstacles, uncertainty, and information overload (Amoako et al., 2020). Numerous studies have revealed that having a positive outlook greatly increases one's propensity to undertake activities that are not only favorable to the environment (Sun & Wang, 2019b; Suparno, 2020) but also exerts a considerable impact on consumers' willingness and motivation to purchase environmentally friendly and sustainable products (Pop et al., 2020b). Additionally, studies consistently demonstrate a substantial significant link between attitude and both the intention to purchase and the act of buying environmentally friendly products (Patwary et al., 2022). Furthermore, research continuously demonstrates a substantial positive relationship between an individual's attitude and their intention to engage in purchasing behavior, particularly in contexts emphasizing sustainable or eco-friendly products as well as the actual behavior of buying eco-friendly items (Liu et al., 2020). The following hypothesis is put out in light of this knowledge:

H4. Attitude is positively related to sustainable consumption intention among Generation Z college students

H5a. Attitude mediates the relationship between environmental concern and sustainable consumption intention.

H5b. Attitude mediates the relationship between social media usage and sustainable consumption intention.

## **METHOD**

### **Design and sample**

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey methodology, using non-probability sampling to gather data via an online survey completed by respondents independently. The target population consisted of Generation Z college students residing in Yunnan Province, and the data was collected via a survey link created using Wenjuanxing and disseminated through social media platforms like WeChat and Xiaohongshu, with participants receiving a succinct description of the study's objectives.

The following inclusion criteria served as guidelines for participation: (1) Yunnan Province-based Generation Z college students, ages 19 to 29; (2) participation in or completion of undergraduate or graduate studies (baccalaureate, master's, or doctorate programs); and (3) readiness to engage willingly in the research.

The questionnaire is divided into two primary sections. The first section contain a number of questions meant to ensure that only respondents meeting the predetermined inclusion criterias were permitted to take part in the survey. The second section assessed respondents' perceptions across seven key constructs: environmental concern, social media usage, attitude, price sensitivity, and sustainable consumption intention. The survey instrument included 22 observed variables representing five latent constructs. As suggested by (Cohen, 2013), the sample size was determined using a 0.05 significance threshold, 0.8 statistical power, and an effect size of 0.18. A total of 350 responses were initially collected; however, after removing all data that did not meet the required criteria, the final valid dataset consisted of 302 responses. 178 men and 124 women, all in the age bracket of 19–29, with a bachelor's degree or higher, made up the sample. Table 1

offers an in-depth breakdown of the participants' demographic characteristics, providing a detailed overview of key attributes such as age, gender, education level, and other relevant factors.

**Table 1 :** The demographic profiles of the participants

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	178	58.94%
	Female	124	41.06%
Age	19-25	256	84.77%
	26-29	46	15.23%
Educational level	Undergraduate	262	86.75%
	Masters	37	12.25%
	PhD	3	1%

### Measurement

In this research, environmental concern was measured using the scales developed by (Chrysohoidis & Krystallis, 2005; Michaelidou & Hassan, 2008). To evaluate respondents' social media usage, scales developed by (Gunawan & Huarng, 2015; Pop et al., 2020b) were utilized. Attitude was assessed with scales developed by (Ding et al., 2017; Sun & Wang, 2020; Wang et al., 2018). Price sensitivity was measured using scales from (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Srivastava & Gupta, 2023). Finally, sustainable consumption intention was assessed using scales from (Chen & Chang, 2012; Horrich et al., 2024; Paul et al., 2016). The answers were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale; 1 meaning "strongly disagree," and 7 denoting "strongly agree."

### Data analysis

The study applied PLS-SEM through SmartPLS software, version 4.1.0.8. This variance-based approach was selected for its robust predictive capabilities and its capability to efficiently manage complex models with numerous variables and intricate structural relationships. PLS-SEM is more flexible for exploratory research than Covariance-Based SEM prioritizes maximizing explained variance while not depending on rigid assumptions about data distribution (Pahlevansharif & Sharif Nia, 2018). The Smart-PLS software offers advanced algorithms, robust modeling features, and comprehensive technical support, further enhancing its applicability (Hair et al., 2017).

Using the approach described by (Henseler et al., 2009), there were two phases of the analysis. With the purpose of ensuring that the structures are resistant to failure, in the initial phase, the measurement model was assessed using with an emphasis on validity and reliability. Cronbach's alpha served as the tool for assessing internal consistency, with a reliability benchmark set at 0.7 or higher deemed satisfactory. Furthermore, composite reliability (CR) was examined, with values exceeding 0.7 signifying that the constructs demonstrated reliability. Convergent validity was proven by ensuring each construct's AVE was more than 0.5 and CR greater than 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; J. F. Hair et al., 2014). Additionally, all constructs' AVE values had to be less than their corresponding CR values in accordance with the standards established by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2014). Discriminant validity was assessed using two established methods. Under the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for a construct must be higher than its correlation with any other construct in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), while the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio, validated in prior studies (Henseler et al., 2015a), must remain below 0.85 to confirm that items measuring a specific construct were distinctly different from items measuring other constructs. After these evaluations, to ensure robustness and evaluate the significance of path coefficients, the structural model was assessed using 5,000 bootstrap resamples.

### RESULTS

Assessing the measurement model, as presented in Figure 1 and Table 2, demonstrates excellent internal consistency and reliability across all constructs, confirmed by the composite reliability (CR) values that fall between 0.905 and 0.950, as well as the Cronbach's alpha values, which fall between 0.856 and 0.915. The

AVE values for each construct range from 0.701 to 0.827, which is more than the recommended minimum needed to demonstrate convergent validity. Convergent validity is attained when the CR surpasses 0.6, even if the AVE is less than 0.5, according to the standards established by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Every construct in this study satisfies this requirement, with CR values above 0.8. As can be seen in Table 2, each construct's discriminant validity is established as the square root of the AVE surpasses its correlations with other constructs with other items. Additionally, all HTMT ratios are below the 0.85 cutoff, as seen in Table 3, as recommended by (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015b).

The developed hypotheses were examined by analyzing after validating the measurement model, the structural model was examined. The SRMR score of 0.061, which is significantly less than the widely accepted criteria of 0.08, indicates that the model appears to match the data well(Henseler et al., 2016) . The structural model represents 63.0% of the observed variance in sustainable consumption intention, demonstrating its explanatory power. Table 4 demonstrates the strong positive relationships between SMU and SCI ( $\beta = 0.127$ ,  $t$ -value = 2.919), and between EC and SCI ( $\beta = 0.526$ ,  $t$ -value = 7.999), thus confirming the validity of H1b and H2b. Additionally, the results also reveal that ATT has a significant relationship with both EC ( $\beta = 0.359$ ,  $t$ -value = 4.421) and SCI ( $\beta = 0.140$ ,  $t$ -value = 3.788), thereby confirming hypotheses H1a and H4, while H2a is not supported due to the insignificant relationship between SMU and ATT ( $\beta = -0.058$ ,  $t$ -value = 1.103).

Table 4 summarizes the evaluation of indirect effects, which shows partial mediation: ATT partially mediates the relationship between EC and SCI ( $\beta = 0.050$ ,  $t$ -value = 2.465), thus supporting H5a. Hypothesis H5b is not supported as attitude does not significantly mediate the relationship between SMU and SCI ( $\beta = -0.008$ ,  $t$ -value = 0.965). Furthermore, SMU is found to moderate the relationship between EC and SCI ( $\beta = -0.112$ ,  $t$ -value = 2.769), confirming H3. The significant predictive ability of the mediation model is shown by the fact that it explains 68.0% of the variation in SCI and 11.3% of the variance in ATT. Figure 2 visually presents the outcomes of the mediation and total effect models.

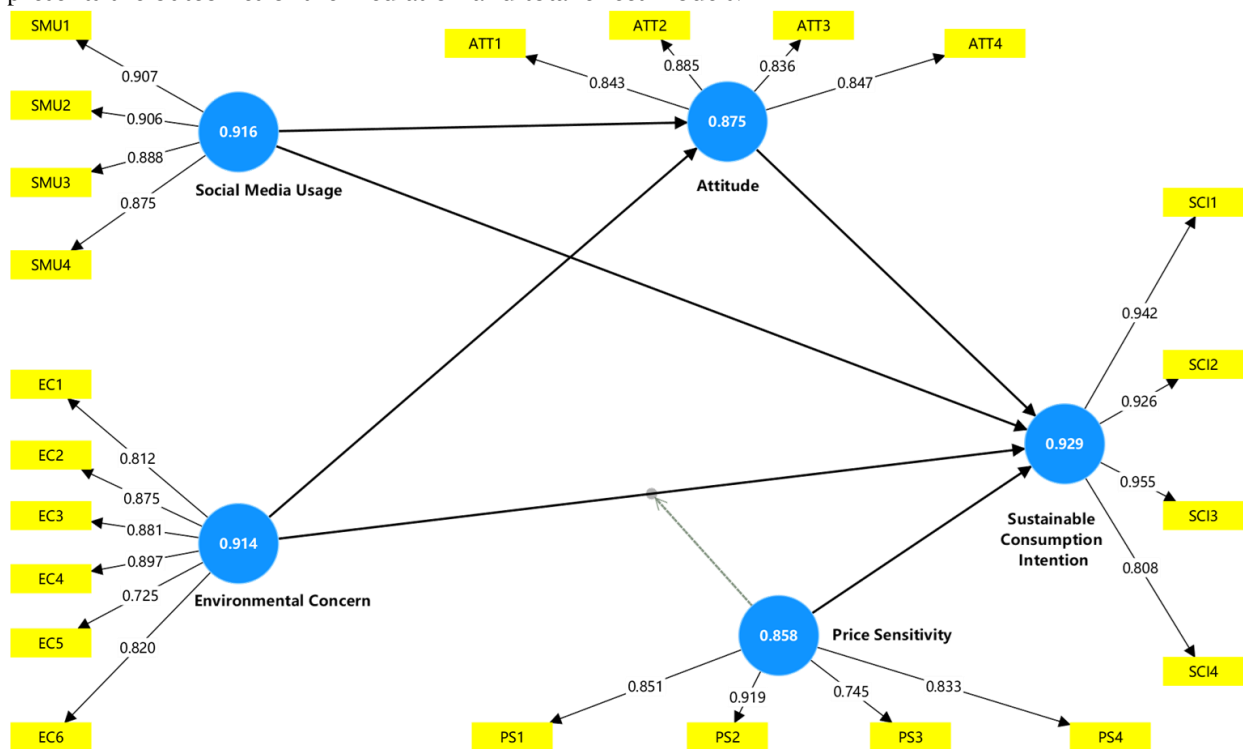


Figure 1: Evaluating the measurement model

Table 2: Evaluating the measurement model

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
ATT	0.874	0.914	0.728
EC	0.914	0.933	0.701

SMU	0.915	0.941	0.799
PS	0.856	0.905	0.705
SCI	0.925	0.950	0.827

**Table 3:** Discriminant validity assessment

		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Fornell-Larcker criterion	(1) ATT	0.853				
	(2) EC	0.340	0.837			
	(3) PS	0.210	0.590	0.839		
	(4) SMU	0.060	0.329	0.343	0.894	
	(5) SCI	0.392	0.781	0.575	0.398	0.909
HTMT ratios	(1) ATT					
	(2) EC	0.374				
	(3) PS	0.236	0.660			
	(4) SMU	0.079	0.352	0.383		
	(5) SCI	0.434	0.842	0.637	0.430	

**Table 4:** Structural model assessment

Paths	Path coefficients (t – value)	95% confidence intervals
Total effects		
SMU →SCI	0.119**(2.655)	(0.031, 0.208)
EC →SCI	0.576***(9.031)	(0.452, 0.697)
Direct effects		
SMU →SCI	0.127**(2.919)	(0.044, 0.215)
EC →SCI	0.526***(7.999)	(0.396, 0.651)
SMU →ATT	-0.058(1.013)	(-0.178, 0.049)
EC → ATT	0.359***(4.421)	(0.173, 0.499)
ATT→ SCI	0.140***(3.788)	(0.069, 0.214)
Mediation effects		
SMU →ATT →SCI	-0.008(0.965)	(-0.029, 0.006)
EC →ATT→ SCI	0.050*(2.465)	(0.017, 0.097)
Moderation effects		
Mod_ EC_ SMU → SCI	-0.112**(2.769)	(-0.171, -0.054)
Note(s): *** p < 0.001; ** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05		

Total effect

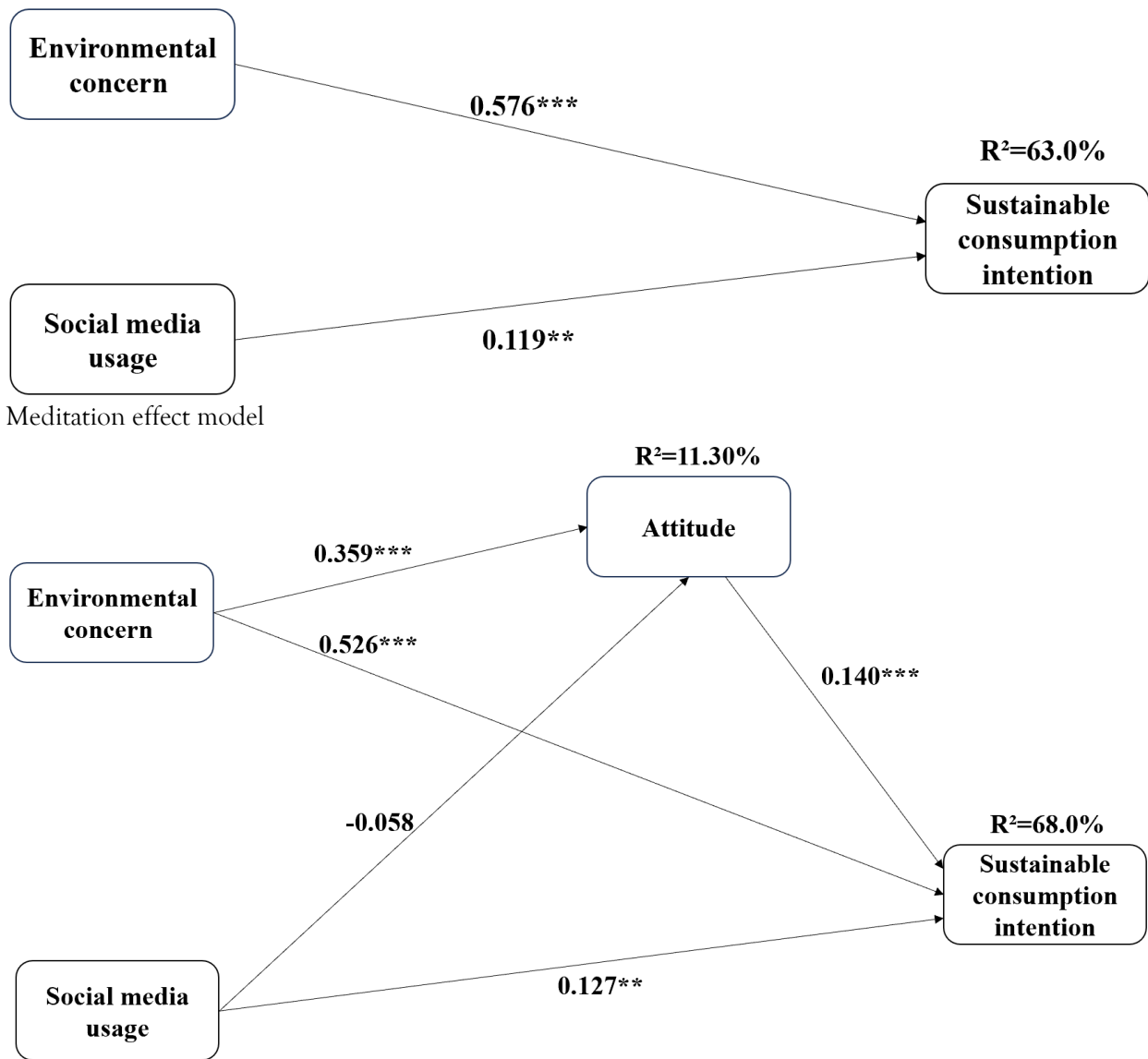


Figure 2: The mediation and total effect models are being tested

## DISCUSSION

This study examines how SMU and EC affects Generation Z college students' intentions to engage in sustainable purchasing, paying special attention to how attitude mediates these interactions and how price sensitivity moderates them. The findings show that social media usage and environmental concern both positively influence intentions for sustainable consumption, suggesting that Generation Z's engagement with sustainability-related content on social media platforms influences their environmentally conscious actions. As a mediating component, attitude strengthens the link between sustainability goals, environmental concern, and social media. However, price sensitivity was found to negatively moderate this relationship, diminishing the effect of attitude on sustainable consumption intentions when financial constraints are a primary concern. In keeping with previous research by (Kautish et al., 2021; Yanyan et al., 2023), the study shows that EC is a critical factor in predicting sustainable consumption intentions (H1b). Additionally, attitudes toward buying eco-friendly products are significantly influenced by environmental concern (H1a), which supports previous research (Cheung & To, 2019; Hoang Yen & Hoang, 2023) that emphasizes the close relationship between environmental awareness and using sustainable buying methods. In line with the results of (Mishra & Kaur, 2023b), The findings indicate that the relationship between EC and SCI is partially mediated by ATT (H5a). Finding a positive relationship between the desire to participate in social media and sustainable consumption is one of the study's main contributions (H2b). This is consistent with current studies that demonstrate how social media use may raise environmental concern and impact intentions to make ecologically friendly

purchases (Bedard & Tolmie, 2018; Li et al., 2012). Social media platforms are essential for informing consumers about environmentally friendly goods, which fosters trust and guides choices regarding sustainable consumption (Dewnarain et al., 2019). However, the research further demonstrates that views are negatively impacted by social media use (H2a), which is in line with (Nekmahmud et al., 2022) but contradicting findings by (Pop et al., 2020a), who argued that attitude mediates this relationship (H5b). Sustainable consumption intentions are strongly influenced by consumer attitudes, with more positive views being linked to a higher propensity to engage in sustainable practices. This outcome is consistent with previous studies showing attitudes are important determinants of sustainable consumption (Schlossberg, 1991). Moreover, attitudes driven by EC have a big influence on consumers' choices for environmentally friendly items, as shown in studies on sustainable fashion consumption (Leclercq-Machado et al., 2022) and environmentally responsible behaviors (Mainieri et al., 1997). These findings align with the results of previous studies conducted by (Yue et al., 2020b) and (Kumar & Mohan, 2021b), which suggest that cost concerns can discourage consumers from purchasing sustainable products, even when they exhibit environmental awareness. The moderation effect highlights the financial trade-offs consumers face when balancing sustainability and cost, as noted by (Hahnel et al., 2014).

## CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates the interplay between environmental concern, social media use, and Generation Z's sustainable consumption intentions, mediated by attitude and moderated by price sensitivity. The results highlight how critical it is to comprehend Gen Z's consumption preferences in light of global issues including pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change. While social media usage and environmental concern positively influence sustainable consumption intentions, price sensitivity weakens this relationship. Attitude serves as an intermediary between environmental concern and sustainable consumption, emphasizing its essential impact on promoting eco-friendly actions. Environmentally friendly products that prioritize sustainability are more likely to be chosen by people who possess a deep understanding of environmental issues and their societal and environmental impacts (Rasiah et al., 2023). Social media platforms have evolved into highly impactful channels, playing a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior, driving purchasing decisions, and fostering brand engagement through targeted content and user interactions, often driven by business goals. While companies can use these platforms to connect with Generation Z and promote sustainable practices, their efforts may seem shallow or insincere. Using influencers, creating interactive content, and sharing environmental stories can help build a sense of community, but they often oversimplify complex sustainability issues. This approach risks turning important environmental challenges into marketing campaigns instead of driving real, meaningful change.

Businesses can promote sustainable consumption by being transparent, highlighting the environmental benefits of their products, and offering affordable options. Additionally, emphasizing certifications, eco-labels, and the long-term value of sustainable choices can build trust and attract environmentally conscious consumers.

For academics, environmentalists, and legislators looking to encourage sustainable consumption, these observations provide insightful advice. This study fills in the gaps in existing research, increasing our understanding of the elements that motivate sustainable behaviors in Generation Z and providing important insights for promoting eco-friendly purchasing patterns.

## Acknowledgment

I am profoundly grateful to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ratneswary for her exceptional guidance, her insightful feedback and steadfast support throughout the process of completing this paper have been invaluable. Her expertise, coupled with her constant encouragement, has not only shaped the direction of this research but also significantly contributed to its overall quality and depth. I deeply appreciate her dedication and the invaluable opportunities she has provided for my academic and professional development.

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