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THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE IN MEDIATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GREEN PROMOTION AND GREEN PACKAGING ON GREEN PURCHASE BEHAVIOR IN EASY GREEN PRODUCTS BY UNILEVER

PERAN PENGETAHUAN LINGKUNGAN DALAM MEDIASI HUBUNGAN ANTARA PROMOSI HIJAU DAN KEMASAN HIJAU TERHADAP PERILAKU PEMBELIAN HIJAU DALAM PRODUK EASY GREEN OLEH UNILEVER

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Abstract

The increasing environmental issues, particularly the problem of plastic waste in Indonesia, as well as the gap between awareness and purchasing behavior of environmentally friendly products, have become important phenomena in this study. This study aims to analyze the effect of green promotion and green packaging on green purchase behavior, as well as to examine the role of environmental knowledge as a mediating variable in Easy Green Unilever products. In this study, data were collected through a survey distributed to users of Easy Green Unilever products in Indonesia, with a total of 400 respondents obtained. The research method employed a descriptive and quantitative approach, using non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. In data processing, this study utilized SmartPLS software. The results indicate that green promotion and green packaging have a positive and significant effect on green purchase behavior. In addition, environmental knowledge is proven to have a significant effect on green purchase behavior and is able to mediate the relationship between green promotion and green packaging on green purchase behavior. The conclusion of this study emphasizes that increasing consumers' environmental knowledge is a key factor in strengthening the effectiveness of green marketing strategies in encouraging environmentally friendly purchasing behavior.

Keywords : Green Promotion, Green Packaging, Environmental Knowledge, Green Purchase Behavior.

Abstrak

Meningkatnya isu lingkungan, khususnya permasalahan sampah plastik di Indonesia, serta adanya kesenjangan antara kesadaran dan perilaku pembelian produk ramah lingkungan menjadi fenomena penting dalam penelitian ini. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis pengaruh *green promotion* dan *green packaging* terhadap *green purchase behavior*, serta menguji peran *environmental knowledge* sebagai variabel mediasi pada produk Easy Green Unilever. Pada penelitian ini data dikumpulkan melalui survei yang didistribusikan kepada pengguna produk Easy Green Unilever di Indonesia dan

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diperoleh sebanyak 400 responden. Metode penelitian yang digunakan melalui pendekatan deskriptif dan kuantitatif dengan teknik pengambilan sampel menggunakan *non probability sampling* dengan jenis *purposive sampling*. Dalam pengolahan data, penelitian ini menggunakan software SmartPLS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *green promotion* dan *green packaging* berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap *green purchase behavior*. Selain itu, *environmental knowledge* terbukti berpengaruh signifikan terhadap *green purchase behavior* dan mampu memediasi hubungan antara *green promotion* dan *green packaging* terhadap *green purchase behavior*. Kesimpulan penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa peningkatan pengetahuan lingkungan konsumen menjadi faktor kunci dalam memperkuat efektivitas strategi pemasaran hijau dalam mendorong perilaku pembelian ramah lingkungan.

Kata Kunci : Promosi Ramah Lingkungan, Kemasan Ramah Lingkungan, Pengetahuan Lingkungan, Perilaku Pembelian Ramah Lingkungan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Global waste has become one of the most serious environmental challenges worldwide, marked by the continuous increase in waste generation, ecosystem degradation, and negative impacts on human health and climate change. According to the World Bank report *What a Waste 2.0* (2023), the world produces approximately 2.01 billion tons of municipal solid waste annually, with around 33% not properly managed. The report also projects that global waste will increase by 70% by 2050 due to rapid urbanization, population growth, and economic development. Among various types of waste, plastic waste has become a major environmental issue, particularly in developing countries such as Indonesia.

Indonesia is recognized as one of the largest contributors of plastic waste entering the oceans. The World Bank (2023) reported that Indonesia ranks among the top five countries contributing marine plastic pollution. Approximately 3.2 million tons of plastic waste are discarded into the sea every year, largely driven by the high use of single-use plastics and inadequate waste management systems. Household consumption industries contribute significantly to this problem, particularly through plastic packaging from food, personal care, and household products. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry (2023) indicate that 60.44% of total waste originates from household activities, with plastic waste accounting for 19.15%.

Plastic waste not only damages the environment but also affects economic and social sectors. Pollution reduces the quality of tourism destinations and marine ecosystems, threatening industries such as fisheries and tourism that contribute significantly to Indonesia's GDP. Open burning of plastic waste also releases toxic substances harmful to human health. Furthermore, unmanaged waste lowers the quality of life in communities living near landfills and polluted areas. According to the World Bank (2021), Indonesia generates around 7.8 million tons of plastic waste annually, and nearly 63% of it is poorly managed, causing severe environmental impacts on land and in oceans.

In response to these issues, the Indonesian government introduced policies to reduce waste generation and improve waste management, including the target of reducing marine waste by 70% by 2025. The private sector has also become actively involved in environmental sustainability initiatives. One company that consistently promotes sustainable practices is Unilever through its environmental programs and green marketing strategies. Unilever launched initiatives such as Shared Planet and Easy Green to encourage consumers to adopt environmentally friendly lifestyles and support sustainable products.

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Easy Green is a collaborative program between Unilever Indonesia and Lazada launched in 2022 to label and promote environmentally friendly products. The program represents a form of green promotion designed to educate consumers about sustainable consumption, especially regarding environmentally friendly packaging and reduced plastic use. Through Easy Green, consumers are encouraged to choose products with recyclable, reusable, or biodegradable packaging. Unilever has also implemented various sustainability efforts, including the use of recycled plastic materials, refill stations, waste bank development, and partnerships with organizations such as PRAISE and IPRO to support circular economy practices in Indonesia.

Environmental awareness among Indonesian consumers has increased significantly in recent years. Ipsos Global Trends (2023) reported that 92% of Indonesian respondents expressed concern about environmental problems and believed that environmental disasters could worsen without changes in consumption behavior. In addition, surveys conducted by KLHK and Snapcart revealed that many Indonesian consumers are interested in sustainable products and environmentally friendly packaging. However, despite this growing awareness, actual market adoption of green products remains relatively low. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as the attitude–behavior gap, where consumers express positive attitudes toward green products but do not consistently translate these attitudes into actual purchasing behavior.

Consumer behavior in purchasing environmentally friendly products can be explained through the integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory. According to Widodo et al. (2025), green purchasing behavior is influenced by attitudes toward the environment, subjective norms, and environmental values held by consumers. Purchase intention is shaped by environmental attitudes, social influences, and information obtained from eco-labels, while consumers' decisions are also driven by moral values and environmental concerns. Thus, green purchasing behavior reflects a combination of rational considerations and environmental values. Furthermore, Pradana et al. (2024) explained that the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is commonly used to predict consumer intentions and behaviors. TPB states that behavioral intention is influenced by three main factors, namely attitude toward behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Widodo et al. (2026) also emphasized that subjective norms refer to individuals' perceptions of social pressure or expectations from important people around them, such as family, friends, and the social environment, to engage in environmentally friendly consumption behavior. These social influences encourage consumers to support and purchase products that demonstrate environmental responsibility.

Several factors contribute to the attitude–behavior gap. Consumers often face difficulties identifying truly environmentally friendly products, while green products may also be more expensive or less accessible in the market. Environmental knowledge therefore becomes an important factor influencing consumer trust and purchasing decisions. Environmental knowledge refers to consumers' understanding of environmental issues, sustainable products, and the environmental consequences of consumption behavior. Consumers with higher environmental knowledge are generally more likely to support and purchase environmentally friendly products.

Green packaging also plays an important role in influencing consumer behavior. Packaging functions not only as product protection but also as a communication tool that conveys environmental information directly to consumers. Studies suggest that consumers who understand the environmental benefits of sustainable packaging tend to show stronger green

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purchase behavior. Similarly, effective green promotion strategies can educate consumers and strengthen awareness regarding environmental sustainability.

Although many studies have examined green marketing and green consumer behavior, several research gaps remain. Most previous studies focused on developed countries and examined only direct relationships between green marketing variables and purchasing behavior. Research exploring the mediating role of environmental knowledge, especially in developing countries such as Indonesia, remains limited. Furthermore, studies simultaneously examining green promotion and green packaging within the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry are still relatively rare.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of green promotion and green packaging on green purchase behavior, with environmental knowledge serving as a mediating variable, in the context of Easy Green Unilever products in Indonesia. This research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions in understanding consumer behavior toward environmentally friendly products and developing more effective green marketing strategies.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a descriptive design to examine the role of environmental knowledge in mediating the relationship between green promotion, green packaging, and green purchase behavior in Easy Green products by Unilever. The quantitative approach was selected because this study aims to measure the relationships among variables objectively and test the proposed hypotheses statistically. The research was conducted on consumers who have used or purchased Easy Green Unilever products in Indonesia.

The population of this study consisted of Indonesian consumers who were familiar with and had experience purchasing Easy Green products by Unilever. Since the exact population size was unknown, the sample size was determined using the Hair et al. rule, which recommends a minimum sample of 5–10 times the number of indicators. This study used 22 indicators; therefore, a total of 400 respondents were collected to ensure adequate statistical power and data reliability.

The sampling technique applied in this study was non-probability sampling using purposive sampling. Respondents were selected based on several criteria: (1) consumers living in Indonesia, (2) consumers who had purchased or used Easy Green Unilever products, and (3) respondents aged at least 17 years old. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed using Google Forms. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

The variables examined in this study consisted of green promotion and green packaging as independent variables, environmental knowledge as the mediating variable, and green purchase behavior as the dependent variable. Green promotion refers to marketing activities aimed at communicating environmental values and encouraging environmentally friendly consumption behavior. Green packaging refers to environmentally friendly packaging characteristics such as recyclable, reusable, or biodegradable materials. Environmental knowledge describes consumers' understanding of environmental issues and sustainable products, while green purchase behavior reflects consumers' actual purchasing behavior toward environmentally friendly products.

The indicators used in this study were adapted from previous studies related to green marketing and consumer behavior. Green promotion indicators were measured using three items, green packaging with seven items, environmental knowledge with nine items, and green purchase behavior with three items. All measurement items were adapted from relevant literature to ensure validity and reliability.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. SEM-PLS was selected because it is suitable for predictive research models and capable of analyzing complex relationships involving mediating variables. The analysis process consisted of two stages: measurement model (outer model) evaluation and structural model (inner model) evaluation.

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The outer model evaluation included convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability testing. Convergent validity was assessed using outer loading values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where loading factors above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 indicate acceptable validity. Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), Fornell-Larcker Criterion, and cross-loading analysis. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values, with a minimum threshold of 0.70.

The inner model evaluation was conducted to assess the relationships among latent variables. This stage included testing the coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), effect size (f^2), and model fit indices such as SRMR and NFI. Hypothesis testing was performed using the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS. A hypothesis was considered accepted if the t-statistic value exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05, indicating a significant relationship among variables. Through this method, the study examined both direct and indirect effects of green promotion and green packaging on green purchase behavior through environmental knowledge as a mediating variable.

3. RESULT AND DISCCUSSION

1. Test the Measurement Model (Outer Model)

A. Convergent Validity

Tabel 1. Hasil Average Varian Extracted (AVE)

Variable	AVE	Critical Value	Model Evaluation
Green Promotion	0,756	> 0.5	Valid
Green Packaging	0,585		Valid
Environmental Knowledge	0,579		Valid
Green Purchase Behavior	0,695		Valid

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that each variable has an AVE value greater than 0.5, namely 0.756, 0.585, 0.579, and 0.695, which can be said to be valid. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables have met the convergent validity criteria. Next, below are presented the results of convergent validity, including the loading factors for each research variable.

B. Discriminant Validity

Table 2. HTMT Test Results

	Green Promotion	Green Packaging	Environmental Knowledge	Green Purchase Behavior
Green Promotion				
Green Packaging	0,826			
Environmental Knowledge	0,767	0,831		
Green Purchase Behavior	0,766	0,834	0,812	

Discriminant validity in this study was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach. Based on Hair et al. (2022), discriminant validity is achieved when HTMT values are below 0.90. The results showed that all HTMT values were below the threshold, indicating that each construct was conceptually and empirically distinct. Therefore, the measurement model was considered valid for structural analysis. In addition, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion was used to further assess discriminant validity, where the square root of the AVE for each construct must be greater than its correlations with other constructs (Hair et al., 2002).

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Table 3. Result Fornell Larcker

	Green Promotion	*Green Packaging*	*Environmental Knowledge*	*Green Purchase Behavior*
Green Promotion	0,870			
Green Packaging	0,712	0,765		
Environmental Knowledge	0,671	0,746	0,761	
Green Purchase Behavior	0,623	0,693	0,688	0,834

Table 3 shows that each construct explains its own indicators better than other constructs, indicating that the model meets the Fornell-Larcker discriminant validity criteria. The square root of the AVE for each construct was higher than its correlations with other constructs, confirming adequate discriminant validity. In addition, the cross-loading results showed that each indicator had a higher correlation with its respective construct than with other constructs, indicating that the measurement model was valid and suitable for further structural analysis.

C. Reliability Test

Table 4. Reliability Test Results

Variabel	***Cronbach's Alpha***	**Nilai Kritis**	***Composite Reliability* (rho_c)**	**Nilai Kritis**	**Evaluasi Model**
Green Promotion	0,839	> 0,7	0,903	> 0,7	Reliabel
Green Packaging			0,908		Reliabel
Environmental Knowledge	0,909		0,925		Reliabel
Green Purchase Behavior	0,781		0,872		Reliabel

Based on the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha results in Table 4.10 above, the values for each variable are above 0.7. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables meet the minimum requirements and each construct in the estimated model has good reliability.

2. Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

A. Coefficient of Determination (R-Square)

Table 5. R-Square Measurement Results

Variabel	*R-square*	*R-square Adjusted*
Environmental Knowledge	0,596	0,594
Green Purchase Behavior	0,559	0,556

In table 5 above, it is known that the R Square on the environmental knowledge (Z) variable is 0.596. From these results it can be explained that green promotion (X1) and green packaging (X2) have an influence on environmental knowledge (Z) of 59.6% while the remaining 40.4% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. Then on the green purchase behavior (Y) variable, it was obtained at 0.559. From these results it can be explained that green promotion (X1), green packaging (X2) and environmental knowledge (Z) have an influence on green purchase behavior (Y) of 55.9% while the remaining 44.1% is influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

2. Predictive Relevance (Q-Square)

Table 6. Predictive Relevance Test Results

Variabel	**Q^2predict**	**Keterangan**
Environmental Knowledge	0,585	Prediktif
Green Purchase Behavior	0,506	Prediktif

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Based on Table 4.12, it can be seen that the environmental knowledge variable has a Q2 value of 0.585 and the green purchase behavior variable has a Q2 value of 0.506. These results indicate that both variables are greater than 0, thus concluding that these variables have predictive relevance.

2. *Effect Size* (F *Square*)

Table 7. Hasil Uji Effect Size

Variabel	f-square	Keterangan
Green Promotion -> Environmental Knowledge	0,098	Lemah
Green Promotion -> Green Purchase Behavior	0,029	Lemah
Green Packaging -> Environmental Knowledge	0,362	Besar
Green Packaging -> Green Purchase Behavior	0,087	Lemah
Environmental Knowledge -> Green Purchase Behavior	0,101	Lemah

Based on Table 7, the F-Square values describe the effect size of one construct on another within the structural model. The results indicate that green promotion has a small effect on environmental knowledge (0.098) and green purchase behavior (0.029), showing that the relationships are relatively weak. Green packaging has a very large effect on environmental knowledge (0.362), indicating that it is the most dominant variable in shaping consumers' environmental knowledge, particularly because packaging acts as a direct communication medium for environmental information. However, green packaging only has a small effect on green purchase behavior (0.087). Likewise, environmental knowledge shows a small effect on green purchase behavior (0.101), suggesting that although these variables significantly influence purchasing behavior, their relationships are not very strong.

3. FIT Model Test

Table 8. FIT Model Test Results

	Saturated model	*Estimated model*
SRMR	0,052	0,052
d_ULS	0,675	0,675
d_G	0,296	0,296
Chi-square	700,968	700,968
NFI	0,864	0,864

Comparing the results of this study, the SRMR value in the estimated model is above the limit but still close to 0.08. The NFI value also shows a difference with the estimated model, which is slightly below the saturated model. Therefore, this study still has a value quite close to the saturated model, especially in the NFI and SRMR, which have a small difference and are still close to good standards.

4. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using SmartPLS with the bootstrapping method to analyze both direct and indirect effects among variables. The hypotheses were accepted if the t-statistic value was greater than 1.96 and the p-value was less than 0.05.

The results showed that all direct effect hypotheses were accepted and significant. Green promotion had a positive and significant effect on green purchase behavior ($t = 3.087$; $p = 0.002$) and environmental knowledge ($t = 4.491$; $p = 0.000$). Green packaging also positively and significantly affected environmental knowledge ($t = 8.473$; $p = 0.000$) and green purchase behavior ($t = 4.403$; $p = 0.000$). In addition, environmental knowledge significantly influenced green purchase behavior ($t = 4.950$; $p = 0.000$).

The indirect effect analysis also indicated significant results. Green promotion positively and significantly affected green purchase behavior through environmental knowledge ($t = 3.027$; $p = 0.002$). Likewise, green packaging had a positive and significant indirect effect on green purchase behavior through environmental knowledge ($t = 4.171$; $p = 0.000$). These findings confirm that environmental knowledge plays an important mediating role in strengthening the influence of green promotion and green packaging on consumers' green purchase behavior.

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Discussion

1. The Effect of Green Promotion on Green Purchase Behavior

The results showed that green promotion has a positive and significant effect on green purchase behavior, with a t-statistic of 3.087 and a p-value of 0.002. However, the path coefficient value of 0.168 indicates that the direct effect is relatively weak. This means that although green promotion contributes to encouraging environmentally friendly purchasing behavior, it is not the main factor influencing consumers' purchasing decisions. These findings are consistent with Irshad (2025), who stated that green promotion positively influences green purchase behavior by encouraging consumers to purchase sustainable products. From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior, green promotion mainly shapes consumer attitudes but does not fully strengthen purchase intention or perceived behavioral control.

2. The Effect of Green Promotion on Environmental Knowledge

The second hypothesis revealed that green promotion positively and significantly affects environmental knowledge, with a t-statistic of 4.491 and a p-value of 0.000. The path coefficient of 0.283 indicates a relatively low direct effect. This suggests that green promotion serves as an initial source of environmental information for consumers, although it is not the dominant factor in increasing environmental knowledge. These findings support the study by Irshad (2025), which found that green promotion improves consumers' understanding of environmental issues. According to the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior Model, knowledge is the first stage in shaping attitudes and behavior.

3. The Effect of Green Packaging on Environmental Knowledge

The results indicated that green packaging has a positive and significant effect on environmental knowledge, with a t-statistic of 8.437 and a p-value of 0.000. The path coefficient value of 0.544 demonstrates a strong direct effect. This means that environmentally friendly packaging significantly contributes to increasing consumers' awareness and understanding of environmental sustainability. These findings are in line with studies conducted by Irshad (2025) and Shabbir (2020), which emphasized that green packaging acts as an effective communication medium in delivering environmental information. Within the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior Model framework, green packaging directly improves consumer knowledge through clear visual information.

4. The Effect of Green Packaging on Green Purchase Behavior

The fourth hypothesis showed that green packaging positively and significantly influences green purchase behavior, with a t-statistic of 4.403 and a p-value of 0.000. However, the path coefficient of 0.326 indicates that the direct effect remains relatively weak. This finding implies that green packaging contributes to environmentally friendly purchasing behavior, although it is not the primary determinant of consumer decisions. The results are consistent with research by Panda (2022), which stated that green packaging plays an important role in shaping consumer awareness and environmentally responsible behavior. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, green packaging can create positive attitudes, although purchasing behavior is still influenced by other factors such as price and consumption habits.

5. The Effect of Environmental Knowledge on Green Purchase Behavior

The fifth hypothesis demonstrated that environmental knowledge positively and significantly affects green purchase behavior, with a t-statistic of 4.450 and a p-value of 0.000. The path coefficient value of 0.332 indicates a relatively weak direct effect. This means that consumers' environmental knowledge contributes to green purchasing behavior, although it is not the strongest factor influencing behavior. These findings support the research of Taufique (2017), which explained that environmental knowledge encourages consumers to engage in environmentally friendly purchasing practices. According to the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior Model, there is still a gap between knowledge and actual behavior because not all knowledgeable consumers directly translate awareness into action.

6. The Effect of Green Promotion on Green Purchase Behavior Through Environmental Knowledge

The sixth hypothesis indicated that green promotion positively and significantly affects green purchase behavior through environmental knowledge, with a t-statistic of 3.027 and a p-value of 0.002.

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The path coefficient value of 0.094 shows a relatively weak indirect effect. This finding suggests that environmental knowledge mediates the relationship between green promotion and green purchase behavior. The study supports the findings of Nguyen-Viet (2022), who explained that green promotion plays an important role in implementing successful green marketing strategies when supported by sufficient environmental knowledge. In the Knowledge-Attitude-Behavior Model framework, green promotion first increases knowledge, which then contributes to shaping purchasing behavior.

7. The Effect of Green Packaging on Green Purchase Behavior Through Environmental Knowledge

The seventh hypothesis revealed that green packaging positively and significantly affects green purchase behavior through environmental knowledge, with a t-statistic of 4.171 and a p-value of 0.000. The path coefficient value of 0.181 indicates a relatively weak indirect effect. These results suggest that environmental knowledge successfully mediates the relationship between green packaging and green purchase behavior. This finding is consistent with the study by Nguyen-Viet (2022), which emphasized the important role of green packaging in supporting green marketing strategies and encouraging sustainable purchasing behavior. Within the Value-Belief-Norm Theory framework, environmental information contained in packaging strengthens consumers' beliefs and personal norms regarding sustainable consumption.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, all variables, namely green promotion, green packaging, environmental knowledge, and green purchase behavior, were categorized as good, indicating that consumers have positive perceptions toward Easy Green initiatives. The study revealed that green promotion and green packaging have positive and significant effects on green purchase behavior, both directly and indirectly through environmental knowledge. In addition, environmental knowledge significantly influences consumers' environmentally friendly purchasing behavior and serves as an important mediating variable in this research model.

The findings also indicate that although the relationships among variables are significant, most direct effects are relatively weak. This suggests that green marketing strategies alone are not sufficient as the main factor in shaping green purchase behavior. Therefore, improving environmentally friendly purchasing behavior requires not only effective green promotion and packaging strategies but also support from other factors such as price, consumer habits, and trust in environmental claims.

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