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# STRATEGIES TO INCREASE ELECTRIC CAR PURCHASE INTEREST THROUGH MODERATED TRUST IN ELECTRIC CAR BRAND EQUITY IN EAST JAVA

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this study was to analyze the influence of Environmental Concern, Innovation, Social Media Effectiveness, Brand Image, and Green Product Awareness on Purchase Intention through Trust, moderated by Brand Equity, among electric car consumers in East Java. This study used causality, using primary and secondary data sources. The sample population was 195 electric car consumers in East Java. The analytical technique chosen to analyse the data and test the hypotheses in this study was the Structural Equation Model. The results of the study prove that Environmental Concern has a positive but insignificant effect and Innovation has a negative but insignificant effect on Consumer Trust; while Social Media Effectiveness, Brand Image and Green Product Awareness have a positive and significant effect on Consumer Trust; Environmental Concern has a negative but insignificant effect and Innovation has a positive but insignificant effect on Consumer Purchase Intention; while Social Media Effectiveness has a negative but significant effect and Brand Image has a positive but significant effect on Consumer Purchase Intention; except that Green Product Awareness has a positive but insignificant effect on Purchase Intention; Trust has a positive but significant effect on Consumer Purchase Intention; and Trust has a negative but insignificant effect on Purchase Intention moderated by Consumer Brand Equity.

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Currently, fuel prices are increasingly expensive, and reserves are becoming very limited and difficult to manage for the future. Furthermore, environmental issues are a global concern, as outlined in the Education for Sustainable Development (EfSD) initiative. [1]. This situation is a global concern, including in Indonesia, necessitating the development of environmentally friendly and energy-efficient electric cars. Electric cars are powered by electric motors, utilising electrical energy stored in batteries or other energy storage devices. Electric cars offer several potential advantages over conventional internal combustion engine vehicles. Most importantly, they produce no emissions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions because they don't require fossil fuels as their primary driving force. [2].

Sales growth in a company implies that the company is making significant profits. Better sales growth means increased revenue and can help the company expand its business reach [3]. According to a report from the Association of Indonesian Automotive Industries (Gaikindo), electric car sales in Indonesia reached 15,437 units throughout 2022, a 383.46% increase compared to the 3,193 units sold the previous year [4]. Electric car sales in Indonesia have the

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potential to continue increasing in the near future. Starting last year, the government offered incentives in the form of Government-Borne Value Added Tax (PPN DTP) for purchases of electric four-wheeled cars and buses. This was established through the Regulation of the Minister of Finance Number 38 of 2023.

However, the government's incentives haven't been aligned with consumer purchases of electric cars. According to Gaikindo data, wholesale sales of battery-based electric vehicles (BEVs) in Indonesia reached approximately 23,154,000 units in 2023 [6]. When compared with the number of conventional car sales, which reached 1,048,040, electric car sales are still less popular with the public [7]. This makes it necessary to conduct a study on the factors that influence interest in purchasing electric cars.

Purchase Interest is the tendency to buy a brand. It is generally based on the suitability of the purchase motive with the brand's attributes or characteristics. [8]According to Bimantari, purchase intention is an intention with consumer motivation in the form of feelings or conscious plans to carry out certain behavioural actions. [9]Purchase interest can be measured through the dimensions of liking, namely, the consumer's purchase plan for a product. Really wanting refers to the consumer's certainty in a product, and possibility refers to the consumer's possibility of purchasing a product.

One factor that needs to be improved to increase interest in purchasing electric cars is trust. According to Kotler & Keller, trust is a company's willingness to rely on business partners. [10]. Trust is defined as the willingness to rely on a trusted business partner. [11]. Mahliza's research states that trust has a strong positive influence on purchasing interest. [12]This differs from the research by Pakpahan and Ryan, which states that trust does not affect purchase intention. [13].

Several factors influence trust building, such as environmental awareness, innovation, social media effectiveness, brand image, and green product awareness. The first factor, environmental awareness, is a person's beliefs, attitudes, and level of concern for the environment. [14]. From the results of previous research studies, such as Lestari's research, it was stated that Environmental Concern has a significant positive influence on Green Trust. [15]. The second factor influencing trust is innovation. Innovation is the initial introduction of a new product or process whose design significantly differs from past practices. Changes in product benefits are based on the new capabilities the innovation provides in meeting customer needs. [16]Pratiwi and Hasin's research proves that innovation has a positive and significant influence on brand trust. [17]Social media effectiveness is the third factor influencing trust. According to Sarwono and Prihartono, every activity related to marketing a company's products or services to consumers via the internet is not only aimed at selling products or services online but also at online branding and building relationships with consumers. [18]. Haudi's research proves that social media has a significant positive influence on trust. [19].

The fourth factor influencing trust is brand image. This study used brand image because it influences purchase intention for the Wuling Air-EV electric car in Jakarta. Every product sold on the market has its own image in the eyes of consumers, deliberately created by marketers to differentiate it from competitors. [10]. Based on the results of the study, Kurdianto stated that brand image has a positive influence on brand trust. [20]. Green Product Awareness is the fifth factor influencing Trust. Green marketing is an organised environmental protection campaign that attracts public attention because it can improve the environment. [21]According to a study by Alamsyah and Febriani, Green Brand Awareness has a direct impact on increasing consumer Green Trust in purchasing products. [22].

In addition to the direct relationship, there is an indirect relationship between Brand Equity and Trust and Purchase Intention. The use of Brand Equity in this study is because Brand Equity is the basis for how a brand wants to be seen and recognised, representing brand values, personality, and unique attributes. Brand Equity focuses on the value presented by producers to build consumer trust in the product. With high brand trust and equity, it will influence consumer purchase intention. [23]. Brand equity as a moderating variable in the relationship between trust and interest in purchasing electric cars in Indonesia can be explained by the existence of trust in electric car products and is strengthened by the commercial value of a brand obtained from consumer perceptions.

Based on the problems presented above, it can be concluded that there are factors that influence the intention to purchase electric cars. However, based on the results of previous research, it is known that there are still different results in each study. The novelty in this study lies in the moderation of brand equity on the intention to purchase electric cars, which has not been done in other studies. This study aims to analyse the influence of environmental concern, innovation, social media effectiveness, brand image, and green product awareness on purchase intention through trust in electric car consumers in East Java..

#### 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research design is causal research, which aims to analyse the causal relationship between one variable and another variable by conducting hypothesis testing. [24]. The population in this study was electric car consumers in East Java. The sampling method used was Hair et al., where 39 research indicators were multiplied by 5, resulting



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..... in a sample size of 195 respondents. Data collection was conducted through questionnaires, which were analysed using Partial Least Squares (SEM) analysis.

#### 3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### 3.1. Convergent Validity

Table 1 Convergent Validity

Table 1. Convergent Validity  Original					
Variable	Item	Sample	P-Values	Note	
	X1.1	0,840			
Environmental Concern (X1)	X1.1 X1.2	<u> </u>	0.000	Valid	
		0,871		Valid	
	X1.3	0,812			
_	X2.1	0,809	_		
<u> </u>	X2.2	0,766	<u> </u>		
_	X2.3	0,809	 0.000		
Innovation (X2)	X2.4	0,565		Valid	
· <i>'</i>	X2.5	0,745	<u> </u>		
<u>-</u> -	X2.6	0,818	_		
	X2.7	0,812	<u> </u>		
	X2.8	0,828			
	X3.1	0,838	<u> </u>		
	X3.2	0,878	<u></u>		
Social Media Effectiveness (X3)	X3.3	0,866	0,000	Valid	
	X3.4	0,783			
	X3.5	0,859	_		
	X4.1	0,877	0.000		
Brand Image (X4)	X4.2	0,877		Valid	
	X4.3	0,857			
	X5.1	0,760			
	X5.2	0,864	_		
_	X5.3	0,828	_		
— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —	X5.4	0,845		77 1' 1	
Green Product Awareness (X5) — — — — —	X5.5	0,883		Valid	
	X5.6	0,863			
	X5.7	0,854			
	X5.8	0,789			
	<b>Z.1</b>	0,839			
Trust (Z)	<b>Z.2</b>	0,930	0.000	Valid	
	Z.3	0,877	_		
	M.1	0,872	- 0.000 Valid		
Brand Equity (M)	M.2	0,841		Valid	
	M.3	0,874	_	, and	
	Y.1.1	0,806	– 0.000 Va		
Purchase Intention (Y) —	Y.1.2	0,745		Valid	
	1.1.2	0,743			

Variable	Item	Original Sample	P-Values	Note
	Y.1.3	0,755		
_	Y.2.1	0,706	<del>_</del>	
	Y.2.2	0,625	<del>_</del>	
_	Y.2.3	0,775	_	
Trust (Z) * Brand Equity (M)	Z*M	1,159	0.000	Valid

All indicators are declared valid because they have a convergent validity value above 0.6.

#### 3.2. Discriminant Validity

**Table 2. Discriminant Validity** 

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	
Environmental Concern (X1)	0,708	
Innovation (X2)	0,544	
Social Media Effectiveness (X3)	0,715	
Brand Image (X4)	0,757	
Green Product Awareness (X5)	0,700	
Trust (Z)	0,779	
Brand Equity (M)	0,744	
Purchase Intention (Y)	0,544	
Z*M	1,000	

The AVE value of all variables is stated to have good discriminant validity because it is > 0.5.

#### 3.3. Reliability Test

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
Environmental Concern (X1)	0,879	0,794
Innovation (X2)	0,903	0,877
Social Media Effectiveness (X3)	0,926	0,900
Brand Image (X4)	0,903	0,840
Green Product Awareness (X5)	0,949	0,938
Trust (Z)	0,913	0,857
Brand Equity (M)	0,897	0,828
Purchase Intention (Y)	0,877	0,833
Z*M	1,000	1,000

The composite reliability and Cronbach alpha values for all research variables are  $\geq$  0.70, so they are declared reliable.

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#### 3.4. Regression Equation

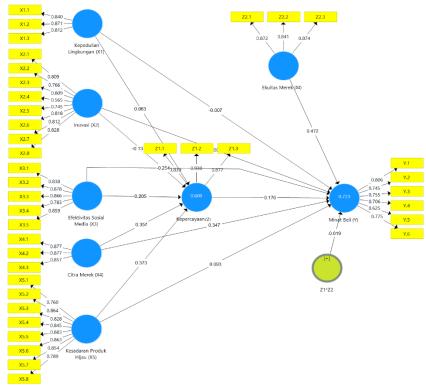


Figure 1. Measurement Model PLS

Based on the image above, it is known that Trust (Z) is influenced by the variables Environmental Concern (X1), Innovation (X2), Social Media Effectiveness (X3), Brand Image (X4) and Green Product Awareness (X5). In addition, the Purchase Intention Variable (M) is influenced by the variables Environmental Concern (X1), Innovation (X2), Social Media Effectiveness (X3), Brand Image (X4), Green Product Awareness (X5), Trust (Z) and Brand Equity Moderation on Trust (Z\*M). The following is the structural equation of the relationship.

$$Z = 0.063 \ X1 - 0.134 \ X2 + 0.205 \ X3 + 0.357 \ X4 \\ Y = -0.007 \ X1 + 0.075 \ X2 - 0.254 \ X3 + 0.347 \ X4 + 0.093 \ X5 + 0.176 \ Z + 0.472 \ M - 0.019 \ Z*M$$

#### 3.5. R-Square

Changes in the R-Square value can be used to assess the influence of certain independent latent variables on the dependent latent variable to determine whether they have a substantive influence. For endogenous latent variables in a structural model, an R2 result of 0.75 indicates a "strong" model, an R2 of 0.50 indicates a "moderate" model, and an R2 of 0.25 indicates a "weak" model. [25]

Table 4. R-Square

Variabel	R-Square		
Kepercayaan (Z)	0,600		
Minat Beli (Y)	0,723		

Based on the results of the R-Square value test above, it can be interpreted that the variables of Environmental Concern (X1), Innovation (X2), Social Media Effectiveness (X3), Brand Image (X4), and Green Product Awareness (X5) which influence the Trust variable (Z) have an R2 value of 0.600 which indicates that the model is "Moderate". The variables of Environmental Concern (X1), Innovation (X2), Social Media Effectiveness (X3), Brand Image (X4), Green Product Awareness (X5), Trust (Z), Brand Equity (M) and Brand Equity Moderation on Trust (Z\*M) which influence Purchase Intention (Y) have an R2 value of 0.723 which indicates that the model is "Moderate".

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#### 3.5. Hypothesis Test

Table 4. Hypothesis Test

Variable Relationship	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Value	Results
Environmental Concern (X1) - > Trust (Z)	0,063	1,101	0,272	Not significant
Innovation (X2) -> Trust (Z)	-0,134	1,040	0,299	Not significant
Social Media Effectiveness (X3) -> Trust (Z)	0,205	2,022	0,044	Significant
Brand Image (X4) -> Trust (Z)	0,357	4,095	0,000	Significant
Green Product Awareness $(X5)$ -> Trust $(Z)$	0,373	3,137	0,002	Significant
Environmental Concern (X1) - > Purchase Intention (Y)	-0,007	0,185	0,854	Not significant
Innovation (X2) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0,075	0,760	0,447	Not significant
Social Media Effectiveness (X3) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	-0,254	2,700	0,007	Significant
Brand Image (X4) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0,347	4,181	0,000	Significant
Green Product Awareness (X5) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0,093	0,978	0,329	Not significant
Trust (Z) -> Purchase Intention (Y)	0,176	2,075	0,038	Significant
Z*M -> Purchase Intention (Y)	-0,019	0,564	0,573	Not significant

#### 3.6. Discussion

#### 1) The Influence of Environmental Concern on Trust

Environmental Concern (X1) is known to have a positive but insignificant influence on Trust (Z), with a t-statistic value of 1.101, smaller than the critical limit of 1.96, and the original sample value of 0.063. This indicates that although the direction of the relationship between Environmental Concern and Trust is positive, the strength of the influence is not statistically strong enough to be considered significant. This study also shows partial consistency with previous studies. For example, Vinoth and Lestari found that environmental concern has a positive and significant influence on green trust, but in the context of East Java, the results were not significant. [26] [27].

#### 2) The Influence of Innovation on Trust

Innovation (X2) has a negative and insignificant influence on Trust (Z), with a t-statistic value of 1.040 (smaller than the significance limit of 1.96) and an original sample value of -0.134. This indicates that the higher the perception of innovation towards electric cars does not actually increase or even decrease the level of consumer trust, although at a weak level of influence. This finding contradicts the research of Alfairoza and Pratiwi & Hasin, which stated that innovation can increase brand trust. [28] [17]. However, rapid and radical changes resulting from innovation can become a psychological barrier for consumers who tend to reject changes that they do not fully understand.

#### 3) The Influence of the Effectiveness of Social Media on Trust

Social Media Effectiveness (X3) shows a significant positive influence on Trust (Z), as evidenced by a t-statistic value of 2.022 (greater than 1.96) and an original sample of 0.205. This finding aligns with Haudi and Bawono's research, which emphasises that social media is able to build trust through active interaction, consumer involvement, and consistent information delivery [19] [29]

### 4) The Influence of Brand Image on Trust

Brand Image (X4) has a significant positive effect on Trust (Z), with a t-statistic value of 4.095 (>1.96) and an Original Sample value of 0.357, indicating a positive relationship. Empirically, this indicates that increasing positive

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perceptions of the electric car brand image directly contributes to building consumer trust. This finding is reinforced by the results of Kurdianto's study, which found that brand image directly increases brand trust. [20].

#### The Influence of Green Product Awareness on Trust

Green Product Awareness (X5) has a significant positive influence on Trust (Z), with a t-statistic value of 3.137 (>1.96) and an Original Sample value of 0.373. Therefore, the higher the consumer awareness of the environmentally friendly aspects of electric cars, the higher the level of trust that arises. This is in line with research by Alamsyah & Febriani and Membeuil & Diunugala, which shows that green awareness directly influences the formation of green trust because consumers feel the company's real commitment to environmental issues. [22] [30].

#### The Influence of Environmental Concern on Purchase Intention

Environmental Concern (X1) has a negative but insignificant effect on the Intention to Purchase Electric Cars (Y), with a t-statistic value of 0.185 (below the threshold of 1.96) and a coefficient value (Original Sample) of -0.007, which indicates a negative but very weak relationship. Empirically, these results indicate that although some consumers have concerns about environmental issues, this is not strong enough to encourage them to purchase an electric car. These results are not in line with Rini and Hernomo, who found that environmental concern has a positive and significant effect on the intention to purchase green products. [31] [32]. However, contextual differences and local perceptions of energy sources can be key differentiators.

#### The Influence of Innovation on Purchase Intention

The results of the study indicate that the Innovation variable (X2) has a positive but insignificant effect on Purchase Intention (Y), with a t-statistic value of 0.760 (less than 1.96) and an Original Sample value of 0.075, indicating a weak but positive relationship. The level of technological literacy and limited information regarding the innovative features of electric cars in East Java may be the cause of the weak effect. This result contradicts the findings of Maulana & Alisha and Tanuwijaya, who found that product innovation has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. [33] [34].

#### The Influence of the Effectiveness of Social Media on Purchase Intention

Social Media Effectiveness (X3) has a negative and significant influence on Purchase Intention (Y), as indicated by a t-statistic value of 2.700 > 1.96 and an Original Sample coefficient value of 0.254. This indicates that the higher consumers' perceptions of the effectiveness of social media used by electric car brands, the lower their purchase interest in the product. Empirically, this result can be explained by considering the characteristics of social media audiences in East Java. Consumers tend to be sceptical of promotional information, especially if hard-selling elements are too dominant compared to engagement or real user testimonials. This result is in line with Raheni's research. [35]. However, this is different from Sangen and Jaleni & Apid, who found that social media has a positive influence on purchasing intention. [36] [37]

#### The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Interest

Brand Image (X4) has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention (Y) with a t-statistic value of 4.181 > 1.96 and an Original Sample value of 0.347. This means that the stronger and more positive the brand image of an electric car is in the minds of consumers, the more likely they are to be interested in purchasing the product. This result is in line with Benhardy and Rahmawati & Yayak, who stated that brand image has a significant effect on purchase intention. [38] [39]

#### 10) The Influence of Green Product Awareness on Purchase Intention

Green Product Awareness (X5) has a positive, insignificant effect on Purchase Intention (Y), because the tstatistic value is 0.978, which means it is smaller than 1.96. The Original Sample value shows a positive value of 0.093. Empirically, this result can be explained by considering that even though consumer awareness of green products increases, it does not necessarily directly encourage purchase intention. This is in line with Mensah's findings, which state that the influence of environmental awareness on purchase intention is more influenced by price factors, utility value, and perceived quality, rather than only by awareness itself. [40]

#### 11) The Influence of Trust on Purchase Intention

Trust (Z) has a significant positive influence on Purchase Intention (Y), as the t-statistic value is 2.075, which is greater than 1.96, and the Original Sample value shows a positive value of 0.176. Therefore, it can be concluded that better Trust will increase Purchase Intention with a strong influence. Empirically, this finding indicates that consumer trust in brands or companies providing electric cars plays a significant role in shaping purchase intention. This research is consistent with Ihsan & Lilik, who found that consumer trust significantly influences purchase intention. [41].

#### 12) Brand Equity Moderates the Influence of Trust on Purchase Intention

Based on the results of the hypothesis test, the t-statistic value was obtained at 0.564 (smaller than the critical value of 1.96), and the Original Sample value was -0.019, which indicates that the influence of Trust on Purchase Intention moderated by Brand Equity is negative and insignificant. Empirically, this condition indicates that although

some consumers have a certain level of trust in electric cars and also view the brand positively (as indicated by a high brand equity value), the combination of trust and brand equity is not strong enough to increase purchase intention significantly. This finding is contrary to previous research, as stated by Zuhdi, which states that high brand trust and equity should be able to increase purchasing intention. [23].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research analysis and discussion, the research conclusions are that Environmental Concern has a positive but insignificant effect and Innovation has a negative but insignificant effect on Electric Car Consumer Trust in East Java; while Social Media Effectiveness, Brand Image and Green Product Awareness have a positive and significant effect on Electric Car Consumer Trust in East Java; Environmental Concern has a negative but insignificant effect and Innovation has a positive but insignificant effect on Electric Car Consumer Purchase Intention in East Java; while Social Media Effectiveness has a negative but significant effect and Brand Image has a positive but significant effect on Electric Car Consumer Purchase Intention in East Java; except Green Product Awareness has a positive but insignificant effect on Purchase Intention; Trust has a positive but significant effect on Electric Car Consumer Purchase Intention in East Java; and Trust has a negative but insignificant effect on Purchase Intention moderated by Electric Car Consumer Brand Equity in East Java.

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