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# DRIVING MASSTIGE CONSUMPTION: THE ROLE OF PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL LOCUS OF CONTROL AMONG MIDDLE-CLASS CONSUMERS IN BANYUMAS

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**Abstract**

The increasing demand for sustainable consumption has encouraged consumers to consider not only functional and symbolic values but also environmental responsibility in their purchasing decisions. This study investigates the influence of pro-environmental behavior and environmental locus of control on masstige marketing among middle-class consumers in Banyumas, Indonesia. Drawing upon sustainable consumption and consumer behavior perspectives, this study examines how environmental-related psychological factors shape consumers' perceptions of accessible prestige products that integrate sustainability attributes. A quantitative research approach was employed using survey data collected from 100 middle-class consumers who had purchased masstige products within the previous six months. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that environmental locus of control has a positive and significant effect on masstige marketing, demonstrating that consumers who believe their individual actions can contribute to environmental improvement tend to respond more positively to sustainable prestige-oriented products. Furthermore, pro-environmental behavior also positively influences masstige marketing, suggesting that environmentally responsible lifestyles enhance consumers' preferences toward products combining prestige, accessibility, and sustainability. This study contributes to the sustainable marketing literature by highlighting the role of psychological environmental factors in shaping masstige consumption patterns, particularly in an emerging market context. The findings provide practical implications for marketers in developing sustainable masstige strategies aligned with middle-class consumers' environmental values.

**Keywords: masstige marketing; pro-environmental behavior; environmental locus of control; sustainable consumption**

## INTRODUCTION

Climate change, environmental degradation, and increasing ecological concerns have significantly transformed consumer behavior by encouraging individuals to adopt more sustainable consumption patterns (Okumah et al., 2020). Environmental issues are no longer perceived only as ecological challenges but have become important considerations influencing consumer decision-making processes and market dynamics (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). In response to these challenges, consumers are increasingly incorporating environmental considerations into their daily decisions, including product selection, resource utilization, and consumption practices that reflect ecological responsibility. This transformation indicates that contemporary consumers increasingly evaluate products not only based on functional benefits but also based on their environmental and social consequences (White et al., 2019).

Pro-environmental behavior (PEB) represents consumers' voluntary actions that reduce environmental harm through responsible purchasing, resource conservation, and sustainable

lifestyle choices (Steg & Vlek, 2009). However, previous studies have identified an attitude–behavior gap, where consumers may demonstrate strong environmental awareness but do not always translate these values into actual environmentally responsible consumption practices (Derdowski et al., 2020). This gap suggests that environmental awareness alone is insufficient to explain sustainable consumption decisions, highlighting the importance of psychological factors that determine whether consumers feel capable and responsible for creating environmental change (Chiang et al., 2019).

The phenomenon of sustainable consumption is particularly relevant among middle-class consumers in developing economies, where increasing purchasing power has encouraged consumers to seek products that combine lifestyle aspirations with responsible consumption values (Kumar et al., 2021). Middle-class consumers represent a strategic market segment because they increasingly seek products that provide symbolic meaning, personal identity, and social recognition beyond functional attributes (Kharas, 2017). This consumer segment demonstrates a growing interest in products that allow them to achieve lifestyle aspirations while maintaining alignment with ethical and environmental values (Rahayu et al., 2023).

One emerging marketing strategy that reflects this changing consumer orientation is masstige marketing, which combines the exclusivity associated with prestige products and the accessibility required by mass-market consumers (Truong et al., 2009). Masstige consumption allows middle-class consumers to experience symbolic benefits, such as status and self-expression, without the financial barriers associated with traditional luxury consumption (Paul, 2019). In the context of sustainability, masstige products with environmental attributes may become attractive because they provide consumers with both social recognition and opportunities to demonstrate ecological responsibility (Kapferer & Michaut-Denizeau, 2020).

From a theoretical perspective, pro-environmental behavior can be explained through behavioral theories emphasizing the influence of attitudes, beliefs, and perceived control in shaping individual actions (Ajzen, 2020). The Theory of Planned Behavior explains that individuals' behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, which subsequently affect actual behavior (Yuriev et al., 2020). Furthermore, the New Ecological Paradigm perspective suggests that individuals who possess stronger ecological worldviews tend to develop greater environmental concern and are more likely to engage in sustainable behaviors (Derdowski et al., 2020). Therefore, consumers with stronger environmental orientations may be more receptive toward products and brands that integrate sustainability values.

Beyond environmental attitudes, individual differences in perceived environmental responsibility provide an important explanation for variations in sustainable consumption behavior (Chiang et al., 2019). Environmental locus of control reflects consumers' perceived agency in creating environmental change through their personal decision (Nielsen et al., 2020). Individuals with internal environmental locus of control tend to perceive themselves as capable of contributing to environmental improvement, which encourages stronger involvement in pro-environmental activities (Derdowski et al., 2020). Conversely, individuals with external locus of control may perceive environmental problems as responsibilities belonging primarily to governments, industries, or other external actors, reducing personal involvement in sustainable actions (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014).

The role of environmental locus of control becomes increasingly important when examining masstige consumption because consumers' environmental beliefs may influence how they evaluate symbolic and premium products (Sreen et al., 2018). Consumers who believe that their choices can create environmental impacts are more likely to select brands that reflect their personal values, including masstige brands that communicate sustainability, responsibility, and prestige simultaneously (Griskevicius et al., 2010). Therefore, ELOC may serve as a psychological mechanism connecting environmental beliefs with consumption preferences.

Although previous studies have extensively examined the determinants of pro-environmental behavior, limited research has explored how environmental psychological factors influence prestige-oriented consumption patterns such as masstige marketing (Okumah et al., 2020). Previous research has primarily focused on the relationship between environmental concern, green attitudes, and sustainable purchasing intentions, while the relationship between pro-environmental behavior and consumers' attraction toward accessible prestige products remains underexplored (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Similarly, studies investigating environmental locus of control have mostly concentrated on predicting environmental actions rather than examining its implications for marketing strategies and consumer value creation (Nielsen et al., 2020).

Furthermore, most existing studies have been conducted in developed countries or among specific consumer groups, creating limitations in understanding sustainability-driven consumption among middle-class consumers in emerging markets (Okumah et al., 2020). In Indonesia, particularly in regional markets such as Banyumas, middle-class consumers represent an important segment because they are increasingly exposed to sustainability discourse while simultaneously pursuing lifestyle and prestige-oriented consumption (Putri & Yasa, 2021). Therefore, examining the influence of pro-environmental behavior and environmental locus of control on masstige marketing provides an opportunity to extend sustainable marketing literature by integrating environmental psychology and consumer behavior perspectives.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to understand how consumers' environmental values and psychological beliefs influence contemporary consumption patterns (Derdowski et al., 2020). Understanding these relationships can help marketers develop masstige strategies that balance prestige, accessibility, and environmental responsibility (Okumah et al., 2020). Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of pro-environmental behavior and environmental locus of control in driving masstige consumption among middle-class consumers in Banyumas, Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

### *Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB)*

Pro-environmental behavior (PEB) refers to individual actions consciously aimed at minimizing negative impacts on the environment and is a primary focus of sustainable marketing research (Derdowski et al., 2020). PEB is influenced not only by environmental attitudes and values but also by psychological factors such as perceived control and individual beliefs about the impact of their actions (Vicente et al., 2021). In the context of consumption, PEB is often reflected in preferences for environmentally friendly products, willingness to pay premiums, and sustainability-oriented purchasing decisions (Coşkun et al., 2017). However, there is an attitude-behavior gap, where individuals with positive attitudes toward the environment do not always translate these attitudes into actual behavior (Derdowski et al., 2020).

### *Environmental Locus of Control (ELOC)*

Environmental locus of control (ELOC) refers to an individual's belief in the extent to which they have control over environmentally related outcomes (Chiang et al., 2019). Individuals with an internal locus of control believe that their actions have a direct impact on the environment, thus being more active in engaging in pro-environmental behaviors (Nielsen et al., 2020). Conversely, individuals with an external locus of control tend to attribute responsibility to external parties such as the government or companies, which can reduce engagement in environmental impact assessments (Antonetti & Maklan, 2014). Empirical research shows that locus of control not only directly influences environmental impact assessments but also moderates the relationship between environmental values and actual behavior (Derdowski et al., 2020).

***Pro*-Environmental Behavior and Masstige Marketing**

Changes in consumer orientation in recent decades indicate that consumers no longer only consider the functional benefits of products, but also increasingly pay attention to the social, symbolic, and sustainability values inherent in these products. In this context, Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB) is one of the factors influencing consumer preferences for products that are not only high quality but also reflect environmental responsibility. PEB refers to individual actions that consciously aim to reduce negative impacts on the environment through more sustainable consumption patterns, resource use, and purchasing decisions (Steg & Vlek, 2009). The relationship between PEB and Masstige Marketing can be explained through the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which explains that individual behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, which then shape intentions and actual decisions (Ajzen, 1991).

From a consumer identity perspective, masstige products allow individuals to express symbolic meanings associated with lifestyle, social positioning, and personal values beyond traditional luxury consumption. Research by Dangelico and Vocalelli (2017) found that consumers with a high environmental orientation tend to have a greater preference for products offering sustainability attributes. Furthermore, Wang et al. (2022) found that consumers with high levels of environmental awareness are more willing to pay a premium for products that combine functional, symbolic, and sustainability benefits. These findings suggest that pro-environmental behavior can enhance the appeal of masstige products because consumers view them as a representation of personal values and a symbol of responsible social status. Based on these theoretical arguments and empirical evidence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

***H1 : Pro-Environmental Behavior has a positive influence on Masstige Marketing.***

***Environmental Locus of Control and Masstige Marketing***

Environmental Locus of Control (ELOC) describes an individual's beliefs about the extent to which their actions can influence environmental conditions. This concept is an extension of the Locus of Control theory introduced by Julian B. Rotter. Individuals with an internal environmental locus of control believe that their personal actions can produce tangible environmental changes, while individuals with an external environmental locus of control tend to believe that environmental conditions are largely determined by external factors such as government, companies, or social circumstances (Rotter, 1966).

The relationship between ELOC and Masstige Marketing can be explained through Social Cognitive Theory developed by Albert Bandura. This theory explains that an individual's beliefs about their abilities (self-efficacy and perceived control) will influence behavioral choices and decisions made (Bandura, 1986). In the context of consumption, individuals who have internal ELOC tend to believe that their purchasing decisions can contribute to environmental improvement. Therefore, they are more likely to choose products that reflect sustainable values, including masstige products that integrate aspects of quality, prestige, and environmental responsibility.

Empirical research also shows that locus of control plays a significant role in shaping environmentally oriented consumption behaviors and decisions. Chiang et al. (2019) found that individuals with an internal locus of control exhibited higher levels of engagement in pro-environmental behaviors. Research by Nielsen et al. (2019) showed that confidence in one's ability to influence the environment was an important predictor of sustainable consumption behavior. These findings indicate that perceived environmental agency strengthens consumers' preference

for brands that align with their ethical and social values. Based on theoretical arguments and previous research results, the following hypothesis is proposed:

***H2: Environmental Locus of Control has a positive influence on Masstige Marketing.***

## RESEARCH METHODS

### *Data Collection*

The data in this study were collected from middle-class consumers in Banyumas Regency who had experience purchasing prestige products (masstige) in the past six months. The sample size was 100 respondents. Data were obtained by distributing questionnaires. The distributed questionnaires contained statements derived from previous research.

### *Research Instruments*

Each instrument in the study that represents the research variables is the result of adopting previous research. The mass marketing variable consists of 23 statements adopted from previous research (Ishaq, et al., 2023), the variablepro-environmental behaviorsconsists of 10 statements adopted from research (Trivedi & Savalia., 2015), and environmental locus of control adopts 14 statements from research (Cleveland, et.al., 2005).

### *Data Analysis Techniques*

The hypothesis in this study was tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Square approach (Chin, 1998) which was carried out using Smart PLS 3.2.9 software. The data in this study were analyzed in two stages, namely analysis and interpretation of the results of the structural model test (Hulland, 1999). Convergent validity in this study was tested to determine the magnitude of the loading factors and the average variance extracted (AVE) value (Hair et al., 2022), then discriminant validity testing was carried out with cross loading. Internal consistency in this study was analyzed with Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) and discriminant validity with the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) approach (Henseler et al., 2015).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Validity and Reliability Testing*

Based on the results of the outer loading test in Table 3, all indicators used in the study have met the criteria for convergent validity, as they have loading factor values above 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022). For the Environmental LOC construct, the outer loading value ranges from 0.739–0.855. The Masstige Marketing construct shows an outer loading value between 0.732–0.839, while the Pro Environmental Behavior construct has an outer loading value between 0.781–0.860. These results indicate that all indicators are able to adequately reflect the measured latent constructs and have a strong contribution to the formation of each construct.

The results of the reliability and validity evaluation also show that all constructs have Cronbach's Alpha, rho_A, and Composite Reliability values that are above the minimum limit of 0.70. The Environmental LOC construct has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.955 and a Composite Reliability of 0.960. The Masstige Marketing construct has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.972 and a Composite Reliability of 0.974. Meanwhile, the Pro Environmental Behavior construct shows a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.945 and a Composite Reliability of 0.954. Thus, all constructs can be said to have a very good level of internal consistency (Hair et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct also met the required criteria, which was above 0.50. The AVE value for the Environmental LOC construct was 0.629, Masstige Marketing was 0.619, and Pro-Environmental Behavior was 0.696. These results indicate that more than 50% of the indicator variance can be explained by the constructs they

represent (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, the measurement model in this study was declared valid and reliable, making it worthy to proceed to the structural model testing and hypothesis testing stages.

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Testing

| Variable | Indicator | Loading Factor | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | AVE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Environmental LOC | X21 – X214 | 0.739 – 0.855 | 0.955 | 0.960 | 0.629 |
| Masstige Marketing | Z111 – Z153 | 0.732 – 0.839 | 0.972 | 0.974 | 0.619 |
| Pro Environmental Behaviour | X11 – X19 | 0.781 – 0.860 | 0.945 | 0.954 | 0.696 |

**Finding**

***Discriminant Validity using Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)***

The HTMT analysis was conducted to assess discriminant validity among the latent constructs. The results presented in Table X indicate that all HTMT values are below the recommended threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). The HTMT value between Environmental LOC and Masstige Marketing is 0.525, while the HTMT values between Environmental LOC and Pro Environmental Behaviour and between Masstige Marketing and Pro Environmental Behaviour are 0.314 and 0.466, respectively. These values confirm that each construct is empirically distinct from the others and measures different conceptual domains. Consequently, the discriminant validity requirement is fulfilled, indicating that the measurement model is capable of differentiating among the constructs included in the study.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity using HTMT

| Construct | Environmental LOC | Masstige Marketing | Pro Environmental Behaviour |
|---|---|---|---|
| Environmental LOC | - | | |
| Masstige Marketing | 0.525 | - | |
| Pro Environmental Behaviour | 0.314 | 0.466 | - |

***Effect Size ($f^2$)***

The effect size analysis was performed to evaluate the contribution of each exogenous construct to the endogenous constructs. Based on the guidelines proposed by Hair et al. (2022), $f^2$ values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively. The results show that Environmental LOC exerts a moderate effect on Masstige Marketing with an $f^2$ value of 0.246. Furthermore, Masstige Marketing has a moderate effect on Pro Environmental Behaviour with an $f^2$ value of 0.152. These findings indicate that Environmental LOC contributes meaningfully to the formation of Masstige Marketing perceptions, while Masstige Marketing plays a substantial role in influencing Pro Environmental Behaviour. Therefore, both relationships demonstrate practical significance in explaining consumer behavioural outcomes within the proposed research framework.

**Hypotheses Result Test**

***Direct Effects Analysis***

The direct effects were assessed using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. A hypothesis is considered supported when the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05 (Hair et al., 2020). The results presented in Table X indicate that both structural relationships are

positive and statistically significant. First, Environmental LOC significantly influences Masstige Marketing (β = 0.416, t = 8.524, p < 0.001), indicating that consumers with stronger environmental locus of control tend to perceive and respond more positively to masstige marketing initiatives. This finding suggests that individuals who believe their actions can contribute to environmental improvement are more likely to value products that combine prestige with sustainability attributes.

Second, Pro-Environmental Behaviour significantly influences Masstige Marketing (β = 0.327, t = 6.324, p < 0.001). The positive coefficient indicates that individuals exhibiting stronger environmentally responsible behavior tend to have more favorable perceptions of masstige marketing strategies. This result implies that sustainable consumption behavior is aligned with the attractiveness of masstige products that emphasize environmental values while maintaining aspirational brand positioning. Overall, all hypothesized direct relationships are supported, demonstrating that both Environmental LOC and Pro-Environmental Behaviour are important antecedents of Masstige Marketing.

Tabel 3. Result of Regression Analysis

| Hypothesis | Relationship | β | t-value | p-value | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Environmental LOC → Masstige Marketing | 0.416 | 8.524 | < 0.001 | Supported |
| H2 | Pro Environmental Behaviour → Masstige Marketing | 0.327 | 6.324 | < 0.001 | Supported |

**Discussion**

***The Influence of Environmental Locus of Control on Masstige Marketing***

The results of this study indicate that Environmental Locus of Control (ELOC) has a positive and significant effect on Masstige Marketing (β = 0.416; t = 8.524; p < 0.001). This finding suggests that consumers who believe that their personal actions can contribute to solving environmental problems tend to respond more positively to products that combine prestige, exclusivity, and sustainability values. In other words, environmental responsibility has become an important consideration in shaping consumer perceptions of masstige products.

This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that environmental consciousness and perceived individual responsibility encourage consumers to support brands that communicate sustainability values. Cleveland et al. (2012) found that consumers with a strong internal environmental locus of control are more likely to engage in environmentally responsible consumption. Similarly, Joshi and Rahman (2015) reported that environmental awareness significantly influences green purchasing behavior because consumers perceive their purchasing decisions as contributing to environmental preservation.

The findings also align with the growing literature on sustainable luxury and masstige consumption. Research by Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau (2019) suggests that contemporary consumers increasingly expect prestige brands to demonstrate environmental and social responsibility. As a result, sustainability has evolved from a peripheral attribute into a source of symbolic value that enhances brand attractiveness. However, the present findings differ from studies conducted in some emerging markets where prestige consumption is still largely driven by social status and conspicuous consumption motives. For instance, research by Eastman et al. found that status-oriented consumers often prioritize social recognition over ethical considerations when purchasing prestige products. In such contexts, environmental concerns may play a secondary role compared to symbolic prestige.

In the context of Banyumas, these findings reflect an interesting transformation in consumer behavior. Banyumas has experienced significant growth in educational attainment, digital connectivity, and environmental awareness, particularly among younger consumers and urban

middle-class groups. Consumers increasingly seek products that not only convey social prestige but also align with personal values related to sustainability. Therefore, masstige products that emphasize environmentally friendly materials, sustainable production processes, and responsible branding are likely to resonate strongly with consumers who possess a high environmental locus of control.

***The Influence of Pro-Environmental Behaviour on Masstige Marketing***

The results further demonstrate that Pro-Environmental Behaviour positively and significantly influences Masstige Marketing ($\beta = 0.327$; $t = 6.324$; $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that consumers who frequently engage in environmentally responsible behaviors tend to have more favorable perceptions of masstige products that communicate sustainability attributes. This result supports the theoretical perspective that consumer behavior and consumption preferences are increasingly integrated with environmental values. According to Ajzen (1991), individuals tend to select products that are consistent with their beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral intentions. Consumers who actively practice recycling, energy conservation, waste reduction, and environmentally conscious purchasing are therefore more likely to appreciate brands that reflect similar values.

The findings are consistent with studies by White et al. (2019), who found that environmentally responsible consumers exhibit stronger preferences toward sustainable brands. Likewise, Griskevicius et al. (2010) demonstrated that environmentally friendly consumption can function as a signal of social status, particularly when green products possess premium or prestige characteristics. From a masstige marketing perspective, the results reinforce the argument that sustainability can enhance perceived prestige. Previous research by Paul et al. (2016) suggests that environmentally conscious consumers increasingly perceive sustainable products as symbols of modernity, sophistication, and responsible citizenship. Consequently, sustainability itself becomes part of the prestige value proposition.

Nevertheless, the findings differ from studies conducted in highly price-sensitive markets where environmental behavior does not always translate into purchasing decisions. Research examining the “attitude-behavior gap” in green consumption found that consumers often express environmental concern but fail to purchase environmentally friendly products due to higher prices or limited availability. In such contexts, environmental behavior does not necessarily lead to stronger preferences for premium products.

For consumers in Banyumas, however, the positive relationship observed in this study suggests that environmentally responsible behavior is increasingly associated with lifestyle aspirations. The growing presence of eco-friendly products, sustainable fashion, reusable packaging, and environmentally conscious brands has contributed to a perception that sustainable consumption is both socially desirable and personally rewarding. Among educated and middle-income consumers, purchasing environmentally responsible masstige products may serve not only as an expression of environmental commitment but also as a marker of modern and prestigious identity.

**CONCLUSION**

This study aims to examine the influence of Environmental Locus of Control (ELOC) and Pro-Environmental Behaviour (PEB) on Masstige Marketing among consumers in Banyumas. The results of the PLS-SEM analysis demonstrate that the measurement model satisfies the requirements of validity and reliability, indicating that all constructs and indicators used in the study are appropriate for explaining the proposed research model. The hypothesis testing results reveal that Environmental Locus of Control has a positive and significant effect on Masstige Marketing. This finding indicates that consumers who believe their individual actions can contribute to

environmental improvement tend to have more favorable perceptions of masstige products. Environmental responsibility is therefore not only associated with ecological concerns but also becomes an important consideration in evaluating products that offer prestige and symbolic value.

Furthermore, Pro-Environmental Behaviour is also found to have a positive and significant effect on Masstige Marketing. Consumers who actively engage in environmentally responsible behaviors are more likely to appreciate products that combine sustainability attributes with prestige and accessibility. This finding suggests that environmentally conscious lifestyles increasingly influence consumption preferences and strengthen the attractiveness of masstige products. Among the two antecedents examined, Environmental Locus of Control exhibits a stronger effect on Masstige Marketing than Pro-Environmental Behaviour, indicating that consumers' beliefs regarding their ability to influence environmental outcomes play a more prominent role in shaping perceptions of prestige-oriented sustainable products. This result highlights the importance of psychological factors in explaining consumer responses to masstige marketing strategies.

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